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Volume I
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Volume III
Educational Leadership
CONTENTS

6 Educational administration as a humane science: conversations between Thomas Greenfield and Peter Ribbins
THOMAS GREENFIELD AND PETER RIBBINS

7 Building an ethical school: a theory for practice in educational leadership
ROBERT J. STARRATT

8 Surviving and thriving in a secularized culture: the phenomenon of religious (church/faith) schools in England
HELEN JOHNSON

9 Beyond Orientalism – how to understand the culture of Muslim schools in England: some methodological reflections
HELEN JOHNSON AND MIKE CASTELLI

PART 2
Emotions and gender

10 Feeling like a leader: the emotions of leadership
BRENDA R. BEATTY

11 The dark side of leadership: teacher perspectives of principal mistreatment
JOSEPH BLASE AND JO BLASE

12 The work of educational leaders in building creative and passionate schools and colleges
CHRIS JAMES

13 Educational leadership: a feminist critique and reconstruction
JILL BLACKMORE

14 The female secondary headteacher in England and Wales: leadership and management styles
MARIANNE COLEMAN

vi
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Changing the deafening silence of indigenous women’s voices in educational leadership</td>
<td>Tanya Fitzgerald</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Dusting off the phoenix: gender and educational leadership revisited</td>
<td>Valerie Hall</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Essentials of female management</td>
<td>Diane Reay and Stephen J. Ball</td>
<td>363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PART 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Politics and micropolitics</td>
<td></td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>The challenge to professionals from the new public management: implications for the teaching profession</td>
<td>Mike Bottery</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Micropolitics of educational organisations</td>
<td>Eric Hoyle</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Reappraisal: the problems and prospects of studying the micropolitics in reforming schools</td>
<td>Hanne B. Mawhinney</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VOLUME II  EDUCATIONAL THEORY**

**Acknowledgements**

ix

**PART 4**

**Theory**

1

21  Towards a critical practice of educational administration | Richard J. Bates | 3

22  Educational administration, leadership and management: towards a research agenda | Ray Bolam | 17
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>The changing context of management in education</td>
<td>Tony Bush</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Restructuring Hong Kong’s schools: the applicability of western</td>
<td>Clive Dimmock</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>theories, policies and practices to an Asian culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Educational administration as science: a post-positivist proposal</td>
<td>Colin Evers and Gabriele Lakoski</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>From struggling to juggling: towards a redefinition of the field of</td>
<td>Ron Glatter</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>educational leadership and management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The field of educational leadership: studying maps and mapping</td>
<td>Helen Gunter and Peter Ribbins</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Theory and practice in educational management</td>
<td>Meredydd Hughes</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The discourses of educational management</td>
<td>Walter Humes</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>‘Really good ideas’? Developing evidence-informed policy and practice</td>
<td>Rosalind Levacic and Ron Glatter</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in educational leadership and management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Realizing the potential of educational management in India</td>
<td>Padmakar Sapre</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PART 5</td>
<td>School effectiveness and school improvement</td>
<td></td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Exploring the principal’s contribution to school effectiveness:</td>
<td>Philip Hallinger and Ronald H. Heck</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1980–1995</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Linking school effectiveness knowledge and school improvement practice</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>towards a synergy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>DAVID REYNOLDS, DAVID HOPKINS AND LOUISE STOLL</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>The change equation: capacity for improvement</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>LOUISE STOLL, JOHN MACBEATH, IAIN SMITH AND PAMELA ROBERTSON</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART 6</strong></td>
<td>Financial management and local management of schools</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Monetary incentives and the reform of teacher compensation:</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a persistent organizational dilemma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>STEPHEN L. JACOBSON</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Local management of schools as an organizational form:</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>theory and application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ROSALIND LEVACIĆ</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Efficiency, effectiveness and the local management of schools</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TIM SIMKINS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Efficiency, equity and exchange in education</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>HYWEL THOMAS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART 7</strong></td>
<td>Further education</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Style and substance in education leadership: further education</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(FE) as a case in point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>DENIS GLEESON</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Strategic planning in further education: the business of values</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>JACKY LUMBY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Educational reform and managerialism: comparing the experience of</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>schools and colleges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>TIM SIMKINS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS

42 A counter-policy to subvert educational reform?
Collaboration among schools and colleges in a competitive competitive climate
MIKE WALLACE

VOLUME III EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Acknowledgements ix

PART 8
Leadership and headteachers 1

43 Letting go of outlived professional identities: a study of role transitions and role strain for principals in restructured schools
PAUL V. BREDeson

44 Grounding knowledge of schools in stakeholder realities: a multi-perspective study of effective school leaders
CHRISTOPHER DAY, ALMA HARRIS AND MARK HADFIELD

45 Headteachers’ knowledge, practice and mode of cognition 60
MICHAEL ERAUT

46 Headship 73
VALERIE HALL AND GEOFF SOUTHWORTH

47 The effects of transformational leadership on organizational conditions and student engagement with school
KENNETH LEITHWOOD AND DORIS JANTZI

48 Cross-cultural leadership development 113
JAN M. ROBERTSON AND CHARLES F. WEBBER

49 Context and praxis in the study of school leadership: a case of three?
PETER RIBBINS

50 Embedding leadership in task performance 147
VIVIANE M. J. ROBINSON
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Leadership as pedagogy, capital development and school effectiveness</td>
<td>Thomas J. Sergiovanni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Instructional leadership in schools: reflections and empirical evidence</td>
<td>Geoff Southworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Lessons from successful leadership in small schools</td>
<td>Geoff Southworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Stages of headship</td>
<td>Dick Weindling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Enhancing school leadership: evaluating the use of virtual learning communities</td>
<td>Megan Crawford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Learning through leading or leading through learning?</td>
<td>Jennifer Kerr and Danny Murphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Preparation for the school principalship: the United States’ story</td>
<td>Joseph Murphy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Leadership, learning and systemic reform</td>
<td>Kathryn Riley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Technology-mediated leadership development networks: expanding educative possibilities</td>
<td>Charles F. Webber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Leadership for learning – reengineering ‘mind sets’</td>
<td>John West-Burnham</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART 10

Middle leadership 347

61 Leadership of school subject areas: tensions and dimensions in managing in the middle 349
   HUGH BUSHER AND ALMA HARRIS

62 Distributed properties: a new architecture for leadership 363
   PETER GRONN

63 Heads on deputy headship: impossible roles for invisible role holders? 389
   PETER RIBBINS

VOLUME IV  EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

Acknowledgements ix

PART 11

History and research 1

64 Some aspects of the ‘headmaster tradition’ 3
   GEORGE BARON

65 Research in educational administration in Britain 15
   GEORGE BARON

66 Transformative power and leadership 34
   WARREN BENNIS

67 Transforming the frog into a prince: effective schools research, policy and practice at the district level 41
   LARRY CUBAN

68 Images of teaching and proposals for reform: a comparison of ideas from cognitive and organizational research 66
   WILLIAM A. FIRESTONE

69 A century’s quest to understand school leadership 91
   KENNETH LEITHWOOD AND DANIEL L. DUKE

CONTENTS xii
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors/Editors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Records of achievement: a critical and historical review</td>
<td>Michael Strain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>School management in nineteenth-century elementary schools: a day in</td>
<td>Angela M. Thody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the life of a headteacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201</td>
<td>PART 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategy, marketing, change and culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Primary schools and the nature of the education marketplace</td>
<td>Les Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>203</td>
<td>Rethinking schools and school leadership for the twenty-first century:</td>
<td>Brent Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>changes and challenges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>238</td>
<td>Leaders or followers? Governing bodies and their role in school</td>
<td>Peter Earley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leadership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256</td>
<td>Strategic management: where is the school going? A guide to strategic</td>
<td>Brian Fidler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>thinking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>272</td>
<td>Strategy, external relations and marketing</td>
<td>Nick Foskett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>289</td>
<td>Creating a school culture from the ground up: the case of Celebration</td>
<td>Kathryn M. Borman, Edward Glickman and Allyson Haag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td>Strategic leadership, resource management and effective school</td>
<td>Brian J. Caldwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reform</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>332</td>
<td>Renewal in the age of paradox</td>
<td>Andy Hargreaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>School culture, school effectiveness and school improvement</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David H. Hargreaves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>Conceptualising school change</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benjamin Levin and J. Anthony Riffel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82</td>
<td>School response to a changing environment</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benjamin Levin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>School self review</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agnes McMahon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>Beyond ‘managed change’: rethinking how schools improve</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karen Seashore Louis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Organizational learning and school change</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halia Claudia Silins, William Richard Mulford and Silja Zarins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This page intentionally left blank
Chronological table of reprinted articles and chapters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Article/Chapter</th>
<th>References</th>
<th>Vol.</th>
<th>Chap.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Article/Chapter</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>Vol</td>
<td>Chap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Paul V. Bredeson</td>
<td>Letting Go of Outlived Professional Identities: A Study of Role Transitions and Role Strain for Principals in Restructured Schools</td>
<td><em>Educational Administration Quarterly</em> 27(2) (May): 185–202.</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Journal/Publication Details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Article/Chapter</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>Vol.</td>
<td>Chap.</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Valerie Hall</td>
<td>Dusting off the Phoenix: Gender and Educational Leadership Revisited Headship</td>
<td><em>Educational Management &amp; Administration</em> 25(3): 309–324.</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Valerie Hall and Geoff Southworth</td>
<td>School culture, school effectiveness and school improvement</td>
<td><em>School Leadership &amp; Management</em> 17(2): 151–170.</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Peter Ribbins</td>
<td>Leadership for Learning – reengineering ‘mind sets’</td>
<td><em>School Leadership &amp; Management</em> 17(2): 231–244.</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Journal/Book</td>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Brian J. Caldwell</td>
<td>Strategic leadership, resource management and effective school reform</td>
<td><em>Journal of Educational Administration</em></td>
<td>36(5)</td>
<td>445–461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Clive Dimmock</td>
<td>Restructuring Hong Kong’s Schools: The Applicability of Western Theorites, Policies and Practices to an Asian Culture</td>
<td><em>Educational Management &amp; Administration</em></td>
<td>24(4)</td>
<td>363–377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Michael Strain</td>
<td>Leadership as pedagogy, capital development and school effectiveness</td>
<td><em>International Journal of Leadership in Education</em></td>
<td>1(1)</td>
<td>37–46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Les Bell</td>
<td>Feeling like a leader: the emotions of leadership</td>
<td>Paper presented at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, April, pp. 1–33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Article/Chapter</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>Vol.</td>
<td>Chap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Ron Glatter</td>
<td>From Struggling to Juggling: Towards a Redefinition of the Field of Educational Leadership and Management</td>
<td><em>Educational Management &amp; Administration</em> 27(3): 253–266.</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Journal and Volume/Issue</td>
<td>Volume/Issue Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Article/Chapter</td>
<td>References</td>
<td>Vol.</td>
<td>Chap.</td>
</tr>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Journal and Volume</td>
<td>Page Numbers</td>
<td>Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Joseph Blase and Jo Blase</td>
<td>The Dark Side of Leadership: Teacher Perspectives of Principal Mistreatment</td>
<td>Educational Administration Quarterly 38(5) (December)</td>
<td>671–727</td>
<td>I 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Megan Crawford</td>
<td>Enhancing School Leadership: Evaluating the Use of Virtual Learning Communities</td>
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</tr>
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<td>IV 73</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>II 31</td>
</tr>
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<td>IV 85</td>
</tr>
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<td>2002</td>
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<td>Instructional Leadership in Schools: reflections and empirical evidence</td>
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<td>III 52</td>
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<td>II</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>I</td>
<td>12</td>
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

During a somewhat difficult three years, which have however allowed considerable time for reading and reflection, I have had the opportunity to select the articles and chapters in these four volumes to represent the field of educational management. What is presented here is a collection that has taken account of the professional judgements of a large number of those, mainly from higher education institutions, who have been generous in their commitment to the process of defining the intellectual territory of educational management. What is presented is the best I could achieve, given their guidance. It was agreed that management would be the most appropriate focus for the whole, because of the importance of providing a historical perspective in the collection and to ensure that this did not date. Over the last thirty years, the British Educational Leadership Management and Administration Society (BELMAS) has followed the changing emphases in the field, and the political and policy trends, and transformed itself from BEAS (British Educational Administration Society) established in 1971 to BEMAS, in 1980, with the incorporation of ‘Management’ into its title. In 2001 it succumbed to the further changed focus of research and practice and incorporated ‘Leadership’ into its title, BELMAS. Its major academic journal followed the same process, changing its name from Educational Administration to Educational Management and Administration and finally to Educational Management, Administration and Leadership in 2004. The articles and chapters selected here, which attempt to map the whole field of educational management, have been derived from the Gunter definition,

a field is a metaphor for understanding the intellectual territory which members inhabit, there are spaces where field members locate themselves and their work, and there are boundaries which demarcate those who are within the field from those outside.

(Gunter 1999: 230)

These historical changes have resulted in the very strong recent focus on educational leadership, although Earley and Weindling (2004) show, in retrospect, that it is possible to demonstrate that there has been twenty years of research on
educational leadership. This emphasis is also, at least partially, a consequence of changing definitions and understandings about the nature of leadership and management. The establishment of a National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in the UK in 2000 illustrates this new centrality. It is not yet clear how long this particularly strong focus will be sustained. However, for a new organisation focusing on current priorities, there is clearly less need for NCSL to give standing to education management. What would appear to be the case is that the flow and rationale for this evolving process from administration to management, and the grounds for the strong current significance given to leadership, have not been widely researched within this large historical context. Gunter (1999a) has presented a framework derived from interviews with the senior scholars and researchers in the field in the UK and an examination of the BELMAS archive which articulates a structure for this evolutionary process. As early as 1984, she notes, Harris Jenkins classified education management writings, having considered 473 references, in four categories (Gunter 1999: 73–74). These have remained useful in creating a framework for further analysis.

The Comparative Approach in which management in educational institutions is compared for similarities and relevance with industrial and commercial practice.

The Organisational Approach in which models and concepts from organisation theory such as structure, leadership and roles are discussed in relation to educational institutions.

The Managerial Approach in which managerial approaches and techniques are identified as being increasingly separate from policy studies, but which recognises the potential for reintegration through the common aim of organisational effectiveness.

The Environmental Approach in which education management sees the educational institution within a social and economic environment through the application of systems theory.

The different understandings of management and leadership presented in these four volumes variously define leadership as a subset of management, as above, and management as a subset of leadership. Therefore, it is interesting to note that the other major UK journal in the field changed its title from School Organisation to School Leadership and Management in 1997.

There has been a similar historical development and debate about the relative significance of the distinct but complementary research traditions of school effectiveness and school improvement. In selecting the articles for these volumes, this created an issue of how significant for representing the field of educational management are school effectiveness and school improvement traditions. School effectiveness is arguably about management through research into what characterises success, and school improvement about the leadership of schools to success through people. The place of this tradition within the scope of
It was determined that the full four volumes should be entitled *Educational Management* because, arguably, this has represented the central tradition historically over the last forty years. The titles for the four separate volumes – ‘Educational values’, ‘Educational theory’, ‘Educational leadership’ and ‘Educational change’ – have resulted from an attempt to impose coherence and meaning on the collection of articles which, it was judged, best represent the field – albeit largely after the selection of articles was made. The rationale for determining the subsections was similarly driven by the articles chosen. This would seem, in retrospect, to be an appropriate way to characterise the intellectual territory. The four volumes represent the major areas on which research and scholarship has focused for the last forty years. It is confidently expected that any reader seeking to understand the intellectual history of the field and the current central issues will be able to find them both in this coherent collection of articles. There is a clear emphasis on articles which have stood the test of time.

Volume I, ‘Educational values’, includes articles incorporating research into the ethical, moral and religious as frameworks for considering educational values. The emotional context of management and gender can be understood as allied to the central concerns of research on values. Politics and micropolitics have been conceptualised in the literature selected here as directly related to the ethical. This volume, in particular, raised the issue of coverage of the field. It was judged important that certain content areas were sufficiently represented because of their relative importance in any exploration of educational values.

Volume II centres on theory with considerable reference to the broader international context of analysis and research in this area. This incorporates the application of theory to the school effectiveness and school improvement traditions. The implications of applying research and theory to financial management and the distinctive context of further education are also presented here. Particularly in the articles selected, these issues are strongly related to management.

Volume III concentrates on leadership. Initially there is a strong focus on headteachers or school principals, the original focus of almost all leadership research and articles about learning leadership, again with an international focus, which extends this consideration. This volume is brought to a conclusion by chapters exploring the more recent focus on middle leadership or, as frequently conceptualised, distributed leadership.

The fourth volume, ‘Educational change’, opens with a section which explores the history of the changing research focus and changing conceptions of the field of educational management. The second part of this volume explores the change process more pragmatically and the relationships between strategy, culture and marketing, all of which can be conceived as distinctive manifestations of major changes in the field. This structure, which has again been partially derived from the articles selected, but also from the process described below,
may represent another framework for mapping the wider field and defining the content of educational management.

If this had been a USA-based collection, the process for determining those scholars who would best represent the field might have been more straightforward. Paul Bredeson, of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, confirmed that Division A of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) had initiated a task force to study inquiry and scholarship in the field of educational administration in response to a concern about the quality of research. He drew my attention to a list of fifty recognised highly productive and influential scholars, professors of educational administration, which was completed in 2000. The Task Force Research and Inquiry Report – Part 1 (Tschannen-Moran, Firestone, Hoy and Moore Johnson 2000) explored the differences between these ‘elite scholars’ and ‘typical scholars’. The ‘elite’ list certainly provided a rationale for making a selection of suitable scholars from the USA and Canada to include in these volumes because peers had determined the identified sample. The independence of all the scholars and the peer review process meant that the list had professional integrity. The characteristics that distinguished the elite from the typical could also be at least partially applied in the UK. The elites published more than three times as many articles in prestigious refereed journals as the typical, and the productivity gap widened over the span of their careers. They tended to have a more rapid career track development and their first and current positions were more likely to be in the highest quality research institutions. They put more emphasis on lasting contributions derived from research, using research to create and test theory rather than focusing on the pragmatic, and drew ideas for scholarship from theoretical literature and research. This rationale has partially helped focus this selection as well as determining the scholars from the UK to be considered. This is particularly interesting in considering the elite as determined by Gunter (1999) in the dissertation discussed below.

The second part of the AERA Task Force on Research and Inquiry Report (Ogawa, Goldring and Conley 2000) provided an additional framework of analysis for this collection. There is the tension between an abiding intellectual interest and responding to shifts in practice and policy. The recommendation emerging from the task force was that research should be co-ordinated around deeper, larger, conceptual problems attending to larger organisational dilemmas. The central issue to be addressed was the degree to which the academic field should concentrate on some specific sets of research questions or educational problems to improve the knowledge base and the degree to which the academic field could or should co-ordinate research efforts to advance knowledge. The central problem was how research could be both of high quality and high utility. In this collection, I have attempted to achieve both.

It is significant that the AERA elite were designated as professors of educational administration. They were therefore inevitably from a large number of different educational institutions providing a range of complementary expertise and focus. One scholar on that list, Kenneth Leithwood, would certainly be widely
recognised internationally. Leithwood clearly should be represented in this collection because of the quality and range of his work on leadership, but there has then been the difficulty of selecting from the eleven books, twenty-nine chapters and thirty-six refereed journal articles on leadership listed on his website. Even this number of possible sources for selection of representative, characteristic or significant Leithwood work excludes all the other books, articles and refereed journal articles listed on the same website under the headings of policy, change, and leadership development. In making the selection for these volumes, policy, change and leadership development are certainly incorporated within the wider field of educational management.

As with the problem of the relative significance of school effectiveness and school improvement within the field of educational management, there is an associated problem raised as a result of examining the Leithwood website: how fully should policy be represented in this collection. This issue was also raised by Ben Levin, who has considerable knowledge and interest in this particular component of the map of educational management. He is another who has continuously offered guidance throughout the selection process. This procedure, with Leithwood as with many others, allowed the possibility of asking directly the elite, and others whose eminence deserved, at the very least, serious consideration, to make recommendations about their most significant work and to explain their individual rationale for its particular importance. Many scholars were very generous in assisting in this process. In the end, however, I have to be responsible for the selection and the coherence of the total collection. What has helped refine my deliberation process has been that Leithwood, Levin and many others were willing to engage in an iterative discussion process about their own work and that of others in representing the field.

It was agreed that there would be no new commissioned work for this undertaking. The project was to represent the field as it had evolved. It was also decided that the most appropriate initial approach would be to seek guidance from the members of BELMAS and the Standing Conference for Research on Educational Leadership and Management (SCRELM), the most significant and influential independent organisations in the UK. A welcome number of people responded very positively to this approach to define educational management. This provided a very clear foundation for a subsequent iterative process of refinement. It was judged that a model which asked individuals to suggest ‘influential and productive scholars’, although that language was not used, and the articles that best represented their uniqueness would approach as fully as possible the methodology used by Division A of AERA. This was using a process that, if inevitably more arbitrary, approximated to peer review. From the USA and Canadian reports presented below it would appear that ‘inquiry’, which is close to research, and ‘scholarship’ are perceived as equally important and complementary significant elements in the publications evaluated. Research and scholarship are similarly corresponding in the UK, with scholarship arguably focusing on the wider significance of a broader range of research.
In the process of determining the selection for these volumes, it was initially requested that particular scholars or researchers should be recommended and that subsequently the recommendations should be of particular articles or chapters by these scholars or researchers. It was judged that for these purposes such a process would be professionally acceptable and have integrity. A number of scholars were very willing to give a considerable amount of thought and time to making recommendations and to reflect on the choices that were emerging from the process. There has been anonymity throughout, particularly important for those who were willing to make professional judgements, especially about which of the articles that were being considered, in their judgement, were not of sufficient relative significance to be included. This was equally important for those who were prepared to be self-critical and to make an honest, subjective evaluation of the significance of their own work in relation to that of others. All those who helped appeared to be willing to accept that, for this publication, working with a model that asserted that the field would be best defined by selecting the most significant works of the major scholars, was appropriate. I am personally very grateful for the support of the process, which strongly guided my reading, that was shown by many scholars of international repute.

This raised another major conceptual and pragmatic issue. Many scholars, but not all, who agreed to recommend from their own considerable number of publications, would have preferred to select their most recent work because this often represented the climax of their development and achievement and frequently built on their earlier work. However, this collection is intended to represent educational management with articles and chapters which explore significant developments throughout the last forty years. What is clear is that some scholars have focused on a particular range of questions for a considerable period because of their developing expertise and understanding. This leading-edge knowledge defined their uniqueness and professionalism and this created the unique capability for further development within a more constrained focus. This very competence led to the development of greater and more rounded expertise through professional learning and further research. However, given the intention to focus on a forty-year timespan, and given some of the scholars currently producing high-quality work as well as the early founders of BEAS who have been producing research throughout this period, one problem has been to select what has been most significant historically. This meant seeking some understanding of the work of these scholars throughout their publication history and attempting to evaluate the most significant developments along their journey. The best guides for this were frequently the researchers themselves, but some scholars and researchers were again willing to reflect on the most significant work of their peers. Such a selection of the most important articles of elite scholars had to be managed whilst attempting to present a map of the range of research, learning and achievement within the whole field of educational management.

The current strong focus on leadership should be put in historical context. The Open University course ‘Effective leadership and management in educa-
tion’ (1997) has now been succeeded by a totally rewritten course but with a not dissimilar title, ‘Leading and managing for effective education’ (2003). The first title was catching what was then the relatively new strong focus on leadership, despite the evidence from Earley and Weindling (2004) that there had already been research for twenty years. The Open University Masters Programme in Education, of which the above course is a part, now firmly established as the most popular postgraduate degree for educational professionals in Europe, has over 3,000 students registering each year. The titles of the modules for these two courses illustrate the changing emphases. For the first course the titles of the modules were ‘Education management: strategy, quality and resources’, ‘Organizational effectiveness and improvement in education’, ‘Leadership and teams in educational management’ and ‘Professional development for educational management’. They were made available to most of the first cohort of candidates for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) to embed their professional learning more fully through access to the literature. Leadership was emerging but the focus in the titles was still on management. The modules for the new 2003 course are ‘Strategic leadership and educational improvement’, ‘Effective educational leadership’ and ‘Leading people and teams in education’. The new emphasis is clear but apparently relatively recent.

Ribbins and Gunter (2002) and Gunter and Ribbins (2003) have explored the mapping of the educational leadership field. Their map, as presented in Chapter 27, is inevitably simplified but even the limitations imposed by focusing on the headings illustrates the complexity of any mapping process in such a heavily researched field. The five groupings of work around key knowledge claims are: conceptual, critical, humanistic, evaluative and instrumental. This model was based on an analysis of publication outputs in the field. These five knowledge domains can be understood in terms of seven major factors or groupings of work: purpose, focus, content, method, audience, communication and impact. This creates thirty-five dimensions to be considered which are explored in the two articles. It was also suggested that there are five distinct audiences for this work: citizens, clients, policy-makers, practitioners and researchers. Ribbins and Gunter decided that it was appropriate, pragmatically, to adopt the ‘Ten propositions’ generated by the Think Tank for the National College for School Leadership in order to chart leadership themes whilst recognising that this is, in practice, one reading of the territory. These propositions state that school leadership must:

- be purposeful, inclusive and values driven;
- embrace the distinctive and inclusive context of the school;
- promote an active view of learning;
- be instructionally focused;
- be a function that needs to be distributed throughout the school community;
- build capacity by developing the school as a learning community;
be future-oriented and strategically driven;
be developed through experiential and innovative methodologies;
be served by a support and policy context that is coherent, systematic and implementation driven;
be supported by a National College that leads the discourse around leadership for learning.

The complexity of the mapping proposed by Ribbins and Gunter, which it is recognised is oversimplified here, links analysis with these propositions established for the purpose of improving practice. The five key knowledge domains are most important for our purposes here and have been applied to the wider historical context and broader field of educational management towards the end of the selection process.

**Conceptual** research is concerned with the issues of ontology and epistemology and with conceptual clarification... **Critical** research is concerned to reveal, and emancipate practitioners from, the various forms of social injustice and the oppression of established but unjustifiable structures and processes of power... **Humanistic** research seeks to gather and theorize from the experiences and biographies of those who are leaders and those who are led... **Evaluative** research...may be taken to mean any research that seeks to abstract and measure the impact in this case of leadership and its effectiveness at micro, macro and meso levels of social interaction... **Instrumental** research seeks to provide leaders and others with effective strategies and tactics to deliver organizational and system-level goals. (Ribbins and Gunter 2002, pp. 374–376)

A major problem throughout this process has been to determine the geographical balance. The collection was to be a UK-based publication but this raised the issue of how fully the rest of the world was to be represented and the evaluation of contributions from throughout the world to the field of educational management. BELMAS in particular has always included an international membership and the influences on the developing field of educational management in the UK have always been international. What was clear, however, was that many of the reading lists used in UK universities included significant international contributions, with a strong emphasis on the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. There was remarkably little from Europe because it would appear that any high-quality work is rarely translated into English. The work of scholars from Hong Kong and India is part of the canon when the scholars have written in English but it is unclear whether or not this is the most intellectually-challenging work from those areas. Informal evidence suggests that the UK, Australia and New Zealand appear to reach out to learn from overseas, but in the USA, and to a lesser extent in Canada, there is a very limited knowledge of the
UK context, thinking or research apart from a few scholars with an international reputation. As early as 1969, Baron (in Gunter 1999, p. 48) was aware of international issues and the theory–practice divide:

In England much American writing on educational administration is of absorbing interest to the social scientist who is seeking avenues of approach to the study of school organisation and policy formation in this country. At best it is charged with imaginative insights that throw new light on problems of leadership, structure and innovation. To the practitioner in England, however, writing of this kind can appear highly remote from his concerns, since the urgent needs at the moment are to translate into teachable form the managerial aspect of the headmaster’s role.

I am grateful to those who were willing to send me copies of less accessible articles and also to comment on what they judged were the distinctive qualities of those articles they had selected. Some were willing to select their three or so most significant articles which was enormously helpful. I am particularly grateful to those who were prepared to revisit the list of articles as it evolved and to continuously reflect on the changing selection, in particular Geoff Southworth, Ron Glatter, Helen Gunter and, most supportively and challengingly of all, Peter Ribbins. It has been a privilege to reflect on the reflections and comments of these and many other leaders in our field. Even more of a privilege has been the opportunity to read many of the articles from which the selection has finally been made, both those in the final collection and the many, certainly almost equally worthwhile, that it was not possible to include.

The historical development of educational management has followed, to some extent, the changing approaches and priorities in business management. After discussions with a number of scholars in business schools, it was determined that within these four volumes, it would not be possible to incorporate a sufficiently extensive selection of articles from the business school tradition to make any selection appropriate. It is evident that many educational leadership development programmes in the UK reach out to a limited number of complementary business leadership books rather than articles and that these are almost entirely from the USA, whilst the business leadership programmes accessed use little or no evidence from education.

The final area in which a major decision had to be made was what to do about further education, higher education and adult education. It was determined that it would be appropriate to present a limited selection of articles on further education in Volume II. It was agreed, however, that it would only be appropriate to explore the overlapping areas of school and college management and leadership.

This section draws fully on the doctoral dissertation of Helen Gunter (1999), for which she interviewed many of the leading scholars in the field and drew
extensively on the BELMAS archive. This dissertation approaches the AERA process but she additionally interviewed what might be categorised as ‘elite’ UK scholars: Professor Sir George Baron, Professor Les Bell, Professor Ray Bolam, Professor Tom Bone, Dr Mike Bottery, Professor Tony Bush, Professor Lynn Davies, Professor Ron Glatter, Professor Eric Hoyle, Professor Meredydd Hughes, Agnes McMahon, Dr Janet Ouston, Professor Peter Ribbins, Professor Sir William Taylor, Professor Hywel Thomas and Professor Len Watson.

This eminent group enabled the full time span from the 1960s to the present to be covered, since a number of them were centrally involved in the establishment and early development of BELMAS. This allowed reflection on the professional practice of those who worked within higher education institutions as presented through an analysis of their publications, research and training. They were all from centres of training and research and many had international reputations for expertise in particular aspects of work including theory, finance and professional development. Gunter (1999, pp. 43, 83) developed a summary of the purpose and stages of development in the field of educational management that has also informed the final selection process here.

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<td>Site-based management</td>
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<td>Improvement</td>
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<td>Leader</td>
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<td>Fractured continuum</td>
<td>Networking</td>
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<td>Pluralist provision</td>
<td>Contract provision</td>
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Higher education institutions are considered as sites of intellectual work by knowledge workers and their interaction with those working in field settings is analysed. This process raises questions about whether or not the focus on practitioner interest and problems has been at the expense of a responsibility to epistemology and whether or not the intellectual work has been more about
communicating knowledge to make policy work than producing theoretical insights to support critical understanding and alternative models of management practice. The approach which used professional biographical life histories from these selected members of higher education institutions asked the respondents to present their understanding of the development of educational management, the position of their own work within this, and the relationship between their professional practice and the policy context. This provides a post hoc rationalisation for the methodology used in determining this selection as a representation of the educational management field. Gunter describes those she interviewed as ‘a professional elite in which they have, and continue to provide, intellectual leadership for practitioners in schools and colleges’ (Gunter 1999, p.109). The articles selected for these volumes are an attempt to represent both the wider elite and the field of educational management.

The growing influence of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) has clearly enhanced the status of school leaders. It now funds seventy five per cent of research on educational leadership with its own priorities. There is a danger that this might distort the focus of the broader field of educational management and not intellectually represent the field as presented by Gunter, however. The NCSL bibliography presents the knowledge pool as covering school improvement, alternative views about school improvement, leadership, instructional leadership, professional learning communities and capacity, coaching, action research and enquiry-based leadership, student leadership, future schools, urban and challenging contexts and also includes further suggested readings from the NCSL evidence-based archive. This bibliography has informed the articles selected for these volumes, although it eschews publications from before 1990. The complementary literature reviews of ‘What leaders read’, both from the business world and from education and beyond, have been carried out for the NCSL by scholars working in higher education institutions, in a management school and in an education department. This collection in contrast has asked those in higher education institutions, but not university management schools, to select articles or chapters from books, rather than whole books, so that within these four volumes there is a presentation of the whole field. The choice has however, ultimately, been the responsibility of one person.

There are other collections of readings, consciously more limited in scope because recently edited and focusing on the present and future, from the UK but with some international articles, the Handbook of Educational Leadership and Management, (Davies and West-Burnham 2003), and, with editors from the USA and Canada and published in Holland, the Second International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration (Leithwood and Hallinger 2002). The former focuses on a number of themes exploring their current context and how they are developing for the future. The latter concentrates on themes and insights that have developed since the first handbook, eight years earlier. In contrast, this collection includes what has been judged to be the most important articles by the most important scholars in the last forty years, including
contributions from the four editors of these volumes. The opportunity to manage the compilation process has been a privilege because it has allowed me the opportunity to read widely in the field, including many articles, I regret to say, I had not read previously. I am very grateful for the time given by many colleagues in the UK and throughout the world in helping me make this selection. I hope that they feel that the final selection justifies the time they have given in guiding my choice. I commend Educational Management to its readers.

I would like to thank personally the three Project Managers at Routledge-Falmer, Paula White, Jennifer Lovell and Zoë Botterill, who have supported me throughout this three-year project.

References

Part 1

VALUES AND RELIGION
IN PURSUIT OF AUTHENTIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

Paul T. Begley

Abstract

A practice-grounded and research-validated reinterpretation is presented of the ways in which values and ethics influence administrative practices in schools. The basic proposition is that acquiring administrative sophistication is a function of understanding the influence of personal values on the actions of individuals and the influence of values on organizational and social practices. A values perspective is used to link theory and practice with the objective of promoting authentic leadership and democracy in schools. The perennial challenges of leadership are discussed together with the special circumstances of our times. The following are then proposed: the pursuit of personal sophistication, sensitivity to others, and the promotion of reflective professional practice. Examples to findings from recent research that demonstrate the utility and relevance of values and valuation processes as guides to educational leadership are presented. These findings are used to reinterpret key values theories in ways that increase their relevance to school leadership practices. Specifically, the values typology of Hodgkinson is reconceptualized and informed by the accumulated findings of research on administrative valuation processes in schools conducted since 1988. This reconceptualization of theory also reflects efforts to integrate cognitive theory perspectives, together with experiences working with groups of school administrators in Canada, Barbados, Sweden, Australia, and Russia.

Authentic leadership may be thought of as a metaphor for professionally effective, ethically sound, and consciously reflective practices in educational administration. This is leadership that is knowledge-based, values informed, and skillfully executed. With these notions in mind, values are formally defined and
proposed as an influence on the actions of individuals as well as on administrative practice. A syntax of values terminology is then developed and grounded within the context of a single individual living among many in a social environment. Several persistent conceptual issues are given brief discussion. Finally, the seven arenas of administration are identified and their relevance to authentic leadership practice is discussed.

An initial conceptual image of authentic leadership

Appreciating the nature of authentic leadership begins with a thoughtful and rigorous analysis of leadership activity. This can occur through formal research, through personal reflection, but preferably both. Leadership by definition refers to practices that extend beyond the usual procedural context of organizational management. Authentic leadership implies a genuine kind of leadership – a hopeful, open-ended, visionary and creative response to social circumstances, as opposed to the more traditional dualistic portrayal of management and leadership practices characteristic of now obsolete and superseded research literature on effective principal practices (e.g., Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986). Traditionally management was viewed as mechanistic, short-sighted, precedent focussed and context constrained practices. An image of leadership and management that is more in keeping with current times is a values informed leadership – a sophisticated, knowledge-based, and skilful approach to leadership. It is also a form of leadership that acknowledges and accommodates in an integrative way the legitimate needs of individuals, groups, organizations, communities and cultures – not just the organizational perspectives that are the usual preoccupation of much of the leadership literature. The innovative dimension being proposed here is the adoption and application of a values and valuation process perspective to educational administration, which makes the objectives of leadership more understandable, compelling and achievable.

The nature of values

There is much inclination in recent years for educators, politicians and other publicly accountable individuals to speak in terms of lost values or declining social values rather than a perception of any sort of improvement in social values. Within our recent social history, many traditional values seem to have become threatened or at least fragile. To suggest that one does not have values implies a rejection of the formative experiences of family, community and society. Possessing values is generally viewed as a good thing, although a person could just as easily be imagined to hold bad values as good values. The real issue is who gets to decide which values are good and bad. Administrators, for their part, readily acknowledge the importance of values to leadership situations in organizations. It is their role to act as agents for the values of their society, and research suggests they usually employ such values most con-
sciously when they are encountering ambiguous, unprecedented, or time con-
strained problem situations, or when consensus is impossible to establish (Leith-
wood & Steinbach, 1995).

Other basic characteristics of values can be identified. Pirsig’s more recent
novel *Lila* (1991) incorporates a conception of the dynamic and static nature of
values which is instructive. Using the example of an individual who hears a
piece of music and likes it increasingly from day to day, Pirsig illustrates the
dynamic nature of a value. In time, the dynamic value of the musical piece
increases to the point that the individual must buy the recording so they can hear
it as often as they want. As time passes though, the dynamic value of the music
declines through familiarity and frequent play, and the piece of music assumes a
more subdued, but enduring static value. The dynamic value is gone or reduced.
Yet, the dynamic value may experience a resurgence when, for example, a friend
drops by who has not heard the tune and the owner of the recording vicariously
experiences it anew by playing it for the friend.

Where values come from is also a matter subject to debate. Are we born with
some values ‘hard-wired’ as part of our nature, or are they all socially acquired?
Conventional wisdom has it that most values are socially acquired. However,
empiricist scholars like Edward Wilson, author of *Consilience* (1998), attribute
human predispositions to things such as a fear of snakes to mankind’s evolution-
ary past. It is not that difficult to imagine how such instinctual values could
persist as a biologically fixed human condition. Other similar biologically fixed
human values might include the instinct to survive, a fear of death, and the drive
to reproduce. On the other hand, it is also clear that lots of values are socially
acquired. Many values are formatively accumulated, and an apparent, objec-
tively shared meaning can often be assigned to such values. By this, is meant
that people appear to share the same values even though the acquisition of those
shared values may have occurred in radically different ways from person to
person. Nevertheless, the opposite, more existentialist perspective is also pos-
sible. It is likely that individuals may also possess at least a few distinctly per-
sonal values. Some values have a rational, consensual or factual basis, but there
is evidence to also support the existence of non-rational and transcendental
values. The nature of God is an example that has meaning for many people.

These are complex matters to ponder, and language can be a significant
barrier to dialogue on these issues. Accordingly, a critical first step towards
exploring these matters more fully is being clear about what the term ‘values’
means and adopting a suitably comprehensive working definition.

**A working definition of values**

Values are a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual
or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selec-
tion from available modes, means, and ends of action.

(Parsons & Shils, 1962, p. 395)
Conceptualizing values in this manner highlights their function in making choices. In administration, the making of choices is usually termed decision-making, problem solving or dilemma solving: activities familiar to most administrators. Willower puts it this way:

Because a significant portion of the practice in educational administration requires rejecting some courses of action in favour of a preferred one, values are generally acknowledged to be central to the field.

(1992, p. 369)

The Parsons and Shils definition expands the scope of the term *value* beyond the relatively narrow philosophical domain of the meta-physical (the study of first principles) to several other types of values relevant to educational administration. It includes: social ethics (e.g., Beck, 1990, 1993, 1999; Cohen, 1982; Frankena, 1973); transrational values (Hodgkinson, 1996), the rational moral domain of administrative decision making (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2000; Strike, 1990, 1999; Willower, 1994, 1999); plus the realm of self-interest and personal preference (Begley & Johansson, 1998; Evers & Lakomski, 1996; Hodgkinson, 1996).

So, values are essentially a conception of the desirable with motivating force. However, further explication is required. Within the administrative context, it is possible, even necessary, to distinguish the values manifested by individuals from the more collective social values of a group, profession, society or organization. Doing so highlights the interactive relationship between the formation of personal values and social values, implying an answer to the question about which comes first. Values appear to be derived from both within the individual’s psychology as well as from the individual’s interaction with collective groups, organizations and societies. For this reason, it is important to establish a balanced appreciation of the relationships among personal values, professional values, organizational values, and social values. The bulk of the literature of leadership and management has not been helpful in this regard, as it reflects a predominantly organizational perspective, to the extent that individual and professional values are often ignored, assumed to be the same as, or fully subordinated to an organizational imperative. The current interest of many educators in ‘organizational learning’ stands as a shining example of this pathology. In the literature on this subject, the importance of the individual to the leadership process is usually acknowledged on the first page and henceforth lost to an unremitting collective perspective. During a time of heightened social awareness and environmental activism, it is easier to see why a profit-oriented corporate sector might not be allowed to dominate or to remain unaccountable to the broader interests of community and society. The same can be said of educational organizations and organized religion. Sophisticated administrators are wise to consciously distinguish among the arenas of personal, professional, organizational, and social values of their...
environments. A further discussion of these inter-related arenas of administration occurs later in this chapter.

Other semantic difficulties

There are other semantic difficulties that need to be acknowledged. Certain commonly used synonyms and closely related values terminology must be distinguished from one another for the sake of clear communications. Words like morals, values, quality and ethics are often used interchangeably in school leadership literature. Is there one overarching term within which the other terms can be subsumed? It can be illuminating to substitute one term for the other in a sentence or phrase. For example, substituting the word ‘value’ for ‘quality’ in the ubiquitous phrase, ‘total quality leadership’, produces ‘total value leadership’ or ‘value added leadership.’ These alternatives sound plausible, and the substitution actually works reasonably well in application. However, several troublesome questions may also be triggered. If one espouses ‘total value leadership’, one may then reasonably ask which values, and who decides which values? The procedurally preoccupied proponents of the ‘total quality’ movement may not examine such questions too deeply.

In the school leadership literature, and particularly among North American scholars of educational administration, there is a pronounced tendency to adopt the word ethics or moral as an umbrella term for anything values-related (e.g., Grogan & Smith, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1992). In contrast, other scholars, notably several Canadians (i.e., Begley, 2000; Campbell-Evans, 1991; Leonard, 1999), follow Hodgkinson’s lead (1996). They reserve the term ethic or principles for a particular and very special category of transrational values and employ the word values as a generic umbrella term for all forms of ‘conceptions of the desirable.’ Ethics represent a particular category of social/collective values of a transrational nature and research (Begley & Johansson, 1998) suggests they are employed under quite particular circumstances by educational administrators. For example, most administrators appear to avoid using ethics as guides to practice when they can (Begley & Johansson, 1998). This is not so much due to a character deficiency on their part or a lack of moral integrity; rather, it is a natural outcome of the particular accountability patterns associated with school leadership. Ethics are often culturally exclusive and they therefore can be a very troublesome category of values to employ as guides to action in our increasingly diverse societies. As a practical consequence, administrators naturally tend to opt for employing rational consequences and consensus grounded values as guides to action and decision making whenever that is possible.

A syntax of values terminology

It is now appropriate to conceptually situate values within the broader context of one person’s being. Basic questions might include the following: Where do
VALUES AND RELIGION

values fit in as a component of human nature? What is their relationship to the other dimensions of an individual’s or a group’s identity? What is the relationship of actions, speech, and attitudes to values? What is the relationship of values to psychological motivations? One of the simplest ways to illustrate the relationships among these terms is through the use of an onion figure which illustrates a syntax of values terminology. Figure 1 is an adaptation of a graphic found in several of Hodgkinson’s books (e.g., 1991; see also Chapter 13). When considering the figure, it is important to keep in mind that one person is portrayed; one individual, not a group or organization or collective social context.

Beginning from the outside, the first ring represents the observable actions and speech of the individual. This is the way by which one makes empirical attributions about the value orientations of any other person. Observed actions and speech are also the source of data used to generate research findings. There is nothing else that is empirically discernible. Accordingly, most people intuitively rely on the clues provided by the actions and attitudes of others to make predictive insights into the nature of values held by other people. This is a generally sound strategy, but it has the same limits to its reliability in day-to-day life as it does in a research context. As political leaders, principals, teachers, parents and children regularly demonstrate through their speech and actions, the observable actions they manifest may or may not be accurate indicators of the person’s underlying values, particularly when individuals articulate or posture certain values while actually being committed to quite different values. This implies the significant limitations associated with the reliability and validity of conventional research as a source of information about anything, as well as a cautionary note to us as we interpret day to day events.

The next ring or layer of the figure represents attitudes. Attitudes can be thought of as the thin membrane between values and the observable actions or speech of an individual, or the permeable boundary of personality that acts as the interface between the psychological and the physical world. Attitudes can be formally defined as the predisposition to act specifically as a result of values or values systems acquired previously and elsewhere. To elaborate, consider how the values acquired in one personal or social context can have a general influence on the relatively specific attitudes, and potentially the actions, of the same individual or collective group operating in another context. For example, school principals might discover that their attitudes towards children in the school change when they become parents and have young children of their own. Similarly, a person’s values as a teacher and principal might spill over into other social roles he or she carries out: army reserve officer, scout or guide leader, municipal politician and so on. The strength of this extended influence can be residual in nature, a significant spillover of effect, or intrude to such an extent that it overrides or neutralizes the influence of the second value or value system. Moreover, attitudes may be reflected in the body language of posture, gait, or unconscious muscular tensions. They are outward and visible signs of inward and invisible inclinations.
The next layer represents a domain, or conceptual placeholder, for the actual values held or manifested by an individual. For example, an individual might value chocolate over Australian red wines, a chat at the pub over reading, working independently over working with others, a monarchial system of government over a republican system. In the case of an educator, the individual might value phonics over the ‘whole language’ approach, relatively controlled approaches to delegating authority over more laissez-faire styles of distributed leadership, computer mediated instruction over workbook exercises, or doing what’s best for kids as opposed to a teacher-centered curriculum. In fact, with a modest amount of cooperation from a subject, it is relatively easy to catalogue a person’s values. However, it is important to emphasize that identifying these values is one thing, while knowing why they are held is quite another. This is because any specific value can be held in response to one or more in a range of potential motivations. For example, a person could subscribe to honesty as a value to avoid the pain of sanction for dishonesty, or manifest honesty because this is a shared professional or community orientation, or because the consequences of widespread dishonesty is social chaos, or because it is the right thing to do, or any combination of these basic levels of motivation. Furthermore, as suggested earlier, understanding the motivations of others becomes much more complicated when individuals deliberately or unwittingly manifest or articulate one value while being actually committed to another. To know the actual level of commitment, one must look two layers deeper into the ‘onion’ of Figure 1 to the motivations of the individual for manifesting a particular value. For example, the actual level of commitment to decisions by administrators that are tacitly justified on consequential (e.g., what produces the best learning out-
comes) or consensual (e.g., school district policy) grounds could just as easily be grounded in self-interest or personal preference (e.g., if I work this right I’ll get the merit pay and promotion), but also occasionally grounded in a transrational motivational base of will or in response to transcendental values of faith or duty. It is the innermost layers of the onion figure that provide the key to understanding the nature and influence of values on life in general and administration in particular.

Between the values layer and motivational base layer of the figure is a separate layer labelled ‘available knowledge’ or ‘understandings.’ The kinds of knowledge referenced here are acquired through life experiences, training and reflection, and provide the linkage between the basic motivational bases of the fifth layer, introduced in the previous paragraphs, and the specific values adopted and manifested by the individual. The contention here is that as a result of experience, training and/or reflection, an individual responds to basic motivations by adopting particular value positions that will support the fulfillment of that basic motivation in a specific way, and be operationalized through actions or speech selected by the individual to achieve the valued objective. People vary, of course, in terms of the skills and sophistication they can bring to bear on achieving their objectives, depending on the quality of the knowledge at their disposal. This is generally applicable to all aspects of human enterprise, and an infinite number of examples can be offered. However, for the moment consider how a skilful school administrator, consensually motivated as a professional to achieve a complex set of educational objectives, might employ a carefully orchestrated collaborative school improvement project to achieve those educational objectives. By contrast, a less experienced administrator, with the same consensual motivation, but responding to different knowledge or the absence thereof, might decide a memo is all that is required to achieve the same objective.

As argued in the preceding two paragraphs, the motivational base layer of Figure 1 provides the key to understanding the nature and function of values. This is the motivating force dimension behind the adoption of a particular value which, working out through the layers of the figure, shapes attitudes and potentially the subsequent actions. For the purposes of this chapter, and consistent with Hodgkinson’s original value framework, four basic motivational bases are identified. These are (see Figure 2): personal preference or self-interest, an inclination towards consensus, an inclination towards or concern for consequences, and an inclination to respond to ethics or principles. These four motivational bases are relatively broad and arbitrary distinctions and people can manifest a predisposition towards one or more of these motivational bases at the same time when responding to a given situation. As alluded earlier, our recent research conducted on the valuation processes of school administrators in several countries (e.g., Begley, 1999; Begley & Leonard, 1999) suggests that the normative motivational bases for administrative decision-making are the rational domains of consequences and consensus. Self-interest is infrequently acknowledged as a motivation, possibly because professional activity is
usually publicly accountable, and ethics and principles tend to be employed under special circumstances.

Hodgkinson (1996) argues that motivational bases are at the core of the being of individuals, and that values held by an individual reflect these motivational bases. This implies the limited utility of conducting research that merely describes or lists the values manifested by individuals whether they are administrators, teachers, students, citizens, neighbours, or members of the family. It may be interesting and much easier to determine what people value, but why they do so is often most crucial. Much of the early empirical research on values in the field of Educational Administration is descriptive of the values held and reveals little that is conventionally verifiable about motivation.

The final layer at the centre of the figure is the self, or essence of the individual – the biological self as well as the existential or transcendent self. There is not a great deal known or that can be said about this inner core of the individual. Some would describe it as the soul, the life-force or spark of life. It is included in the figure primarily as a conceptual placeholder for such matters.

To summarize the discussion in this section with a metaphor used elsewhere to illustrate the nature of values (Begley, 1996), the attitudes and actions manifested by individuals may be construed as observable ripples and splashes on the surface of a body of water. It is important to keep in mind that the intentions
behind these observable actions may alternately be transparently obvious, super-
ficial, or running deep to the core. They can also remain fully obscured below
the surface of the self, the organizational structure, or the society. Existing
research evidence (see Begley, 1999; Begley & Leonard, 1999) on the values of
school administration suggests that the non-rational motivational bases of per-
sonal preference and transrational principles occur much less frequently than do
the rational motivational bases of consensus and consequences. The relevance of
principles or ethics to a given administrative situation seems to be prompted by
particular circumstances where an ethical posture is socially appropriate (e.g.,
the role of the arts), where consensus is perceived as difficult to achieve (e.g., an
issue involving ethnic bias), or when urgency requires quick action (e.g., student
safety). Furthermore, it may be that the weak influence of personal preferences
on administrative practice can be viewed as a good thing. After all, principals
are, in the end, “agents of society” and accountable to society for their actions.
While values of personal preference are definitely evident as influences on some
administrative processes, Begley (1999), and Begley and Leonard (1999),
suggest they are less frequently articulated by administrators, probably because
of a prevailing social bias towards the rational value types. This rational bias is
perhaps an outcome of organizational socialization and cultural expectations.

The arenas of valuation: sources of values and value conflicts

Although much of the leadership literature is fundamentally organizational in
context and emphasis, the full environment of administration is actually much
more complex. Any school administrator who attempts to lead and manage
without reference to the broader environmental context will quickly encounter
difficulty. The values of profession, organization, community and society are not
necessarily consistent or compatible with each other. Figure 3 illustrates what
can be usefully termed the arenas of valuation. These are the interactive environ-
ments within which valuation processes and, by extension, administration occur.
There are also important dynamics that occur among these arenas. Seven arenas
can be identified to conceptualize the environment of administration.

The term arena itself is helpful in that it highlights the multiple domains and
functions of administration. Conceptualizing administration as something that
involves multiple arenas, each with potentially competing or incompatible
values, is useful for managers or leaders who wish to reflect on the appropriate-
ness of their own actions, the actions of others, and to begin to predict social
reactions to their actions. Within Figure 3, the individual is represented within
the centre ring as self. In a practical sense, this arena highlights the role of the
individual as an entity with a potentially unique influence within a social or
organizational enterprise. It also conveys the potentially intensified influence of
one individual when he or she is a leader. This highlights ‘the power of one’, the
capability of one person to have impact as a leader. Also acknowledged,
however, is the potential for influence on processes by individuals when con-
ditions of distributed leadership exist, or when leadership influence is exerted by individuals without vested authority in the less formal ways which Lindle (1994), for example, has termed micro-politics.

The second ring from the centre represents the arena of groups, collective entities of various types. This arena acts as a place-holder for collectives such as family, peers, friends and acquaintances. The third ring, profession, represents a more formal arena of administration that is closely related to the second ring, but is given special emphasis here because of its relevance to school administration. The fourth ring represents the arena traditionally of most concern to academics and practitioners in the field of educational administration, the organization. Indeed, much of the traditional literature of educational administration and most of the corporate literature are grounded within the organizational perspective. As such a degree of ‘over-weighting vividness’ (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995, p. 202) is often attributed to this arena. Moving further outwards in the figure, one encounters the arenas representing the greater community, society, and culture. Within the last decade, school administrators have learned that it is necessary to pay a lot more attention than before to the community as a relevant administrative arena and source of influence on school leadership (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1992). The increasing diversity of our societies and a general trend

Figure 3 Arenas of administration.
towards globalization has similarly highlighted society and culture as relevant arenas of administrative activity. A final, seventh ring is included to accommodate notions of the transcendental — God, faith, spirituality. This is an arena of considerable importance to many people, even though it does not get a lot of attention in the literature of administration. Administrators who do not subscribe to a spiritual dimension as a relevant source of personal influence would do well to keep this arena in mind, if only because at least some individuals associated with their followership certainly do. The spiritual dimension can be a significant influence on valuation processes for many people and a leader who wants to understand the motivations of the followership will be sensitive to this potentially significant category of influence.

Figure 3 serves two important functions. It suggests the various sources of values, conveying how values can be derived from multiple external and internal environmental sources. Although some values may potentially be acquired through biology as well as existential processes, values are perhaps predominantly acquired from more collective sources: family, friends, peers, acquaintances, a profession, organizations and formal associations, the community, social culture, and through the transcendental. Figure 3 conveys these multiple sources of values, but also it suggests the sources of value conflicts. For example, although value conflicts can certainly occur within a single arena of administration, consider how the personal values of the individual might conflict with those of the community, or professional values might conflict with organizational values.

Tools for authentic leadership

The discussion and concepts presented here, especially the two onion figures, are offered as tools that will contribute to the conceptualization of authentic leadership practices by school administrators. This is perhaps an ambitious and idealistic view of administration, but not a new one. The innovative dimension being proposed is the adoption and application of a values perspective to make authentic leadership an objective that is more understandable, compelling and achievable. In a fundamental way, authentic leadership is living the examined life as Socrates advised so long ago. More recently, Hodgkinson added this corollary: “if the unexamined life is not worth living, the unexamined value is not worth holding” (1996, p. 8). The skills of authentic and expert leaders will extend beyond management. All leaders consciously or unconsciously employ values as guides to interpreting situations and suggesting appropriate administrative action. This is the artistry of leadership.

Note

1 This chapter is a revised and updated version of a paper originally presented at the Conference of the UCEA Centre for the Study of Values and Leadership, Bridgetown,
Barbados (Begley, 2000). It has also been previously published as an article in a special issue (Vol. 4, No. 4, pp. 353–365) of the *International Journal of Leadership in Education* (2001).

**References**


VALUES AND RELIGION


2

THE TRIUMPH OF THE WILL
An exploration of certain fundamental problematics in administrative philosophy

Christopher Hodgkinson


An incompetent leader—a value judgement
An impotent leader—an oxymoron

These semantics are instructive. Innumerable assertions, laudatory or pejorative, can be made about the executive, the administrator, the leader—but what cannot be said is that the office, the role, or its incumbent is without power. This drives home to us what we already know at the deepest level, even though it may take some semantic conjuring to raise it to the surface of consciousness. What is then revealed is the absolute necessity for power in administrative affairs. Power is the first term in the administrative lexicon.¹

Without defining, or confining, this primal concept of power, it may be said that it is the human analogue of the physical science term energy, that is, the ability to do work, to accomplish ends. But in administration, in human affairs as opposed to the simplicities of physics and mechanics, power is much more. It is above all else the ability to impose one’s will. Here the contrast with natural science is revealing. In physics power is equivalent to force and is measurable in quantitative terms such as watts, joules, ergs, or pounds per square inch. But physical events are not human events. At most they are only components of human events. In science one presumes a determinism, a mechanism, a law of causation—notwithstanding that at the quantum level of analysis (that is, subatomic particle physics) strange paradoxes and ‘irrationalities’ are observable that seem to defy our ordinary understanding of cause and effect. In human events a new factor appears. In addition to the mechanistic–deterministic laws of cause and effect to which human beings are themselves subject there is now introduced a concept of will or voluntarism. Thus the human agent in the total equation of determining forces is felt to possess a freedom of choice—whether that sense of freedom is illusory or whether or not it is an epiphenomenon, a psychological by-product of unconscious vectors that are the real
determinants. Administration cannot exist without either the reality or the illusion. And science itself stops short at the edge of voluntarism, at the frontiers of conscious choice. For this reason a distinction between administration and management is essential: the former opening upon the limitless horizons of philosophy, the latter upon the restricted field of vision right and proper to science and technology.

It follows that administration is a form of life in which wills enter into a complex domain of conflict, reconciliation and resolution. In other words, administration is politics: the creating, organizing, managing, monitoring and resolving of value conflicts, where values are defined as concepts of the desirable. In principle or in theory the accomplishment of administrative ends, goals, targets, aims, purposes, plans and objectives is no more than the imposition of a putative collective will upon the resistant and countervailing forces of matter, circumstances, materials, resources and contending wills. To be without will would be to be without power and, conversely, to have power is to have the ability to impose will. And here for the tender of heart and the already disaffected it may be allowed that ‘to impose’ can also be rendered as ‘to change’.

The will to power

At this point one may consider a deeper motivational concept: the will to power. This formulation is central to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche although its origins can be traced through his mentor Schopenhauer (the will to life) back to Vedantic Indian philosophizing about the life-force and the eternal dynamic of creation, preservation and destruction. Less metaphysically and more simply, in administrative terms it can be said to refer to the primal maxim; self-preservation is the first law of nature. I have represented this elsewhere as the first of the metavalues.

How does the will to power bear upon administration? It does this in obviously fundamental ways. For example, inasmuch as administration is an attempt via organization to control the future, it is a philosophical activity:

\textit{Genuine philosophers, however, are commanders and legislators: they say, ‘thus it shall be!’ . . . With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their ‘knowing’ is creating, their creating is a legislation, their will to truth is—will to power.}

Conway expands upon the theme in this way:

\textit{As commanders and legislators, they must introduce order and discipline into the formless economy of Nature, thus ‘correcting’ for Nature’s profligacy. Toward this end philosophers legislate a hierarchy of values}
that both promotes the flourishing of certain forms of life and excludes
other forms . . .

This point is directly relevant, we may note, to postmodern and politically
correct conceptions of inclusion. The will referred to here is of course, despite
the totalitarian nuance, the nomothetic will, the will of the collectivity. Corpora-
tions, organizations and nations can in this sense be said to be imbued with the
will to power.

But now the problem of will has ramified. It can be seen as deriving from the
individual, from the group and, as Weber made specific, from the environment,
culture and Weltanschauung. In essence Weber argues that, on the one hand,
the administrator takes cultural values as given and is, for example, ‘politically
correct’ in the contemporary sense. This would allow the administrator to
assume the mantle of self-righteous ‘responsibility’ and to steer a satisficing
course to given ends as per the doctrine of H.A. Simon. On the other hand, the
administrator may embody convictions (and commensurate will) towards ends
which may or may not be either cultural or those of the corporate entity he repre-
sents. This leads to the potential for ‘irresponsibility’ or bureauopathology, as
when the interpretation of orthodoxy (Weltanschauung) is appropriated by the
leader. Will to power here acts as an administrative countervailing force to the
downward impress of cultural and organizational dictates. Yet even in the case
of the administrative factotum—administrator as Simonian agent—will to power as a depth motivation is a powerful determinant in the overall
collective equation.

Grand assumptions

Granted that administration is the very business of power, that power is its pre-
eminent characteristic, it is somewhat curious that (with a few exceptions, notably
Machiavelli) the standard literature glides so smoothly and blandly over the prob-
lematics of power. Two very deep-seated assumptions seem to underlie this phe-

omenon; assumptions so entrenched and buried that they might be regarded as
meta-assumptions, or assumptions at the unconscious level that pass without
question, scrutiny or examination. Before we examine them, however, it should be
repeated that these are assumptions in the literature, in the theory of administra-
tion, in the conventional wisdom and orthodoxy. It should also be noted that the
assumptions selected for critique are only two examples of presumptive error in
administrative thought and praxis; others such as the naturalistic, homogenetic,
militaristic and excisionistic fallacies have been dealt with elsewhere.

The first of these meta-assumptions or presumptive fallacies is that ‘We are
all honourable men’ (and/or women, to satisfy the politically correct). The
second is that authority and leadership in and of themselves legitimate power.
Taken together these two unspoken assumptions effectively divorce the adminis-
trator from problems of ethics, morals, values, axiology or philosophy—leaving
in their place only problems of technique, of managerial efficacy and efficiency; problems in decision-making and implementation that can in principle be solved by the application of rationality and technology. Systems theorist MacNamara’s belated apologia for the Vietnam War is a case in point.14 Flowing from these assumptions is the concept of power as neutral instrumentality; a means to righteous ends (derived from outside the system) which means are also the professional property of a managerial elite. Thus honourable men and women pragmatically muddle through to resolve the ongoing problems of their particular organizational interest—making a profit, breaking even, delivering quality services, satisfying educational demands, winning the war against crime, or drugs—whatever it might be. Or else the same honorati apply the full force of rationality, systems theory, technocracy, bureaucracy and quantitative methodology to produce pro tem solutions that satisfy or satisfice the stakeholders and constituencies involved. Either way, ends are achieved and our leaders rise above their earthbound followers, escaping the bonds of gravity by means of their virtue, borne aloft on the wings of these grand assumptions, and falling from grace only with failure to maintain the proper altitude and attitude for airborne manoeuvring.

Alas! neither assumption withstands the light of conscious scrutiny. The first assumption can be rejected not on the grounds that fools and knaves assume the administrative mantle—fools and knaves know no boundaries of role or occupation—but on the simple logic of universal self-interest. Self-interest, when it takes the form of egoism, vanity and careerism, is often (but not always) antagonistic to the organizational and higher interests. But more subtle considerations compound the potential for pathology. For example, consider, as Nietzsche does, the feeling of power, the affective quality of power. Nietzsche’s analysis in the Gay Science dissects this in ethical terms:

By doing good and doing ill one exercise one’s power upon others—more one does not want! By doing ill upon those to whom we first have to make our power palpable […] By doing good and well-wishing upon those who are in some way already dependent upon us […] Whether we make a sacrifice in doing good or ill does not alter the ultimate value of our actions; even if we stake our life, as the martyr does for the sake of his Church—it is a sacrifice to our desire for power or for the purpose of preserving our feeling of power. […] Certainly, the condition in which we do ill is seldom as pleasant, as unmixedly pleasant, as that in which we do good—it is a sign that we still lack power […]15

This analysis hardly needs explication for the practising administrator. It is a matter of simple experience, even if that experience goes unscrutinized and unexamined. It penetrates and permeates the affective life and insidiously subverts the claim to honour. It is at the root of Lord Acton’s aphorism that power corrupts, and its little known corollary: ‘Great men are almost always bad men.’16
The second assumption, the assumption of formal legitimacy, falls even more calamitously and precipitously into the pit of decadence. This is because it is entirely a dependent function of a special perception, namely, the perception of the common good, the common interest, of, in a word, the commons. Before legitimacy can be assigned to the formal role of leader there must be agreement upon the collective purpose or the public interest or, simply, the larger interest. But what is this legitimizing interest in a neo-feudal, corporatist social structure where everyone is obliged to defend the parochial interest of some organization or subset of an organization, the interests of which may well be antagonistic to the whole? This is a system wherein the first duty of each administrator is to ‘fight his own corner’; where everyone and anyone is a ‘stakeholder’, and where devices for litigation and conflict resolution and power equalization (ombudspersons, equity and harassment officers, quotas, commissars for this and that perceived abuse) proliferate ad absurdum. In all of this is there somewhere a commons, a source of legitimacy, or has it nihilistically gone to the wall in the general pandemonium of postmodernism? Is it not fair to say that our present condition is one wherein the sense of commonality tends to dwindle to the vanishing point among contending ideologies? In this condition, paradoxically, the demand for conformist orthodoxy and political correctness frustrates the use of reason and speech and inhibits dialogue and dialectical examination of values. Surely any experienced academic or politician would vouch for the resultant bad faith and loss of community? Surely also every practising administrator knows the meaning of political expediency and has faced the choice between personal welfare and the common good on some occasion?

And yet the myth remains. The leader represents and embodies the good of the whole and thus has the authority and power of a legitimised will. L’état, c’est lui, c’est elle. But, despite the assumptions and presuppositions of the textbooks, administrative reality is less a field of honour than a battleground of wills, a domain of confused, confusing and conflicting values and, as often as not, a ‘darkling plain . . . where ignorant armies clash by night’.

Will, affect and circumstance

On the darkling plain victory is a function of will. Will and power, the will to power, these concepts are correlative, they are aspects of one another. In Nietzsche’s view, and he was as much psychologist as philosopher, there is nothing simple here. Willing goes beyond both feeling and thinking; it transcends the affective and the cognitive faculties. But it is essentially an experience of commanding—whether this be of others or of oneself.
What is called ‘freedom of will’ is essentially the emotion of superiority over him who must obey: ‘I am free, “he” must obey’—this consciousness adheres to every will, as does that tense attention, that straight look which fixes itself exclusively on one thing, that unconditional evaluation ‘this and nothing else is necessary now’, that inner certainty that one will be obeyed, and whatever else pertains to the state of him who gives commands. A man who wills—commands something in himself which obeys or which he believes obeys...

Here, it seems to me, Nietzsche is alluding to what I have elsewhere described as a Type I level of valuation. In the face of this charismatic quality of will, lesser individual wills are, as it were, psychologically disempowered. Resentfully or otherwise one either submits or, aligning with the leader, gains force from a psychological identification with the stronger ‘freer’ power.

. . . he who believes with a tolerable degree of certainty that will and action are somehow one—he attributes the success, the carrying out of the willing, to the will itself, and thereby enjoys an increase of that sensation of power which all success brings with it. ‘Freedom of will’— is the expression for that complex condition of pleasure of the person who wills, who commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the command—who as such enjoys the triumph over resistances involved but who thinks it was his will itself which overcame these resistances.

There is enough in these enucleated Nietzschean insights to preoccupy the reflections of the thoughtful administrator for a long time but it must be noted that what they are pointing towards is the triumph of the will, not its defeat, nor its décadence. The healthy will derives its exuberance and its power from a clarity of interest and a commitment to values—whatever the content of those values. Technical competence or expertise doesn’t enter into it.

But the will, free or unfree, always encounters circumstance. For the most part we delude ourselves about the freedom of our will because we are not conscious of the extent to which we are mechanistically determined or programmed by external, subjective and objective, factors. Our capacity to shape events, for ourselves and others, is much less than we might think. Nothing new in this. The Romans said it: *Fata viam inveniunt*, things happen by themselves. In complex circumstances things just happen and consequently the honorific of leadership (or administration) is often falsely attributed to an actor who is simply in the right place at the right time. Fate has smiled upon him. His plan has worked out. His enterprises have been successful. All of which, pace Nietzsche, speaks nothing to either his virtue or his will.

‘Yes. But he brought this great matter to a successful conclusion.’—
That means something, but not enough; for we rightly accept the
maxim which says that plans must not be judged by results. The Carthaginians punished bad counsels in their captains even when they were put right by a happy outcome. And the Roman people often refused to mark great and beneficial victories because the qualities of leadership of the commander were inferior to his good luck. In this world’s activities we often notice that Fortune rivals Virtue: she shows us what power she has over everything and delights in striking down our presumption by making the incompetent lucky since she cannot make them wise. She loves to interfere, favouring those performances whose course has been entirely her own. That is why we can see, every day, the simplest amongst us bringing the greatest public and private tasks to successful conclusions.25

To sum up: will is one thing, affect is another, and fate and accident are always administrative parameters.

Malaise

Let us move now from the Renaissance and classical allusions to our own post-modern times. The practical wisdom of Montaigne has long since been forgotten. Nowhere are fate, accident, affect and will explicited or seriously discussed in the management literature of our day. The managerial technopundits have no vocabulary to comprehend or cope with such untidy concepts. In the dialectic between the philosophy of administration and the science of management the latter has achieved a salience unthought of or undreamt of in earlier epochs. Thus today the president of a Canadian bank can confidently assert that ‘The manager’s principal aim is to remove uncertainty.’26 And MacNamara in his apologia still maintains, ‘To this day, I see quantification as a language to add precision to reasoning about the world.27

Paradoxically this very modernist orientation occurs in a condition of post-modernity and questions arise as to whether it is a triumph or a failure of the will. Is it victory or defeat, affirmation or negation, health or pathology? Is this tacit administrative philosophy—one could call it managerialism—an aspiration towards the ultimate Apollonian ascendancy over the Dionysian forces of passion, violence and unreason which might threaten it?

To answer such questions or to try to is to engage in philosophy, more precisely, in axiology: the problem of values. Doing philosophy and doing axiology can be demanding—such efforts require will. The line of least resistance is to retreat into managerialism, to stick to the book and the numbers, to become a functionary, a factotum. To abdicate one’s will in the face of complexity is all too understandable, if not entirely forgivable.

This malaise or failure of the will is a pathology. Its therapy requires some understanding of the morphogenetics of value. The distinctive value dimensions bearing upon administration can be visualized as a series of concentric spheres
of influence. These descend from a cultural level (V₅) through subcultural (V₄), organizational (V₃) and group (V₂) levels to the irreducible level of the individual (V₁). This whole constitutes the morphogenetic field, a complex of value forces, an ecology of interests and will, which forms the axiological context of practical administration (praxis). This schema allows us to identify the central value conflict and source of contemporary malaise. It points to the hypothesis that the root conflict is not the conventional idiographic contest between V₁ and V₃ but rather a dual conflict. There is first the tension between individuals (V₁) and their organizations (V₃), the orthodox idiographic–nomothetic dissonance. Second, there is the conflict between the state as representative of (V₅) culture and its component corporate units (V₃), where the terms of interest conflict can be specified in economic terms: the greed of the parts being in opposition to the welfare of the whole. This in turn leads us to the idea of neo-feudalism.

As society becomes organizational, with large, complex, bureaucratic corporate entities increasingly dominant and increasingly international and global in scope, so the phenomenon of the individual deriving psychological identity from the organization which dominates that individual’s life as the source of livelihood becomes more and more the norm. Saul has defined ‘corporation’ as any interest group: specialized, professional, public or private, profit-oriented or not. The one characteristic assured by all corporations is that the primary relationship of individual members is to the organization and not to society at large. In a corporatized society the group replaces the individual and therefore supersedes the rule of democracy. In their own relationship with the outside world corporations deal whenever possible with other corporations, not with individuals. The modern corporation is a direct descendant of the medieval craft guild.²⁸

To whom then is one beholden as liege lord? The more one is beholden in a hierarchical structure, the more one is in the power of one’s immediate superiors, as well as one’s peers!

Such dependency throughout the working life is not necessarily to be condemned out of hand. This is exemplified by the Japanese experience but theirs, of course, is a culture of the East and Japan, we must acknowledge, can lay considerable claim to having been the modern world’s first police state. Neo-feudalism is also familiar to the West in all its forms of military organization. But its scope and ramification, its penetration of the public mind at the unconscious level, is a novel aspect of contemporary rational-legalistic, bureaucratized, scientific-technological mass society. Those who have such neo-feudal affiliations—that is to say, us—are the fortunate. Those without liege lords, the unemployed for example, are the unfortunate. Such ronin suffer economically but worse, they find no modality for self-identification, for self-worthiness, for life-meaning, save perhaps in so far as they can accept the label of victim and alleviate their resentment through political action.²⁹
In Saul’s view, corporatism represents the triumph of fascism over democracy; democracy in the romantic Athenian or practical Swiss sense, fascism in its proper original sense as a collectivity of \( \frac{1}{3} \) interests bound together by the State—the emblem of which was the bundle of sticks (fasces) bound together around an axe and carried before the Roman senators by the lic tors as a symbol and reminder of the common good. One can easily break one stick but the bundle of them is invincible. (It is interesting to see how Greece and Rome part company.) Examples of contemporary sticks (and feudal identities) are the professions, the bureaucracy, the corporations of industry, trade, commerce and entertainment. Rather thick sticks, one must admit, but by them we come to identify ourselves to ourselves not as individuals, as persons, but rather as doctors, or lawyers, or civil servants, or educators, or administrators. Thus we leach our individuality, our wills and our very consciousness into the roles provided by the organizational forms.

The administrative implication of this malaise is that it tends to exacerbate the imperative to fight one’s own corner, whatever that might be: the department or section or company or corporation or private practice. The larger good is always decided elsewhere and, increasingly, if at all. Our eyes are on the next prize and prizes are bestowed close to home. One is not rewarded for blowing the whistle in the greater interest. In this state of affairs our consciousness of ourselves is defined and limited by our roles and our wills are weakened by corporatist and subcorporatist myopia. What is good for General Tobacco may be good for the nation or not but it is certainly good for a GT chief executive officer. And as to democracy, with respect to the greater good of the commonwealth, what difference does one-man-one-vote make in a mass electorate? What is one vote among a million? What power attaches to a drop in the ocean? What is one will against the will to power?

Again, and at a larger level of generality than the organizational, there is a value impress stemming from the Zeitgeist, the spirit of the times. To this can be assigned the descriptor postmodernism. For administrative purposes, postmodernism can be described simply as that condition where a loss of value coherence typifies the overall culture. Its hallmarks are, variously: pluralism, relativism, nihilism, multiculturalism, bien-pensant liberalism, identity politics, anomie, alienation, victimology, eco-activism, terrorism, meaninglessness, ressentiment, political correctness. One merely peeks beneath the lid of the Pandora’s box before snapping it shut, remarking only that Nietzsche predicted such outcomes a century ago, not least as a consequence of his most famous utterance that God is dead. This selective catalogue may seem like a vision of hell and the worst of worlds but it must be remembered that it is simply a partial assortment of value ills associated with the postmodern condition and, in any event, it is ‘where we are at’. Each epoch has its own ‘worst of times’ and this is merely ours. Our concern here is not with the putative glories of our era, which are surely many, but with its malaise, with those aspects that confront the will to power and that dissipate and enervate the will to lead.

37
The point for administrators is that, to the extent that postmodernism constitutes a discernible condition of organizational context, they have the onus to become aware of the issues it entails, of the philosophical arguments and of the postmodern polemic itself. Failure to take up this onus again means loss of consciousness, loss of meaning, submission to mechanical determinism, failure of nerve, and weakening of the will to power. The outward manifestation of this weakening appears in the declension of leadership towards pragmatic mediation of interests, in pandering to designated minorities and vocal activists, in the compulsive search for consensus, in the reluctance or inability to say no, in the endless oiling of squeaky wheels, in meek surrender to group-think or politically correct orthodoxy. The postmodern administrator harbours a fear of violating any norm. In the words of the Comte de Mirabeau, ‘There go the mob and I must follow them for I am their leader.’

Recuperation

Restoration, reclamation of the will, the justification and recovery of power, consciousness: what can be done to achieve such aims?

First of all let us acknowledge the administrative–managerial distinction. It can then be asserted that in the preparation of administrators generally the managerial side of things is fairly well taken care of. We can even commend ourselves on this. Managerial science (or proto-science), systems theory, quantitative methods, rational problem-solving and inquiry, research methodology and so on, are with varying emphases well covered in the curricula of our professional schools. The administrative side is more open to critique but even here commendation is possible. Sampling only from the subset of educational administration there is a quite respectable endowment. One need only consider the highly sophisticated common sense of Willower and Sergiovanni or the highly sophisticated uncommon sense of Evers and Lakomski. To these can be added the ethnological work of Gronn and Ribbins and, of course, the radical insights into the social construction of organizational reality of the late T.B. Greenfield. One could of course go on and still leave many contributors to this side of the equation unacknowledged. Indeed the temptation is to say that, as compared with other disciplinary subsets, educational administration is in the van of curricular progress. In any rigorous comparison, however, the differential emphases of subsets would have to be taken into account. Nevertheless, what falls short generally, or at least what tends to receive cavalier treatment, is what might be called administrative philosophy, or the humanities in so far as they exceed or transcend conventional social science and social psychology. So-called human relations, group dynamics, personnel ‘management’ and the like are de rigueur. Even ‘leadership’ in a sort of redictio ad absurdum to anecdote or pencil-and-paper tests is often a required study. But what I have been talking about and reaching towards in this paper is conspicuously absent. By philosophy here I do not mean what goes on by and large in academic depart-
ments of philosophy but rather those aspects of practical wisdom, including logic and rhetoric, and focusing above all on the nature and problem of value, which are directly relevant to administration and leadership praxis. Such an administrative philosophy would also subsume every aspect of Realpolitik of bureauopathy, and of contemporary polemic. Begley has recently expressed in succinct and persuasive form the practitioner argument for axiology in leadership training and preparation. The case for the components of logic and rhetoric is equally cogent, while the case for the education of the will has, so far as I am aware, not even been thought of in any serious manner. Curricular change in these directions, while it cannot of itself bring about rebirth, or the rejuvenation of a flagging and failing will, could hypothetically provide a preparatory educational context that would be supportive of recovery, simply because its manifest function is to enhance and deepen understanding. The ability to understand and penetrate issues, to reveal fallacies and to lay bare faulty reasoning and indefensible sentiment is a prerequisite to the health of the will to power.

Yet in the end we are inexorably returned to V, the value-phenomenology of the individual, and to the character of the leader. This is the elusive central vital element in the entire complex of mysteries conjured up by the terminology of will, power, value, consciousness and leadership.

The education of the will

The will to power is an abstraction. Nietzsche himself refused to advance positive characterizations of the will to power. It was simply that which ‘resides at the most basic level of intelligibility’, in other words, the primal motivation. It becomes reality as it is embodied and manifested in the individual. Moreover it must be understood that, at the individual level, will (intention) is a faculty distinct from either thinking (cognition) or feeling (affect). What commonly passes for will is not that at all but simply an unconscious resultant of competing affective preferences or vectors (impulses) in which the strongest wins out and is thereafter rationalized (if it is thought about at the conscious level) as an ‘act of will’. Actually it is the act of an automaton. ‘Thus I chose’ could be translated ‘Thus it chose for me’. Let us discriminate then between apparent will and real will, between mechanical will and free will. The question before us then becomes: is it possible to acquire the free will, to become free? To put it another way, can one achieve self-mastery?

The general answer to this question is yes. But the education or training necessary to achieve this affirmative is unlikely to be found in the schools of leadership, management and administration in the West. The military disciplines of leadership training practised in officer schools of both West and East, while they clearly confront part of the problem through ego-submission techniques and anti-akrasia do not thereby educe freedom of the will. On the contrary, it could be argued that such education is moral programming or
conditioning rather than any inducement to Socratic examination of self or questioning of authority. With reservations, much the same might be said of elite schools of administrative preparation generally. Indeed, short of adopting Oriental, monastic or Zen principles of character development and training, all that can be reasonably said or done is to hypothesize the psychological sequence implicit in these more esoteric methods of training and offer them up for reflection and consideration.

The essential central and primary element in all such methods would appear to be introspection. In our society, the administrative leader, man or woman, is engaged continually in action, in affairs, in gossip, in the hurly-burly and the rough and tumble of politics, calendars, schedules, meetings, conferences and human contacts which, if not always abrasive, are always demanding of energy. In consequence, the psyche is drained. Any spare time is occasion for guilt that there is spare time. Such time is not generally conceived as retreat, as space for solitary reflection, or for the inward look of contemplation. (Vampires don’t like looking in mirrors either!) Such time is more generally regarded as an opportunity for well-earned egoistic self-indulgence (and possibly more wear and tear). Now from the standpoint of the emergence of true will I would like to plead that, whether action and contemplation are conceived of as being at opposite ends of a psychic continuum, or whether they are just plain dichotomous, either without the other is insufficient. I would go further and assert that the one without the other is a vanity and a futility.

Let us return to the hypothetical psychological sequence implicit in will development. Such an hypothesis would be verifiable not in the empirical scientific mode but in the sense of individual experience or personal experimentation. Reflection or introspection or self-observation is then assumed to lead to an inner understanding which is accompanied by increased awareness or consciousness of one’s being and of one’s actions. This sensibility is then directly transferable to others because it increases the capacity for Mitfühlung, for empathy and insight into the motivations of one’s fellows. One becomes a Menschenkenner; one senses or knows what makes people ‘tick’, and this knowledge is power. But power also comes from another direction, from the hypothesis that consciousness and will are correlative. The increase of the former creates at least the potential for a corresponding increase of the latter.

None of this is novel. It takes us back a very long way, to pre-Socratic times when the Delphic oracle answered seekers after power with the maxim, ‘know thyself’. This may be called the ultimate leadership imperative. It is quite safe because in truth we actually know so little of ourselves—we do not see ourselves as others see us, for example—and indeed we tend to avoid or shy away from such knowledge even if we firmly believe in the maxim that knowledge is power. The education of the will is then inseparable from the revelation of the self. The approaches to this have been alluded to above but, in the West at least, it appears to be something of a lost art.

At a minimal level any new curriculum with the radical objective of the
independence of the will would have to aim at self-discipline and self-mastery in the domain of emotion, particularly negative emotion. The assumption is that one can control one’s emotions, one can be detached, indifferent. In the vernacular, one can keep one’s cool, or as Kipling puts it so perfectly, keep one’s head while all about are losing theirs.43

Of course there is a great caveat here. In all of this there must be authenticity or else it is mere dramaturgy, and dangerous contemptible dramaturgy at that. Sartre, who had an exaggerated and in my view fallacious notion of the degrees of freedom in human will, nevertheless followed his existential logic through from a false premiss to a true conclusion.

Sartre emphasized that man must never disclaim the responsibility for his actions. Nor can we avoid the responsibility of making our own choices on the grounds that we ‘must’ go to work or we ‘must’ live up to certain middle-class expectations regarding how we should live. Those who slip into the anonymous masses will never be other than members of the impersonal flock, having fled from themselves into self-deception. On the other hand our freedom obliges us to make something of ourselves, to live ‘authentically’ or ‘truly’.44

To live authentically and truly would be to have acquired sufficient strength of will to be ‘unimpressed’ (literally so) by all value levels above V1. Such a degree of freedom does not mean that those levels would be disparaged but that the leader would use the levels V2–V5 to the end of the common or organizational good without being used by them. That is, the leadership agenda would be neither unconscious nor reactive. It would be a function of a value system which is itself a reciprocal function of will and consciousness. It would imply at least the embodiment of some Type I values in the leadership.45 Does this prospect distress the more managerial amongst us? Tant mieux! Such leadership may also be, is likely to be, politically incorrect. Again tant mieux! This follows because it is the manifestation of an authentic Socratic individualism; this kind of leadership would always be a challenge to social norms and hence it is not without risk. Ideally one could imagine a full comprehension and sensibility of the entire V2–V5 range, yet with an independent V1 interpretation which, while often held in restraint to subserve the consensus, nevertheless at its greatest moments becomes in truth a triumph of the will.

This is clearly what we do not have today and so the question is, can such an authentic integrity of will and praxis be taught? It probably cannot, save by osmosis and, perhaps, mimesis; by the coming into contact and communion with an exemplar. The education of the will may of course happen by chance; by some happy accident or through association with a mentor or patron or peer, or by some inherent personal quality of natural charisma that achieves this consummation autonomously. Such patterns are not only informal but they are improperly understood and far from being transparent in nature. They can as well have
outcomes contrary to the notion of freedom of the will: for example, in the crystallizing of a learner’s will in the image of the teacher or in the Christian and Islamic paradoxes of ‘In His service is perfect freedom’ and ‘Inshallah! (As God wants!)’ Once again it becomes important to remember the distinction between training and education. That these two pedagogical strategies can run at cross-purposes is always a hazard to any educative project of the will. If the will is free then it cannot be said to be trained, only to be educated. But are these strategies independent or symbiotic?

Even if these problematics remain intractable that does not mean that they are imponderable. Surely we can, and should, teach about them. Surely we could include them within the compass of our total research effort? Is not administration a specially important part of the general search for meaning? Axiology, value analysis, value auditing: all deserve a better place in the professional sun. The gods of passion also deserve to be restored to the administrative pantheon. Dionysus and Apollo are brothers after all.

What I have crudely sketched here is but a prolegomenon to potential years of labour in the academic vineyard. Such a tentative reconnaissance of the territory probably does not warrant any pointed conclusion. Nevertheless, in the spirit of the text one might essay a latter-day postmodern Nietzscheanism:

The Song of the Herd is
We shall overcome.
The Song of the Leader is
I have overcome . . .
Myself!

Dare one, could one, ought one then add the words ‘For them’?

Endlogic

The point of this exploration has already been made: to repeat the peculiar onus upon the leader to acquire self-knowledge and self-mastery. This is not an ethereal or impractical conclusion but rather an ultra-practical or even hyper-practical suggestion. That it is avoided as often as not is merely the mark of malaise, of the flight into reason rather than beyond it.

The more pedestrian practical inferences to be drawn can be summarized as follows:

1. There is never any shortage of leadership positions.
2. There is never any dearth of aspirants for those positions.
3. Therefore the problem is now, as it was in Plato’s time, curricular.
4. The administrative curriculum is lifelong.
5. The managerial side of this curriculum is currently adequate, the administrative or leadership side inadequate.
The inadequacies are axiological not epistemological.

6 Axiology is defined as:

The philosophical theory of value in general, embracing ethics or the philosophical theory of morality, but extending far beyond it to include aesthetic, technical, prudential, hedonic, and other forms of value. Any field of human discourse in which the general value-terms 'good' and 'ought' figure falls within the range of axiology, even that of scientific method with its principles about the degree of belief we ought to give to a hypothesis in the light of a given body of evidence.46

7 Hence, the emergent curriculum would include consideration of the problem of the will, the problem of the commons, Realpolitik, social critique and bureauopathology in all its forms.

8 At a minimum, the emergent curriculum would incorporate practical training in the arts of common-sense logic, rhetoric and polemic.

9 Administration proper is a high-risk, high-reward vocation.

Notes

Paper given at the Toronto Conference on Values and Educational Leadership, OISE Centre for the Study of Values and Leadership, University of Toronto, October 1996.

1 Christopher Hodgkinson, Towards a Philosophy of Administration (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), prop. 6, p. 217.
4 Considering the administrative theorists’ concern with power, it is curious that Nietzsche is so rarely cited or referred to in the literature. A text in English exists—The Will to Power, tr. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1968)—and it can be noted that this concept recurs throughout all the Nietzschean opus as a dominant leitmotif or threnody in his philosophy.
5 Nietzsche sees it as an ultimate driving force in the economy of life and nature going beyond merely human affairs: ‘Life itself is essentially appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and, at its mildest, exploitation … Life simply is will to power.’ Beyond Good and Evil, tr. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin, 1976), 211.
6 Hodgkinson, Philosophy of Administration, 180 ff.
7 Nietzsche, Beyond Good, 211.
11 See n. 8 and Nietzsche, Beyond Good, s. 46.
12 See n. 5.
VALUES AND RELIGION

16 Lord Acton, *Historical Essays and Studies* Appendix.
19 Ibid. 38–71 gives an independent treatment of this problem.
20 Matthew Arnold, ‘Dover Beach’.
21 Nietzsche, *Beyond Good*, s. 19.
22 Hodgkinson, *Philosophy of Leadership, Educational Leadership, Administration Philosophy*.
23 Nietzsche *Beyond Good*, s. 19.
29 While this led to outlawed status and brigandage in Japan, its correlation with crime and violence, with sabotage and terrorism, is not unknown in the West either.
31 Nietzsche claimed to have been ‘born posthumously’: *Ecce Homo* (London, Penguin, 1972). The origin of the graffiti, ‘God said to Nietzsche/That’ll Tietzsche/You irritating little Krietzsche’, is unfortunately unknown.
32 Hodgkinson, *Philosophy of Administration*, 4 and passim. Cf. also Derek Allison, *Canadian Administrator* n.d.

I have been impressed, for example, by the military employment of the history of philosophy, business administration’s concern with ethical practice, and public administration’s experimentation with social equity.


The Matsushita School of Government and Management, Tokyo is, from the author’s experience, a clear illustration of the contrary. Cf. PHP Institute, Osaka, Japan.


Rudyard Kipling, ‘If—’; more fully: ‘If you can keep your head while all about you/Are losing theirs and blaming it on you?’


For a discussion of Type I values see Hodgkinson, *Philosophy of Leadership, Educational Leadership, Administrative Philosophy*, passim.

CONCLUSION: TOMORROW, AND TOMORROW, AND TOMORROW

A post-modern purview¹

Christopher Hodgkinson


Abstract

This chapter critically surveys the cultural and educational context of the period 1960–2020 and seeks to analyze the implications for educational leadership. Sources range from early contributions of Donald Willower to the latest prognostications of experts in Cambridge and the USA. Both general and special conclusions are drawn and a new test, the A3M3, is introduced as part of the presentation.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death
(Macbeth)

These words of Shakespeare seem to imply a deep despair or cynicism about the possibility of benevolent change in human affairs. They are surely the very antithesis of American optimism and progressivism. For organizations they bespeak drudgery, wage slavery, Dilbertian anomie, pathological compartmentalization, ennui. They deplore meaninglessness. But they refer not to some sort of Nietzschean eternal recurrence of the same but simply to the line of time each one of us inhabits, a line which never wavers and always runs from past through present to future.

As one ages (and there’s an absolute for you) one automatically has more past and less future. More behind, less in front. Less hope, more regret. And so the very natural tendency is to approach the future, as McLuhan once put it,
looking in the rearview mirror. I shall try to struggle against this tendency. To that end the bulk of this paper will deal with what is to come, with what might be and the lesser part with the past, with what might have been or seemed to be. But what of that past? It cannot be ignored.

**The way it might have been**

One of the aims of this chapter is to heighten our sensitivity about the cultural impress that is always determining, subliminally and subconsciously, our value orientations and judgments. We are always creatures of our times and the times themselves are a flood of events that are always somehow out of focus. In short my topic is what used to be called history but that word has fallen into contenttion and today is being displaced by exotica such as cultural anthropology, sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, and bio-genetics. Yet history or temporality conceived as the intellectual linkages between past, present, and future is the very province and substance of administration. Certainly it is the meat of leadership in that administration is the management of the future and its achievements become the legacy of the past. The conference for which this chapter was originally prepared hardly came about without past planning and a complex cascade of policy and managerial decisions, each of which was present in its own instance. Administration is also karma-in-action for the past comes back to haunt it. As an eminent management consultant recently put it, somewhat facetiously, ‘The leader knows the future and has agreed to share it with the company instead of using this awesome power to make a fortune gambling.’ But to comprehend or understand the future – the way things might be, it is logically necessary to understand the past – the way things were or, at least, seemed to be. As for the interim between these two things – the so-called present – let’s leave this for the moment; I’ll come back to it.

Shortly before my lamented and esteemed colleague Donald J. Willower sadly left us to join what he would call the Great Majority he gave me a now-treasured possession. This was an inscribed book he had edited, together with Jack Culbertson, back in 1964 (Willower & Culbertson, 1964). It is a chorus of voices from the past and serves to remind us, as Nietzsche put it, that ‘The living are only a species of the dead, and a rare species at that.’ Included in the contributors were such greats as Roald Campbell, Dan Griffiths, and Joseph Schwab. Also among them was a professor of medicine, George Miller. The book taken as a whole presents a vision of what educational leadership was seen to be and what the preparation of educational leaders might have been at the beginning of my survey period (c. 1960–c. 2020). These clearly were the days of a new dawn. A heady sense of the importance and virtue of our professoriate existed. The Midwest Administration Centre at the University of Chicago was the centre of the world. Nevertheless, the general tenor and gist, if not the explicit agenda of the work, was to establish the intellectual credibility and respectability of a new discipline, grounding itself if not in science and theory per se then certainly in
the social sciences and even in philosophy. Its place in the academy was formidably asserted. There was a distinct flavour of elitism and the development of the professorship in educational administration was favourably compared to its equivalent in medicine. Schwab, a ‘mathematical geneticist by training and a philosopher by choice’ (Willower & Culbertson, 1964, p. 48), felt it reasonable to commend to administrators ‘a sophisticated and cynical grasp of about a dozen separate and distinct bodies of theory’ (1964, p. vii). And even though the young Don Willower’s contribution was more down to earth, it too stressed the ideal and the philosophical components of our art. The field was to appeal to ‘the imaginative, inventive individual who wants to work in a profession which seeks to contribute to human progress and growth’ (1964, p. 150). He had already enunciated the theme he was to pursue throughout his career: a pragmatic reconciliation of theory and practice but with a marked stress on reflection and reflective methods concomitant with a commitment to educational ideals.

Dewey revividas. All in all it was an inspiring manifesto, both dignifying educational administration and projecting for it a future where, as once perhaps in the past, men of action were also men of contemplation, of wisdom, of passion and honour. Did all this what-might-have-been come about? You be the judge. Well, perhaps the timing was a little, out.

Recall the 1960s. Remember San Francisco where, then, one wore a flower in one’s hair. I was at Berkeley at the time. Momentarily it was the epicentre of a new revolution: the counter-culture. Wonderful as it all was in its beginnings things soon soured. In the end they even had to create concentration camps in California to hold some of the more exuberant dissidents. And the challenge to authority had slogans like ‘Burn, baby, burn’. Mao buttons were de rigueur, Minutemen and Black Panthers were lionized as were communes, long hair, and free casual sex. It was the time of Sharon Tate and the Manson gang. Vietnam. Drugs. Sex. Dionysus. (we’ll return to him later.)

In the end order was restored. But by then Thom Greenfield had fired the epistemological shot that was heard around the world of educational administration. The authority of science itself was now challenged. Reality was a social construct. Organizations were moral entities, or should be. Camps formed and camp followers lined up. In Canada Royal Commission followed Royal Commission, each more eager than the rest to overturn the traditional order. Change was equated with progress. Permissive lib-chic became the orthodoxy of the day. (It still is, only now crystallized into a non-permissive political correctitude. The University of Alberta extended its influence, via educational administration, to Australia while the newly formed Ontario Institute for Studies in Education became a world-class centre for our subject. This too still is. Heady times. Great debates: Greenfield-Griffiths, Greenfield-Hills, Greenfield-Willower. Back then only 6% of the population in Canada had a university degree. Now 90% of school superintendents have a master’s and 10% the doctorate.

VALUES AND RELIGION
The elusive present

Between past and future lies a mystery. The present. Now. ‘Now’ in logic is a very fuzzy term. Taken as the moment it doesn’t exist, in the same sort of way as it doesn’t make sense to talk of instantaneous velocity in the differential calculus. But the calculus works and our sense of time seems real enough. Yet subjective experience and inner attention are always a mixed-up blodge of the past (memory) and the future (hopes, fears, and expectations). Unless you want to go the Zen route and aspire to be like the samurai who can pick a mosquito out of the air with his chopsticks, ‘now’ would not be precisely meaningful. I fancy, however that most educators inhabit a permanent state of bell-ringing anticipation: blissful if it signifies the end of a class or a lecture, and the contrary otherwise.

Collectively the same holds true. ‘Today’s news wraps tomorrow’s fish’, ‘You can’t step into the same river twice’. Postmodernism, the label for our now, is a-historical and chimerical. Fuzzy logic writ large.

So ‘now’ does not mean right now. It means rather a blurry spread of contemporary events stretching back a bit and forwards a bit. In administration it may be fairer to say that it stretches back a lot and forward a lot for we stumble into the future hobbled by plans and commitments made in the past and our forward reach exceeds our grasp. As for the present as often as not there’s no ‘there’ there. For our purposes then it is sufficient to simply regard the now as the last decade or so together with the shadow it extends into the future. This historical sound-bite (sub specie aeternitatis) is increasingly recognized and classified as postmodern and postmodernism is something we must look at more closely. This NOW is, however, radically different from its predecessors. The following items are indicative of this difference: the pill (perhaps the most revolutionary technical advance since the wheel), the chip, the micro-chip, the PC, the global village, day-trading, cloning, genetic engineering, social engineering, E-commerce, E-everything, Mars orbiter, jumbo-jets, Concorde, neutron bombs, cell-phones, websites, quantum physics, astrophysics, astroturf . . .

All this and much more comprise the technological infrastructure of our present culture. All in the ‘now’. Technology has always been around but previous infra structural changes like the Industrial Revolution occurred over much larger sweeps of time. The present curve of change (and its learning curve) is, in comparison, exponential. All such changes affect the social superstructure or culture because they change context: the mise-en-scène. But there is a complication. Culture is dependent on science and technology but it is also autonomous. It’s not simply a matter of correlative dependency and interaction. The explanation for this is a logical difference between value and fact. Science speaks on facts but is silent on values. The humanities speak (or used to speak) on values but have to accept whatever facts are placed before them. The gulf between these two realms of discourse is radical. To try to get values from facts is to commit the naturalistic fallacy – a fallacy that has never been refuted. You can’t
get an ‘ought’ from an ‘is’. But you have to take the is’s into account. As Third Reich scientist Werner von Braun used to say, ‘I send the rockets up – Who cares where they come down?’ Worrying about where or when they should come down is not science, it’s administration.

For example, will the final mapping of the genome change human nature? No, but it will give us more power perhaps, and certainly it will add to the information overload that we have already. Great changes occur; the scientific sands are shifting underfoot. But the really interesting thing is that human nature changes very little. Crucifixion is out of fashion at the moment but a Roman soldier returning to earth today, after due wonderment at the technical changes about him and a sigh of despair at the state of the Colosseum, would soon feel at home. Genocides and holocausts, man-made events, are still around. On the other hand there has been no nuclear war (yet) and no world war since Hiroshima. (And no army used gas in World War II.) This emphasis on human nature is important because to be an educator is by definition to be a humanist, maybe even a classicist. Certainly there are two Greek gods we should get to know. Their names are Apollo and Dionysus. Apollo is blond and beautiful, impeccable, he is the god of the sun, of light, of reason. A worthy representative of science but also a bit of a fascist. Dionysus is dirty, dishevelled, wild, the god of orgies and sensuous destructive abandon; the god of all things irrational, against all order, for all chaos, all indulgence, a sort of über-hippie. These two gods represent a dialectic ever-present in human nature and human history. Very crudely put the post-Enlightenment period of modernism could be called Apollonian and the philosophical confusion that followed on Nietzsche’s lament of God’s death in the late Victorian era with its consequent cataclysm in 1914 – postmodernism in other words – can be called Dionysian.

This dialectic occurs at many levels in human nature. It is exemplified in our times as a psychological contest between reason and passion; desire for order and rebellion against restraint; the triumph of science and the naturalistic fallacy concomitant with the malaise of moral relativism and the malaise of totalitarian political correctness. You can apply this analysis to education for yourself and all of you have been exposed and are being exposed to the stress and tension which these two immortal archetypes, these two gods, create in our cultural fabric. Listen for a moment to Nietzsche commenting on the death of God:

... Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there any up or down left? Are we not straying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing in on us? ... God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him ...

Not too bad a description of the postmodern condition. But postmodernism is not merely relativistic about value it is also nihilistic about truth. Our Roman soldier could well ask Pontius Pilate’s famous question with even more justifica-
tion. What is truth? What is the truth about truth? (Anderson, 1995). That there is no truth. There are only Nietzschean ‘perspectives’ or ‘interpretations’; onlyLyotard’s ‘incredulity towards meta narratives’; only Derrida’s ‘il n’y a pas dehors-texte’—there’s only a text, and its only meaning is that provided by its reader.

This then is the structure of NOW. On the one hand hyper-rational bureaucratic legalistic complex organizations (school systems, multinationals, governments), on the other hand increasingly stressed individuals and small groups divested of, but searching for, meaning and value in an endless variety of ways from hedonistic materialistic consumerism to profound and authentic spiritual search and striving.

The Way it is becoming. What comes after postmodernism? Such a question invokes the great imponderable— the future— which, while it extends to infinity really only concerns us within the range of our immediate mortality. Soon we too will be part of the Great Majority. And, as always, there is a dialectic of opinion: the sun of Ecclesiastes under which there is nothing new and the river of Heraclitus into which one cannot step twice. Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose . . . and yet the new forever being born. With this dialectical tension in mind let us look fleetingly at the short term ahead. To help us do this I have resorted to alma mater Cambridge. From those hallowed cloisters emerges a picture of post-postmodernity based on Cantabridgian expertise. This in very digested and kaleidoscopic form I now present for your consideration.5 But first a Persian thought, even a Caribbean one? . . .

Ah, fill the cup—what use is to repeat
How time is slipping underneath our feet
Unborn ‘Tomorrow’, and dead ‘Yesterday’,
Why fret about them if ‘Today’ be sweet!

Population

By 2050 two-thirds as much more protoplasm than we have today: 10 billion bodies. But food production efficiency outpaces population growth. Risks to the environment, however. ‘Better governance, better institutions, better markets, better schools’ will be necessary. But desire for progeny may decline.

Climate

Nothing really bad until at least 2050. Need to get rid of present type of cars, however. Scientific opinion is split. Hotter? Colder? We don’t know.

Water

Massive pipeline shifts, Canada to U.S. Also, dams don’t exist forever, they’re aging. Water will soon be metered like electricity. The poor already have a water crisis. A problem of equity rather than engineering.
VALUES AND RELIGION

Energy
Plenty of it but again the environmental problem. Correlated to living standards as one might expect. New cars needed. ‘Globality and 24-hour, hyperactive, inter-connected, e-mail fuelled, sleep-deprived’ new millennium is upon us.

Superpowers
Present condition an historical first (if one excludes Rome). Other powers on the rise, e.g., China and a revitalized Russia. And ethnicity a problem. Presently Pax Americana.

Trouble Spots

United Nations
Richest 20% have 86% of the world’s wealth. Poorest 20% have 1%. U.N. is aging now, too. Like the dams.

East and West
China’s tough line on population control has been a great contribution to humanity. Europe? Conflicting theories: Britain wants ‘community’, France ‘nations’, Germany a ‘state’. But all very exciting and Europe could become number one in 30–40 years time.

Money
Capitalism is ‘the permanent equilibrium state of human society. Everything else was a sideshow.’ ‘The motivation to compete, to own and acquire wealth is a fundamental fact of human existence, just like the need to eat or have sex.’ But the mixed economy form now well established and no more crises for at least 15 years.

Markets
Stock markets will be electronic and global. Big problem of regulation. Companies must grow or die. But double-entry bookkeeping will remain, as it has, since the 15th century.
CONCLUSION

Electronics

The symbol of the 1980s was the personal computer. The symbol of the 90s was the web. The next thing will be sensors. These will be low-cost, very high performance, and they’ll be everywhere, ‘from Macdonald’s fries to insulin delivery for diabetics’. We will soon have entire PCs on a chip. But information technology will be supplanted by biotechnology. The genome and all that.

Internet

This could be a liberating force in the Third World. Can also be cultural dumbing-down (Hollywood and porn). It’s an information toy but how long can interest be sustained?

Cars

Next big step the automated road: regulating vehicles in convoys. Sensors can make this a reality. ‘You would just pay a toll, couple your car into an electronic convoy and sit back to enjoy the ride’. Adelaide already has automated bus routes.

Aircraft

Flight has lost its glamour. Passengers are bored and uncomfortable. The aim will be speed. Airlines will either have to get you there faster or make flying more enjoyable. Fuel and turbulence set technological limits and problems.

Space

Lots of other planets but life on them may have been millions of years in the past or will be millions of years in the future, our time. So don’t bet on extraterrestrials.

Families

System breaking down in the West. Women can’t do it all: adopting a male agenda in life arguably only another form of submission. Smaller families and more childless families. Being a parent used to bring social status, it doesn’t now.

Ethnicity

Very complex. Very postmodern. ‘Identity’ will depend more on one’s set of values than where one comes from.
VALUES AND RELIGION

Crime
Up but more property crime than violent crime. Prison populations up.

Christianity

Islam
Growing West and East. Current modes (military and dynastic leadership) may shift towards democratic forms. Big problem remaining: fundamentalism.

English
World language for next half-century then shift to possibly Spanish. Chinese if they can solve the orthography problem. But English will fragment. Process well under way. English teachers jobs very secure. (Even in Quebec.)

Bodies
Twenty-five percent of the population will be over 60. But healthier. Cliché problem is to ‘add life to years’ rather than converse. Big educational implications.

Minds
Depression, dementia, stress, Alzheimer’s. Boomers already trembling. Four- and five-generational living families. Grandparents may be too busy minding great-grandparents to look after grandchildren.

Reproduction
Divergence between developed and developing regions. In the former sex for pleasure and conception for the laboratory. More test-tube babies, sperm and egg-banks. Chinese interventional experiments need watching.

Funding health
Seven percent of UK Gross Domestic Product presently goes to Health; 9% in Netherlands, 10% France and Germany. But outcomes very comparable. Probable shift from universal coverage to ‘top-up’ or ‘opt-out’ schemes; i.e., basics paid, user-pay for the rest. Even so higher taxes and rationing on the way. (Since
health and education compete for the public purse one can safely predict more stresses and strains in both systems.)

This is by no means all. It is only a sampling of the multiple facets of postmodern life as examined by the Cambridge experts cited but it is surely a peek at the shape of things to come. That shape, through a glass darkly, may disappoint – or it may excite – but futurology is perforce a very modest business since the future itself is a combination of the causal and the casual: of past determining forces which have yet to run their course and the totally unforeseen. So prophets had better be modest. Nevertheless what is glaringly conspicuous by its absence from the above forecasts, what is missing from all this arcana of tribal peoples, telecoms, film, even Judaism; what is totally lacking in this glimpse at the coming century is the category of *philosophy*. And this from the academic home of Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein. This from the institution that gave an honorary degree to Derrida! Not a peep, not a peek. To the end of history must now be appended the demise of philosophy. But before leaping to this conclusion let us look at the view from our side of the water.

**The American view**

As part of the same millennial frenzy that inspired the Cambridge authors, a special issue of *Time* magazine was devoted to such questions as: Will we live on Mars?, travel in time? discover another universe? figure out the brain? get rid of cockroaches?, etc. Admittedly, the questions are scientific-technological, but they are carefully considered by the finest expertise in the respective fields, including many Nobelists. To make a short story even shorter the answers can be summarily summed as no time travel, no extra-terrestrial contact, no final ‘theory of everything’, no explanation of consciousness, no solution to the mind-body problem, no perpetual motion machinery, and no controlling the weather. Or cockroaches. And again *no philosophy* even though several commentators had inevitably to deal with issues such as mind, consciousness, and meaning. Granted the project was non-normative, rationalistic, and scientific-technological in the best tradition of the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason. And, come to think of it and if memory serves, *Time* has not devoted a special issue to philosophy for over thirty years. At which time it declared it dead, killed by the academicians. Even *Time* gets things right on occasion.

**General conclusion**

The values of the short-term future are implicit if not explicit. It is likely to be an unholy Apollonian-Dionysian mix of rationalistic legalistic bureaucratic scientific technological pragmatics and a reactive postmodern relativistic hedonistic narcissistic materialistic nihilism. For education this might imply a skew towards the digital, the mathematical, the marketable, and the meritocratic. That is to say, not the mindless but the meaningless. And all the consequent
Dionysian reactions of rage, resentment, ressentiment, and violence this might invoke. I hope these words are not prophetic and a product more of dimmer than of clearer sight. But I have long perceived with some empirical verification the cultural tendencies to valorexia and philosophobia: the twin diseases of loss of meaning and abhorrence of philosophy.

Of course we as educators must be concerned with literacy of all types, including the digital; of course we must attend to earning-learning of all the marketable kinds; but we must also restore our responsibility for general social decorum, even in postmodernity; we must hand down traditions and history even if they offend some multicultural persuasions; and we must have a concern with the larger purposes of being human. Failing this we are not educators but just another form of teaching machine: programmers, trainers, info-dispensers. Information may equate to knowledge but knowledge does not equate to understanding. None of this is to say we cannot joyfully embrace the future. *Amor fati* is always an option.\(^7\) That the questions which this admittedly disjointed and tumultuous sweep of time and events are always: what changes and what stays the same? Mark Twain’s remark is relevant, ‘History does not repeat itself. But it sure rhymes.’

Simply put what changes is context, what doesn’t change is human nature. But, as already mentioned, human nature just happens to be the essential raw material of education. More, it is also the essence of administration and leadership. (Think *character* instead of *characteristics.*) Moreover still, human nature and the human condition are the quintessential subject matter of real philosophy. John Dewey said, and our late colleague Don Willower endorsed this, that the whole of philosophy is the general theory of education. I would go further and assert that the whole of philosophy is also the general theory of administration.\(^8\) True, philosophy in the academic sense is largely remote from practical affairs but *administrative* philosophy is a discipline the whole aim of which is to inform practicality. And this sort of philosophy is the birthright of everyone. To make my point please take the following A3M3 test:

1. Do you really know how to tell right from wrong?
2. Do you really know how to tell good from bad?
3. Can you tell a sound argument from a fallacious one?
4. Do you know enough about human nature?
5. Do you know enough about the human condition?
6. Do you really know yourself?
7. Are your answers to the above questions adequate for your role as leader or aspirant to leadership?

**Special conclusion**

The test you have just been subjected to calls for some further words of comment. Contrary to what you might now modestly assume, it is possible to
score a perfect seven. At the very least it is possible to impute or ascribe such a score since the test may be extroverted and attributed onto unwitting targets. Thus, all the great charismatic leaders for good or evil might score a 7: Jesus Christ, Gandhi, the Lord Buddha on one side and Josef Stalin, Adolf Hitler, and Pol Pot on the other. I myself have known leaders who, for me at least, fit the 7 bill nicely: my mentor Sir Geoffrey Vickers for one and a certain university president for another – although both might well have been loath to acknowledge the ascription.

More importantly, the test implies an agenda for leadership preparation and research the component parts of which are already established and need only to be assembled. Essentially they suggest a shift in theory emphasis from epistemology to axiology; a short course in elementary logic and rhetoric; some exposure to the arts in the Greenfield tradition and due consideration of pathology (see Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993).

As for research the work already done in the leadership initiative of these conferences is one example. Credit must be given in this respect to the labours of Professor Begley. Analytical tools for value praxis already exist and the ethnological studies of Peter Ribbins in the United Kingdom (Ribbins & Sayer, 1998) and Peter Gronn in Australia (Gronn, 1999) provide examples of how insight can be gained into the administrative form of life. This curricular emphasis should supplement and complement rather than displace the current studies in social science.

In the A3M3 quiz the crucial question, which cannot be formulated so as to yield a precise answer, is of course number 6. Philosophers and non-philosophers alike may argue cogently and validly that it is unanswerable in any objective sense, short of mystical illumination or transcendental revelation. Nevertheless it is always possible to arrive at a tentative subjective judgment, and the question should always be held before us for if it is not asked then it is answered – in the negative. Not for nothing was the exhortation ‘Know thyself’ above the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in ancient Greece.

Finally, two lesser considerations: first, the test is subject to modification in that the rigid requirement for a dichotomous yes or no answer might be relaxed and, second, perhaps the test calls for a more innocuous and user-friendly title than the one temporarily assigned: Administrative Arrogance And Managerial Modesty Measure. I am sure that neither the A nor the M attributes exceed the limits of propriety in the present audience, and that the circle of what might have been can be closed into what yet still might be.

Notes

1 This chapter is revised and updated version of a paper originally presented at the Conference of the UCEA Centre for the Study of Values and Leadership, Bridgetown, Barbados. It has also been previously published as an article in a special issue (Vol. 4, No. 4, 297–307) of the International Journal of Leadership in Education (2001).
VALUES AND RELIGION

5 Direct quotations are indicated by quotation marks, otherwise paraphrase and commentary. The headings are those used in the source CAM No.28 Michaelmas 1999 and the authorities are respectively: ‘population’ (economist Sheilagh Ogilvie), ‘climate’ (Judge Institute’s Chris Hope), water (geographer Bill Adams), ‘energy’ (consultant Dan Yergin), ‘superpowers’ (Centre for International Studies’ James Mayall), ‘trouble spots’ (Guardian Editor Ian Black), ‘United Nations’ (former U.N. Under-Secretary Dame Margaret Anstee), ‘East and West’ (M.C. to King of Nepal Chiran Thapu), ‘money’ (Chief Economist of The Times Anatole Kaletsy), ‘markets’ (Judge Institute’s Richard Barker), ‘electronics’ (Silicon Valley Institute director Paul Saffo), ‘internet’ (Washington Post Editor David Ignatius), ‘cars’ (Professor of Engineering David Newland), ‘aircraft’ (Rank Professor of Engineering Shhn Ffowes Williams), ‘space’ (Royal Astronomical Society’s Jacqueline Mitten), ‘families’ (research psychologist Penelope Leach), ‘ethnicity’ (anthropologist, Sue Benson), ‘crime’ (Institute of Criminology’s Andrew von Hirsch), ‘Christianity’ (Bishop of Rochester Michael Nazir-Ali), ‘Islam’ (scholar and author Akbar Ahmed), ‘English’ (Director Research Centre for English and Applied Linguistics Gillian Brown), ‘bodies’ (Professor of Clinical Gerontology Kay-Tee Khaw), ‘minds’ (Director Research Centre on Aging Felicia Huppert), ‘reproduction’ (Head of Department of Biological Anthropology Nick Mascie-Taylor), and ‘funding health’ (Master of Sidney Sussex Sandra Dawson).
6 Time, April 2000
7 Nietzsche’s solution. But this depends on the degree of freedom and reality of the will. Which calls for another paper beyond this one.
9 Theoria, op.cit. note 4; and also Macmillan (2001).
10 From experience I can recommend Robert Thouless (1974). The elements of argument do not change with the fashions of the times and this was first published in 1930.
13 As for note 2.

References

CONCLUSION

Willower, D.J., & Culbertson, J. (1964) *The professorship in educational administration*. Pennsylvania State University: UCEA.
Managing moral purpose and change agentry is at the heart of productive educational change. It is necessary to take a closer look at each of them, and to make explicit their organic relationship.

**Moral purpose**

In their major study of teacher education, Goodlad and his colleagues found themselves being pushed deeper to the moral purposes of education in order to understand the basic rationale for teaching in post-modern society: ‘We came to see with increasing clarity the degree to which teaching in schools, public or private, carries with it moral imperatives—more in public schools, however, because they are not schools of choice in a system requiring compulsory schooling’ (Goodlad, 1990a, p. 47, my emphasis; see also Goodlad, Soder and Sirotnik, 1990). Goodlad singles out four moral imperatives:

**Facilitating critical enculturation**

The school is the only institution in our nation specifically charged with enculturating the young into a political democracy . . . Schools are major players in developing educated persons who acquire an understanding of truth, beauty, and justice against which to judge their own and society’s virtues and imperfections . . . This is a moral responsibility. (pp. 48–9)

**Providing access to knowledge**

The school is the only institution in our society specifically charged with providing to the young a disciplined encounter with all the subject
matters of the human conversation: the world as a physical and biological system; evaluative and belief systems; communication systems; the social, political, and economic systems that make up the global village; and the human species itself . . . (Teachers) must be diligent in ensuring that no attitudes, beliefs, or practices bar students from access to the necessary knowledge.

(Building an effective teacher-student connection)

The moral responsibility of educators takes on its most obvious significance where the lives of teachers and their students intersect . . . The epistemology of teaching must encompass a pedagogy that goes far beyond the mechanics of teaching. It must combine generalizable principles of teaching, subject-specific instruction, sensitivity to the pervasive human qualities and potentials always involved.

(PRACTICING GOOD STEWARDSHIP)

If schools are to become the responsive, renewing institutions that they must, the teachers in them must be purposefully engaged in the renewal process.

(Goodlad, 1990b, p. 25)

One of Goodlad’s colleagues, Sirotnik (1990, p. 298 ff) adds his list of moral requirements: commitment to inquiry, knowledge, competence, caring, freedom, well-being, and social justice. In his own words:

The implications of moral commitments to inquiry, knowledge, competence, caring, and social justice go farther than curriculum and classroom experiences. They go to the very heart of the moral ecology of the organization itself. This can be readily seen in the extent to which these commitments are reflected in the work environment of educators outside of classroom teaching per se. To what extent does the organizational culture encourage and support educators as inquirers into what they do and how they might do it better? To what extent do educators consume, critique, and produce knowledge? To what extent do they engage competently in discourse and action to improve the conditions, activities and outcomes, of schooling? To what extent do educators care about themselves and each other in the same way they care (or ought to care) about students? To what extent are educators empowered to participate authentically in pedagogical matters of fundamental
importance – what schools are for and how teaching and learning can be aligned with this vision.

(p. 312)

At a policy level, growing concerns about educational equity and economic performance mirror the more particular issues just described. The restructuring movement, in intent at least, places a renewed focus on the education of all students, ‘especially those who have been ineffectively served in the past’ and attempts to reorganize schools for that purpose (Murphy, 1991, p. 60). Poverty, especially among children and women, racism, drug abuse, and horrendous social and personal problems all make the equity and excellence agenda more serious and poignant day by day (Hodgkinson, 1991).

My main point, however, is not to consider these matters at the institutional level – at least not at this time. The building block is the moral purpose of the individual teacher. Scratch a good teacher and you will find a moral purpose. At the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto, we recently examined why student teachers wanted to enter the profession. We have a post-baccalaureate fifth year program which results in certification after one year. It represents a particularly select group because there is a great demand to enter teaching in Ontario. For 1992/93 there were some 7000 applicants for 1100 positions. We use as admission criteria a combination of two factors weighted equally – academic grades, and an applicant ‘profile’ designed to capture experience and reasons for entering teaching. Because of the emphasis on experience, the average age is 29. In a small study we drew a random sample of 20 per cent of those in the 1991/92 year (Stiegelbauer, 1992). We set out to derive from the written profiles, what student teachers said about ‘why they want to become teachers’. The most frequently mentioned theme was ‘I want to make a difference’ reflected in the following sample of quotes:

I hope my contribution to teaching, along with other good teachers’ contributions, will help result in a better society for our future. I care about children and the way that children are learning.

Education is an important factor which determines the quality of an individual life and the future of society as a whole.

No other profession enables one the opportunity to provide such a positive impact on a child’s overall development.

I want to effect positive change in students’ lives.

I’ve always thought that if I could go into a classroom and make a difference in one kid’s life . . . then that’s what I am here for.

I am not suggesting that the mere statement of purpose is a straightforward matter. We cannot automatically take these statements at face value (although
our day-to-day experience with student teachers provides ample corroboration of
this theme), and there are different motivations for entering teaching among any
cohort: But I am saying that we have a kernel of truth here. Many, many
teachers enter the profession because they want to make a contribution – they
want to make a difference!

What happens here-on-in – in teacher preparation, induction, and throughout
the career – is a different story. Those with a non-existent or limited sense of
moral purpose are never called upon to demonstrate their commitment. Those
with moral potential, however inchoate, are never developed. Those with a
clearer sense of purpose are thwarted.

Hargreaves and Tucker (1991) address the latter issues in their treatment of
teaching and guilt. They quote Davies (1989, p. 49) ‘at the centre of the feeling
of guilt is self disappointment, a sense of having done badly, fallen short, of
having betrayed a personal ideal, standard or commitment’. Hargreaves and
Tucker (1991) also suggest that aspects of moral purpose like caring may be too
narrowly conceived. They argue that there is more to it than personal caring and
interpersonal sharing: ‘Care . . . carries with it social and moral responsibilities
as well as interpersonal ones’ (p. 12).

The argument is somewhat subtle, so let me make it more directly. If con-
cerns for making a difference remain at the one-to-one and classroom level, it
cannot be done. An additional component is required. Making a difference, must
be explicitly recast in broader social and moral terms. It must be seen that one
cannot make a difference at the interpersonal level unless the problem and solu-
tion are enlarged to encompass the conditions that surround teaching (such as
the collaborative school, chapter 4), and the skills and actions that would be
needed to make a difference. Without this additional and broader dimension the
best of teachers will end up as moral martyrs. In brief, care must be linked to a
broader social, public purpose, and the latter if it is to go anywhere must be pro-
pelled by the skills of change agentry.

We now come to the integrative theme of the chapter: teachers are agents of
educational change and societal improvement. This is not as highfalutin as it
sounds. I have already argued that they are part way there on a small scale with their
aspirations for making a difference. And they are there ecologically with expecta-
tions of reform constantly swirling around them. In addition to making moral
purpose more explicit (thereby clearly declaring what business we are in) educators
also need the tools to engage in change productively. Care and competence, equity
and excellence, social and economic development are natural allies in this quest.

Change agentry

I will have more to say about change agentry later. Here I want to outline some
of its elements at the individual level. How to produce more of it, and under
what conditions it can be further developed and sustained are the subjects of the
remaining chapters.
I define change agentry as being self-conscious about the nature of change and the change process. Those skilled in change are appreciative of its semi-unpredictable and volatile character, and they are explicitly concerned with the pursuit of ideas and competencies for coping with and influencing more and more aspects of the process toward some desired set of ends. They are open, moreover, to discovering new ends as the journey unfolds. In chapter 3, the complexities of the change process and some of the insights and lessons arising from the new mindset will be explored in detail. At this stage the question is, what conceptions and skills should the teacher of moral purpose possess in order to become a more effective change agent.

I see four core capacities required as a generative foundation for building greater change capacity: personal vision-building, inquiry, mastery, and collaboration. Each of these has its institutional counterpart: shared vision-building, organizational structures, norms and practices of inquiry; focus on organizational development and know-how, and collaborative work cultures (chapter 4). For reasons that should be increasingly clear throughout this book we need a dual approach working simultaneously on individual and institutional development. One cannot wait for the other. And if they are not working in concert, in particular settings, it is necessary to work on them separately looking for opportunities to make them connect.

The individual educator is a critical starting point because the leverage for change can be greater through the efforts of individuals, and each educator has some control (more than is exercised) over what he or she does, because it is one’s own motives and skills that are at question. Moreover, working individually on the four capacities about to be described makes it inevitable that there will be plenty of intersection of effort. I am not talking about leaders as change agents (more of that later) but of a more basic message: each and every educator must strive to be an effective change agent.

I start with personal vision-building because it connects so well with moral purpose contending with the forces of change. Shared vision is important in the long run, but for it to be effective you have to have something to share. It is not a good idea to borrow someone else’s vision. Working on vision means examining and reexamining, and making explicit to ourselves why we came into teaching. Asking ‘What difference am I trying to make personally?’ is a good place to start. For most of us it will not be trying to create something out of nothing. The reasons are there, but possibly buried under other demands or through years of disuse, or for the beginning teacher still underdeveloped. It is time to make them front and centre. We should not think of vision as something only for leaders. It is not a farfetched concept. It arises by pushing ourselves to articulate what is important to us as educators. Block (1987) emphasizes that ‘creating a vision forces us to take a stand for a preferred future’ (p. 102); it signifies our disappointment with what exists now. To articulate our vision of the future ‘is to come out of the closet with our doubts about the organization and the way it operates’ (p. 105). Indeed, it forces us to come out of the closet with doubts about ourselves and what we are doing.
Says Block writing more generally about organizations: ‘We all have strong values about doing work that has meaning, being of real service to our customers, treating other people well, and maintaining some integrity in the way we work’ (p. 123). Teachers, as I have indicated, are in one of the most ‘natural’ occupations for working on purpose and vision, because underneath that is what teaching is all about.

Several points in conclusion. First, I cannot stress enough that personal purpose and vision are the starting agenda. It comes from within, it gives meaning to work, and it exists independent of the particular organization or group we happen to be in.

Second, personal vision in teaching is too often implicit and dormant. It is often expressed negatively (what people want to get rid of, or not see happen) or narrowly in terms of means (more time, smaller classes). We need also to have positive images as driving forces. Teachers do not have to wallow in hubris in realizing that they are in a strategic position. Teachers should be pursuing moral purpose with greater and greater skill, conceptualizing their roles on a higher plane than they currently do.

Third, once it gets going, personal purpose is not as private as it sounds. Especially in moral occupations like teaching, the more one takes the risk to express personal purpose, the more kindred spirits one will find. A great deal of overlap will be experienced. Good ideas converge under conditions of communication, and collaboration. Individuals will find that they can convert their own desires into social agendas with others. Remember, personal purpose is not just self-centered, it has social dimensions as well such as working effectively with others, developing better citizens, and the like.

Fourth, personal purpose in teaching should be pushed and pushed until it makes a connection to social betterment in society. This is what it is at the one-to-one teacher-student level anyway. It has greater scope and meaning, and calls for wider action if we realize that societal improvement is really what education is about.

Fifth, and an extension of the previous point, is the realization that personal purpose in teaching is a change theme. Gardner (1964, p. 72) quotes Petrarch:

By citizens, of course, I mean those who love the existing order; for those who daily desire change are rebels and traitors, and against such a stern justice may take its course.

Today, the teacher who works for or allows the status quo is the traitor. Purposeful change is the new norm in teaching. It has been bouncing around within teaching for the past thirty years. It is time we realized that teachers above all are moral change agents in society – a role that must be pursued explicitly and aggressively.

Finally, and paradoxically, personal purpose is the route to organizational change. When personal purpose is diminished we see in its place groupthink and
a continual stream of fragmented surface, ephemeral innovations. We see in a phrase, the uncritical acceptance of innovation, the more things change, the more they remain the same. When personal purpose is present in numbers it provides the power for deeper change:

Cultures get changed in a thousand small ways, not by dramatic announcements from the boardroom. If we wait until top management gives leadership to the change we want to see, we miss the point. For us to have any hope that our own preferred future will come to pass, we provide the leadership.

(Block, 1987, pp. 97–8).

All four capacities of change agentry are intimately interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The second one – inquiry – is to say that the formation and enactment of personal purpose is not a static matter. It is a perennial quest. One of the new paradigm writers, Richard Pascale (1990) captures this precisely: ‘The essential activity for keeping our paradigm current is persistent questioning. I will use the term inquiry. Inquiry is the engine of vitality and self-renewal’ (p. 14). Stacey (1992) puts it this way: ‘A successful, innovative organization must have groups of people who can perform complex learning spontaneously. Because in open-ended situations no one can know what the group is trying to learn, the learning process must start without a clear statement of what is to be learned or how’ (p. 112).

Inquiry is necessary at the outset for forming personal purpose. While the latter comes from within, it must be fueled by information, ideas, dilemmas and other contentions in our environment. The beginner, by definition, is not experienced enough with the variety and needs of students, and with the operational goals and dilemmas of improvement to have clear ideas of purpose. Habits of ‘questioning, experimentation, and variety’ are essential (ibid). Reflective practice, personal journals, action research, working in innovative mentoring and peer settings are some of the strategies currently available (see Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991). Inquiry means internalizing norms, habits and techniques for continuous learning.

Learning is critical for the beginning teacher because of its formative timing. But we are talking about more than this – lifelong inquiry is the generative characteristic needed because post-modern environments themselves are constantly changing. We are probably never exactly right in the first place, but in any case we need the checks and balances of inquiry because in changing times our initial mental maps ‘cease to fit the territory’ (Pascale, 1990, p. 13). Thus, we need mechanisms to question and update our mental maps on a continuous basis. For Pascale, the question is the answer: ‘Our quest isn’t just a New Management Paradigm of the Nineties but a way of thinking that is continually open to the next paradigm and the next and the next . . . ’ (p. 265). What could be closer to change agentry?
The relationship between the first two capacities – personal vision and inquiry – involves the ability to simultaneously express and extend what you value. The genesis of change arises from this dynamic tension.

The capacity of mastery is another crucial ingredient. People must behave their way into new ideas and skills, not just think their way into them. Mastery and competence are obviously necessary for effectiveness, but they are also means (not just outcomes) for achieving deeper understanding. New mindsets arise from new mastery as much as the other way around. Mastery then is very much interrelated with vision and inquiry as is evident in this passage from Senge (1990):

Personal mastery goes beyond competence and skills, though it is grounded in competence and skills . . . It means approaching one’s life as a creative work, living life from a creative as opposed to a reactive viewpoint . . .

When personal mastery becomes a discipline – an activity we integrate into our lives – it embodies two underlying movements. The first is continually clarifying what is important to us (purpose and vision). We often spend too much time coping with problems along our path that we forget why we are on that path in the first place. The result is that we only have a dim, or even inaccurate, view of what’s really important to us.

The second is continually learning how to see current reality more clearly . . . The juxtaposition of vision (what we want) and a clear picture of current reality (where we are relative to what we want) generates what we call ‘creative tension’. ‘Learning’ in this context does not mean acquiring more information, but expanding the ability to produce results we truly want in life. It is lifelong generative learning.

(p. 142)

It has long been known that skill and know-how are central to successful change, so it is surprising how little attention we pay to it beyond one-shot workshops and disconnected training. Mastery involves strong initial teacher education, and continuous staff development throughout the career, but it is more than this when we place it in the perspective of comprehensive change agentry. It is a learning habit that permeates everything we do. It is not enough to be exposed to new ideas. We have to know where new ideas fit, and we have to become skilled in them, not just like them.

Block (1987) says that the goal is:

(to learn) as much as you can about the activity you are engaged in. There’s pride and satisfaction in understanding your function better than anyone else and better than you thought possible.

(p. 86)
We also know that inquiry, learning, and mastery are intrinsically anxiety producing: ‘Almost every important learning experience we have ever had has been stressful. Those issues that create stress for us give us clues about the uncooked seeds within us that need attention’ (ibid, p. 191). This means that the capacity to suspend belief, take risks, and experience the unknown are essential to learning. We can be more selective in what we try (as distinct from accepting all change) but in exploring selected new ideas we must be patient enough to learn more about them and to look for longer term consequences before drawing conclusions.

Rosenholtz (1989) found that teachers in schools characterized by these ‘learning enriched’ habits, not only learned more and became better at what they did, but they became more confident. The more accustomed one becomes at dealing with the unknown, the more one understands that creative breakthroughs are always preceded by periods of cloudy thinking, confusion, exploration, trial and stress; followed by periods of excitement, and growing confidence as one pursues purposeful change, or copes with unwanted change.

Back to Senge (1990):

People with a high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode . . . personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. And they are deeply self-confident. Paradoxical? Only for those who do not see that ‘the journey is the reward’.

(p. 142)

In order to be effective at change, mastery is essential, both in relation to specific innovations and as a personal habit. New competencies and know-how are requirements for better understanding and judging the new and are the route to greater effectiveness.

Collaboration is the fourth capacity. Aside from the power of collaboration which we take up in later chapters collaboration is essential for personal learning (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991). There is a ceiling effect to how much we can learn if we keep to ourselves. The ability to collaborate – on both a small and large scale – is becoming one of the core requisites of postmodern society. Personal strength, as long as it is open minded (i.e., inquiry oriented) goes hand-in-hand with effective collaboration – in fact, without personal strength collaboration will be more form than content. Personal mastery and group mastery feed on each other in learning organizations. People need one another to learn and to accomplish things.

Small-scale collaboration involves the attitude and capacity to form productive mentoring and peer relationships, team building and the like. On a larger scale, it consists of the ability to work in organizations that form cross-institu-
tional partnerships such as school district, university and school-community and business agency alliances, as well as global relationships with individuals and organizations from other cultures.

In short, without collaborative skills and relationships it is not possible to learn and to continue to learn as much as you need in order to be an agent for societal improvement.

In summary, skills in change agentry are needed, because the processes of improvement are dynamically complex, and as we shall see, these processes are to a certain extent unknowable in advance. Chaos in a scientific sense is not disorder, but a process in which contradictions and complexities play themselves out coalescing into clusters (see Gleick, 1987, Stacey, 1992, Wheatley, 1992). Scientists talk about ‘strange attractors’ as forces that pull chaotic states into periodic patterns. Moral purpose is one of the change processes’ strange attractors because the pursuit and pull of meaning can help organize complex phenomena as they unfold. Strange attractors do not guide the process (because it is not guidable), they capitalize on it. Without moral purpose, aimlessness and fragmentation prevail. Without change agentry, moral purpose stagnates. The two are dynamically interrelated, not only because they need each other, but because they quite literally define (and redefine) each other as they interact.

I have argued that moral purpose and change agentry, far from being strange bedfellows, should be married. They keep each other honest. They feed on, and fulfill one another. Moreover, together they are generative in that they have an in-built capacity to self-correct and to continually refigure what should be done. Not only are they effective at getting things done, but they are good at getting the right things done.

I have also claimed that moral purpose and change agentry separately, but especially in combination, are as yet society’s great untapped resources for improvement. We need to make them explicit, and make them part and parcel of personal and collective agendas. We need to go public with a new rationale for why teaching and teacher development is so fundamental to the future of society. We need to begin to practice on a wide scale what is implicit in the moral purpose of teaching. To do so we need the capacities of change agentry. And we need to know a lot more about the complexities of the change process.

References


VALUES AND RELIGION

In common parlance we speak of organizations as if they were real. Neither scholar nor layman finds difficulty with talk in which organizations “serve functions”, “adapt to their environment”, “clarify their goals” or “act to implement policy”. What it is that serves, adapts, clarifies or acts seldom comes into question. Underlying widely accepted notions about organizations, therefore, stands the apparent assumption that organizations are not only real but also distinct from the actions, feelings and purposes of people. This mode of thought provides the platform for a long-standing debate about organizations and people. Is it organizations which oppress and harass people or is it fallible people who fail to carry out the well-intentioned aims of organizations? The debate continues on issues such as whether it is better to abolish organizations, to reshape them along more humane lines, or to train people to recognize the goals of organizations more clearly and to serve them more faithfully.

In contrast, this paper rejects the dualism which conveniently separates people and organizations; instead it argues that a mistaken belief in the reality of organizations has diverted our attention from human action and intention as the stuff from which organizations are made. As a result, theory and research have frequently set out on a false path in trying to understand organizations and have given us a misplaced confidence in our ability to deal with their problems. If we see organizations and individuals as inextricably intertwined, it may not be so easy to alter organizations, or to lead them, or to administer them without touching something unexpectedly human. More importantly, the view that people and organizations are inseparable requires us to reassess the commonly accepted claim that there exists a body of theory and principle which provides the touchstone for effective administrative action in organizations. The belief in the reality and independence of organizations permits us to separate the study of organizations from the study of people and their particular values, habits and
beliefs. The common view in organization studies holds that people occupy organizations in somewhat the same way as they inhabit houses. The tenants may change but, apart from wear and tear, the basic structure remains and in some way shapes the behaviour of people within. Studies have therefore focused largely on the variety of organizational structures and their effects upon people. These structures are usually seen as invariant over time and place, as universal forms into which individuals may move from time to time, bringing with them idiosyncrasies which colour their performance of the roles prescribed by the organization (Getzels, 1958, p. 156).

Organizational science and the profession of administration

The science of organization has found its way into studies of schools and influenced the training of those who are to administer schools. In this science, schools are a variety of the species organization which can be distinguished chiefly by the nature of their goals and their bureaucratic structure (Bidwell, 1965, pp. 973–4). The science of organization is, therefore, assumed to provide useful knowledge about schools even as it does about other kinds of organizations. Accepting this position, Griffiths (1964, p. 3) rejects “the opinion that educational administration is a unique activity, differing greatly from business, military, hospital and other varieties of administration” and endorses (p. 118) a “general theory which enables the researcher to describe, explain, and predict a wide range of human behavior within organizations”.

In a profession of administration based upon organizational science, the task of the administrator is to bring people and organizations together in a fruitful and satisfying union. In so doing, the work of the administrator carries the justification of the larger social order (Getzels, 1958, p. 156), since he works to link day-to-day activity in organizations to that social order. In schools, the administrator may be director or superintendent, principal or headmaster, department head or supervisor. Whatever their titles, their tasks are always the same. They bring people and resources together so that the goals of the organization and presumably of an encompassing social order may be met (Gregg 1957, pp. 269–70). No matter what circumstances he finds himself in, the administrator mediates between the organization and the people within it. The task is difficult; he needs help with it. As the argument runs, such help is fortunately to be found in the emerging science of organizations. Since organizations do have a human component, knowledge about organizations is usually described as a social science. But social or not, this science like all others is seen as universal, timeless, and imperfect only in its incompleteness.

The claims for a science of organization and for a profession of administration based upon that science have in recent times made a marked impact upon education. For over two decades now, scholars have attempted to improve education by applying organization theory to the conduct of affairs in schools and
by training educational administrators in that science (Culbertson and Shibles, 1973). Celebrating its emancipation from the press of immediate practical affairs (Griffiths, 1964), the field turned instead to discovery of the basic relationships and principles which underlie day-to-day concerns. The professor supplanted the practitioner as the source of valid knowledge about administration. If practitioners did not know or accept that they were no longer masters of the basic knowledge which underlay their craft, it did not matter. Even the scholar-practitioner, Chester Barnard, in introducing Simon’s classic writings claimed that it was the scholar’s knowledge of the “abstract principles of structure” rather than the practitioner’s knowledge of “concrete behavior” which leads to an understanding of “organizations of great variety” (Simon, 1957, pp. xlii–xlv). Things are not what they seem, in educational administration as in other realms of reality. We need the scientist and his theory to interpret them to us. His knowledge, though it may be incomplete and is certainly subject to improvement, has the virtue of universal applicability. Acting on this conviction, scholars in educational administration have sought to understand how organizations really work and to use this knowledge towards the improvement of educational practice.

A survey of representative writing in educational administration (see Campbell and Gregg, 1957; Halpin, 1958; Griffiths, 1964; Getzels, Lipham and Campbell, 1968; Milstein and Belasco, 1973) reveals that inquiry in this field has leaned heavily on the belief that a general science of organizations has provided the needed theoretical underpinnings for understanding schools and for the training of the administrators who are to run them. While a general theory of organizations provided the rationale for understanding schools, the sister social sciences provided the research tools and the “sensitizing concepts” needed to identify and resolve their administrative problems (Downey and Enns, 1963; Tope et al., 1965). Since this happy combination of theory and method yields an understanding of organizations as they really are, it then becomes possible to say how educational administrators may be trained to improve organizations and administrative practice within them (Culbertson et al., 1973). Although the claim is seldom if ever made explicitly, this line of reasoning, linking a general theory of organizations to the training of administrators, implies that we have at hand both the theory and method which permit us to improve schools and the quality of whatever it is that goes on within them. That change in schools proceeds without assistance from an applied organization theory, or indeed, in contravention to it (Fullan, 1972), usually fails to shake our faith in such theory.

It will surely come as no surprise to anyone who examines the references cited to this point that most of them are American in origin, since it was in the United States that the movement to conceive educational administration as a social science arose in the late 1940s. A decade later the movement had taken hold in Canada and some time later in Australia and Britain. As the concept of educational administration as a profession and social science gains ever wider recognition and acceptance, it becomes appropriate to examine the theory and
assumptions which underlie the field. In particular we need to ask whether the theory and assumptions still appear to hold in the settings where they were developed before they were recommended and applied to totally new settings. Such an examination is not only appropriate but essential in the face of an alternative view which sees organizations not as structures subject to universal laws but as cultural artefacts dependent upon the scientific meaning and intention of people within them. This alternative view, which stems from nineteenth-century German idealism (Deutscher, 1973, p. 326), bears the awkward name phenomenology (Phillipson, 1972), though it might with equal justification be called the method of understanding, as it is in the work of Max Weber (Eldridge, 1971, p. 28). What we call the view is not important. What matters is that there exists a body of theory and assumption which runs squarely at odds with that which has provided the ideological underpinnings of educational administration as it has developed over the past two decades. The ideological conflict between these views rests on two fundamentally different ways of looking at the world. One is the established view both in the study of organizations generally and in the study of educational administration. In this paper, I will outline the alternative view and recommend its application both in organization and administrative theory.

It is surely no accident that the alternative view has its roots in European philosophy and social science. And it is at least noteworthy that this view has a current flowering in Britain, where it is exerting a strong influence in both sociology (Filmer et al., 1972; Dawe, 1970; Brittan, 1973) and in education (Young, 1971; Cosin et al., 1971). I do not wish to drive the differences in the views to the point of a spurious contrast between American and European social science. The alternative view which I will outline has its supporters in the United States too (Garfinkel, 1967; Cicourel, 1964; Louch, 1966; Wilson, 1970). Two points should be made here. First, and of lesser importance, phenomenology has yet to influence the study of organizations in the United States despite the existence of a long-standing phenomenological tradition in some sociological schools of thought in that country. In Britain, both theory and research on organizations reflect the phenomenological perspective (Tipton, 1973; Silverman, 1970). Second, and more important since it relates to the heart of the issue, the existence of the two competing ideologies illustrates the fundamental contention of phenomenology that there are no fixed ways for construing the social world around us. These ways are products of particular settings and circumstances rather than expressions of universal ideals and values. Our concepts of organizations must therefore rest upon the views of people in particular times and places, and any effort to understand them in terms of a single set of ideas, values and laws must be doomed to failure.

The alternative view rejects the assumption, underlying much of organization theory, that organizations belong to a single species which behaves in predictable ways according to common laws. This view finds forceful expression in the work of Mayntz (1964), a European scholar of organizations:
Propositions which hold for such diverse phenomena as an army, a trade union, and a university ... must necessarily be either trivial or so abstract as to tell hardly anything of interest about concrete reality ... After all, the distinct character of an organization is certainly determined, among other things, by the nature, interests, and values of those who are instrumental in maintaining it.

If people are inherently part of organizations, if organizations themselves are expressions of how people believe they should relate to each other, we then have good grounds to question an organization theory which assumes the universality of organizational forms and effects. This argument suggests that organizations theorists have been so busy defining the forest that they have failed to notice differences among the trees—and worse, have ignored objects in the forest that are not trees at all. It suggests, too, that an academic industry which trains administrators by disclosing to them the social-scientific secrets of how organizations work or how policy should be made indulges at best in a premature hope and at worst in a delusion.

Two views of social reality

The conflicting views on organizations of which I have been speaking represent vastly different ways of looking at social reality and rest on sharply contrasting processes for interpreting it. These contrasts are summarized in Table 1 in which I have compared the two views and suggested how they differ with respect to a number of critical issues. Each of these issues has implications for the theory of organizations and for research undertaken in line with such theory. Necessarily then, these contrasts also have implications for a number of practical questions in the conduct of affairs in organizations. Some of these will be explored in the concluding section of this paper. Although there are no generally accepted names for identifying the two views contrasted in Table 1, it may suffice to note that the crux of the issue is whether social reality is based upon naturally existing systems or upon human invention of social forms. Social reality is usually construed as a natural and necessary order which, as it unfolds, permits human society to exist and people within it to meet their basic needs. Alternatively, social reality may be construed as images in the mind of man having no necessary or inevitable forms except as man creates them and endows them with reality and authority. In the one perspective, organizations are natural objects—systems of being which man discovers; in the other, organizations are cultural artefacts which man shapes within limits given only by his perception and the boundaries of his life as a human animal.

The systems notion posits an organizational force or framework which encompasses and gives order to people and events within it. The system—unseen behind everyday affairs—is real; it is the organization. The force of
Table 1  Alternative bases for interpreting social reality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of comparison</th>
<th>A natural system</th>
<th>Human invention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical basis</td>
<td>Realism: the world exists and is knowable as it really is. Organizations are real entities with a life of their own.</td>
<td>Idealism: the world exists but different people construe it in very different ways. Organizations are invented social reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of social science</td>
<td>Discovering the universal laws of society and human conduct within it.</td>
<td>Discovering how different people interpret the world in which they live.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic units of social reality</td>
<td>The collectivity: society or organizations.</td>
<td>Individuals acting singly or together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of understanding</td>
<td>Identifying conditions or relationships which permit the collectivity to exist. Conceiving what these conditions and relationships are.</td>
<td>Interpretations of the subjective meanings which individuals place upon their action. Discovering the subjective rules for such action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>A rational edifice built by scientists to explain human behaviour.</td>
<td>Sets of meanings which people use to make sense of their world and behaviour within it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Experimental or quasi-experimental validation of theory.</td>
<td>The search for meaningful relationships and the discovery of their consequences for action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Abstraction of reality, especially through mathematical models and quantitative analysis.</td>
<td>The representation of reality for purposes of comparison. Analysis of language and meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td>Ordered. Governed by a uniform set of values and made possible only by those values.</td>
<td>Conflicted. Governed by the values of people with access to power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations</td>
<td>Goal oriented. Independent of people. Instruments of order in society serving both society and the individual.</td>
<td>Dependent upon people and their goals. Instruments of power which some people control and can use to attain ends which seem good to them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued
“natural” in the descriptor is to evoke the view common in systems theory that organizational forms are shaped by powerful forces which in large measure act independently of man. The organizations so formed will be right and good, if the natural forces are allowed free play. Mayntz (1964, pp. 105, 115) has noted that such views in which an unseen organizational hand works for the greater social good are likely to be most congenial to scholars who share a faith in the ideals of the Western liberal democracies. In identifying organizations as social inventions, the alternative view identifies organization with man’s image of himself and with the particular and distinctive ways in which people see the world around them and their place in it. This view is the perspective of phenomenology. In it organizations are the perceived social reality within which people make decisions and take actions which seem right and proper to them. (Greenfield, 1973, p. 557). The heart of this view is not a single abstraction called organization, but rather the varied perceptions by individuals of what they can, should, or must do in dealing with others within the circumstances in which they find themselves. It is noteworthy that this tradition—the decision-making tradition (Cyert and March, 1963; Simon, 1964) in organization theory—is frequently cited in scholarly writing, but seldom followed in analyses of organizations. This tradition, culminating currently in the creative insights of James March (1972) into organizational realities, reaches back into the work of Simon (1957; March and Simon, 1958) and thence into the work of Max Weber (trans. Gerth and Mills, 1946) and the German philosophers and sociologists of the phenomenological tradition (Deutscher, 1973, p. 327; Silverman, 1972, pp. 184–5).

What are some of the particular issues involved in the contrast between the systems and phenomenological views? These are suggested in Table 1 where the two views are compared on a number of points. In the discussion which follows,
the phenomenological view is emphasized, since it is assumed that the foundations of the systems view are the more familiar of the two views.

**Philosophical basis**

The systems view assumes that the world is knowable as it is. Although the acquisition of such knowledge requires the intervention and help of scientists, theorists and scholars, there exists an ultimate reality which may be discovered by application of the scientific method and similar forms of rational analysis. In systems theory, the prevailing image of the organization is that of an organism. Organizations exist; they are observable entities which have a life of their own. Organizations are like people, although sometimes the image is more that of the recalcitrant child rather than the mature adult. In any case, the theory endows organizations with many human properties. They have goals towards which they direct their activities; they respond and adapt to their environments. Nor can organizations escape the fate of organisms ill-adapted to their environments. Indeed, the fate of organizations depends upon their ability to adapt to an increasingly complex and turbulent environment. Following the Darwinian logic inherent in their image of the organization, systems theorists (Bennis, 1968) see small, quick-witted, democratic organizations replacing the ponderous, bureaucratic forms now expiring around us. The fact that bureaucratic organizations appear as large, robust and formidable as ever does not appear to shake belief in organizations as living entities subject to stringent laws permitting only the fittest to survive. Indeed, our belief in the living organization is likely to be so strong that we fail to notice that the systems theorists have shifted from telling us about the way organizations are to telling us how they ought to be. “If only organizations were adapted to their environments,” the argument runs, “imagine how quickly these bureaucratic forms would disappear.” In thinking about the dazzling prospect of a world in which organizations were creatures closely adapted to a benign, well-intentioned environment, we forget that the role of theory is to tell us the way things are rather than how they ought to be or how we should like them to be. Our image of the organization as an entity, as a living entity, rests upon an analogy. But we fail to draw the conclusion (Willer, 1967, p. 33) that the analogy is useless when discrepancies appear between the image and the phenomena observed.

The phenomenological view of reality contrasts sharply with that of systems theory. This view has its origin in the distinction Kant drew between the noumenal world (the world as it is) and the phenomenal world (the world as we see it). For Kant, a world of reality does indeed exist, but man can never perceive it directly; reality is always glossed over with human interpretations which themselves become the realities to which man responds. And man is always learning, always interpreting, always inventing the “reality” which he sees about him. In popular form, the Kantian philosophy has been expressed as follows: “Man does not create his world, but he does make it.” It therefore comes as no surprise to the phenomenologist that people are killed by “empty” guns. But for the phe-
nomenologist, beliefs are always of greater consequence than facts in shaping behaviour. The bullet may indeed be in the gun, but it is the individual’s belief about an empty chamber which causes him idly to pull the trigger. Deutscher (1973) summarizes the phenomenological view as follows:

The phenomenological orientation always sees reality as constructed by men in the process of thinking about it. It is the social version of Descartes’ *Cogito, ergo sum*. For the phenomenologist it becomes *Cogitamus, ergo est*—we think, therefore it is!

[1973, p. 328]

**The role of social science**

The implications of the phenomenological view are of critical importance in shaping our views both of the social sciences and of a study of organizations founded on them, as may be seen in the contrasting positions taken by Weber and Durkheim (Bendix and Roth, 1971, pp. 286–97). For Weber, working within his “method of understanding”, “there is no such thing as a collective personality which ‘acts’”, only individuals acting on their interpretations of reality. In contrast, Durkheim, convinced of an ultimate, knowable social reality, sought to eliminate the perceptions of individuals and to find “the explanation of social life in the nature of society itself” (Bendix and Roth, 1971, p. 291). Thus Durkheim spent his life building a sociology around notions of “elemental” forms which provide the invariable units out of which social life is built. Weber, on the other hand, explored the ideas, doctrines and beliefs with which men endowed their organizations and which provided the motivation for action within them. Durkheim’s path leads to generality, abstraction and universality in the study of organizations; Weber’s leads to the particularistic, the concrete, and the experience-based study of organizations. Durkheim’s path leads to an ascetic study of organizations, Weber’s to one which smells of reality.

The phenomenological view leads to the concept of organizations as “invented social reality” (Greenfield, 1973, p. 556) and to the paradox that, having invented such reality, man is perfectly capable of responding to it as though it were not of his own invention (Silverman, 1970, p. 133). More basically, however, the phenomenological perspective questions the possibility of objectivity in what Weber calls “the cultural sciences”. While it is possible for such sciences to pursue inquiry within a logically rigorous methodology and for them to take into account certain basic social facts such as where people live and what they do, it is not possible for cultural scientists to give us “a direct awareness of the structure of human actions in all their reality” (Eldridge, 1971, p. 16). Thus the notion of discovering the ultimate laws which govern social reality becomes an ever receding fantasy which retreats as we attempt to approach it. Such bogus ‘laws’ as the law of supply and demand were, both for Weber and Durkheim, “maxims for action”, advice to people on how to protect their interests if they wished to be “fair and
logical” (Eldridge, 1971, p. 18). In Weber’s view, then, it is impossible for the
cultural sciences to penetrate behind social perception to reach objective social
reality. Paradoxically, this limitation on the cultural sciences is also their strength,
since it permits them to do what is never possible in the physical sciences: the
cultural scientist may enter into and take the viewpoint of the actor whose behavi-
our is to be explained.

We can accomplish something which is never attainable in the natural
sciences, namely the subjective understanding of the action of compo-
nent individuals . . . We do not ‘understand’ the behaviour of cells, but
can only observe the relevant functional relationships and generalize on
the basis of these observations .


While the cultural scientist may not discover ultimate social reality, he can
interpret what people see as social reality and, indeed, he must do so according
to a consistent, logical, and rigorous methodology (Eldridge, 1971, pp. 9–10). It
is such a discipline for interpreting human experience which provides the
science in the cultural scientist’s work, not his ability to discover ultimate truths
about social structure. Thus the purpose of social science is to understand social
reality as different people see it and to demonstrate how their views shape the
action which they take within that reality. Since the social sciences cannot pen-
etrate to what lies behind social reality, they must work directly with man’s defi-
nitions of reality and with the rules he devises for coping with it. While the
social sciences do not reveal ultimate truth, they do help us to make sense of our
world. What the social sciences offer is explanation, clarification and demystifi-
cation of the social forms which man has created around himself. In the view of
some (Dawe, 1970, p. 211), the social sciences may lead us to enlightenment
and to liberation from the forces which oppress man. In the phenomenological
view, these forces stem from man himself, not from abstractions which lie
behind social reality and control man’s behaviour within that reality.

Theory about what?
The two views give rise to opposing theories about the world and the way it
works, since each sees reality in different kinds of things. Each approaches
theory building from a point of view which is normative rather than descriptive.
In the natural systems view, the basic reality is the collectivity; reality is in
society and its organizations. Assuming the existence of an ultimate social
reality, the role of theory is to say how it hangs together or how it might be
changed so that it would hang together even more effectively (Merton, 1957;
Etzioni, 1960). Thus functional analysis—the theory associated with the systems
view—becomes a justification of the way social reality is organized rather than
an explanation of it. In this view, the theory becomes more important than the
research because it tells us what we can never perceive directly with our senses: it tells us the ultimate reality behind the appearance of things and it establishes a view which is essentially beyond confirmation or disproof by mere research.

The phenomenological view begins with the individual and seeks to understand his interpretations of the world around him. The theory which emerges must be grounded (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in data from particular organizations. That these data will be glossed with the meanings and purposes of those people and places is the whole point of this philosophical view. Thus the aim of scientific investigation is to understand how that glossing of reality goes on at one time and place and to compare it with what goes on in different times and places. Similarly organizations are to be understood in terms of people’s beliefs about their behaviour within them. If we are to understand organizations, we must understand what people within them think of as right and proper to do. Within this framework we would certainly not expect people everywhere to have the same views. In fact, it is the existence of differences in belief structures which provides us with the key to interpreting them. People are not likely to think of their own views as strange. Indeed it is only in contrast to other views that we come to understand our own. Theory thus becomes the sets of meanings which yield insight and understanding of people’s behaviour. These theories are likely to be as diverse as the sets of human meanings and understandings which they are to explain. In the phenomenological perspective, the hope for a universal theory of organizations collapses into multifaceted images of organizations as varied as the cultures which support them.

The view of theory as arising from our understanding is expressed by Walsh (1972):

> The point about the social world is that it has been preselected and preinterpreted by its members in terms of a series of commonsense assumptions which constitute a taken-for-granted scheme for reference . . . In this manner factual reality is conferred upon the social world by the routine interpretive practices of its members. The implication of this is that every man is a practical theorist when it comes to investigating the social world, and not just the sociologist.

[p. 26]

Thus, the naturalist tries to devise general theories of social behaviour and to validate them through ever more complex research methodologies which push him further from the experience and understanding of the everyday world. The phenomenologist works directly with such experience and understanding to build his theory upon them. As Kuhn (1970) points out, our theories are not just possible explanations of reality; they are sets of instructions for looking at reality. Thus choice among theories and among approaches to theory building involves normative and—especially in the social sciences—moral questions. Choice among them is in part a matter of preference, but choice may also be
made on the basis of which theories direct us to the most useful problems and which provide the most helpful insights into them.

**Research and methodology**

In the systems view, research is directed at confirming theory. Theory, in this view, is something which scientists build, largely from the armchair, by thinking up what must be the ultimate explanation for the phenomena observed. Contrary to accepted opinion, Kuhn (1970, p. 16) has argued that such theory is never open to disproof and serves instead as a “consensual agreement among scientists about what procedures shall constitute scientific activity and hence which explanations will count as scientific explanations” (Walsh, 1972, p. 25).

From the phenomenological perspective research, theory and methodology must be closely associated. Theory must arise out of the process of inquiry itself and be intimately connected with the data under investigation. In this view, the aim of theory should be explanation and clarification. Thus research and theory which fulfils this aim must depend not only upon what is being explained but also upon to whom it is explained, and with what. Louch (1966) argues this view as follows:

> Explanation, in Wittgenstein’s phrase, is a family of cases joined together only by a common aim, to make something plain or clear. This suggests that a coherent account of explanation could not be given without attending to the audience to whom an explanation is offered or the source of puzzlement that requires an explanation to be given. There are many audiences, many puzzles.

[p. 233]

Research in the naturalist mode is prone to use experimental methods to establish relationships among variables. The research often substitutes mathematical models for the substantive theoretical model and is satisfied if statistically significant relationships are found among the variables of the mathematical model. The aim is to relate variables x and y, usually with a host of other variables “held constant”. Little effort is spent on determining whether x and y exist in any form which is meaningful to or has consequences for actors within a social situation. Nor is there much effort to ask whether holding one or more variables constant yields an interpretable result among those remaining. In physical systems, we can understand what it means to hold volume constant, for example, while we raise the temperature of a gas and observe the effect on pressure. But what does it mean when we come to a social system and speak, as some researchers do, of holding social class constant while we observe the effect of school resources upon achievement? Whereas the physicist manipulates materials and apparatus in specific, understandable ways, the social researcher frequently makes no intervention at all in the social system which he is attempt-
ing to explain. Instead, he does the manipulation of variables in his mind, or in the workings of his computer. Can we rely on the suggestion that if we manipulate variables in a social system, we will get the same results the researcher gets from his intellectual manipulation of them? The doubt is growing that we will not, as is apparent, for example, from critiques of school effects research (Spady, 1973, pp. 139–40) demonstrating that schools may account for a great deal or virtually nothing at all of pupil achievement, depending on which of several alternative but statistically acceptable procedures the researcher chooses for his analysis.

Phenomenologically based research, on the other hand, aims at dealing with the direct experience of people in specific situations. Therefore the case study and comparative and historical methods become the preferred means of analysis. These methods are perhaps found in their most developed form in the work Weber did in building ideal types for organizational analysis. These types should be seen as “characterizations or impressions of ways of thought and styles of living” which permit comparison and understanding of them (Louch, 1966, p. 172). What Weber did in building these ideal types was to worm his way into the heads of bureaucrats, clerics and commercial men in order to “discern logical connections among propositions expressing [their] beliefs about the world” (Louch, 1966, p. 173). The moral consequences of these beliefs may also be made plain and checked against “reality”. The close connection among theory, research and ethics thus becomes obvious.

Thus an organizational theory based upon understanding rejects the emphasis which much of contemporary social science places upon quantification, more complex mathematical models, and bigger number crunchers in the shape of better and faster computers. As Burns (1967, p. 127) has pointed out, better manipulation of numbers cannot substitute for the emptiness of the concepts to which they apply. This fixation on numbers without concern for the concepts they are thought to represent leads to a sickness of social science which Sorokin has called “quantophrenia” and which Rothkopf (1973, p. 6) likens to the Leerlauf reactions described by Lorenz. In these reactions, animals go through elaborate stereotyped performances for hunting or mating when no other living creature is there to see or respond to the performances.

If we move towards improved understanding in our research we might change our image of what constitutes the essential research tool and supplant the computer with Weber’s notion of the ideal type. An ideal type provides us with an image of a social situation at a particular time and place. We may then surround this image with others made of different organizations or of the same organization at other times. By looking at these images comparatively by seeing them almost as the frames of a motion picture, we begin to understand our world better and to comprehend its differences and the processes of change occurring within it. This direction in theory and research leads to an investigation of language and the categories it contains for understanding the world (Bernstein, 1971a; 1971b). It leads also to an investigation of the processes (Scheff, 1973;
Garfinkel, 1964) by which we negotiate with each other and so come to define what we will pay attention to in our environment and our organizations.

**Society and its organizations**

In the systems view, the problem of society is the problem of order. Without society and its organizations, chaos and anarchy would result. The social order is seen as a basically well-working system governed by universal values. In the phenomenological view, the organization as an entity striving to achieve a single goal or set of goals is resolved into the meaningful actions of individuals. Organizations do not think, act, have goals or make decisions. People do (Georgiou, 1973; Greenfield, 1973), but they do not all think, act and decide according to preordained goals. Thus the notion of the organization as a necessary order-maintaining instrument falls and the notion of organization as the expression of particular human ideologies takes its place. In this way, the problem of order becomes the problem of control (Dawe, 1970, p. 212). Or, to put the question otherwise, the problem is not whether order shall be maintained but rather who maintains it, how, and with what consequences. The image which this view calls to mind is the organization as a battlefield rather than the organization as an instrument of order. People strive to impose their interpretations of social reality upon others and to gain command of the organizational resources which will permit them to do so. The warfare in this battlefield usually takes the form of linguistic attack and defence, although the physical forms of warfare fit just as comfortably within the perspective.

Take as an example this exchange between a principal and a new social worker after the social worker had spent considerable time and effort counselling a student who had been persistently truant and tardy.2

P: It was really simpler and more effective in the old days when the truant officer just went straight to the student’s home and brought him back to school.

SW: Actually, I do the work truant officers did, but I do it a different way.

P: That may be so, but we used to get results more quickly. If the students wouldn’t come to school, we expelled them. They had to recognize our authority or quit school. That’s what I mean by simple. Now everything is complicated. Why can’t we deal with these cases without a lot of red tape?

SW: I prefer to see my work as treatment. The aim is not to wind up a case quickly but to keep the student in school and learning. And in any case, Mr. Principal, legally I am the truant officer and you need my backing to expel a student for truancy.

It is surely not hard to see in this exchange a battle going on over what the job of the social worker should be and behind that a struggle over how the school should define its responsibilities to students. The issue is how the job
of the social worker shall be defined and who shall control the school’s power of expulsion. Each of the protagonists is inviting (and threatening) the other to accept a particular definition of the situation and the way it is proper to act within it.

The conflict view of organizations thus links up neatly with the decision-making tradition in organizational analysis. In a recent significant contribution Perrow (1972, pp. 145–76) demonstrates how this tradition, developed brilliantly by March and Simon (1958), complements the insights of Weber. A major concern of Weber was for the way in which the power of bureaucracies would be used outside the organization. March and Simon demonstrate how power may be marshalled within the organization. As Perrow points out (p. 196), the supposed plight of professionals within bureaucracies is a minor complaint compared to what others have suffered from professionals who have been able to act out their ideological beliefs through their control of organizations.

We should also be grateful to Perrow (p. 90ff) for pointing out the contrasts between Barnard’s theory and his practice. For Barnard, (1938, pp. 46–61) organizations were by their very nature cooperative enterprises. In this respect, Barnard was a good systems theorist whose theory dealt with abstractions about organizations and not with the ideologies of those who ran them. In an astonishing case study, Barnard (1948) spoke to a group of the unemployed who had recently seen “police clubs flying, women trampled, men knocked down” (p. 64) in the following terms:

I’ll be God damned if I will do anything for you on the basis that you ought to have it just because you want it, or because you organize mass meetings, or what you will. I’ll do my best to do what ought to be done, but I won’t give you a nickel on any other basis.

[pp. 73–4]

In his commentary on this situation, Barnard makes it very clear that he realized he was in a position of conflict over ideology. But his theoretical concern lies not with the ideologies, but with his proposition that men under “states of tension” will do what is “utterly contrary to that which is normally observed in them” (p. 62). While he explains in detail how he won the ideological battle which gave him power to decide what the men “ought to have”, he makes no mention of his final decision. The content of decisions is not important in systems theory. However, Barnard does take pains to denigrate the ideology of the unemployed workers and their claims for better treatment. He also considers in a footnote (pp. 73–4) whether a person of “superior position” should swear in front of those of “inferior status”, and confides that “the oath was deliberate and accompanied by hard pounding on the table”.

In this example, Barnard as theorist merely adds the notion of “states of tension” to his earlier developed principles of cooperative action in organizations. Do these ideas tell us the significant aspects about organizational life
with Chester Barnard? The phenomenologist holds that Barnard’s ideology is the significant variable shaping the experience of many people in the organizations which he controlled. Without understanding the ideological issues involved in an organization, and in particular without knowing what ideology is in control, the general principles of organization mean relatively little in terms of what people experience in an organization.

**Organizational pathologies and cures**

The systems theorist looks for pathologies in the body of the organization itself. These stem from ill adaptations of the organization to its environment, to the ultimate goals it should serve, or to the needs of individuals. The solution to these pathologies is obvious: change the structure of the organization to improve the adaptation and thus the performance of the organization. The phenomenologist, on the other hand, sees structure as simply the reflection of human beliefs. If there are problems in organizations—and problems are certainly to be expected—they must therefore rest in conflicting beliefs held by individuals. Solutions to such problems cannot be found simply by changing structures. The root of the problem lies in people’s beliefs and the ability to act upon these beliefs.

Thus the argument that we must make organizations more liveable, more congruent with human values and motives, ignores the fact that it is one set of human motives and values which is in conflict with another set of motives and values. There is no abstract entity called organization which can be held accountable—only other people.

[Schein, 1973, pp. 780–1]

Our penchant for thinking about organizations as entities, as things with a life of their own, blinds us to their complexity and to the human actions which constitute the façade which we call organization. It leads us to believe that we must change some abstract thing called “organization” rather than the beliefs of people about what they should do and how they should behave with each other. The more closely we look at organizations, the more likely we are to find expressions of diverse human meanings. The focus of our efforts to improve organizations should not be, “What can be done to change the structure of this organization?” but, “Whose intentions define what is right to do among people here involved with one another?” and “How might these intentions be changed?” The task of changing organizations depends, first, upon the varieties of reality which individuals see in existing organizations, and second, upon their acceptance of new ideas of what can or should be achieved through social action. We know little about either, but it is clear we should understand the first before we attempt to direct the second.
Implications

Where do the ideas based on phenomenology leave the notion of “organization”? And what of the science that studies organizations? And where does a profession of educational administration which bases its practice on this science now find itself? In conclusion, let me briefly develop some answers to these questions and suggest some directions for future study.

1. Organizations are definitions of social reality. Some people may make these definitions by virtue of their access to power while others must pay attention to them. Organizations are mechanisms for transforming our desires into social realities. But the transforming mechanism lies within individuals. It is found in individuals striving to change their demands or beliefs into definitions of reality that others must regard as valid and accept as limitations on their actions. This notion of organizations as dependent upon the meanings and purposes which individuals bring to them does not require that all individuals share the same meaning and purposes. On the contrary, the views I am outlining here should make us seek to discover the varying meanings and objectives that individuals bring to the organizations of which they are a part. We should look more carefully too for differences in objectives between different kinds of people in organizations and begin to relate these to differences in power or access to resources. Although the concept of organization permits us to speak of the dominating demands and beliefs of some individuals, and allows us to explore how those with dominating views use the advantage of their position, we need not think of these dominating views as “necessary”, “efficient”, “satisfying” or even “functional”, but merely as an invented social reality, which holds for a time and is then vulnerable to redefinition through changing demands and beliefs among people. Where then may we go from here? Let me suggest some lines of development.

2. We should begin to regard with healthy scepticism the claim that a general science of organization and administration is at hand. Such theories carry with them not only culturally dependent notions of what is important in an organization but also prescriptive ideas of how study and inquiry into organizational problems should go forward. The movement toward international associations for the study of educational administration should be welcomed, but these associations should open windows on our understanding of organizations rather than propagate received notions of organization theory. If the movement can provide a comparative and critical perspective on schools and on our notions of how they should be run, the association will serve a valuable role. Since the dominant theories of organization and administration have their source in the United States, it is these ideas which should receive searching analysis before they are blindly applied in other cultural settings. In Britain, this critical examination of theory and its policy implications has already begun (Baron and Taylor, 1969; Halsey, 1972), though one is hard pressed to find similar critical examinations in other national or cultural settings.
3. Willy nilly, the world does seem to be shrinking towards the global village. Yet there are still strong forces which maintain vivid cultural distinctions within it. Despite these forces, the interests of the mass media, which the academic community seems all too ready to ape (Perrow, 1972, p. 198), direct attention more frequently to the symptoms of social problems rather than to their sources. While the mass media are usually ready with prefabricated solutions to these problems, students of organizations should doubt the utility of solutions which ignore their sources in the truly critical and powerful organizations of our societies. If we are unwilling to understand our own organizations, or if we regard acquiring such understanding as a trivial task, we should be aware that there are often others willing and waiting to apply their own preconceptions and answers to the tasks of defining the organization, identifying its problems, and prescribing solutions to them. Our own experience of our own organizations is a valuable resource. It is with this experience that the organization theorist must begin to understand the nature of organizations. Since an understanding of organizations is closely linked to control of them and to the possibility of change within them, the phenomenological perspective points to issues of crucial importance both to the theorist and the man of practical affairs.

4. The possibility of training administrators through the study of organization theory has been seriously overestimated. Such theory does not appear to offer ready-made keys to the problems of how to run an organization. Through credentials, such training does appear to offer sound prospects for advancement within administrative systems. While such training may increase social mobility, each society must decide whether it wishes to pursue this goal, and, if it does, whether this method is the most appropriate for doing so. If training of administrators is to serve its avowed purposes, then it seems clear that the nature of the training must move in virtually the opposite direction from that advocated in recent years. That is to say, training should move away from attempts to teach a broad social science of organizations-in-general towards a familiarity with specific organizations and their problems. That the training should continue to have critical and reflective dimensions should not conflict with this redirection of training programmes. It appears essential also for training programmes to develop a much stronger clinical base than is now common in most of them. In such training, both the theoretician and the practitioner must be intimately involved.

5. Research into organizational problems should consider and begin to use the phenomenological perspective. This redirection of research should awaken interest in the decision-making tradition of organization theory and in the institutional school of organizational analysis (Perrow, 1972, pp. 177–204) with its emphasis on the exposé and ideological analysis of specific organizations (Bendix, 1956). In methodology, research should turn to those methods which attempt to represent perceived reality more faithfully and fully than do the present highly quantified and abstruse techniques. And researchers should avoid
prescribing solutions to pressing social problems on the basis of prescriptive theory and research. For example, those who concluded on the basis of the Coleman study that the achievement of black students in American schools might be raised by integrating black and white students were dazzled by the naturalist assumption that a statistical relationship represents social reality. They therefore were led to the error of believing that social relationships may be manipulated in the same way in which variables from the research design can be manipulated. In doing so, they failed to reckon with the reaction of black students to greater integration as a “solution” to their problems (Carlson, 1972). Indeed researchers and social scientists might consider the cultural imperialism which is frequently inherent in their recommendations for solving social problems and strive first to understand (Bernstein, 1971b, Sarason, 1971; Holbrook, 1964) the social and organizational world for which they hope to prescribe solutions.

What is needed for better research on schools is better images of what schools are and what goes on in them. “Better” in this case means creating images of schools which reflect their character and quality and which will tell us something of what the experience of schooling is like. Since schools are made up of different people in different times and places, it is to be expected that images which reflect the experience of schooling must be many and varied. These images would be sets of “one-sided viewpoints”, as Weber called them, each throwing “shafts of light” (Eldridge, 1971, p. 12) upon social reality in schools.

As the natural systems have provided the dominating model for studies of organizations (Mayntz, 1964, p. 116), the image of the school as a unit of production has dominated investigations of schools (Levine, 1973; Spady, 1973). The production model of the school is a systems variant which sees the school as a set of roles and resources arranged to yield a product which conforms to predetermined goals. We are often so accustomed to this model that we fail to notice the enormous discrepancies between it and what typically goes on in schools. To begin with, most sets of official educational goals would justify schools doing virtually any good thing for the individual or the society in which he lives. Secondly, the products of school are nearly impossible to identify, if by product we mean something which is unmistakably due to the efforts of the school itself. The clearest measure of school product—the results students obtain on standardized and other kinds of tests—correspond poorly to the goals of education and are usually accounted for most readily by influences outside the school. Thus whether schools do anything to achieve a set of vague goals can never be determined within the model of the school as a unit of production.

If we shear from our image of schools the notion of overriding goals and visible products, what are we left with? The image is now that of pure process in which people strive to shape a social environment which is congenial to them and which they believe serves their purposes or the purposes which other people ought to have. The image of the school is now not the factory or the system but
the public utility (Pincus, 1974) which produces a service which people use for their own ends. It is not surprising in this conception of the school that people involved with it—teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, etc.—have strong feelings about what services should be provided and how they should be provided. Moreover, it should be apparent that experience with the school’s services leads to strong, though not necessarily universally accepted, beliefs about what kinds of service and conditions of service are good and bad and to convictions about which of them are effective and ineffective. However, lacking objective criteria to judge the relevance and validity of their claims, and lacking even a common basis of experience with the school’s services, people holding these beliefs and convictions are likely to clash with others having different but equally firmly held convictions. We learn to believe in our own experience of school process and to doubt the validity of others’ beliefs. In this way, the proposal model accounts both for the apparent stability of schools—their resistance to change—and for the continuing conflict about what schools are for and how they should be organized and run. It suggests as well that the path to understanding more about schools must lie through interpretations and analysis of the experience of people in schools, not through attempts to decide which structural elements of schools yield outcomes that best approximate their ultimate purposes.

6. The research advocated above and the rationale for it developed earlier in this paper do not imply only the description and analysis of subjective states. Weber is said to have advised researchers first to get the facts about the basic elements of social situations and then to move to a subjective interpretation of them (Eldridge, 1971, p. 19; Bendix and Roth, 1971, pp. 286–91). The “facts” Weber had in mind were such matters as wages, costs of materials, the people involved, and descriptions of them in demographic terms. These are the typical resource variables which are of frequent concern in analyses of the school from the perspective of the production model. The questions usually investigated are whether the school is making effective and efficient use of its resources in pursuit of predetermined educational goals. Answers to such questions are complex, contradictory and unconvincing, as Spady (1973) has demonstrated. The reasons for such unsatisfactory outcomes are obvious when pointed out, as Gagné (1970) has done. Children do not learn from “environments” from “resources” or from the “characteristics of teachers”. They learn from their specific involvement with people, things and events around them. Thus knowledge of the basic facts about a social situation is only the beginning of an understanding of it. What is needed beyond these basic facts is a knowledge of how people in a social situation construe it, what they see as its significant features, and how they act within it. Such knowledge can only come from the interpretation of particular experiences in specific situations.

In this respect, it might be useful to think of two kinds of variables in a social situation—outside and inside variables. The outside variables are those which lend themselves readily to quantification and which involve a minimum of interpretation. As has been suggested, these variables provide information about the
characteristics of the people and resources found in a social situation. The inside variables are those which may only be expressed through interpretation of experience. Both kinds of variables are important, though in most organizational studies of schools, emphasis has usually fallen exclusively on the former category.

It would be helpful to replace our usual notion of the school as a system with the idea of the school as a set. Where the system idea implies preordained order and functions in the school, the notion of set leaves completely open both the definition of the elements of the school and the description of relationships among them. Defining the school as a set leaves as a problem for investigation what the elements of the situations are and what the meanings of relationships among the elements are. With such a view of the school, we might recognize both external and internal variables; as follows:

**External variables.** Pupil characteristics: their age, sex, home background, individual abilities and previous learning. School characteristics: building design, facilities and equipment. Classrooms: number of pupils, subject of study, methodology. Teacher characteristics: training and length of service, personality, intelligence, abilities and interests.

**Internal variables.** What is the quality of relationships among teachers, pupils and others in the school? What experiences do they have in terms of (a) their expectations for the environment, (b) the opportunities and problems they perceive, (c) the efforts they make to learn, help or teach, (d) their feelings of accomplishment or failure? What decisions do different people in the school make and why do they make them? How are people and situations defined and evaluated?

The variables listed above are intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. The final point to be made about them is that both of these major dimensions are essential for describing and understanding schools fully. In fact, some of the most revealing analyses will arise from contrasts between the school seen in terms of external variables and the school seen in terms of internal variables. That organizational theory has too frequently directed attention to the external variables and that it has presumed rather than explored their relationships to internal variables are points which have already been made at length.

7. A continued study of organizations from the perspectives of the social sciences is certainly warranted. Schools as one of the most significant of our social institutions deserve particular attention. It seems appropriate, however, for students of schools as organizations to consider the meaning of their studies and to redirect them towards investigations which increase our understanding of organizations as they are before attempts are made to change them. Paradoxically, the efforts which promise to yield the most penetrating insights into organizations and the most practical strategies for improving them are those
efforts (March, 1972) which deal with the way people construe organizational reality and with the moral and ethical issues involved in these construings.

If, as the phenomenologist holds, our ideas for understanding the world determine our action within it, then our ideas about the world—what really exists in it, how we should behave in it—are of the utmost importance. And if our ideas about the world are shaped by our experience, then the interpretation of our experience is also of paramount importance. It is this process, the placing of meaning upon experience, which shapes what we call our organizations and it is this process which should be the focus of the organization theorist’s work. And unless we wish to yield to universal forces for determining our experience, we must look to theories of organizations based upon diverse meanings and interpretations of our experience.

Notes

* Source: An expanded version of a paper given at the Third International Intervisitation Programme on Educational Administration (1974) at Bristol, sponsored by the British Educational Administration Society and other agencies.

1 Deutscher (1973, pp. 324ff) describes these schools of thought and their connections with idealistic philosophy. He also points out (p. 325n) that those he calls the “Harvard functionalists” make no mention of phenomenology or its proponents in their encyclopaedic history of theories of society. See Parsons et al. (1961).

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94
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AS A HUMANE SCIENCE
Conversations between Thomas Greenfield and Peter Ribbins

Thomas Greenfield and Peter Ribbins


Scene setting
For students of educational administration, 1974 was an exciting year. It was the year in which the third International Intervisitation Programme was held. At the conference Thomas Greenfield delivered a paper which changed the face of educational administration as a field of study. To understand why it is necessary to locate the paper in its historical context.

Since the 1950s educational administration had been dominated by positivist thought in the form of the ‘Theory Movement.’ This envisaged the development of a general theory of human behaviour, within which the theory of administrative behaviour in educational contexts would be a sub-set. In this paradigm the natural sciences, especially physics, would provide the model (Griffiths, 1957, 388).

By the late 1960s doubts were being voiced. But as Griffiths (1988, 30) acknowledges, its ‘demise came at the 1974 meeting of the IIP in Bristol. . . . The coup de grace was delivered by Greenfield who made an across-the-board denunciation of every aspect of the theory movement’. Since then, Greenfield ‘has broadened and deepened his critique. In an impressive series of papers . . . he has sought to develop a systematic view of social reality as a human invention, in opposition to the systems scientific perspective of social reality as a natural system. He has constructed strands of argument on the nature of knowledge, on administrative theory and research, on values, on the limits of science, and the importance of human subjectivity, truth and reality . . . the magnitude of his undertaking and a corresponding elegance of argument make his work the
most important theoretical development in recent educational administration’ (Evers and Lakomski, 1991, 76).

Accordingly, his papers are eagerly sought in many parts of the world but are not always easy to get hold of individually or collectively. A solution is the publication of a collection and since 1990 we have been involved in producing one. We have done so in all the usual ways including spending several days together in Birmingham in June 1991. Some hard choices have had to be made in selecting ten papers to represent his thinking from among the sixty Greenfield has published since 1961 [Appendix 1]. Once this was done we have been involved in the equally demanding task of editing in a way that respected the integrity of individual papers but which minimized repetition in the text as a whole. With this under way two tasks remained – producing a foreword and writing a postscript. The former was straightforward – we had only to ask Christopher Hodgkinson.

The latter took more thought. We wished to enable the reader to locate the set of papers within the context of Greenfield’s personal and professional history as he saw it. This led us to a ‘novel’ approach. During the five days of our meeting in Birmingham we conducted a series of wide ranging discussions. These were taped and transcribed. Since then we have refined, revised and elaborated the text of these talks. They represent an unusually sustained attempt to explore with a scholar how and why his thinking developed as it did.

**Before 1961: towards the scholar’s life**

**PR:** Let us try and get some purchase on the development of your thinking over time. Partly by looking at your life, career and work. You were born in Saskatchewan?

**TG:** Into a farm family and I lived the first few years of my life on a farm.

**PR:** You didn’t enjoy farming much?

**TG:** I didn’t experience much of it but I remember from an early age having a longing for something else. That something else was the city. I can recall my mother telling me of cities and their various wonders.

**PR:** Most of your schooling was in city contexts?

**TG:** From the ‘Second Grade’ to my degree studies in English and German at the University of British Columbia.

**PR:** These studies were an influence you came back to later in your career and thinking?

**TG:** They certainly were. I fell into those choices of study, as many do, but it left a lasting impression on me. After finishing my degree I needed a job quickly and teaching seemed the easiest and most obvious thing, also my mother had been a teacher so perhaps there is that kind of influence. If I’d been more courageous or had more money I might have done other things.

**PR:** So you spent a number of years teaching in an elementary school?

**TG:** I was trained as a secondary school teacher and worked as one briefly and
was quite happy at it. But I was offered the job in Vancouver and they put me in an elementary school because that was where there was a shortage of teachers. Initially I found that difficult.

PR: Presumably you became reasonably good at it because from '58 to '59 you had a year as a Vice-Principal?

TG: Yes that’s right. I guess by the end of my teaching career I had some success. It was in an interesting school. Some of us were advanced and I was one of those.

PR: What were your responsibilities?

TG: Assistant to the head. That was my first insight into practical administration. The principal was the opposite of the previous one. He was very aggressive and direct whereas the other man had been incompetently *laissez-faire*. He was repressive with the children and indifferent to the teachers. I suppose that was when I first began to think about what administrators do.

PR: You had a year as a deputy principal?

TG: Then another happenstance from above. Someone in Edmonton contacted the BC Teacher’s Union and asked if they knew of somebody to nominate for a scholarship in educational administration. The thought of getting away for a year from that principal was attractive.

PR: Did you also want to research?

TG: My plan was simply to go for the year. I realised that if I did go I would probably be launched into an administrative career.

1961–1971: Objectivist years – from certainty to doubt

PR: In Alberta you studied Teacher–Leader Behaviour and Its Relationship to Pupil Growth. Why?

TG: The Department was just establishing itself. It had been going for only two years and there were two kinds of staff. Older people who had come to an academic position from a background of senior positions in administration and those, like the professor I worked with. He had some experience of education and then had gone to study in the University of Chicago, which is where the thrust of the Theory Movement arose. When I started my studies, I had a sense that the difficulties and complexities I had been introduced to in my study of the arts could be answered. They could be calculated, they could be resolved – exactly. I had a sense of turning my back on what I had understood to be knowledge for many years.

PR: That in comparison what you had known hitherto was sloppy, impractical, soft?

TG: That’s right, there was clarity, answers and certainty. As I understood more of the New Movement theory I saw it could bring discipline and knowledge to thinking in the field, to make it more useful.

PR: Was your Doctoral research a development of your Masters work?

TG: It was. My masters’ study focused on leadership, and I worked within a
pre-existing instrument designed to measure leadership. The standard thing to do was to take such measures and relate these to other variables. I related these to measures of output, in particular to measures of pupil growth. For my doctoral studies I tried to understand more of how these measures of output were related to organisational variables.

PR: This was very much within the positivistic frame?
TG: Oh absolutely!

PR: It relied on a good deal of number crunching?
TG: I did a great deal of number crunching. This was offered to us as the methodology. All problems in education were thought to be ultimately resolvable in this way. Of course we were drawing on the whole school of thought that is described as ‘Logical Positivism’.

PR: This was a time in which the Theory Movement and logical positivism were at the height of their influence.
TG: Logical positivism was powerful in the social sciences generally and pre-dominant in philosophy. We were not aware of this. These things were simply offered to us as part of the method we should use. We were aware there were problems to be solved in education and this was the means for understanding and resolving them.

PR: At a fundamental level it was taken for granted that tackling such problems raised technical rather than philosophical considerations?
TG: That was reflected in our training program. There were two kinds of emphases, the first and most important, was on quantitative method, the second was on an understanding of the social sciences. The social sciences were seen as a great repository of knowledge that would give us ideas and theories on which we would use our methods of quantitative analysis. We learned the social science of empiricist realism, that is the methods of logical positivism. We were also involved in studies that from the new perspective were seen as rather useless. We did a course in educational philosophy, which was taught by one of the old line scholars who had grown up in the tradition of Dewey. He took us through thinking on education, from Spencer onwards. We looked at thought right back to the Greeks. We had wonderful discussions and debates and being in that class re-awakened ideas that entered our heads as undergraduates. They certainly interested and challenged me. But when you walked out of that class you realised it didn’t really help at all.

PR: It was entertaining – but not really useful?
TG: It was simply self-indulgent, and didn’t address the great social issues of the day. I’d grown up in an environment of protest, a generally left-wing ideology. I was raised by my mother. She had a vivid sense of social outrage at the social injustices she suffered. I also had a sense of social mission, that there were great problems in the world that had to be set right.

PR: And that science was the way to do it?
TG: My first inclinations were towards the arts but I came to feel that was for
nothing and one ought to devote oneself to studies that could be socially useful.

PR: The serious citizen is a scientist? You published three papers in 1961.

TG: From early in my studies I could write well enough to put things clearly and forcefully, to draw people’s attention, to get good marks. Since then I’ve thought about my writing a great deal more. As Barnes says, ‘Mystification is easy, clarity is the hardest thing of all.’

PR: Your early papers use an essentially quantitative approach?

TG: They do. Within the systems metaphor that orders the whole thing. The school is a productive unit, there are distinguishable outputs, they are caused by effective process, all under the control of the administrator.

PR: And such thinking informs your Ph.D. study: ‘Systems Analysis in Education - A Factor Analysis and Analysis of Variance of Pupil Achievement’?

TG: A terrible title – but it displays the things I was proud of at the time. I cringe to think of it, a blaring trumpet advertising method, and no substance at all.

PR: Ideas derived from systems theory backed up by great technical skills in manipulating the numbers.

TG: I had a sense I was a possessor of a kind of arcane knowledge and had to display that in the title.

PR: You were an insider?

TG: I was inside, I could do a factor analysis, I could do an analysis of variance.

PR: And you felt comfortable with that at that time?

TG: Oh yes.

PR: When you finished your Ph.D., you became Research Director at the Canadian Teacher’s Federation?

TG: In Ottawa. I had gone to Alberta for a year, but had stayed four. I was too educated to return to the ordinary classroom. But there wasn’t an academic position available at that time in Canada. So I took an opportunity to get into research administration.

PR: To what extent was this a research role?

TG: My main role was as an advocate for research. There were interests the Federation wanted pursued with regard to the interests of teachers. They wanted salary scales, benefits and things of that kind examined. It was low-level survey research. There was also interest at that time in classroom research. I published several papers advocating that role for the classroom teacher in research.

PR: Did you hope for a ‘proper’ academic appointment?

TG: I went there happily but before long I became less happy. I found the position was that of tame scientist, in which you were hired because you could add a certain cachet to the proper opinions that my employers wanted to highlight. We were very much on display as scientists of education.

PR: Paid to find things you were expected to find or at least to find evidence to support such expectations?

TG: You could say what you wanted as long as you didn’t question certain sacred truths. I came to be very aware of that.
So there were frustrations in working in that context and when the chance came to get a post at OISE [Ontario Institute for Studies in Education] in Toronto you were interested.

I was very much imbued with the attitude that saw the typical role of the researcher as the creator of superior knowledge, so I did resent the political control that was put on me, even though it wasn’t all that binding. So when the university system began to expand I remember thinking long and deeply about leaving the Federation. But I had the opportunity to join the newly formed OISE. What decided me to go was the knowledge that my former Professor, John Andrews, was going to the Institute. That was a strong attraction. Also the thought of moving to a big city was very attractive.

Andrews was quickly promoted. In 1967 you became Head of the Department and held this post for the next four years. What was involved?

The chief thing was managing its growth. The Institute was growing very fast, money seemed to be no object. Every year there was a competition among the departments for the increased resources given to the Institute. Growth was seen as good in itself.

Presumably at that time you accepted this?

Oh I did, and we were growing also in terms of students and of the depth and complexity of the programmes we were offering.

How large was the Department by the time you completed your term?

We were twenty or more by 1970.

Good grief.

Good grief yes!

What was managing that growth like?

Appalling.

What kind of administrator were you?

I was proactive. I saw things to do and I did them. I didn’t feel badly about using my power, except sometimes, and I thought I was working for the greater good.

Did you see yourself as a consultative manager?

I didn’t mind overriding a decision that I thought needed to be overridden. I didn’t do that very often but I saw the need for it. I was keenly aware of the demands the Department was under, demands to expand both research and training. We had to meet our obligations, and this moved me to take risks. I pursued senior scholars, but not many of them came. So the salvation of the Department lay in recruiting new, untried talent. I appointed a woman to the faculty at the time when such an appointment was exceptional. I also took risks in the specializations I promoted and the greenness of the persons I recommended. I was pretty green myself.

How did your four years experience as an administrator shape your thinking as a scholar?

It shaped it a very great deal. When I finished my first term as Head, I was up for review for a second term and I felt that there was no question about
it. To my surprise one of the senior people came to me and said he wanted the job. I was just completely dumbfounded. He said he would get it and that the best thing I could do was to step down.

That was my first encounter with the Realpolitik of organisations and, of course, it rubbed me the wrong way. I might have been persuaded to leave and go back to doing what I really preferred. I decided he was wrong, that he didn’t have the power, and even if he did, I wasn’t going to go that way. The ensuing months were sheer hell. He was a consummate political animal and he was able to find enough resentment about things I had done and exploit this. It came to a vote of the whole Department, staff, students, support staff – everybody. I could see that to win by a small margin, which I did, was not enough, so I quit.

PR: So you went back to being a professor and ceased being an administrator. That experience must have been one you learnt from?
TG: During that time I was aware again that we were expected to be tame scientists.

PR: Even at OISE?
TG: We were an instrument of provincial government policy, and one of the issues was the amalgamation of schools and school districts. There was a belief that bigger was better. I saw that I was being used as a kind of strategic lever against popular opinion. I could see the complexity of the issues. I could see these were to do with values. I was there to build the technical argument, to give it credibility. But on more than one occasion people would listen and then say, ‘That may be true if you say it. We still don’t want to do it.’

PR: So the doubts which have dominated much of your work since then can be traced back to this period? And these doubts were wide ranging and fundamental, relating even to your understanding of the methods that you were using? This takes us neatly to the first of the papers in which you begin to express these doubts in a published form. ‘Critique of a Tradition’, in 1968 raises doubts concerning the ideas and methods of researching that had characterised your work in the past.

TG: My task was to review the research years at the University of Alberta, research using the instrument known as the Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire, the LBDQ. There had been much research of this kind. I looked at its outcomes and its implications.

As I did the paper, I came to realise the limitations of such theory and methodology. I said in a muted way that these methods were inadequate as a means for studying leadership.

PR: Were you also beginning to have doubts about the quantitative approach itself as a means of understanding things like educational leadership?
TG: I had to think things out, I had to understand them as deeply as I could. My arts training left me with the idea that the world was a mystery and that understanding of it was gained only with great difficulty, much scepticism.
and a lot of work. When I examined a body of findings based upon the LBQD, that scepticism returned.

PR: Unlike some who share your reservations about the quantitative approach you had a very good grasp of statistics. You spent a decade or more working with statistics. You were very comfortable with them but began to see their limitations?

TG: There are enormous subjective elements in these supposedly objective methods. I knew too that numbers opened up a whole arcane study which was immensely satisfying because of its apparent exactitude and closed logic. That such logic is comfortably abstruse and impervious to question by non-initiates is part of its attraction. It impresses by its apparent power while repelling questions, hiding the fact that it often has much less to say to the everyday world than it seems to. Numbers can be useless, but strongly addictive.

PR: What was it about the late ‘60s which began to make you doubt all this?

TG: I began to think through the nature of my science. Earlier I had become aware of the enormous subjective elements in these supposedly objective and quantitative analyses. There were problems with factor analysis, one of the prime tools, and also with multiple regression. With factor analysis, for example, there is no unique solution. Solutions are imposed by the researcher and what is interpretable becomes the decision of the researcher. In multiple regression, subjective decisions such as the order in which the variables are input significantly affects the result. In Coleman’s study of equal opportunity, for example, the order of entering the variables shifts the value of in-school factors from virtually everything to almost nothing. On one occasion when members of a Senate committee asked about the meaning of the beta weights that powerfully shape his findings, Coleman replied they were purely mathematical concepts which had no bearing on practical reality.

PR: Such an approach may manipulate quantitative data, see various pretty patterns and suddenly say ‘This pattern represents truth, life and reality!’

TG: That’s it exactly. Much later I came across a statement from Francis Bacon where he says, ‘God forbid that we should mistake a dream of the imagination for a pattern in the world.’ Many findings produced by the quantitative methods are dreams of the imagination asserted as truth.

For example, if statisticians find a relationship statistically significant, then all the variation in the display which does not reveal that pattern is called error.

PR: And is systematically set aside?

TG: You simply eliminate the error and everything looks better because you are dealing with it through a lens that draws you up close, and instead of seeing the whole of the aquarium you’re looking at a tiny little droplet.

PR: And then extrapolate to the whole phenomenon.

TG: In this context an objection often made against the qualitative researcher is
that he doesn’t understand the relationship between the regularities observed and a larger world, that inference and representation is impossible. That is exactly the problem: the quantitative researcher creates in eliminating error.

PR: Concern for such issues is evident in your 1973 paper ‘Social inventions’. When did you first begin to think in such terms?

1971–1974: Towards an alternative paradigm

TG: I saw these problems before the end of my formal studies. But I did not appreciate their full implications until I realised these matters touched upon the essence of the claim that science offered salvation for the social problems of the world.

This is first expressed in my 1968 paper, which ends with a series of questions. These questions and their wider implications were forming in my mind and between 1968–1972 they came to the fore. In 1971–72 they crystallised.

PR: Before we turn to this, let us first consider what you mean by ‘empiricism’ and ‘the empiricist approach’?

TG: It arises from applying logical positivism to the world. I first encountered this view in an aphorism from Spearman: ‘Anything that exists, exists in some quantity, and anything that exists in a quantity can be measured.’ This implies that anything immeasurable does not exist, not beauty, justice, or truth.

PR: Does Spearman’s claim self reference? How do you measure a claim? What of the hypothetico-deductive method itself? It does not necessarily derive from logical positivism or empiricism?

TG: No it doesn’t, except that there is an easy bridge between that view and mathematical physics.

PR: That reminds me of Griffiths’s point, made many years ago, that properly conceived the study of educational administration could replicate Kepler’s Laws of motion. It could produce general laws of human behaviour in social contexts.

TG: That’s right, and there is an enormous leap of logic and faith in such a claim. It is only in retrospect that you realise that what is being advocated is a view of the social world that sees it as a version of the physical world. The methods which enabled understanding of the physical world are exactly the methods that will bring us to an understanding of the social world.

PR: The argument advanced was that the objectivist approach had brought vast leaps of knowledge in physics so why should it not do so in the social sciences? But let us try and clarify your own epistemological position. Evers and Lackomski seem to claim you doubt objectivity in the physical as well as the social world.

TG: I don’t doubt the objectivity of the physical world. I do not question that,
their example, a door may be a better way of leaving a room than trying to
go through the wall, floor or roof. I would say that it’s not clear that the
door is the only way out – there may be a window – even if it is forty floors
up!

PR: As I understand it, what they want to do is to argue, following Quine and
others, that there are ways of choosing between competing theories which
are neither wholly positivist nor wholly subjectivist.

TG: They rely on something like an agreement among scientists.

PR: Perhaps a bit more than that – the criteria they propose are things like which
of two or more competing theories is the more economic, which explains
more, which leaves you with the fewest messy problems, which is related
better to what we already know.

TG: Yes and that a significant group of people accept it – which to me puts it on
a social basis. I think of the fate of Galileo and other heretics who were
right but forced to say their theories were wrong. Evers and Lakomski’s
arguments may best apply to the interpretation of the physical world,
although conundrums exist there too. It ends in mystery in that reality too.
The limits of both macro- and micro-analysis are found in emptiness, dark-
ness, the unexplained, the unfathomable. But Evers and Lakomski’s argu-
ment becomes shaky indeed when it is applied to the social world. There
truth is defined, as Szasz says, not by scientists looking into test tubes and
telescopes, but by ‘experts’ who go not to their laboratories to observe, but
to make judgement. As Szasz points out, whether schizophrenia is a disease,
a sin, or an acknowledgement is a willful and moral choice.

PR: The paper in which you first began to voice the concerns which have
dominated your subsequent writing was ‘Social inventions’ in 1973. Limita-
tions of space have excluded it from our book. Why did it not cause the stir
your 1974 paper did?

TG: Where it was known, it was as much a cause célèbre as the later one. I spent
much of the year following my resignation doing very little, just teaching
and licking my wounds, and then I had a leave. It turned out to be a very
important year.

PR: What did you do with it?

TG: I went to the University of Alberta, then to the University of British Colum-
bia and finally to Germany. I read and read, being drawn into the world of
Max Weber. And I had to write a paper on change.

PR: That was for AERA? [American Educational Research Association]

TG: Yes. I tried to use the new understandings. After that I went to Germany. In
going to Germany I was opening a door. I turned to things that had moved
me as an undergraduate student.

PR: What kinds of things?

TG: Generally the arts – art, language and philosophy.

PR: How long did you spend in Germany?

TG: Only four months!
PR: You didn’t go there to explore German thinking on the things which have characterised your later writing?
TG: No, I wanted to go through a door I had previously rejected. That turned out to be an important experience. I knew the fount of knowledge there. I encountered a body of thought that much of my critique rests upon. I lived in Germany in German, and that was difficult and stressful. We surround ourselves with our mother language, with the realities and assumptions of that language. To have that torn away and operate in a system that you suddenly don’t understand is hard. You don’t understand the social architecture.
PR: A hard existentialist experience.
TG: It is. That is a theme that comes back in my later writing, that we need that tearing away from our existing social reality to appreciate what it is.
PR: To see it in its strangeness and familiarity?
TG: And it’s mutability. We think of it as inexorable, it’s the water the goldfish never sees. I came to see German thought and history in a new context.
PR: It seems as if this experience confirmed rather than triggered your growing disenchantment with empiricism and your search for another way? What about the paper you wrote? What was the response to it?
TG: I don’t think it was remarked on much. It was just one of thousands of papers at AERA.
PR: Can we now turn to something that did cause a major stir – your paper to IIP ’74 in Bristol? How did you come to be asked to give the IIP paper?
TG: I knew George Baron. When he became the Coordinator of the IIP ’74, he asked if I would do a paper on leadership. I said, ‘I’d be happy to do that but I have to tell you that what I would say about leadership now would be rather different from what I said a few years ago.’ I sent him a copy of the 1973 paper and he wrote back saying, ‘Forget about leadership. Write some more of the new.’ He referred to the work of contemporary British sociologists he thought I might find interesting. One was Filmer. It was from Filmer I picked up ‘Phenomenology’.
PR: You must have known some of this work anyway?
TG: I did. I’d read Silverman and a good deal of German philosophy, sociology and history, centring in particular on Weber. Previously I’d used the ‘action framework’, a term Silverman draws from Weber. Filmer’s book drew my attention to phenomenology in contemporary analysis. My critics thought it was a mistake. I remember writing the paper easily. It was all there. It was all sensible and apparent. It all came together. George gave me the title and I recall sitting down and the whole thing just seemed to flow out.
PR: In retrospect, what were you trying to say in the paper? Is it possible to pick out the main themes?
TG: I pointed to the inadequacy of social science as science and to organization theory as a foundation for management science.
PR: In Griffiths’s memorable phrase, you were thinking yourself out of a paradigm? Was that painful?
TG: It was painful.
PR: How did you come to reject the paradigm? What objections were crucial for you? Were your objections essentially epistemological? Evers and Lakomski seem to think so and so also does Griffiths?
TG: I came to see there were complexities in the world other than those that the systems framework had led me to see. I was strongly aware of the existence of alternative realities. The systems perspective offers certainty and an ordered view, but I knew from my experience such a view of the world was only one. The more interesting questions often lay in the contestation between alternative perspectives, how some became dominant and others subordinate. Power was inadequately dealt with in the systems model.
PR: In so far as it was dealt with at all?
TG: This came to me with an absolute clarity. My year away solidified my views. It enabled me to return to my intellectual roots. I was returning to understandings I had been led away from.
PR: Into the more complex social world you discovered in the study of literature for example?
TG: Exactly.
PR: A world in which motive, interest and reason are important in shaping how people think and act. In your IIP paper you used words and made claims which some found difficult to cope with. Labels like subjectivist began to be attached to you and your views. Were you ready to accept such a label when you were writing the paper?
TG: Shortly thereafter I began to use the word subjectivist. I don’t know why I didn’t use it earlier, I can’t imagine that it wasn’t available to me.
PR: Subjectivism is implied in the paper but you don’t use it.
TG: I had a sense of working alone. I was still groping to understand. When I was in England, British sociologists like Beryl Tipton wanted me to become ‘structural’, but I always resisted the ethno-marxist or critical perspective. The people I talked to were books, some old, others new. I think, perhaps, I was subject to the error the solitary scholar is apt to fall into. I was unable to check things out by talking to other people, I did it mostly by myself.
PR: Were you aware in writing the paper that you were presenting an essentially epistemological argument?
TG: I didn’t set out to study epistemology. My key issue was ‘How are we to understand the social world?’ It is not known in the way the physical world is to be known. This was very clear to me. As was the notion that in some sense we construct the world around us.
PR: Which entails that it is different – in some cases significantly different – for each of us?
TG: And so science fails as a basis for rational social action. I saw the cultural differences between the world of educational administration as it then was and the things that I was reading. I saw the difference between those rules and the rules I had grown up with in undergraduate study. To an extent I
saw this as part of a general split between European and North American modes of thinking and understanding. I acknowledged that in the paper, without wanting to drive it home too far. What I tried to emphasise was not the geographical aspect of the cultural difference, though this seemed real enough, but the different sets of ideas which some people used to understand the world. I was most clear about the invalidity of a claimed universal science using the methods of logical positivism: I was sure that was wrong and said so.

PR: Evers and Lakomski seem to argue you’re a subjectivist with regard to the physical and the social world. Is that a correct representation of your views?

TG: No. We are grounded in physical reality. That we do not escape, cannot escape, but there are other kinds of realities built on that. Schumacher makes this point. He speaks of the great Chain of Being in which the world of self-consciousness is built first on consciousness, then both upon life, and ultimately all three on a fourth, the physical stuff of the world. Each of the links in the Chain is qualitatively different from, radically different from, the ones above and below it. The living body is not the dead one, though the physical reality of both may be virtually indistinguishable. Or as Lear says, carrying the dead Cordelia in his arms, ‘I know when one is dead, and when one lives.’ That is my position now: we exist in physical reality but we are not limited by it, much more we transcend it. After all, you can still enter the Lenin tomb in Moscow and see the body incarnate, as vividly as it was the day before Lenin died. This failure to recognise a hierarchical difference becomes a source of great error: a society congealed around a distorted and malevolent perception.

Evers uses the example that you exit by the door of your office. For the most part this may be true, but it is not the last word. I could exit by the window or I could refuse to go out at all. That I cannot walk through a wall is meagre knowledge compared with how I might construe it. Is it a Wall to be wept at and venerated? Is it a Wall men may weep and pray at, but not women? Or should I take a bazooka and blast it? The interesting questions about the physical world are how we construe it. Où sont les neiges d’antan? Auden writes of returning to a city

where Euclid’s geometry
And Newton’s mechanics would account for our experience,
And the kitchen table exists because I scrub it.
It seems to have shrunk during the holidays. The streets
Are much narrower than we remembered; we had forgotten
The office was as depressing as this.

Physical reality exists within a subjective reality. It’s a slippery slope we live on.

PR: You could take some quite simple alternative cases to the one they use
about a room. You could ask what a fine paintbrush means to me as opposed to somebody else? At a physical level it is the same for everybody. But someone seeing a paintbrush for the first time would not see it as I do. Nor, perhaps, would Michaelangelo.

TG: Exactly. There’s a wonderful dialogue in The Countesthorpe Experience, which is a commentary upon Countesthorpe College and the many controversies which surrounded its development. The dialogue is between Armstrong the head of social studies at the school and Professor Bantock of the School of Education, University of Leicester. They talk about the different ways people construe the world. At one point Bantock argues that Thomas Aquinas and the mediaeval peasant did not worship the same God, nor it might be added, did they worship in the same church. Quoting Blake, Bantock says, ‘The fool sees not the same tree the wise man sees.’ To me it is obvious that the realities we see are dependent upon what we think those realities are, and this includes our interpretation of the physical world.

PR: But the argument may be easier to make in the case of the social world than the physical world. Take the case of the roles people play. It is possible for two people to share similar roles but to interpret and enact them in very different ways. We make roles, we do not just take them. I suppose the issue we have to address as subjectivists is that if you push this argument too far it is hard to see what account one could give of the social world. Social life must at some minimal level be predicated on the idea that we can work together and share understandings about what we can expect of and from each other. The question becomes how do we work together if we see the world in different ways?

TG: You have slipped from talking about the physical world to the social. The two are quite different. One is a world of ‘is’ and the other of ‘ought to be’. Consider the differences of will. We manipulate the physical world, not create it. We do not ‘create’ the social. We assert ourselves, we want to control others. The social dynamic has no counterpart in the physical world. It is uniquely human.

Attempts to control others’ perceptions are never completely successful. They work, by and large, but there’s always the possibility of the renegade and the rebellious. Patterns of social life are all ultimately controlled by the action, will and intention of individuals. We can try to organise and shape this and we spend a great deal of effort in doing so but are never more than partially successful. In thinking about this I find R. D. Laing’s discussion of the confrontation between the twentieth-century mother and the Stone Age baby very telling; ‘After fifteen years what you end up with is a half-crazed creature more or less adjusted to a mad world.’

PR: The IIP paper has been described as an ‘across the board attack’ on the kind of thinking that had dominated conventional theories about organisations and their management. Is this the way you saw the paper yourself and did you expect it to be seen by others in this way?
TG: I didn’t go to Bristol to throw down a gauntlet. I went there having written out the dialogue that had been taking place in my own mind over the last few years. I went in the hope of inviting others to join the dialogue. I certainly saw the implications of the position I was adopting and I think I spelled these out clearly at the end of the paper.

PR: I am surprised to hear that? I’ve always read the paper as a kind of manifesto for a new paradigm. Has it not been interpreted by others in this way?

TG: I didn’t think in paradigms at the time but perhaps I thought what I had to say could be accepted as inquiry. I didn’t go to Bristol to cross the Rubicon, but as soon as I arrived I began to get intimations others would see things differently. The paper had been sent to the conference and distributed to participants. When I arrived a couple of days after the conference began, there was a kind of electric tension that burst out at the session itself.

PR: When I first read it the paper made a great impression on me. I had encountered some of the ideas it contained and these had begun to make me think hard about my own position which up to then was largely that of a conventional positivist. My first thoughts were ‘Great! Somebody has thrown down the gauntlet at last and has done so in an elegant forceful argument’. I thought it a crunching paper so I am surprised to hear you did not expect it to cause the stir it did.

TG: I think it was a kind of naïveté on my part. There were people there who were toweringly angry with me.

PR: Was there a respondent? What was his response?

TG: The respondent was Alan Crane. His response was largely to ignore the paper and to seek to repair the damage. Unfortunately his statement does not appear in the proceedings. As I remember it, his text affirmed the existing paradigm. He soon came to change his view.

PR: Who were the people who spoke forcibly for and against from the floor? What did they say?

TG: For the most part, the questions and comments were neither for nor against. They were exploratory, but the atmosphere again revealed the gulf, the audience behaving like schoolboys in an assembly where a visiting speaker has said all the wrong things, explored a forbidden topic, even under the eyes of the headmaster. Griffiths’s brooding presence was very much apparent.

PR: He was present?

TG: He was indeed, he challenged me from the floor, but not before there was a forest of hands and questions after my presentation and Crane’s response. I don’t recall anything hostile from that response, only keen interest, if not support. It was clear something rather extraordinary was happening. Even before the session the atmosphere was electric. It was like a time-bomb waiting to go off, and I walked into the session with many doubts and uncertainties. As the paper had been circulated, I didn’t read it or even summarize its main points. I don’t remember what I said, I just wanted to get
the ordeal over with. I’d presented my thing, said a few words, made a few points, and Alan Crane stood up, seemingly to calm the horses, and then there was an explosion. Everyone, it seemed, wanted to say something. I remember George Baron saying to me afterwards, ‘Well, it had a slow start, but once you got wound up . . .’ He recalled an incident where Griffiths interrupted me as I answered a question. I had been saying that the dominating theorists of the field were systems thinkers – I may have added most were Americans. Later the whisper campaign against me claimed that the point of my critique was no more than a cover up for my administrative incompetence, a fight against my American nemesis in the struggle that deprived me of the Departmental headship. In any case, Griffiths interrupted at that point. ‘Name one,’ he demanded in his stentorian voice, ‘Talcott Parsons,’ I shot back. I might have added ‘Daniel Griffiths.’ Baron said he was in admiration of that exchange. Certainly from that point on the gloves were off, I have come to be deeply grateful to Daniel Griffiths for his latter day views, but it was another case in the beginning.

PR: I think I’ve met about 400 people who have told me they were there. What happened after the session?

TG: The room was full but it was a moderate sized classroom, with about sixty present. Immediately after the meeting people came to talk to me. Griffiths was seething with anger, telling me ‘You are poorly informed’ I remember those words. He then turned on his heel and left after advising me to read more. I tried to talk to him later, but it was difficult. I felt I had betrayed something, stabbed Caesar. I had always stood in admiration of him – in awe even. It was painful. I felt alone and isolated. There seemed no community of scholars, no camaraderie. If there was support, it came from individuals who didn’t count, people from places on the periphery of the great world of theory and accepted thinking about it. Four years later when IIP ’78 was held in Canada, my colleagues ensured there would be no echo of the Bristol error. I was not invited to attend or make a presentation. I watched the IIP caravanserai as it passed briefly through Toronto.

PR: What happened after the conference?

After 1974: The subjectivist year – from Bristol to Edmonton

TG: Things went quiet. I knew in UCEA [University Council for Central Administration] circles the thing would come back as a cause célèbre, I was aware Griffiths was speaking out. I began to get invitations to write, some of my later papers are a reflection of that.

PR: From North America as well as in Europe?

TG: There were exchanges in the UCEA Review. I remember by that time feeling almost paralysed by it all. I had not anticipated the bombshell that broke over my head. I began to understand the way it was seen. It was inter-
interpreted as deliberately challenging, threatening and hostile, I had not thought of it like this. I simply wasn’t prepared to mount any platform in an adversarial way. It was just not me, I didn’t want to go through some kind of trauma or intellectual combat, and for some time I felt paralysed. I felt I was not doing good work at that time, it took me a long time to overcome that fear. To accept a burden I didn’t want, a kind of curse of insight. In those years I was unsure about my insights, unsure at least that I could invoke them again to defend the original vision. That’s how I felt about it, as a vision whose source I was unsure of, and could not command. In each subsequent paper I had a sense of struggling to draw again from the deep well of insight that moved the 1974 paper. To reach the Muse, as it were, was uncertain, an undertaking fraught with risk. And in those days, the overthrow of reason and professional authority that Allan Bloom describes so well in *The Closing of the American Mind* – all that made it hard to be a scholar of any kind other than one who upheld the new political orthodoxy. It dismays me to find how often my writings are seen by younger readers as support for academic fascism then and now, for that is what it is. I learned to listen to the depths, to alternative realities for inspiration. I began to feel like Winston Smith in *1984*, beset from both left and right. I learned to listen to the depths, to alternative realities for inspiration. Though argument helped I learned to tune into and hearken to the non-rational, to return to modes of knowing I knew from the arts and my other training.

**PR:** In Britain, *EMA* [*Educational Management and Administration*] published a series of papers which tried to take up the debate. ‘Self’ in 1977–78 was a response to that symposium. What were you trying to say in it?

**TG:** I knew the argument about the social construction of reality brings in very personal issues. I realised you couldn’t just march into an assembly, as I did at Bristol, and present the intellectual arguments for a radically different view of social life and not see the personal dimensions it entailed. I’ve never seen my arguments as *ad hominem*. I aimed only at the intellectual issue, but of course you cannot advance such arguments without, as I say in my paper, cutting into something unexpectedly human.

**PR:** Were you not trying to insulate what you do as a scholar from the account you were giving of what social life is like?

**TG:** There was an element of the sorcerer’s apprentice in what I was doing. It is one thing to get all those brooms moving and another to stop them. I soon realised once it had started there was no going back.

**PR:** Are you saying you assumed that the kind of social world you were depicting would not quite apply to you?

**TG:** I was quickly disabused of that – ‘Self’ begins the march towards that recognition.

**PR:** Can you elaborate on that?

**TG:** Where does the self belong in the study of organizations? That’s the point. There are reflections of my struggle in that paper and it acknowledges that
our ideas are very much connected to ourselves, to our personal constructions of the world, and to our values. That the assertion of one’s own self and values is apt to bring one into conflict with stronger dominating expressions of self.

PR: To some you might be the dominating . . .
TG: I definitely wasn’t then. The paper began to be talked about in unscholarly ways. I discovered something about my field: its pettiness, its calcified and limited vision, its conventionality, its hostility to dissenting opinion, its vituperativeness.

PR: The attack was personalised?
TG: The attack was personalised, it was by second-hand statement, innuendo – people who had not read the paper but claimed they knew what it was about.

PR: They attacked your motives not your arguments?
TG: Some put up the straw man ‘phenomenology’ saying I didn’t understand it, this was evidence of the inadequacy of my argument. I was aware I was being attacked unfairly in an unscholarly fashion, that people sought to explain the paper in personalised terms. They began to circulate stories about my administrative competence and the business about losing the leadership of the Department started to come up. I felt beleaguered and alone.

PR: Several of the EMA contributors were sympathetic.
TG: That was in England. The first person who extended the personal hand of friendship and support to me here was Chris Hodgkinson.

PR: You have not formally collaborated? A case of two people sharing a similar view of the world and learning together and sharing ideas as they learn together?
TG: He came to me at a time I was very vulnerable. This was about the time his book *Towards A Philosophy Of Administration* came out. He had sought me out. Chris’s style means there are no secrets with him, nothing you can’t talk about. We talked of the whole intellectual furore, my changing personal circumstances, my marriage dissolving. He would talk about everything, intellectual and personal, everything others avoided in disdain, disagreement, or embarrassment. He offered the steel of intellectual argument and the hand of friendship. There were no others like him. Everything was on the table, no averted eyes, no sham, no shame, no pitying condescension. No rejection. Acceptance, but also no-holds-barred disagreements when it came to that. But always understanding and support. The first time I met him, he said something like, ‘What’s this I hear about your taking up the vices of the ancient Greeks?’ And I probably replied something like, ‘I’m not just taking them up.’ He was, as I say, a great, friendly, and supportive hand, and there weren’t many then.

PR: Not even amongst your colleagues at OISE?
TG: Not in that way. There were not the people there that I could talk to intellec-
tually or personally. I always felt my Canadian colleagues waited to see how the show would play New York or Chicago before committing themselves. Well the ‘Phenomenology’ show is still getting mixed reviews in New York and Chicago, though fringe voices like William Greenfield’s *Organization Theory Dialogue* has invited my views, as is seen in ‘Phoenix’. My Canadian colleagues have now come around, too, though often they would rather put me on some kind of honour role than ask my views on anything. At one time however some of the colleagues closest to me virtually averted their eyes when they saw the fuss and furore. There were friends but not in a way that Chris was. I never felt with Chris a personal rejection although I did feel this with other people; a sense of being beyond the pale.

**PR:** How, and in what way did you begin to affect each others thinking? Had this begun to happen when you started to write ‘Truths’ in 1978?

**TG:** I had begun to take in what he said about administration as an act of will and choice, as asserting self, as dramaturgy. In the next paper, ‘Research in Educational Administration’, I cite Sir Geoffrey Vickers, after writing to him at Hodgkinson’s suggestion. Chris was in correspondence with Vickers, who was most generous with his time and thought, though he was old and ill. The correspondence between Vickers and Hodgkinson began after Vickers had written a critically appreciative review of *Towards a Philosophy of Administration*, a book that was admired everywhere but in educational administration, where it was ignored or misunderstood.

**PR:** So ‘Reflections’ in 1978 tries to work out some of the themes raised in the debates after 1974?

**TG:** I was trying to explain again what the 1974 paper was about, going over the same ground and speaking to the critics who had addressed it in print in the United States. I make reference to Hills, Griffiths, Kendell and Byrne.

**PR:** Who first criticised your use and understanding of phenomenology?

**TG:** Griffiths and Willower did, and much of ‘The man who comes back’, in 1980 speaks directly to them.

**PR:** How were you using ‘phenomenology’?

**TG:** Not in the way some American phenomenologists were using it. I suppose you might say that I was using phenomenology with a small ‘P’, Griffiths and Willower were using it with a big one. And they insisted that if I was not using their way I must be using it incorrectly.

**PR:** This debate was conducted in the American context and with the American scholars who were key members of the ruling orthodoxy and who had been notable in defending it against you.

**TG:** For a long time that’s what I did. I was invited to these events as an *enfant terrible* to come and say again and again those threatening and outrageous things.

**PR:** What of ‘Ideology’ in 1979? In it your concern begins to turn from epistemological to value issues.

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**EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMANE SCIENCE**

113
TG: Here I was able to get away from the old platform. I was at last able to look ahead again, to resume the dialogue I had begun with the 1974 paper. I was able to set aside the debate and get on with the thinking.

PR: Let us turn briefly to ‘Talk, Chance, Action and Experience’ of 1979. What do you mean by experience and chance in this context?

TG: The world of chance is one the statistical view seeks to do away with. In stressing regularities, statistics leaves out irregularities even though they may explain a great deal about how the world actually functions. What is vivid, individual, living gets left out. In this paper and in ‘Truths’ I ask the question, ‘Why are we afraid of the specific?’ The argument for chance is to bring in the specific, the individual, the reality of contingency and circumstance and to recognise the importance these things can have in organizations. To take this view, is to move towards a historical view of social reality.

PR: How important is it to be clear about the notion of experience if we are to understand social life?

TG: The word ‘experience’ echoes through many of my papers after 1974. We all exist within our own phenomenological reality, that is our experience. It is a great resource, it is irreducible and it is not to be summed up in statistical and general propositions. The important point about experience is what we think we know about it and how we come to understand it. In one sense our experience is irreducible but in another it needs explanation or rather it needs understanding. It doesn’t come ready-made to us.

PR: Some of the gurus of the Theory Movement have challenged the idea that the experiences of practitioners as seen and interpreted by the latter can be an important way of understanding organizations and their management.

TG: That puts the point well. In many ways natural science is a matter of building knowledge that goes against experience. Our experience tells us the sun rises in the east and sets in the west but natural science tells us this is false, that the sun doesn’t rise at all. Just about all natural science is a supplanting of immediate experience with better knowledge. That is the approach taken in much of the social sciences and in the Theory Movement. It amounted in practice to a belief that administrators did not and could not know what was really going on. They thought they experienced something but this had little to do with the reality of what was happening.

PR: They had to have their experience explained to them to understand it. They needed a theorist to do this?

TG: Against this I would argue that while experience may not in and of itself be sufficient to understand reality, it is a crucial building block for such an understanding. Any worthwhile explanations of social reality must not contradict that experience. It may reinterpret it but it must not contradict it. This is the perspective of phenomenology, the perspective of the first hand, the perspective of the subjectivist.

PR: Natural science can explain but not understand?
TG: More and more I used images from literature and art. In ‘Ideology’ I quote from William Blake. He asked,

What is the price of experience, do men buy it for a song?  
Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No, it is bought with the price  
Of all a man hath, his house, his wife, his children’.

One begins with the experience but there is more. You come to understanding through that bed-rock, through that thing that nobody can dispense with.  
We live in experience but what understanding are we to place upon it? A social science that assumes that experience must be obliterated or replaced is wrong.

PR: Can I have access to or learn from the experience of another?

TG: The only way we can gain access to another’s experience is in symbols of one kind or another, frequently linguistic symbols. We struggle with language to put names on our own experience, to understand better and to understand others. As Schumacher says ‘There must be an altruism, I must first of all believe that there is somebody else there who is sentient even as I am, whose experience is as valid as mine and which I ought to try and understand.’ That’s a moral principle.

PR: For what purpose should I do that?

TG: In the fundamental sense of respect for others, beyond the utilitarian sense of mutuality. In a deeper sense it has an ethical base: Love thy neighbour as thyself.

PR: ‘Research in Educational Administration’ of 1979 documents the continuing dominance of the positivistic, scientistic, empiricist paradigm in the study of educational administration in North America?

TG: I attempted to set out the credos of New Movement theory. Then I examine the research that flowed from it. I was trying to show its inadequacies in theory and research – attempting to lay out the alternative directions in which we might go.

PR: You talk a good deal of Andrew Halpin?

TG: I try to understand the genesis of the Theory Movement, and Halpin was very much involved in it. He was a founding father. I don’t think anybody has more penetratingly used Simon’s ideas – a brilliant mind. I find it interesting that in his earlier writings Halpin seems to have been clearly aware of the shortcomings of the idea of a Grand Theory. He was one of those who raised questions and did so right at the beginning. It has long surprised me why Halpin and others stopped asking them.

PR: I don’t know of a more evocative set of titles than ‘The Broken Icon’, ‘The Fumbled Torch’ and ‘A Foggy View From Olympus’. Is his concern in writing these papers the same concern he expressed at the beginning of the Theory Movement? Or rather is he arguing that it is the theorists who have failed the movement rather than the theory which has failed the theorists?
TG: What interests me are the doubts he expressed in some of his early papers. In ‘Ways of Knowing’ he ruminates on the idea that the way scientists know is not the way that administrators know. He recognises there are ways of knowing that are non-scientific. But later on, he put these doubts aside and becomes a committed convert to the New Movement. At the end he is saying that the Theory Movement failed because the following generation of researchers watered down and despoiled the pure and potent methodology, the vision the founding theorists handed down to them from Olympus. The methodology was not done the way it should be, the acolytes failed the priests. The rite became impure. So, I would question your statement that Halpin thought it was the theory the founders offered that was betrayed. Halpin was under no illusion that such theory existed. He complained bitterly about loss – the loss of the methodology. The rite – the methodology defined by Simon and in logical positivism generally – was no longer performed by knowledgeable and competent practitioners. Halpin went back to believing in pure positivist methodology, setting aside all his earlier doubts that it was adequate to the task set for it. It is those doubts I offer in this paper as foundation for a critique of the Movement.

PR: If this approach will not do, how and what should we research in educational administration? You begin to address these issues in the paper.

TG: I need to make an observation before I try to answer that question. We should ask ourselves why a flawed science persists. Why a science that does not work is still hailed as science. An answer can be found in the argument MacIntyre advances. There are strong reasons for believing in such a science, even if it doesn’t work. It offers a world in which there are answers to all problems. You must have been at sessions where the science of effectiveness is preached. It is a world of cheerfulness and certainty. The alternative is conflict-ridden and uncertain, opening up the pain that comes with recognising the different realities we live in, of confronting the value chasms that separate us. The Canadian government hires conflict resolution ‘experts’ from America to ease the acceptance of its proposals for constitutional change. We want to believe such a technology exists and that it works to remove the value gaps separating Canadians. Welcome to the world of management science and the relief managers or politicians feel as their responsibility for value choice is devolved into a technical, non-responsible realm where choice is a product of scientific analysis, not personal judgement. Choosing responsibility leaves one in an exposed and vulnerable position, and so science comes to the administrator’s rescue: science not the administrator makes the decision, thus absolving the administrator from responsibility, while giving strategic advantage over the choice.

To go back to your question, we should be studying decision-makers, how they make their decisions and what they decide. It is a conclusion I come to with assistance from Vickers and Hodgkinson: that a science of values is meaningless, that science cannot resolve value differences, though
for strategic purposes we may wish to say it can. Without science the administrator simply makes choices. The choices made may be good or bad, but someone is responsible for them. This is a hard road and one reason why it is difficult to be a manager and why managers look for help from science. And finally I would note the paper argues that the proper role of research in the face of these dilemmas is description.

PR: How do you justify the existence of scholars of education administration given the assumptions you have outlined? How can we help?

TG: We can help by enabling administrators to understand their experience better. One of the implications I drew at the end of my 1974 paper said the study of educational administration should use the social sciences as windows of discovery, windows into alternative perceptions, windows into alternative values.

PR: In thinking about the way in which we construct reality, how do you see the balance between reality as individually and socially constructed?

TG: What the social researcher is doing is launching out upon an inquiry into other people’s realities. I assume that the portrait can be of value not just to the researcher but to people within that social reality as well or to others who have interests in it.

I would also hope that enquiries into social reality make plain the contestation, the different visions of reality that people have, of how one prevails over another, of how power is used to sustain and propel certain views over others, and to ask what the consequences are. But I do not see this yielding the technology of control that management research seeks. The research I have in mind offers the hope of achieving insight into social realities. It is overwhelmingly descriptive and historical. It looks for insight, but first it is descriptive. It records decisions and points to their implications.

PR: Can it help to improve things?

TG: Maybe it can but not in an instrumental way. We are not looking at physical reality but at a chancy, value-driven cultural enterprise. All we hope for is a better vision beyond the shadows in which people will somehow rise to what is good to what is better. It can bring us to argument, to better argument, to an appreciation of people and their values behind the argument. That is my position: description first, followed by argument and ultimately, of course, prescription. While positivistic management science wants to shut down argument by calculating the answer, I want to open it by standing at the gulf that separates us, by recognizing the chasm that must be overcome.

PR: I know ‘The man who comes back’ of 1980 gives you satisfaction, not least because of those marvellous quotes from Francis Bacon in the beginning. Why is it significant for you?

TG: It’s a paper written after I had come to terms with my homosexuality, not that there are references to homosexual realities in it, as there are in some others, ‘Anarchy’ for example. But in this paper and for the first time I let a
part of myself that I had earlier suppressed speak freely. This paper comes from the heart, not just from the head. Here I began to use strength out of gay realities to say something about the world. I drew strength from myself, from newly understood experience, to call upon the Muse, and to let myself speak the truth I saw. From that special reality I gained strength. The horrible uncertainty of the past, the doubt that I might have something to say to the world was largely assuaged, if not completely exorcised. ‘The Man Who Comes Back’ is a paper where I address my critics, but also advance the argument. I look at some of the deepest conundrums of understanding social reality. In doing so I don’t think I ignore my critics. I am attentive to what they say, but at the same time, I speak past them, trying to build a framework of sound understanding.

PR: And it’s built around nine propositions?

TG: It ends with those nine propositions saying how we might understand organisations. It seemed to have no impact in the central academic institutions of educational administration in North America. To this day it goes virtually uncited, as is apparent in the record of the major American citation index. Though EAQ [Educational Administration Quarterly] is sometimes reluctant to publish my papers, the editors know they represented good business. Issues in which they appeared were good sellers.

PR: Can’t get a better quantitative test than that!

TG: I attribute this response to the interests of students and junior faculty who read my articles almost as a subversive activity. One colleague starting his academic career told me recently students were enthralled or profoundly troubled when examples of my writing were offered them.

PR: ‘Anarchy’ of 1983 sketches an anarchistic theory of organisations, but does not draw on traditional anarchistic notions.

TG: I am using anarchism here, in the sense of an awkwardness of things, of things that don’t fit, of an unwillingness to participate, of a non-intended, but ultimately conscious rebelliousness. At the end I talk of the anarchy that adheres in all thought. It’s a personal statement in many ways. I am no longer addressing critics, I am simply stating my position. I suppose in a lot of my work there is a theme of the individual versus the organisation. I am for the individual, I am for freedom, for independence.

PR: Some of these papers reflect a return to themes you touched upon at the beginning of your academic career. Themes to do with leadership. You appear to be trying, in part, to bring this up to date with your contemporary thinking?

TG: In ‘Non-Natural Order’ of 1984 I take up Halpin’s ideas about ways of knowing. There are ways of understanding and expressing knowledge that are powerful, satisfying and important, but non-rational – ways that are essentially cast within an artistic, literary, historical, philosophical even journalistic mode. A mode that is descriptive, withholding judgement, though moving towards it, moving to insight.
PR: You began to develop an approach to understanding leadership which entailed taking examples from literature which illustrates the analysis you want to make. In the paper there is a long section from *A House for Mr Biswas*. Why did you decide to use this?

TG: I found myself drawn to the book. It is powerful, evocative. Perhaps in it I saw something of my own experience. It tells us things about education which, narrowly conceived, the social sciences can’t begin to approach. It helps you to understand what education means, and what a painful process it is, if it works in a deep and fundamental sense. I found it a tragic expression in one sense and hopeful in another.

PR: What does it tell you about leadership?

TG: That leadership is more than an individual phenomenon; it is a cultural thing, that it’s embedded in whole lives, whole lives within cultures. The programme of education we see in *Biswa* is certainly not ‘implemented’. We see elemental cultural dynamics at work. There is a kind of leadership in what Naipaul describes, and Biswas is a leader too – he leads himself. ‘If you would be a leader,’ said Bethune, ‘first lead yourself.’ That’s anti-leadership, and I admire it, as I do this sentiment from Mackay, a Canadian poet: ‘Rend your heart and not your garments.’ Whatever the power or restriction of the wider culture, the person within it who thinks right, believes right is of ultimate importance.

PR: The idea of knowing yourself as a route to understanding educational management is a recurrent theme in your work. Along with the belief that the kind of excessively task-orientated approach to leadership development advocated in much of the literature is not a promising way to hope to achieve this.

TG: Technocratic approaches to leadership and technocratic approaches to literacy are empty. A text like Naipaul’s has more to say about illiteracy, say in the inner cities of England, than many of the technocratic studies that are talking about effective teaching. They do not begin to touch the power of insight Naipaul offers, insight into the importance of tradition. Mr Biswas moved from poverty in rural Trinidad to seeing his son embarking for Oxford. That is an awesome journey, but it is carried out within a tradition of knowledge, and reveals the dynamics that ultimately bring about change. These are not simple, technocratic variables, they are deep-seated attitudes towards knowledge. Biswas’s life tells us that all education is in one sense invasive of individual experience. What Naipaul lets us see is the shaping of the individual in line with cultural values.

PR: Coming to grips with these things has been a kind of twenty year odyssey for you. Who have been your guides as you struggled to think through the enormously complex issues that you have been trying to come to terms with? And are the old ones like Weber or Laing being supplemented by a very different set including Naipaul and Shakespeare?

TG: First a methodological point in terms of a question: ‘What represents the
world and allows us to understand it?’ The claim of empiricist social science of course is that we can know reality only through its restricted rules. This is dangerously wrong in that its representations of the world are both limited and impoverished. What I came to realise is that other modes of representing the world are not just a supplement, as some people would see it, to the stronger objective and powerful understandings of science, they are true alternatives to it. But of course, they do not lead to what science promises us – control. So we follow the narrow route of science because of the false promises it offers. It doesn’t offer control, or if it does, in a very spurious mode. There are more fundamental and powerful insights into reality. These are descriptive; they do not yield control. You look at the life of Mr Biswas and it doesn’t tell you what to do, it doesn’t tell you which variables are to be manipulated, but it does give you an understanding and appreciation. It gives you what Sir Geffery Vickers calls ‘appreciation’. There is that value-oriented stance again. A novel like Mr Biswas allows you to appreciate what was involved in the building of literacy. It has powerful policy implications but they’re not the kind that you deduce in the way that empirical scientists claim to do. The inference in empiricist science is supposed to be obvious and logical, I doubt they are. In ‘appreciation’ that obvious logic does not exist. One understands and comes to value. A look at Mr Biswas would incline you to evaluate education as a desirable end in itself – you certainly wouldn’t do it for a productive reason, you would do it for what it says about the maintenance of culture and what it offers the individual even though all individuals would not benefit from it. So the implications that I would draw there run against the kind of production-oriented, mechanistic, market-driven analyses that we have now. You invest in education in and of itself. But the power of that investment can be such as to transform the individual and – possibly, ultimately – the culture itself. That is how change comes about.

PR: I am trying to understand the way your thinking has developed, as opposed to where you are now. Can we consider this in three questions: First, ‘What can I know?’ Secondly, ‘How can I achieve such knowledge?’ and thirdly, ‘Who can help me to know?’ And in considering each of those questions, can you also say something about the sequence in which your ideas have developed? What came first, what next and what last?

TG: Initially, I was seduced by a methodology that, collapses the first two questions. The first becomes irrelevant and the second all-important. The argument I’ve been making is that logical positivism offers us a shrunken view of the world. It offers a methodology for manipulating reality so as to control it, a methodology that promises more than it actually delivers. It ends up hiding more than it reveals. In terms of the nature of knowledge, I’ve turned my back on the people who were my mentors in educational administration. I have found myself going back to ways of knowing and bodies of knowledge that I had encountered much earlier. On coming to
educational administration I concluded that my earlier knowledge was useless, or more exactly, valueless. This paper recognises that those other bodies of knowledge are relevant and may be powerful. That they are not just supplements to what social science lets us understand, but are truly unique insights in their own right. Partly because they are not paralysed by the only way of knowing recognised in positivistic social science.

PR: How does art relate to social science?

TG: I don’t think we should see art as another kind of social science, the two are quite different. There is a role for social science as social science. It’s a very complex role, and it is not the social science that is envisaged by logical positivism. The vital point is that the arts are not to be cast into the role of a lower level support to social science. Studies of the humanities and educational administration say, ‘To illustrate the principles established in social science, to colour them in with the tones of fleshy reality, one draws on literature and the humanities.’ You read *A Bell for Adano* or view *The Bridge on the River Kwai* to add weight and relevance to general principles, colouring in the laws of social science. Everything, including *King Lear*, can be brought into the service of social science. But for me the arts are not to be so easily dragooned to serve the propositions of social science by adding convincing evidence to support what such science has already established. Much more the arts speak to questions of how to live a life. People who make policy based on what social science tells them will need something more. They would do well to call on the humane vision that the arts can give.

In this view of the arts, they are not simply a parallel vision of scientific truth. Theirs is a starkly different vision, one in which moral questions are to the fore. Should Henry Kissinger weep at his desk before ordering the fire of napalm to be dropped on peasant villages, a question raised in Wallace Shawn’s play, *Aunt Dan and Lemon*? Would such weeping make it impossible to do what has to be done? As Northrop Frye has said, ‘We don’t go to *Macbeth* to learn about the history of Scotland, but to understand what it’s like to gain the world and lose your soul.’ Somebody who understands that is a better person, certainly a better person to be in a leadership position.

PR: But how does it help you with the identification and education of such leaders?

TG: I have proposed that leaders require a period of withdrawal and contemplation, that is what I would see as the role for training. Certainly there is a role in training for the provision of information, concepts and theories. But I think the most valuable form of training begins in a setting of practice, where one has to balance values against constraints — in which one has to take action within a political context. I think only somebody who has acted in that way is ready for true training in leadership. In that context I would be Platonic, not striving to make philosophers kings, but kings philosophers, or artists maybe. To make them more humane in any case, more thoughtful of their power, more aware of the values it serves or denies.
PR: Aristotle and Plato were not all that successful when they actually tried their hands at leadership?

TG: Which takes us back to the idea that the practising administrator may know something the philosopher and the theorist do not know, and vice-versa. I think we have to bring those things together. The ultimate training of a leader would be a kind of philosophical withdrawal to look at the larger issues in fresh perspectives. Perhaps they will return and administer as they were doing it before but with an added insight. That’s all I can see as a hope, that there is an added insight. A deeply clinical approach to the training of administrators is needed, as it is for teachers. Our training for both is disjointed, reflection is separated from action, thinking from doing, praxis from the practical. Why do we merely throw people at these jobs, expecting then to do well with almost no experience of them, offering them no analysis of their experience? The answer seems to lie in a virtually anti-intellectual bias, in the belief that experience alone, shored up by quick nostrums of science will turn the trick.

PR: There is a practical hope as well?, That they will be better leaders for it?

TG: I think there is. One of the things I have sensed in speaking to leaders in education, is how impoverished their real world is. They don’t see beyond a narrow horizon. They don’t see the problems of education, except in rather technological terms, or if they do see it, if they talk about it in larger terms, they are sentimental or platitudinous. We need leaders in education who can think about some larger issues, it’s the only thing that’s going to save it. It is interesting that the reports we get from Japan indicate that is the way they see administrative training. Junior officers entering government or business spend time just sitting and contemplating the beauty of the flowers. Senior people are expected to have a sense of history, of their own culture, of what is ultimately of value and they spend time on such things. Yet these things may seem non-productive, though of course the practical never escapes ultimate attention. It isn’t just navel-gazing or New Ageism. Can we expect our educational executives to think of larger but seemingly non-productive matters? I hope so, but it will be an uphill struggle to bring them to such contemplation. Perhaps we need different kinds of executives in terms of character and vision.

PR: There are examples within western culture which have looked back at such folk, they can sometimes be very nasty in practice as well.

TG: What are thinking of, the Mandarins?

PR: I was thinking of Cosimo de Medici. Machiavelli’s Prince is a highly cultured person with a great understanding of many things but would you like to have him as a role model for educational leaders?

TG: I’d rather have the Prince than the technocrats of today. Machiavelli helped him to understand what he was doing and why. I would prefer that to the people who are being swept over the precipice and don’t realise it.

PR: He understands politics and people. Is that not an intensely control-orientated vision?
TG: Not in the technocratic sense. It is control in the political sense, the lawful sense.
PR: Is that an important distinction?
TG: I think so. Certainly organisations are control orientated, but my theme is that they should not work through a mechanistic kind of control, but rather through a lawful, personal, responsible form. That is the point emphasised in the title of this paper, the idea of wilfulness and non-natural order. The idea that the organisation is not natural, it is created out of somebody’s intention, purpose and will, and the people who understand this and its implications for theory and practice are the ones who will control it. That is the nature of organisations. The people who run organizations ought to understand this. Therefore, I prefer the Prince even though he is selfish and egotistical. He does not pursue the best goals but he knows what goals he is pursuing and how to pursue them. Hodgkinson would say what we need is an amalgam of Machiavelli and Plato, a Prince with better ideals. We need a Prince who knows he is responsible, not one who thinks science removes his responsibility or who manipulates us behind the mask of a fraudulent science.
PR: Plato did not seem to have somebody like the Prince in mind as a model ruler in the Republic. He believes if you are egotistical and selfish you will become the most terrible prisoner of your own vices and desires. He propose a form of selection and training which would liberate his guardians from this danger but he was not too precise about how you might achieve this.
TG: I don’t think there is a technology for that. All we can do is work with the character of leaders. This is a distinction which Hodgkinson makes. Whereas studies of leadership in the positivistic mode have looked at the characteristics of leaders, what is important is their character. I think we look at the Prince and deplore his character, but how do you get people of good character into leadership positions in organizations? That would be the answer.
PR: But isn’t what Machiavelli proposed predicated on somebody who is like the Prince? Can you be other than the Prince if you operate in the kind of way that Machiavelli is proposing? Could Plato’s Philosopher Guardian operate as Machiavelli’s Prince is advised to do without becoming the Prince?
TG: We must hope it is possible. That is why I put emphasis on a withdrawal from the exercise of power so that leaders can examine what they are doing. The headlong pressure to act, to do, to be the leader militate against a reflective attitude – a stance that is needed for the growth of worthwhile values, of character. That is what I see as the ultimate in the nurture of leaders through training. It would be aimed at persons in power, fostering awareness of values and of the value choices that face them, and thereby perhaps assisting character growth.
PR: So the effort is not to make them effective leaders, but to make them good persons first?

TG: To make them good persons, yes. I’d remind you that in German, Machiavelli’s genre is known as *Furtenspiegel*, writing from the ‘mirror for princes’. Seeing himself in the mirror, the Prince is to be transformed.

PR: Even so what makes a good leader? What, for example, makes St Paul a good leader? Why was St Peter less effective as a leader than Paul? How do you help leaders to be better people *and* more effective leaders?

TG: Paul, is a perfect example. He receives a blinding vision on the road to Damascus with a new moral insight and thereafter he combines, what you might call political strategies with mystical experience. ‘For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face.’ He shows us what it is to be a good leader. His combination of vision with untiring effort and endless recipes and advice for making things work, seeing where values require taking a stand on what matters, and working out their implications in practical reality. For example, his decision to make Christianity more than just another Jewish sect by his abandonment of the old Law and circumcision, opening the new way to *all*, to Gentile and Jew, to women, to men, to free-born and slave, the insistence that redemption was open to all. That’s leadership, and it has a political element woven with the visionary. He is filled with concern for the world as it is and how to change it and organise it but at the same time he is touched by, in this case, a transcendental vision. The role that I see for the arts is the one that gives us some insight into the larger values, and that I think leaders very much need.

PR: That is one thing the arts could do. They could also give leaders an insight into motive and intention and the operation of will and the relationship between each and all of these things and actions.

TG: One of the implications of accepting a world of multiple realities is that leaders need to appreciate the realities that they are overriding in the pursuit of those they seek to inculcate. Again this requires a kind of withdrawal from the immediate reality to understand the complexities and the alternatives. But the leader cannot contemplate forever, contemplation must stop sooner or later and action must begin. But there is no calculus for resolving a conflict of values, a conflict of separate realities, except through force, varying from psychic to physical.

PR: Can we examine ‘Critical Perspective’ of 1985. It offers an economical yet comprehensive account of your thinking on educational organisation.

TG: What it represents in terms of something new, is a study of the foundations of our field in the work of Herbert Simon and Chester Bernard, especially Simon. Here is where I began to consider how Simon built up a foundation and pushed the field in a mistaken direction.

PR: What do you see as the mistaken direction?

TG: He established logical positivism as *the* methodology of the field. In doing so he understood it could not deal with values: there is no science of
valuing. Simon recognised that. His solution removed valuing and purpose-
ing from the science of administration. His science came at the price of a
neutered administrative practice, deploring on the one hand that administra-
tors make choices out of their own values, creating on the other the adminis-
trative ‘moral cipher’ as the model for scientific action. In that sense, Simon
is worse than Machiavelli, much worse.

PR: He had a very technicist view.

TG: He scientised the field by eliminating the value choice questions. His whole
aim was to reduce decision making, to eliminate values in choice questions.
His whole aim is to reduce decision making to a calculable system. The only
way you can calculate this is if there are values established within it. So
Simon’s perfect administrator is a neutered cipher. Interestingly, he began by
trying to understand what he called the ‘psychology of human choice’. But
ultimately the thrust of his logic brought him to the study of artificial intelli-
gence, as is seen in his model for choosing a diet that was maximally nutri-
tious and of minimal cost, as though religious rules of diet were meaningless,
and as if food fads and fetishes had no force. The endpoint of Simon’s
thought is HAL of Kubrick’s 2001, the computer that is superrational, but
non-human and non-humane, making up for the deficiencies of human think-
ing by obliterating the human power to have values to choose.

PR: What of Chester Barnard?

TG: Barnard saw the task of the executive officer as building a moral order. That
is the nature of organisations – a moral order in action. The building of that
order is, as I see it and as Barnard saw it, a wilful thing. So if you put Simon
and Barnard together, you create the perfect combination. Barnard was
much concerned about purpose and the building of commitment through
communication. These were the foundations of his concept of administra-
tion, defining an administrator who was value-concerned and active on
behalf of them. All that Barnard’s administrator strove to create Simon
assumed as givens in the administrator’s world. Simon focused only on
what the administrator has to be to achieve the values handed to him and to
achieve them efficiently. But Barnard and Simon are not seen in a
complementary sense within much of the subsequent literature. Rather
Simon becomes a replacement for Barnard, as superior because he is scien-
tific. If you look at early editions of Simon, there is an introduction by
Barnard in which he says virtually the same thing. He too was dazzled by
the promise of Science.

PR: Even Barnard?

TG: Even Barnard. He speaks of Simon’s book as being the next wave, as some-
thing standing on the base of what he offered. I don’t think he saw that as
entailing a destruction of the base.

PR: To what extent is ‘Decline and Fall’ of 1986 concerned with similar issues?

TG: Very much. It takes up where the previous paper leaves off. It looks at what
Simon offered, at the difference between Simon and Barnard.
PR: Is there anything else in this paper that we should note at this point?

TG: I mention the classic work, *The Consolation of Philosophy* by Boethius, and this is to make the argument on the need for reflection. The story of Boethius is touching. He was a Christian who stood at the hinge between the Roman World and the Middle Ages. He is an administrator, one caught between the Emperor and the Pope, or as it turned out, the wrong Pope. He is condemned, and as he awaits his death he thinks back on his career and writes, thus bringing new insight to the administrative task. Few of us will face the horror that Boethius did, but I am convinced that potentially there is that same dimension in all administrative rule, a kind of horror. The wielding of power is terrible, and the more power, the more terrible it becomes. If there is to be a kind of humanising of that power a contemplative, philosophical dimension must and should be brought to it. Perhaps to do the thing at all requires the kind of withdrawal which I have advocated, and a need for a meditation on values.

PR: Some of your work has an epistemological focus some deals with aspects of value and its place in the study and practice of educational administration. Both themes are present in the last two papers. Both were written in 1991. The first is ‘Phoenix’ and the second is ‘Science and service’. They read, to an extent, as an *Apologia pro Vitae Sua*. Do you see it like this?

TG: I feel rather like Prospero, I guess, looking back on a career.

PR: Prospero voluntarily gives up the power of magic at the end of *The Tempest*?

TG: Shortly before I wrote this paper I retired. So this is a retrospective view of the controversy in which I have been involved for close on twenty years. I had these things that I wanted to say stored up.

PR: You try to look back over developments in the field as well as the debates in which you have been involved over the last two decades. You try to make sense of the field as a whole, but as you do that, new things come forward like the book from Evers and Lakomski.

TG: That’s right!

PR: Which is a new challenge, a rather subtler one philosophically than the some that had come before?

TG: I finished the paper knowing that it was not a final testament after all. The debate wasn’t finished. There’s a whole new phase, a new era of issues and controversy, but that makes me feel good. I like to think I had some part to play in what’s happening now.

PR: Certainly in this case, they much value your work.

TG: A surprise after all this time.

PR: I think *Knowing Educational Administration* is in many ways an exceptional book, But I can’t help thinking that Evers and Lakomski have been brave or foolhardy or both. The scope of their thesis is immensely broad. They have been pretty reckless in the potential enemies they might make given the range of critiques they present. But of all the critiques, yours is
the most understated. It is one of the longest in the book, but also one of the
most tentative. Whilst they acknowledge its strengths, they seem rather
more critical of Hodgkinson’s work. They are also critical of the critical
theorists.

TG: Perhaps they see Hodgkinson as the more dangerous opponent philosophi-
cally. His comment on the book was that the value–fact divide recognized
over 2,500 years of philosophy is not so easily unhorsed, that naturalistic
coherentism hasn’t done it. I take great satisfaction from what they have
said, not just because it is appreciative, although it is that, but because they
pay attention to the text of what I have written. They pay attention to what I
said, even though their view of it is rather selective. They don’t look at all
of my writing over the last twenty years and I wish they had looked at some
of the other things. But what they look at, they look at squarely and care-
fully.

PR: And they’re critical of others who don’t.

TG: Exactly. And that is something which has aggrieved me most over the
years. Too often I have been personally attacked rather than attacked on the
basis of what I have written. That has been a cross to bear over the years. So
it is satisfying at this juncture to find critics with whom I may disagree, and
I’m sure I will, but who understand what I’ve said and deal with it.

PR: Your work has often been associated with that of Hodgkinson. How have
you influenced each other’s thinking and what kind of intellectual debt do
you owe each other?

TG: The debt he may owe me is that mine was the initial breach in the wall. I
began discussion of contentious issues. This opened up the field and he has
marched through that breach. It was likely he would have done so anyway
but this breach was there to use and I think he used it. He has gone much
further with the questions of value than I did initially, and so what I owe to
him is a better understanding of the world of values, and perhaps he has
saved me – I’m not sure that I’ve been guilty of the relativism that some
people have accused me of. I don’t think I ever took that position, people
misunderstood the fact that I wanted to look with open eyes at the different
value positions that people live by, and to recognise where conflicts of
values exist. I don’t think this is to claim that there is no way of arbitrating
between them, but my task has always been to put description first. That’s
the message I have tried to leave – description first and prescription second.
And to emphasise that prescription does not logically follow from descrip-
tion, it cannot. I guess I largely set aside the question of how one is pre-
scriptive, although I recognised that one must be ultimately. Hodgkinson
has addressed such issues much more centrally and much more fully. There
is a difference: Hodgkinson has said to me I am the better writer – perhaps
or perhaps not. But I have been able to get attention that he does not. A kind
of interaction occurs between us; together we are a kind of reciprocating
intellectual machine.
PR: How are you alike in what you are trying to do?
TG: We’re alike in our opposition to positivism, we’re alike in our awareness of values generally. His appreciation of values tends to be more classical and philosophical, maybe Platonist. Whereas mine tends to be, perhaps ‘artistic’, because I draw upon roots to seek an understanding of value. I think it’s also the case that I acknowledge a spiritual tradition more strongly than he does, although it’s there with him as well.

Perhaps he draws on an eastern spiritual element whereas I am more likely to find it in Judaeo-Christianity. There is a religious or spiritual tradition in my work whereas this is less prominent in his other than in his references to the eastern religions. But even this he interprets in an almost secular way. But no one can read *The Philosophy of Leadership* with its orchestrated and plangent credos without knowing that this is a work of great moral architecture, profound and moving. There is a kind of flirtation in my work – an obsession even – with the religious, a sensitivity at least to the spiritual. Some readers have pointed out that Biblical imagery suffuses many of my texts, and these appeal strongly to those of a religious cast of mind. Even so I hope my work carries no stigma of a doctrinal emphasis, although in some sense it moves within the Western spiritual tradition.

What I have taken from Hodgkinson is his argument that a social science of organization can never replace an understanding of administration itself. He deals with the existential reality of the administrative act as virtually no other writer does. He is a fine philosopher, insightful, expressing the power of ancient and modern thought, revealing its essence in pungent human terms. His knowledge of the management literature is profound and he leads the way to deeper and deeper insights into it. He is relentless that technique, ancient or modern, can never supplant the wilfulness of human action or release human agents from responsibility for it. If there are ideas from Hodgkinson that have influenced me most, they are the irreducibility of value choice and the unavoidability of human responsibility for that choice. Free will in some measure at least, and that is where the struggle with Evers and Lakomski begins. They deny mind and free will, reducing everything to matter, arguing as Evers has said that it is easier to physicalise the mental than to mentalise the physical. In opposition to that dehumanizing proposition Hodgkinson and I are united.

PR: One sense in which I see you as somewhat similar is that you are both scholars in the traditional sense of the word. Neither of you is known now as a researcher.
TG: I accept that, but I would also argue that we ought not to draw a sharp line between non-empirical scholarship and empirical scholarship. I mean they are both enquiries, and one needs the other.
PR: I don’t deny that for a moment but you did much of your research when your thinking was influenced by the traditions you have now spent many years challenging.
TG: Yes, though I have done more beyond that than people recognise. But I cer-
tainly accept the judgement that I am not an active empirical researcher.
PR: I have tried to frame a series of questions reflecting the criticism that your
theories are invalid, since you have done little or no empirical research in
the light of them. Can we consider them?
TG: I travel this ground reluctantly, for I have been over it many times before,
most recently in ‘Phoenix’. Before taking on the individual questions, let
me suggest that they boil down to a single point: Why can’t Greenfield
abide by the rules of the game set down in the systems–empiricist paradigm,
which is after all the only rational and desirable one? That question consti-
tutes a strategic denial of my arguments, a strategy that rules them out of
order before they are even considered. Do I again have to cite opinions to
the contrary by Culbertson, Griffiths, Evers and Lakomski, and others? Do I
have to make a defence in a court ignorant of those judgements or at least
disseminate of them? Past pleadings in front of that court have been fruitless
and give ample evidence that those who pose the charge often fail to hear
the answers, let alone weigh them in balanced judgement.

The reason for this recalcitrance on the part of my critics is clear, as
Hodgkinson shows in his Foreword: ‘He touches the point with a needle’.
The implications of my work are seen as so threatening and revolutionary in
some quarters that the only defence against them is to deny that my posi-
tions carry sense or weight, to seek to invalidate them as having no empiri-
cal support. I am reluctant to push this analysis, but the recrudescence of
such criticism in ever new forms and from varied sources makes it all the
more important to address the issues again. And this, I know, is your argu-
ment. So let’s look at it again in the separate aspects you enumerate.
PR: Let me put the questions as five propositions. That theory is valuable only
insofar as it is useful in research?
TG: This proposition is cast within the assumptions of the systems–empiricist
paradigm. It refuses to see any other kind of enquiry as a contribution to
knowledge. As Schumacher says, even the slenderest knowledge of matters
of profound importance is of great value. If ‘adequate’ standards of inquiry,
as Schumacher describes them, are acknowledged, my work is a kind of
research. While not profound itself, my work ‘adequately’ addresses issues
that are. I hope it has yielded at least some slender knowledge of these
issues, knowledge that other methods cannot generate.
PR: That your work is not and has not been useful by this crucial criterion of
research as it is usually understood.
TG: Perhaps my work has not been useful by that criterion. But that is the heart
of the issue. The whole thrust of my argument is that there are other more
‘adequate’ criteria for building knowledge.
PR: That there is a failure by the missing research criterion is demonstrated by
the fact that to date not a single researcher has used your ideas.
TG: That no researcher has used the ideas I have espoused is true only if the
criteria and assumptions of the systems–empiricist paradigm are imposed as a Procrustean bed for the whole field. That those who live encapsulated within the systems paradigm do not use these ideas is hardly surprising. But it is false to claim that my work has influenced no researchers to take up new modes of inquiry. There has been a ‘sea change’ in the field and ‘turmoil’ as Griffiths and others acknowledge: part of that transformation, as these commentators recognize, is due to my blazing the path.

PR: That in any case, it would be difficult to undertake research on the basis of your ideas, since these change significantly from paper to paper and lecture to lecture.

TG: Surely it is not to be seen as a negative quality of my work that it has changed and evolved over two decades, that the critique has not sprung Minerva-like and fully formed from the head of Zeus. Instead it has come slowly and with some pain from a human being struggling for understanding over two decades of work. Surely recognition of this struggle is not to be taken as serious criticism of the effort over those decades. It is possible to see a thrust in the development of ideas in my critiques. If there are changes in that critique, they are not simply erratic and do not constitute abrupt or ill-founded changes to suit the ideological winds of the time. There are developing themes in the work and these have been identified most recently in ‘Science and Service’. You have noted the other side of this coin, the face of it that says, ‘You have tended to reproduce rather than advance significantly your ideas since the IIP ’74 paper’. That I must face the inherent contradictions of these twinned criticisms suggests to me that they come from those who are acutely uncomfortable with what I have written. Their response is less reasoned argument than a reflex that rejects or ignores what lies behind them. They have another agenda to pursue.

PR: That these criticisms go a long way towards explaining why your work is not much quoted in the United States, is not popular, and has not ‘caught on’ there.

TG: The observation about the ‘point of the needle’ is explanation of why my critique has not ‘caught on’ in the United States. It is unpopular wherever what Frye describes as ‘Mercantilist Whiggery’ prevails. Writings such as ‘Phoenix’ where I critique the ill-effects on education of such a world view are unlikely to be received with joy and gratitude in cultures that accept the excesses of technocratic–pragmatic, systems–empiricist, individualist values as received and unopposable truth. But it should be noted that ‘Phoenix’ was commissioned by an American group and presented first from an American platform to a small but appreciative audience.

On all of these points, a more balanced judgement will surely be possible after the results of the programme we are engaged in here appear in the Routledge collection. After its publication, I would hope to hear the opinions of those who may bring an open-mindedness to the issues and ulti-
mately a balanced appreciation of them. *De quistibus non est disputandum*. I am willing to let the matter rest with a ‘trial by what is contrary’, as Milton described the process of truth making. In such a trial, I ask only an opportunity to present my defence, hoping not to be ruled out of order for wanting to argue it.

PR: What of the final paper in the collection? Why did you write it and what were you trying to achieve with it? How does ‘Science and Service’ relate to ‘Phoenix’?

TG: ‘Science and Service’ was written six months after ‘Phoenix’, the two of them being a keystone in the arch of my writings. I did not set out to make them serve such a crucial role nor even conceived them as linked. As usual the papers arose from invitations. After word of my retirement spread I began to get invitations to write – anything at all, just write. The invitations to do these papers came early and as invitations to speak about issues that arose during the last two decades of controversy in administrative studies.

‘Phoenix’ is a synoptic statement revisiting the issues of the past two decades. It attempts to secure the ground that has been won and to extend the implications of the argument into new territory. I delivered ‘Phoenix’ not only at AERA in Chicago but in seminars at the Universities of British Columbia and Victoria. These presentations began the questioning anew.

‘Science and Service’ puts values central to its persuasive structure. It speaks from the heart, and in return has engendered strong reactions – for and against. It speaks to others’ hearts too. The fundamental issue in both papers is the same: what place can values have in a science of the social world, in purposive, administrative action within it? If ‘Phoenix’ did not answer that question, it had at least pointed the direction in which the answer lies. In beginning to write ‘Science and Service’, I knew I had to speak to the challenge from Evers and Lakomski, but I did not want to make it only a response to their work. That may come later. Rather ‘Science and Service’ does a march around Evers and Lakomski, it outflanks their fact-driven position by making values central to the whole argument – or rather by making the choosing of values central to that argument. In Evers and Lakomski’s argument, the choosing of values is reduced to a process that lies essentially outside human will: they solve the value problem by obviating it. As Evers says, their answer is to ‘physicalise the mental’. Values are genetically encoded, I suppose, and scientifically discovered.

When I presented ‘Phoenix’ at a seminar at the University of British Columbia, I was surprised by a question that asked me to clarify my values. I was taken aback. I thought I had done so, and listed the various value positions I had taken in the latter part of that paper. Later I realized I had not spoken to the heart of that question, how one values values.

In ‘Science and Service’ I bring the fact–value dichotomy into the existential reality of making a value choice out of facts. I take seriously the Weberian argument that rationality itself stands upon a non-rational choice. The paper offers a
leap, a leap upwards, a leap of faith perhaps. The argument shows what we must do if we are to avoid the Evers–Lakomskian trap. To be humane, to escape the fact-driven, calculable world, we must be human, reaching beyond our grasp, towards heaven, as Browning would say. And this of course takes us out of the limited world of fact and matter, out of synapses and programmed responses, into the world of culture, into true culture, a world that Evers and Lakomski deny, or accept only as an obverse of the physical. As I see it Evers and Lakomski’s great contribution is to remind us of the world of fact, of the error of valuing too much. My Contribution and Hodgkinson’s is perhaps to remind us of the mystery beyond fact, of the error of valuing too little. In ‘Science and Service’ I acknowledge contemporary problems in education where values inappropriately overwhelm the factual. One need not look far in education today to see many such problems: the view for example that all is to be discovered by the child pursuing its own needs, the conviction-driven exalting of the child-centred approaches that deny what we all know to be good and great teaching. There are facts in all of this that need more attention than they get, though I admit they are value saturated. All of this may leave us dismayed, overwhelmed even, before the fact–value gulf.

When I presented ‘Science and Service’ at a recent seminar at the University of Western Ontario, I was asked whether it represents a departure from previous relativist positions. My first response was to say that I hope there is not a single and even line of development through all my papers. They represent a groping towards understanding, not a uniform and logical line of extrapolation. But I also said I hoped that the position seen in ‘Science and Service’ is consistent with what has gone before, with positions that set out the realities of different perceptions of the world and that describes the realities of those views in conflict. Those differences are the basic stuff of the world, and much of my earlier work asserts them in the face of a mode of thought that would deny them or work them out in a flawed system that asserts technical progress is equivalent to moral progress. Such progress brings us to the world of authority and hierarchy, which my work has never denied, though I now see more clearly than I did where the redemption of authority and hierarchy must come from. I hope I have never taken the position that one value position is as good as another – the opposite indeed – though I have tried to show that looking at the world through the eyes of value holders reveals profound conflicts that reason itself fails utterly to resolve. I may have come close, but I never embraced the relativist horror. That’s clear in the bonsai image from Decline and Fall where the educator shapes pupils’ values even as the gardener shapes the bonsai tree. While I’m at it, I should say that I am dismayed at those who read my work as though it made nothing but a liberationist, egalitarian, and rights-of-the-individual argument, a position seen most vividly – and wrongly – in the stance of today’s deconstructors, post-modernists and radical feminists. I yield no more to values calculated out of science than to values taken for granted or ignored. While it might be easier to throw up one’s hands in the face of these difficulties, the way I have
reached finds that each culture offers its own road upwards. Salvation, peace and reconciliation, if they are to be found, are to be found on that road, and we cannot deny our own road. I began ‘Science and Service’ with deliberately religious metaphors in mind, and these connect with others that suffuse much of my work. I finished the paper with a sense that the great conundrum we face is still unresolved. But perhaps we know better now what it is and which way to look to face it.

In pushing that position a little further I would refer to a work I have just come to know. In the Massey lecture series titled, *The Malaise of Modernity* (broadcast on CBC and published by Anansi), Charles Taylor has argued what he calls ‘the view from Dover Beach’. In reference to Arnold’s far-seeing poem and in contravention to Lasch and Bloom, he defends self-fulfilment as a goal of individual action. He argues that the ethic of the ‘authentic’ individual, as first stated by Nietzsche, the presumed villain of the piece, does not destroy the truth of ethical limits on human action. It simply moves the consideration of such limits to a new context. Nietzsche himself never gave up the moral perspective, calling for a yea-saying, a yes to the world. How can it be otherwise if we are not to perish with the individual in self-defeating doubt, agony, and destruction? Taylor’s view is that the ebbing of the Dover tide is not absolute, it offers as much as it takes away. Hope lies at the bottom of Pandora’s box. There remain the possible errors of liberalism in Taylor’s argument. It must be made clear therefore that the authentic individual goes unredeemed – doomed within violence and self-destruction – without a sense of obligation, of altruism, of something beyond the individual. Taylor chronicles the trip the elite, modernist poets – Yeats and Eliot – took towards fascism, a charge that may be wrong at least in the case of Eliot, but who can deny the endpoint of individualism seen in Pound’s broadcasts from Italy during World War II? These were not just madness, as they were treated as being after the War, but the end development of a line of thought, a line still alive today in the vicious and death-dealing actions of the skinheads of today. The strength of the individual perspective is the pause it gives for questioning, for dialogue and its stimulus for the creative, for the new vision. It seems clear to me now that dialogue cannot deny a conversation with the ultimate. That must temper the excesses and destructiveness of the otherwise unrestrained individual. There must be a yea-saying to the world. Ultimately – and this may be the point of greatest importance – art must be descriptive, mimetic, of the world not just creative of it, otherwise art and human action itself ends in self-defeat.

The hundredth anniversary of the birth of Henry Miller and a renewed critical appraisal of his work give reason to look again at these issues. Miller called the *Tropic of Cancer* ‘a gob of spit in the face of art’, as he revelled in his experience of Paris. But even in the *Tropic* he had something to say: he praised one culture and criticized his own. He moved to the Big Sur, but deplored the New Ageism that followed him there, even as he deplored the spirit of the larger American culture. He was horrified that Linda Lovelace and *Deep Throat* could
be seen as justified by his art, yes by his *Art*. Another gob of spit in the face of *Art*, and he ended by defending what he knew he had never attacked. We should remind ourselves that great art is moral. It is an ethical statement about the world, and that is what makes it great. Gobs of spit may besmirch it, but not deny its message. Art and ethics are ultimately united. So too the individual and his understanding of the world are ultimately united with ethics. That is the position I have come to, and it is the position I began with. *Macbeth* and *Faust* are not just fine words spread over five acts. Great art – and great social science too – must always have a moral content. And we judge their greatness by that content. Describing the world as it is can hardly deny or controvert this position. Indeed it makes the position. That’s what I have been trying to do in my work: trying to describe the world as it is, and trying to contemplate the moral conundrums created thereby.

**References**


BUILDING AN ETHICAL SCHOOL
A theory for practice in educational leadership

Robert J. Starratt


During ordinary times, which are never ordinary, but especially during a period of school restructuring, educational administrators need to consider their responsibility to promote an ethical environment in their schools. This article develops three foundational ethical themes—critique, justice, and caring—as the pillars on which to build such a school.

The social sciences are undergoing a major shift away from a dogmatic positivism that relegates ethics and morality to a stereotyped realm of personal preferences, prejudices, and tastes unsupported by scientific argument, toward an acknowledgement of organizational and public life as a legitimate arena of moral striving and human fulfillment (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Jennings, 1983; Sullivan, 1986; Walzer, 1985). In the field of education, talk about ethics and morality tends to divide between public rhetoric and academic theory. In the public arena, some call for a return to a hypothetical time when people agreed on moral values, when teachers were not ashamed to preach morality in the classroom. Others worry that these proposals are simplistic attempts to impose “fundamentalist” definitions of right and wrong (supposedly with Biblical grounding) on everyone, to impose repressive attitudes about sex, spontaneity, and material enjoyments. The public rhetoric tends to frame the debate over morality in education in extreme and sometimes inflammatory imagery, but a more restrained shift has slowly been taking place among researchers and theorists.

Whether this shift is labeled as ushering in a “Post-Positivism” (Jennings, 1983), “Post-Structuralism” (Cherryholmes, 1988), or “Post-Liberal” (Bowers, 1987) era or as a reconceptualization of traditional categories of virtue and character and justice (MacIntyre, 1984; Purpel, 1989; Walzer, 1985; Wynne, 1982), there is clearly a movement away from an overly rationalistic approach, despite some rear guard action in defense of positivism (Lakomski, 1987). This
shift in educational policy formation and implementation, in organizational analysis, in program evaluation, and in curriculum theory, is toward an inclusion of human factors, expressly moral in nature, previously neglected.

The literature in educational administration similarly reflects growing concerns about moral and ethical issues (Foster, 1986; Greenfield, 1987; Kimbrough, 1985; Raywid, 1986; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988; Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 1988; Vandenberg, 1990). However, the literature may be yet a step away from speaking concretely enough to practitioners. The abstractions of moral philosophers and social theorists are difficult to translate into practical guidelines that influence everyday actions. Theory needs to approach close enough to practice so that it becomes a theory for practice, something the reflective practitioner can use in everyday encounters while walking about the school or the district (Schon, 1983; Sergiovanni, 1985; Starratt, 1990). A theory for practice does not imply a collection of generic recipes for moral choices, but rather a theory that helps practitioners frame moral situations encountered in practice so that their moral content becomes more intelligible and more available to the practical intuitive sense of the practitioner.

What follows is an attempt to bring ethical inquiry much closer to the workplace of educational administrators. It will not attempt to build an ethical theory, but rather to bring ethical themes developed by other theorists into a multidimensional construct that offers practicing administrators a way to think about their work and their workplace from ethical perspectives. The attempt will probably offend ethical purists because it borrows from ethical theories that seem incompatible with one another. On the other hand, the construct accepts the substantial conceptual tensions between the themes and highlights those tensions to illuminate the very ethical issues at stake. If the construct appears to offer useful, or even interesting, clarifications for the practitioner, then perhaps ethical theorists can follow up this attempt with a more foundational synthesis of their own.

What is suggested, in brief, is the joining of three ethics: the ethic of critique, the ethic of justice, and the ethic of caring. None of these ethics by itself offers an educational administrator a fully adequate framework for making ethical judgments; together, however, each ethic complements the others in a developmental context of practice. Each fills out an ethical perspective on policy choices. Because none of these ethics compels choice in every instance, one perfect choice does not exist; the three perspectives, however, enable one to make choices with the consequences more clearly delineated, to move toward the “best” choice under the circumstances, or to a choice that, although it favors one ethical demand, will probably be balanced later on by other choices.

The ethics of educational administration: building and administering an ethical school

The ethics of educational administration being advanced here is different from that offered by other scholars on the topic, such as Kimbrough (1985) or Strike
et al. (1988). They tend to focus on individual ethical choices of administrators regarding how to deal with individual persons or with individual situations. In other words, the ethics of educational administration from their perspectives is about the ethics of choices that administrators make in given circumstances. The position taken here is that the much larger ethical task of educational administrators is to establish an ethical school environment in which education can take place ethically. Individual choices regarding individual circumstances are seen as taking place in this larger ethical context. Hence the administrator who assumes that the educational environment, the organization, the system, the institutional arrangements (the curriculum, the daily and weekly schedule, the assessment and discipline and placement and promotion policies) enjoy a value neutrality, or worse, already embody the desirable ethical standards, is ethically naive, if not culpable.

Educational administrators are supposed to manage, not simply any old organization, but an educational organization. The educational program housed in that organization is supposed to serve moral purposes (the nurturing of the human, social, and intellectual growth of the youngsters). Hence, although educational administrators do many generic things common to all administrators (coordinate the scheduling of multiple activities simultaneously under one system, monitor budgetary expenditures, monitor health hazards, delegate responsibilities, and so forth), these activities are aimed at promoting the educational goals of the institution. The qualitative elements essential to educating give those administrative choices a different finality than choices made, for example, by hospital administrators, military officers, or corporate managers. Hence the ethical position taken here is that educational administrators have a moral responsibility to be proactive about creating an ethical environment for the conduct of education. They will no doubt be faced with individual ethical choices about whether to suspend a custodian for certain actions or whether to accept a gratuity from the parent who wants her son to make the basketball team. Those individual choices, however, do not constitute the ethical agenda of the educational administrator; they are a small part of the large agenda of building an ethical school.

Presently, the political climate is encouraging educators to restructure schools, which provides a certain opportunity for the building of ethical schools. Assuming that this means, among other things, a move toward school-based management, teacher empowerment, and participatory decision making, then schools will be freed from systemic, bureaucratic controls and enabled to exercise greater autonomy in their attempts to create a more humanly responsive environment. This implies that the school community will be engaged in an ongoing effort to govern itself, and that, in turn, implies pursing a moral purpose. From this vantage point, then, the educational administrator faces a difficult task. How is he or she to conceptualize the ethical task? This is where the ethical inquiry of this article begins.

Each theme will be developed consecutively. Although attempting to remain
faithful to the theory, or body of theory, from which the theme was selected, the exposition will be guided in equal part by the ethical demands of the educating context. Hence, if a distortion, bending, or thinning out of the force of the original theory seems to some readers to be taking place, they may be right; however, such interpretation is grounded in the effort to offer a larger synthesis in the service of practice. Underneath this synthesis, of course, are the irreducible assumptions and myths about what is valuable in human life in which every theory is grounded. A discussion of the ontology and epistemology behind this construct, however, would paralyze, I fear, the very attempt to develop the construct in this article. If the construct offers possibilities for ethical clarification and development, then subsequent debate and criticism can lead either to its further elaboration or to its rejection. In either case, the conversation over the meaning of ethics in educational administration may be enriched.

The ethic of critique

Because the historical moment appears to be one of transition and transformation, his article begins with the ethic of critique. Whether one begins from the less radical perspective of the recent proponents of school reform, such as Boyer (1983), Goodlad (1984), or Sizer (1984), or from the deeper critique of Freire (1970), Apple (1982), Bates (1984), or Giroux (1988), it has become increasingly evident that schools and school systems are structurally ineffective. Moreover, the awareness of the structural obstacles to renewal and change is taking on a historical dimension: The bureaucracy of school systems is coming to be seen as an enduring problem, not simply a contemporary phenomenon. Hence an ethic of educational administration appropriately begins with the theme of critique, a critique aimed at its own bureaucratic context, its own bureaucratic mind-set. As the school community, under the leadership of educational administrators and teachers, faces the possibility of creating an ethical school, it will also face the necessity of critiquing both the adversarial, contractual mind-set of the unions, as well as the hierarchically structured, impersonality of the administration of the school. Beyond that critique awaits the critique of the overly (if not exclusively) technicist approach to teaching and learning tied to narrowly conceived learning outcomes and simplistic, quantifiable measures of learning.

Because it goes well beyond the functional critique of contemporary reformers such as Goodlad and Boyer, the ethic of critique employed in this article draws its force from “critical theory,” that body of thought deriving from the Frankfurt School of philosophers and others sympathetic to their perspectives (Adorno, 1973; Habermas, 1973; Horkheimer, 1974; Young, 1990). These thinkers explore social life as intrinsically problematic because it exhibits the struggle between competing interests and wants among various groups and individuals in society. Whether considering social relationships, social customs, laws, social institutions grounded in structured power relationships, or language
itself, these thinkers ask questions such as the following: “Who benefits by these arrangements?” “Which group dominates this social arrangement?” “Who defines the way things are structured here?” “Who defines what is valued and disvalued in this situation?” The point of this critical stance is to uncover which group has the advantage over the others, how things got to be the way they are, and to expose how situations are structured and language used so as to maintain the legitimacy of social arrangements. By uncovering inherent injustice or dehumanization imbedded in the language and structures of society, critical analysts invite others to act to redress such injustice. Hence their basic stance is ethical for they are dealing with questions of social justice and human dignity, although not with individual choices.

Examples of issues confronted by critical ethics include (a) sexist language and structured bias in the workplace and in legal structures; (b) racial bias in educational arrangements and in the very language used to define social life; (c) the preservation of powerful groups’ hegemony over the media and the political process; (d) the rationalization and legitimation of institutions such as prisons, orphanages, armies, nuclear industries, and the state itself. The point the critical ethician stresses is that no social arrangement is neutral. It is usually structured to benefit some segments of society at the expense of others. The ethical challenge is to make these social arrangements more responsive to the human and social rights of all the citizens, to enable those affected by social arrangements to have a voice in evaluating their results and in altering them in the interests of the common good and of fuller participation and justice for individuals.

This ethical perspective provides a framework for enabling educational administrators to move from a kind of naivete about “the way things are” to an awareness that the social and political arena reflect arrangements of power and privilege, interest and influence, often legitimized by an assumed rationality and by law and custom. The theme of critique forces administrators to confront the moral issues involved when schools disproportionately benefit some groups in society and fail others. Furthermore, as a bureaucratic organization, the school exhibits structural properties that may promote a misuse of power and authority among its members. From a critical perspective, no organizational arrangements in schools “have to be” that way; they are all open to rearrangement in the interest of greater fairness to their members. Where unjust arrangements reflect school board or state policy, they can be appealed and restructured.

When an educational administrator confronts the structural issues involved in the management of education, such as the process of teacher evaluation, homogeneous tracking systems, the process of grading on a curve, the process of calculating class rank, the absence of important topics in textbooks, the lack of adequate due process for students, the labeling criteria for naming some children gifted and others handicapped, the daily interruptions of the instructional process by uniform time allotments for class periods, he or she discovers ethical burdens to all of them because they contain unjustifiable assumptions and impose a disproportionate advantage to some at the expense of others.
The ethic of critique poses the fundamental ethical challenge to the educational administrator: how to construct an environment in which education can take place ethically. The ethic of critique reveals that the organization in its present forms is a source of unethical consequences in the educational process.

Some would say that all organizations, of their very nature, precipitate unethical consequences. All organizations tend to make the rules and standard operating procedures the dominant force in organizational life, smothering initiative, instilling fear of not being promoted or approved by one’s superiors, severely limiting freedom of choice, reinforcing “groupthink” and the official rationalizations for the way things are. On the other hand, organizations, paradoxically, are the only places in the modern world where freedom and creativity can be exercised in any significant way (Eisenstadt, 1968). In the restructuring of human institutions to meet the human purposes for which they were originally designed one finds significant moral fulfillment (Starratt, 1990).

Thus educational administrators will face the continuing paradox of their institutional position in the school. On the one hand, they must acknowledge the tendency built into management processes to inhibit freedom, creativity, and autonomy, and to structure unequal power relationships to insure institutional uniformity, predictability, and order. On the other hand, they must acknowledge their responsibility to continually overcome that tendency to promote that kind of freedom, creativity, and autonomy without which the school simply cannot fulfill its mission.

Hence the ethic of critique, based as it is on assumptions about the social nature of human beings and on the human purposes to be served by social organization, calls the educational administrator to a social responsibility, not simply to the individuals in the school or school system, not simply to the education profession, but to the society of whom, and for whom, he or she is an agent. In other words, schools were established to serve a high moral purpose, to prepare the young to take their responsible place in and for the community. Besides the legal and professional obligations of the educational administrator, the moral obligation is to see that the institution of the school serves society the way it was intended. Hence the challenge to restructure schools is a moral as well as a technical and professional challenge.

The ethic of justice

One of the shortcomings of the ethic of critique is that it rarely offers a blueprint for reconstructing the social order it is criticizing. The problem for the educational administrator is one of governance. How do we govern ourselves while carrying out educating activities? The ethic of critique illuminates unethical practices in governing and managing organizations and implies in its critique some ethical values such as equality, the common good, human and civil rights, democratic participation, and the like. An ethic of justice provides a more explicit response to the question, even though that response may itself be flawed.
We govern ourselves by observing justice. That is to say, we treat each other according to some standard of justice that is uniformly applied to all our relationships. To understand the theory of justice that we employ requires an understanding of anthropology and epistemology. Socrates explored the basis of justice in *The Republic*; his search was to be pursued by a long line of philosophers up to the present day.

Currently, there are two general schools of thought concerning the ethic of justice. One school traces its roots to Thomas Hobbes and John Locke in the 17th century and finds its contemporary expression in the work of John Rawls (1971). In this school, the primary human reality is the individual, independent of social relationships; the individual is conceived as logically prior to society. Individuals are driven by their passions and interests, especially by fear of harm and desire for comfort. Individuals enter into social relations to advance their own advantage. Individual will and preference are the only sources of value. Therefore, social relationships are essentially artificial and governed by self-interest. The issue of social governance assumes a social contract in which individuals agree to surrender some of their freedom in return for the state’s protection from the otherwise unbridled self-seeking of others. In this school, human reason is the instrument that individuals use to analyze in a more or less scientific fashion what is to their advantage, and to calculate the obligations to social justice called for by the social contract. As Sullivan commented, in its more benign application, this theory conceives of social justice as “a social engineering to harmonize needs and wants” of self-serving individuals in society (Sullivan, 1986, p. 19).

Kant, however, wanted to ground morality in something more than the passions. Hence his philosophical search led him to postulate moral categories of obligation inherent in the practical reasoning of humans. However, the individual was still the source of moral activity. The obligation to act ethically came from the individual, not from society. Rawls (1971) attempted to explain this Kantian moral intuition as a reconstruction of the intuition of justice as fairness. He constructed a coherent context of general rules by which a moral community can reach agreement in much the same way that a community judges linguistically correct expression according to the rules to which all users of the language subscribe (Rawls, 1971). His development of fairness and fair play avoids some of the minimalist rationalizing of the utilitarians, although he continues to hold on to a kind of practical reason to work out individual instances of the universal fairness principle.

Kohlberg (1971) carried on this tradition, only he claimed to go beyond the traditional standoff between “is” and “ought” found in Hume and Kant. That is to say, Kohlberg claimed to have documented in his research an isomorphism between psychological development of moral reasoning and normative ethical theory (Schindler, 1986). His research indicated that as humans moved from one moral stage to a higher moral stage, they moved toward formal moral criteria of prescriptiveness and universality. (Kohlberg, 1971, pp. 224–225). Their higher moral reasoning conformed to what moral theorists from Kant to Rawls had
postulated as universal principles to guide ethical behavior. Once again, note that Kohlberg postulates the individual as the source of ethical judgment, and reason as the instrument of morality, although reason is now seen more in a developmental perspective.

The second school of thought on the ethic of justice finds its roots in Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, and Dewey. A contemporary scholar in this school, William Sullivan (1986), placed society as the prior reality within which individuality develops. Furthermore, through experience, through living in society one learns the lessons of morality. Participation in the life of the community teaches individuals how to think about their own behavior in terms of the larger common good of the community. In this school, freedom “is ultimately the ability to realize a responsible selfhood, which is necessarily a cooperative project” (Sullivan, 1986, p. 21). Ethics is grounded in practice within the community. The protection of human dignity depends on the moral quality of social relationships and this is finally a public and political concern. Citizenship is a shared initiative and responsibility among persons committed to mutual care (Sullivan, 1986, p. 22). From this perspective, a communal understanding of the requirements of justice and governance flows from both tradition and the present effort of the community to manage its affairs in the midst of competing claims of the common good and individual rights. That understanding is never complete; it will always be limited by the inadequacy of tradition to respond to changing circumstances and by the impossibility of settling conflicting claims conclusively and completely. The choices, however, will always be made with sensitivity to the bonds that tie individuals to their communities.

Kohlberg himself (1980) believed that moral reasoning and choices were best made in a communitarian setting (Blatt, 1970; Higgins, Power, & Kohlberg, 1984). He played an active role in the formation of “just community” schools. Hence it can be argued that an ethic of justice, especially when focused on issues of governance in a school setting, can encompass in practice the two understandings of justice, namely, justice understood as individual choices to act justly and justice understood as the community’s choice to direct or govern its actions justly. In a school setting, both are required. In practice, individual choices are made with some awareness of what the community’s choices are (school policies), and school community choices are made with some awareness of the kinds of individual choices that are being made every day in the school.

An educational administrator encouraging an ethic of justice will see to it that specific ethical learning activities are structured within curricular and extra curricular programs to encourage discussion of individual choices as well as discussions of school community choices. This may mean extensive faculty and student workshops on active listening, group dynamics, conflict resolution, values clarification, problem naming, and the like. Teachers familiar with Kohlberg’s stages of moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1969, 1981), can more easily understand the general frame of reference students are using (e.g., instrumental hedonism, negotiation of the social contract, and so forth).
In a school that takes site-based management seriously, issues of the day-to-day governance of life in the school are inescapable. The ethic of justice demands that the claims of the institution serve both the common good and the rights of the individuals in the school. Ongoing discussions of student discipline policies, of faculty and student due-process procedures, of agreements about faculty time commitments, and so on are absolutely necessary. Furthermore, discussions about the curriculum, about appropriate textbooks, about a visiting speakers’ program, and the like will need to be carried on, not simply for their appropriateness for standardized tests, but for the moral questions they raise about public life in the community. Approaches to multicultural education should include not only the standard attempts to create better understanding of cultural differences, but also, and most important, discussions of historical and present social conditions that breed unjust relationships between people of different cultures and explorations of ways to alter those social conditions. Issues of grading and testing could be examined from the perspective of justice, with such discussions leading to the development of alternatives to present practices that benefit some to the disadvantage of others.

No doubt such freewheeling discussion of so many taken-for-granted elements of schooling will get messy and unmanageable. Most administrators dread such initial lack of definition. On the other hand, the debate is in itself educative. The only way to promote ethical attitudes and understandings about self governance is to engage in debate. Someone might object that there will be little time left for the business of teaching and learning if schools spend so much time restructuring the institution. Although that criticism betrays too narrow a view of teaching and learning, let us take it seriously. Then the question for the community to decide is precisely how to manage its time in such a way as to attend to the more traditional academic agenda while still carrying out its activities of self-governance.

Even this brief dusting off of the school’s involvement in promoting an ethic of justice points to the close relationship of the ethic of critique and the ethic of justice. To promote a just social order in the school, the school community must carry out an outgoing critique of those structural features of the school that work against human beings. Often the naming of the problem (critique) will suggest new directions or alternatives for restructuring the practice or process in a fairer manner. For example, the administration of a policy that provides a disproportionate share of resources to students in the upper decile of the student body results in inequities that affect large numbers of “average” students unfairly (Cusick & Wheeler, 1988). It raises questions about the responsibility of brighter students to share their gifts for the larger good of the community, perhaps in some peer tutoring activities.

Ethics of caring

One of the limitations of an ethics of justice is the inability of the theory to determine claims in conflict (Hollenbach, 1979). What is just for one person...
might not be considered just by another person. Hence discussions of what is just in any given situation, can tend to become mired down in minimalist considerations (What minimal conditions must be met to fulfill the claims of justice?). For an ethic of justice to serve its more generous purpose, it must be complemented or fulfilled in an ethic of love. Although earlier discussions of the incompleteness of the ethic of justice took place in a theological context (Niebuhr, 1935), more recent discussions have tended to ground the ethic of love and caring in a philosophy of the person (Buber, 1970; MacMurray, 1961). Scholars such as Gilligan (1977) and Noddings (1984, 1988) promoted these ethical directions from a vantage point of psychology, especially women’s moral development, in the current literature on the ethic of caring.

Such an ethic focuses on the demands of relationships, not from a contractual or legalistic standpoint, but from a standpoint of absolute regard. This ethic places the human persons-in-relationship as occupying a position for each other of absolute value; neither one can be used as a means to an end; each enjoys an intrinsic dignity and worth, and given the chance, will reveal genuinely loveable qualities. An ethics of caring requires fidelity to persons, a willingness to acknowledge their right to be who they are, an openness to encountering them in their authentic individuality, a loyalty to the relationship. Such an ethic does not demand relationships of intimacy; rather, it postulates a level of caring that honors the dignity of each person and desires to see that person enjoy a fully human life. Furthermore, it recognizes that it is in the relationship that the specifically human is grounded; isolated individuals functioning only for themselves are but half persons. One becomes whole when one is in relationship with another and with many others.

Educational administrators committed to an ethic of caring will be grounded in the belief that the integrity of human relationships should be held sacred and that the school as an organization should hold the good of human beings within it as sacred. This ethic reaches beyond concerns with efficiency, which can easily lead to using human beings as merely the means to some larger purpose of productivity, such as an increase in the district’s average scores on standardized tests or the lowering of per-pupil costs.

Administration based on an ethic of caring will attend to the “underside” of administration (Starratt, 1984), that is, to those motives that sometimes intrude, even slightly, on an exchange with a teacher, student, or parent. Sometimes those motives involve the desire to dominate, to intimidate, to control. Sometimes those motives involve racial, sexual, ethnic, and age stereotypes that block the possibility of honest communication. Sometimes the administrator feels insecure in the face of a strong and assertive teacher and feels the need to put that teacher in his or her place. Sometimes the administrator is not even aware of the power he or she has in the eyes of teachers and recklessly toys with the teacher’s insecurity by some light-hearted ridicule of a classroom activity.

When these underside issues dominate an administrative exchange, they block any possibility of open, trusting, professional communication. Mistrust,
manipulation, aggressive and controlling actions or language on the part of the administrator or the teacher or both can lead to a relationship that is hypocritical, dishonest, disloyal, vicious, and dehumanizing.

An administrative exchange can move beyond a superficial ritual to a contractual obligation to a relationship of caring when there is a deep attention to the unique human beings involved in the exchange and to issues of self-esteem, personal confidence, and ego anxieties. People who are fairly secure in their sense of themselves and in their professional role are not overly affected by these underside motives; few, however, are entirely free from them in every circumstance. If these motives are understood and acknowledged initially, they will not distort the exchange in excessively manipulative or negative ways.

The administrator who is concerned with nurturing the growth of teachers will have to ensure that teachers experience the relationship with the administrator as one of regard, mutual respect, and honest contact between two persons. Even though their traditional organizational roles have conditioned administrators and teachers to an antagonistic relationship (Blumberg, 1974; Starratt, 1990), in a school intentionally restructuring itself and concerned about issues of empowerment, it is possible to move toward a relationship based on caring. For relationships of caring to develop, administrators will initially explore with their teachers those conditions necessary to initiate and maintain trust, honesty, and open communication (Hoy & Kupwersmith, 1984).

Besides developing sensitivity to the dignity and uniqueness of each person in the school, the administrator can promote an ethic of caring by attending to the cultural tone of the school. Often the use of language in official communications will tell the story: Formal abstract language is the language of bureaucracy, of distance; humor, familiar imagery and metaphor, and personalized messages are the language of caring. Through reward procedures and ceremonies as well as through school emblems, school mottos, school songs, and other symbols, the school communicates what it cares about. When the school rewards academic competition in ways that pit students against each other, when the awards are few and go only to the top students in the formal academic disciplines, then the school makes a clear statement of what it values. Other ceremonies and awards that stress caring, cooperation, service, teamwork, and the like send different messages. Some schools clearly promote a feeling of family and celebrate friendship, loyalty, and service. Laughter in the halls, frequent greetings of each other by name, symbols of congratulations for successful projects, frequent displays of student work, hallways containing pictures of groups of youngsters engaged in school activities, cartoons poking fun at teachers and administrators—these are all signs of a school environment that values people for who they are. When youngsters engage every day in such a school community, they learn the lessons of caring, respect, and service to each other. With some help from peers and teachers, they also learn how to forgive, mend a bruised relationship, accept criticism, and debate different points of view.

For most educational administrators, a brief reflection on their own ethical
caring will occasion some embarrassment. By confronting their own flawed performance, administrators can discover, with a moment’s reflection, the subtle but constant intrusion of self-interest. Without excusing it, they learn to acknowledge it as a part of them. Recognizing their own failures will help them avoid the tendency to self-righteous judgement of others’ ethical mistakes.

The ethics of caring brings us full circle at this point. Knowing our own failures to care for others, our own immature ways of rationalizing moral choices, knowing our own reluctance to challenge questionable school arrangements, we are able to confront the general weakness in the human community. That weakness is part of being human. Despite our heroic ideals, we often act in distinctly unheroic ways. A sense of compassion is needed for one who would act ethically—compassion for himself and compassion for others. We have to extend our caring to forgiving. The forgiveness extended, we then go on with the business of making things right.

Summary

Two questions remain, the response to which may close out this inquiry into an ethical perspective for practitioners. The first question involves the legitimacy of combining themes derived from three different ethical theories, despite what some might claim are irreconcilable differences among the theories (Pateman, 1980). The second question deals with the practicality of the construct for the practitioner. Namely, does it offer the administrator a perspective that allows him or her to frame the most important ethical issues encountered in schools and to shape an environment that encourages ethical choice?

The answer to the first question deserves a lengthy development that space does not allow. For now, this author argues that the three theories are not irreconcilable. They can be grounded on both the essential nature of human beings and on the essential nature of human society. That is to say, one can argue for the necessary interpenetration of each theme by the others if one is to argue for a fully developed moral person and a fully developed human society. Even a superficial familiarity with the themes, which this article attempts to communicate, suggests that each theme implies something of the other theme. The ethic of critique assumes a point of view about social justice and human rights and about the way communities ought to govern themselves. The ethic of justice assumes an ability to perceive injustice in the social order as well as some minimal level of caring about relationships in that social order. The ethic of caring does not ignore the demands of community governance issues, but claims that caring is the ideal fulfillment of all social relationships, even though most relationships among members of a community function according to a more remote form of caring.

Moreover, each ethic needs the very strong convictions embedded in the other. The ethic of justice needs the profound commitment to the dignity of the individual person found in the ethic of caring. The ethic of caring needs the larger attention to social order and fairness of the ethic of justice if it is to avoid an
entirely idiosyncratic involvement in social policy. The ethic of critique requires an ethic of caring if it is to avoid the cynical and depressing ravings of the habitual malcontent, and the ethic of justice requires the profound social analysis of the ethic of critique, to move beyond the naive fine tuning of social arrangements in a social system with inequities built into the very structures by which justice is supposed to be measured. The response to the first question, then, is that the themes are not incompatible but, on the contrary, complement and enrich each other in a more complete ethic. Uniting themes from different theoretical foundations attempts to use the genuine strengths and the genius of each theoretical position in the interests of building a rich and pluralform ethical environment.

The response to the second question is likewise affirmative. An educational administrator’s day is filled with ethical situations and challenges. Sometimes those situations clearly call for a critique of unfair school procedures; sometimes they involve debate over school policy in an effort to balance the common good with individual rights; and sometimes they involve the demands of an individual person to be recognized and cherished for who he or she is. At other times, more complex problems require that the administrator examine the problem from each framework and perhaps balance the demands of all three ethics in his or her response to the problem. Given the proactive position of an ethics of educational administration advocated in this article, namely the building of an ethical school as an integral part of a national effort to restructure schools, the larger construct of all three ethical themes offers a more comprehensive and multidimensional foundation for such a reconstruction.

Figure 1 The multidimensional ethic.
Figures 1 and 2 offer a visual diagram of how the themes work together to provide such a multidimensional perspective.

This article has attempted to develop a tapestry of ethical perspectives, specifically for those involved with educational administration. That tapestry is woven of three themes: the theme of caring, the theme of justice, and the theme of criticism. An ethical consciousness that is not interpenetrated by each theme can be captured either by sentimentality, by rationalistic simplification, or by social naivete. The blending of each theme encourages a rich human response to the many uncertain ethical situations administrators face every day in their work. Furthermore, they offer complementary frames for thinking about building an ethical school during this time of school restructuring.

References


While the mainstream churches are being increasingly ignored as religious institutions in rapidly secularizing England, their schools survive and, in many instances, thrive. These schools, financed by public funds, are an increasingly important part of the English state schooling system. It would appear that their survival and expansion has been driven by increased societal emphasis on academic success, which, in the main, these schools provide. What are the implications of this in terms of social divisiveness and what is the response of the churches themselves in terms of their role in the communities they serve? While the arguments for and against are entered into by a small number of commentators, it is perhaps significant that the once politically sensitive area of church/faith schools is still left alone by politicians.

Introduction

Thriving religious schools in England are a phenomenon of our times. Much is written that may give the impression that the English schooling system is a uniform and a consistent whole. However, a closer examination of the state system, financed by public funds, shows that while all schools are operating within a centrally designed, directed, and inspected template of a national curriculum and OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) scrutiny, many different types of school are present.

Religious, or as they are more usually called in England, church or faith schools, are one discrete group within the state system. While other faiths are represented, including Jewish and Moslem, they are, in the main, Church of England and Roman Catholic. In a seemingly fragmenting world that has moved or is moving beyond the usual religious traditions, the great narratives that post-
modernist thinking has identified as being left behind, the position and popularity of the church or faith school is not simply the concern or interest of a tiny minority. Why does their existence and public funding seemingly remain unchallenged? This article seeks to explore how various agents within the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church see the role of their schools in terms of the community and/or communities that they serve. It also seeks out oppositional views to these schools’ existence and/or their public funding.

The “secularized” context of the discussion

In July 1999, the American magazine *Newsweek* reported once again the death of God in Europe. It is possible to say, with a certain irony, that this is in contrast to many other parts of the world where He continues to flourish or where “religious thinking, practices and institutions” retain, in Wilson’s (1966) terms, “social significance.” Certainly, in England, intellectual explanations for the decline in religious belief are both fashionable and influential. The leading British sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991), in particular, has noted the existence of what he calls a post-traditional society. Such theory and its “close cousin,” postmodernism, is predicated on the acceptance that the “great narratives,” such as Christianity, that explain human existence in a comprehensive and consistent manner, no longer are relevant.

The Oxford-based theologian Don Cupitt (1997), who is influential in liberal Anglican circles, has written in stark terms of a major global cultural change in which the past is comprehensively left behind as people disengage with ethnic, religious, and moral loyalties. As with modern teenagers watching a dramatization of a Jane Austen novel, with its mannered existence, it is “difficult to reimagine what it was once like genuinely to believe such things and to follow such customs” (Cupitt, 1997, p. 79).

Membership figures that show a downward trend in membership of the Church of England, Roman Catholic, and non-conformist churches would seemingly support the conclusion that English society is moving irretrievably to secularization. (Though it should be noted that membership of the “newer” churches, such as the Seventh-day Adventist, is, in fact, increasing). Figures supplied by the Christian Research Association (as quoted in Brierley & Wraight, 1995 p. 240) show that for the two churches whose schools are the focus of this article, specifically, the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church (as discussed in Johnson, McCreery & Castelli, 2000), are shown in table 1.

In less than a quarter of a century, over half a million members have been lost by both churches. Other figures in this vein can easily be found. As an aside, to illustrate this point about the seemingly comprehensive loss of connection with these churches, it is possible to look at that important social event in all cultures, the wedding. It can be said that the style and venue of weddings say much about the current fashions, social attitudes, and values of a society. Thompson (1986) reports that twenty years ago, in 1979, there were more civil marriage
ceremonies than religious ones since Register Offices were established in 1837. More recent figures show that 59% of couples, who actually marry rather than simply co-habit, now go through a civil ceremony (Office for National Statistics, 1998).

However, argument about the exact nature of the secularization of society is not new (Wilson 1966, 1982). As Martin (1967) has pointed out, some care must be taken with the interpretation of statistics about church membership that may or may not have been accurately and consistently collected. Within such reservations comes also a warning about using them to make comparisons between “now” and “a golden age of religiosity,” which always seems to be just beyond living memory. Also, a distinction has to be made between formal church membership and regular attendance (in 1996 only 11% of British adults attended church once a week or more—ONS 1998, p. 228) and a residual loyalty and identification. Other figures published by the Office for National Statistics in 1998 showed that “many people consider themselves to belong to a religion even if they are not active members” (ONS 1998, p. 227). These figures (see table 2), though still showing a downward trend, are, in terms of the percentage involved of the British population (which is approximately 56 million), very different from those in table 1.

Over half the British population call themselves Anglican or Catholic (albeit mostly non-churchgoing). Thus, Cupitt’s assertions about “an extraordinary cultural upheaval” in which traditions are repudiated can be challenged. However, within these figures, there is no age breakdown. Thus, it could be that those people with a residual loyalty are older than those without. It could be that in Cupitt’s terms, these traditions are “going up in smoke,” but perhaps considerably more slowly than he argues.

Table 1 Decline in Church of England and Roman Catholic Church membership (1975–1998)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Membership through the years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>2,297,871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>2,605,255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note

The dual system of church and state

Whether or not the case for society being “secularized” is fully and convincingly made, trends show an increasing detachment from active participation in the institutions and ceremonies of conventional mainstream Christianity. It is within
this context that the relationship between church/faith schools and the state in England is placed. State funding of church schools has had a comparatively long history; although, it must be noted that, initially, the British government was very reluctant to intervene in schooling for the poor provided by such voluntary activity.

It was in 1833, that central government made its first tentative steps in funding such elementary schooling through the payment of small grants to the non-conformist British and Foreign Schools Society and the National Society of the Church of England. (The latter was founded in 1811 to compete with the non-conformist churches for the loyalty of the urban poor.) So today’s dual system of church voluntary and state maintained schools had “its origins in the grants made in 1833” (Sallis, 1994, p.8). Sallis notes that today “The inclusion of church schools in the public system is thus a distinctive feature of education in this country [England].” This is significant when international comparisons are made. Elsewhere, in societies, with and without strong cultural links to England, a secularist view of state schooling is taken. Such a stance “has widespread public acceptance in Australia and New Zealand, Canada, the USA and most of continental Europe” (p. 8).

However, it must not be forgotten when Church of England and Catholic schools were included within the state system, not only religious leaders but also very senior politicians were involved in the considerable debate. In the face of furious non-conformist objections (about “Rome on the rates”), Balfour, the Prime Minister, had to defend the provisions of the 1902 Education Act that incorporated the Church of England and Roman Catholic church schools. In a noisy House of Commons, he argued that such a move was “not a relic of an ancient system permitted as a matter of compromise to remain . . . out of harmony with the needs . . . of a progressive community” (Munson, 1991, p.245). Balfour went on to see them “as part the normal . . . machinery for education” (p. 245); and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, part of this machinery they have remained.

Along with this historical sketch, it must be noted that subsequent developments throughout the twentieth century have given state funding to Methodist, Jewish, and, more recently, within the last three years, to the handful of Muslim, Sikh, and Seventh-day Adventist schools. Importantly, it is also necessary to

### Table 2: Decline in Church of England and Roman Catholic Church membership (1980–1995) (numbers given in millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note*

remember when considering the other part of the dual system that the state-maintained schools, sometimes called county schools, are not secular. Interestingly, it is their religious and spiritual role that is controversial and has been subject to much recent debate, especially among the English teaching profession.

In 1988, “rather to the surprise of many, the Conservative Government . . . sought, in the Education Reform Act . . ., to reinstate the act of collective worship” (Davies, 1994, p. 10). It had once been part of every child’s daily experience in school, as stipulated by the epoch-making Education Act 1944. In the 1960s and 1970s, for a variety of reasons, including school size and head teacher and teacher disapproval, many schools had discontinued the practice. In startling contrast to the position in the USA, the Thatcher government went further to legislate “for the compulsory teaching of R.E. (religious education), in particular Christianity, described as the predominant religion in Great Britain, as part of the school curriculum” (p. 10).

Six years later, in 1994, Davies could report that “the law was being most determinedly resisted and most comprehensively ignored.” At the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) Annual Conference held that year, a survey was presented to the Conference that showed that “80% of head teachers wanted the law on religious education in school changed” (p. 9). David Hart, the NAHT General Secretary, accused John Patten, the then Secretary of State for Education (the governmental minister responsible) “of failing to recognize that moral values could be taught outside the context of religious assemblies and R.E. lessons” (Davies, 1994, p. 9). Davies also notes the widespread view among head teachers and teachers that “schools should not be mission stations . . . and that Britain was a multi-cultural society, in which no one religion should be given superordinate status” (p. 10). From this “professional” perspective, reliance is placed on the teaching of personal, social, and moral education in schools from a seemingly “neutral” middle ground. This stance is seemingly confirmed by a declaration by the National Curriculum Council, itself a governmental agency. In 1993, the Council stated that it did not consider the spiritual and moral development of children was or should be predicated on a religious or any other belief system: “. . . spiritual development has to do with relationships, with other people, and for believers, with God.” In this statement, “believers” are seen as a distinct group or community.

It is worth noting here that “community,” in itself far from an uncontroversial term, goes beyond the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1983) definition of “common character; agreement; identity.” It can be seen as a basic structure that can be located in the real world (such as the Amish in Pennsylvania). On the other hand, urban sociologists such as Pahl (1984) see “community” as less certain and infinitely more flexible. This is a term open to subjective interpretation. Whatever the definition, belonging to a community is a statement about the socialization that its members have experienced, and within that process, the values and rules that they have internalized to a point that behavior becomes
predictable and, to a greater or lesser degree, automatic. Clearly, membership of a community gives its adherents an identity that in some way can distinguish them from others and other communities in society. Thus, to belong to any community is per se an expression of difference.

Research method

So given overall trends of detachment from conventional institutional Christianity in society as a whole and opposition to the acceptance of “the superiority of Christianity” as a source of moral guidance and religious belief in county schools, why do church schools still exist, and in many instances thrive? How do they themselves define the community and/or communities that they are serving? In exploring these questions, data were collected from documentary sources. Data were also obtained from a series of semi-structured interviews with individuals within church-education societies and communities and from those in opposition to church/faith schools.

A first set of interviews were undertaken to find out how Church of England and Catholic head teachers (or school principals) saw their role in the development of their children’s spirituality, in maintaining a school culture consistent with the moral values of their declared belief system, and how this might contribute to the children’s spiritual development. To this end, an interview inventory was designed to cover both general environmental and “religious” issues (to put it at its widest) and specific operational issues that heads had to face, such as the design and content of school assemblies. All the interviews, which were based on the same interview inventory, took place in the schools, were tape recorded with permission of the heads. The intention of the interviews was to act very much as a “seek and find” exercise and so to act as a pilot survey to test out issues and ideas, arising from the literature, that could lead to a more detailed and more tightly designed study.

These semi-structured interviews were carried out with the heads of 13 primary schools in a south London borough, that has a varied ethnic and cultural composition. Some parts of the borough are predominately black, others mostly white, and others mixed. The borough has also received a large share of the influx of refugees from eastern Europe and other parts of the world, including those who have fled the war in Somalia. The borough has a reputation for being prosperous and “middle class”; however, every day, distressed people are found begging on its streets and in its underpasses. (The overall cultural and ethnic mix of those living in the London conurbation cannot be underestimated. It is possible to illustrate this diversity through the type and number of languages spoken. A recent article in the daily newspaper, the London Evening Standard (21 January 2000), was entitled “From Abe to Zulu, the 300 languages spoken by London pupils” and reported on research carried out in London schools that showed that London is now the “most linguistically diverse city on the planet . . . more so than New York.”)

All 13 schools were fully subscribed; most of the schools were expanding and
were, thus, in a position to select their intake. They were situated in the same type of areas. However, the Church of England schools were open to “all-comers”; whereas the intake of the Catholic schools was almost entirely Catholic. (Historical factors have led to Catholic schools being situated mostly in the English conurbations; the Anglican experience is, of course, very different, and so a strong presence in rural and usually mono-cultural areas is still maintained. Hence, it is easy to speculate that the issues facing a Church of England head teacher in, say, agricultural Lincolnshire, a county 120 miles from London, could be very different from those heads interviewed in this small study.)

All the head teachers gave most generously of their time and were seemingly open in their comments. Other sets of interviews were carried out with three officers of church educational bodies. They asked to be anonymous; but again, were very helpful.

Finding subjects to interview who are in opposition to church schools was much more problematic. As is reflected below, many of the 15 or so letters that were sent out asking for interviews from individuals or bodies likely to be in opposition were not answered. In the end, much of the data collected were taken from documentary sources, some of which are quite old. The journalist Polly Toynbee, however, responded very positively to a request for an interview. She rang the researcher back! A mutual date for a face-to-face interview within a reasonable time frame was not possible, so a telephone interview ensued. The Education Secretary of the Free Churches Council kindly allowed herself to be interviewed at the Council’s premises; as did the General Secretary of the National Secular Society.

Findings

In England and Wales, 2,000 primary and 450 secondary schools are in the Catholic, voluntary-aided sector that forms 10% of state provision. Currently, nearly three quarters of a million young people are being educated in Catholic schools (CES, 1996), and overall, the demand for places is increasing. The Church of England sector contains, as can be expected of the established church in England, many more institutions—4,903 primary schools and 225 secondary schools (Lankshear, 1992). As with the Catholic sector, the demand for school places is strong and increasing. The contribution made by Church of England and Roman Catholic schools is not minimal. Together these church schools make up over a third of state-schooling provision in England and Wales.

The declared aims of Catholic schools

The Catholic education community identifies such a role, if in a particular form, for itself and a partnership between the school, parents, and the local community, the latter being first the Catholic community and, increasingly, the wider community as a whole.
The importance of Catholic education has been stressed by church authorities from the mid-nineteenth century to the present today. The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales “have seen education as central to the mission of the Church” (Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 1997, p. 5). Education is a deeper and broader process than the mere preparation for an economic role, as pupils are to learn and understand that “God (is) creator, sustainer and ultimate goal of all that exists” (p. 50). The mission statement of a Catholic school should make it explicit that it conforms to Christian principles (Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 1996, p. 2).

The role of the head teacher or school principal is pivotal and not limited to a professional competence; for the Catholic head is also to be a personal example to the teachers in his or her school. It is also clear that Catholic teachers have their own role, inasmuch, according to Arthur’s comments on the Declaration on Christian Education (Second Vatican Council, 1965), it is “they who determine whether the Catholic school fulfils its aims” (Arthur, 1995, p. 254). Additionally, they “should integrate the Catholic faith and culture in their own person and that they should imitate Christ,” not only “by word but also by every facet of their behaviour” (p. 254). The Bishops, according to Arthur (p. 257), had emphasized in 1974 the need for schools governors to appoint Catholics to pastoral and management posts. Provisions about atheists and agnostics were dropped ten years ago, in 1990. However, in the face of the tenor of such advice, whether or not it is still current, it is interesting to note that the trend in the figures indicates a majority of non-Catholic teachers in Catholic secondary schools by the turn of the century (Arthur, 1995). Whatever the practical difficulties about staffing, it is clear that Catholic schools are unshakeable from their basic purpose—to be recognizably Catholic.

The declared aims of the Church of England school

As with many things concerned with the Church of England, the policy position adopted is less than explicit. The Durham Commission into Church of England schools that published its report in 1970 put it in these terms: “Only one thing is completely clear: on the subject of Church schools the Church of England has never had one generally agreed policy. It certainly has none today” (p. 217, quoted in Carey, Hope, & Hall, 1998, p. 50).

As an expression of its stated role as the established church, the Church of England school has traditionally been open to “all-comers,” both in terms of staff and pupils. There is no expectation that the head and members of staff should be practising Anglicans (or even practising Christians) and the pupils themselves are drawn from a variety of cultural backgrounds, some Christian, some not (Johnson & McCreery, 1999).

However, this “openness” is now being questioned within a debate about the nature of “community” that should be served. David Lankshean (1992, p. 18), the Schools Officer of the National Society, notes that within the Church of
England there are those who “would argue that the schools are provided by the Church and are a major potential asset in the Church’s work of evangelism and Christian nurture.” This clearly echoes the Catholic position. However, he goes on to note that others within the Church see “the key role of the Church school is to be a good school, run within the context of a Christian community” (p. 18).

Thus, some senior Church of England figures are seeing within the popularity of their schools an opportunity to “become more overtly Anglican” and to place a greater emphasis on serving its own domestic Anglican community. Others continue to argue for the usual “Anglican light touch” in the conduct of their schools through which the traditional Church of England role in serving the widest community, be it practicing Christians or not, is maintained. It is in the former that a “stronger” Christian position is taken, and the latter that seeks (echoing the National Curriculum Council statement discussed above) to promulgate a value system of tolerance and morality that is acceptable in a society increasingly both multi-faith and no-faith. Within this context, in an area that is gaining increased attention, the leading Anglican academic Leslie Francis (1993, 1994), among others, has argued cogently for church schools.

**Opposition to church schools**

Opposition to church or faith schools exists in many differing forms.

**Historic**

The non-conformist fury in 1902 about the incorporation of Church of England and Roman Catholic schools into the state system has been noted. Today, the Free Churches Council takes a more sanguine view. The Council no longer has a declared position on these schools, as one interviewee said: “It’s not really a live issue,” for the constituent churches that make up the Council. Of course, some individual church members object out of principle; but most “seem quite pleased that they (the schools) are there as a Christian presence in the educational system.”

**An anachronism in a secular society**

The National Secular Society, founded in 1866, retains its “fundamental objections to religious schools,” according to its general secretary. The Society has opposed religious schooling since that time, to quote its general secretary again, as it believes that

religion is a private matter for the family. . . . We are not saying that morality isn’t important, or that preparing people for life isn’t important . . . but morality doesn’t necessarily come from religion; . . . what we find objectionable is that (church schools) are state funded.
The general secretary of the National Secular Society also mentioned that he had appeared on television in 1998 to oppose, in 1998, the granting of state funds to Muslim schools: “This was not a racist thing . . . it is a matter of principle whoever is involved.”

None of the leading political parties address the topic of church schools in their declared education policies. The political sensitivities from 1902 that were still warm enough in 1941 for Churchill to advise Butler to leave the church schools alone still seem nearly a hundred years later to have sufficient heat for today’s politicians to “let sleeping dogs lie.” Educational organizations such as the Socialist Education Association, a body affiliated to the Labour Party, have argued in the past against church schools on the grounds they are an expression of religious privilege that promotes a divisive sectarianism that frustrates a truly comprehensive education system. (Given that Tony Blair the current Labour Prime Minister sends all three of his children to state funded Roman Catholic schools, the Socialist Education Association was contacted to see if its position remained the same. No reply was received.)

Recent open opposition to church or faith schools has not come from politicians but from journalists. In an article in the influential, liberal newspaper The Guardian (27 January 1999), journalist Polly Toynbee wrote of her disquiet about the unquestioned existence of church schools which she felt were essentially middle-class and socially divisive. (She ignored the fact that many church schools, due to historic factors, are located in areas of serious social and economic deprivation.)

In terms of an educational argument against church/faith schools, Hirst (1972, 1983) saw education in a sophisticated form as leading to self-direction or in a primitive form as simply passing on tradition and knowledge. He argued that church schools are concerned not necessarily with education in this sophisticated form but with the development of faith in terms of catechesis. However, since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988, concerns about a narrowness of a church school curriculum are no longer relevant.

Perhaps one of the more telling arguments against church or faith schools has been those expressed in the Swann Report in 1985 (and supported by the Commission for Racial Equality, 1990). The Swann Report concluded that although “ethnic minority religious groups have the legal right to establish their own schools, this would not be a desirable development” (CRE, 1990). The Report felt that “they would not be in (their) long term interest . . . and (its) basic philosophy of ‘education for all’ would be compromised” (CRE, 1990, p. 2). This has remained the strong position of many—that faith schools of all kinds are socially and racially divisive and undermine the possibility of a truly comprehensive education in which all share basic values of tolerance.

Interestingly enough, in terms of a cohesive multi-cultural society, articles have appeared in the press that argued public funds granted in January 1998 for Muslim schools would, in fact, enhance and support a multi-cultural society. Roy Hattersley, a former Labour Cabinet Minister, writing in the same newspaper as Polly Toynbee while taking an entirely different view (The Guardian,
12 January 1998), argued that “Muslims . . . will be given a new self-confidence” at the news of such Islamic schools. Darcus Howe, writing in the Labourite and progressive New Statesman (16 January 1998), argued that state funding for Muslim schools is a victory against Islamophobia.

Thus, the “multi-cultural argument” can be seen to have at least two strands: one that is against church or faith schools because, in the English context, they tend to exclude ethnic minorities; and the other, on the contrary, such schools when reflecting the faith and culture of minority communities help enhance their self-confidence and position in society. Thus, the liberal position on church/faith school is split.

How the popularity of church schools is perceived

While journalists such as Toynbee dismiss the popularity of church schools with parents as the exercise of class privilege, it is clear that there is little empirical evidence about such preferences. Interviews with church-school head teachers, both Church of England and Roman Catholic, that are reported more fully elsewhere (Johnson & Castelli 2000, Johnson & McCreery 1999), and with officers of church educational bodies sought information from those in the schools themselves. The head teachers discerned both a pragmatism and a deeper attachment, perhaps both cultural and emotional, to their Christian ethos in the parental liking of church schools.

In general, the head teachers reported that church schools are perceived by parents as being academically “good,” sometimes excellent. Church schools invariably occupy high positions in governmental league tables of examination results and favorable reports in popular guides to achieving schools (for example, The Sunday Times Guide to Excellent State Schools, October 1998). Also, most if not all head teachers interviewed, who worked in schools in multicultural south London, commented on the reputation that these schools have for “good discipline” and “order.”

Others commented upon the supposed secularization of society. In fact, one interviewee asked: “What secular society?” Others detect a feeling that parents “don’t quite want to detach their children from Christianity.” Still others spoke of “spiritual questions and needs that won’t go away.” One primary head teacher put it simply: “Parents still want their children to know the difference between right and wrong.” Thus, educational, cultural, spiritual, and moral issues were identified as a genuine, if sometimes not articulated, concern for parents.

Conclusion

Much has changed in the English schooling system since the election of the first Thatcher government in 1979. The Education Reform Act 1988 placed schools into a quasi-market, where state funding followed the pupil or student. As part of such marketization, parents were given the right to choose the school they preferred for their children. (This replaced, in theory at least, the allocation of
school places by the bureaucratic decision making of local government officers in the town or city hall.) Thus empowered, parents have been making choices.

Clearly, hard-headed pragmatism about academic excellence should not be underestimated in the parental choice of a church school. However, there are other factors. Real parental and general societal concern about certain trends in society (for example, high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancies, and divorce) cannot be dismissed as mere moral panic. As one Church of England head, who was interviewed, has been quoted as saying: “Parents still want their children to know the difference between right and wrong.” But what “right and wrong” and whose? In a post-traditional, post-modern world that produces an intellectual position that recognizes many frameworks and gives no precedence, no superordinate status to any, what moral code should be taught?

The Catholic school, as has been seen, does not adopt a moral ambivalence or accept uncertainty. As fully part of the Catholic Church, it has a declared duty to promote Catholicism in terms of values, knowledge, and belief which are absolute and declared from the center. Hence, an identity, while it is sometimes questioned, remains recognizable by “everybody” and so offers a membership of a worldwide community.

The Church of England does not have such a centralized decision-making mechanism. In organizational terms, the structure of its communion is much “looser.” Thus, the Church of England head teacher has much greater direct influence on what values are transmitted and in what way. The Church of England heads, in their interviews, talked more in terms of the children’s behavior rather than belief and doctrine. This behavior is acted out not only in the formal setting of a school assembly or in the attendance of church services, but, they implied, more importantly in respect to day-to-day living and interactions in the school community and beyond.

Nevertheless, it should not be ignored that the Church of England school, whether or not much time is spent on formal religious practice, does offer access to the Anglican tradition. In this way, it can be seen that Church of England schools are essentially Protestant. Much is not or is understated and open to individual interpretation through the individual’s own moral framework. After all, Anglicanism is the established religion of the English, a people who have no written constitution and seemingly suffer no anxiety as a consequence. As recognized by the Hindu priest, who sent his child to a Church of England school (Johnson & McCreery, 1999), some sort of moral sense is offered to those children from within the Anglican tradition and from those without. The Archbishop of York (Carey, Hope, & Hall, 1998) wrote recently: “Those of other faiths do not actually thank us for being apologetic or unsure or uncertain of our own, or even attempting to play down the differences or distinctiveness.” (p. 17).

In the face of the social realities of the new millennium, is this distinctiveness an illusion or mere wishful thinking? It is possible to ask whether parents who seek a declared moral code and a cultural and religious identity for their children are “desperately trying to hold on to or restore their traditions but are finding to
their dismay that it cannot be done: the substance of tradition is melting away, slipping through their fingers even as they grasp it” (Cupitt, 1997, p. 79).

In face of this fashionable acceptance of the loss of the past, such parental choice of a church school could seem both futile and educationally unsound. However, other writers do not accept such a cataclysmic vision. Bennett (1998) for one offers this comment on the postmodernist thinker: “He sees history setting out on a new chapter even when objectively speaking, it may have only turned a page” (p. 23). Bennett recalls a phrase of Adorno, that such a view allows its thinker to “forget himself.” In so doing, his own culture, history, and the secure sense of self that is identity that is derived at least in part from his community is lost “out of sheer open-mindedness” (p. 23).

The discussion of the multi-faith and multi-cultural society is dense and many layered. A secularized society, state, and school could suggest a homogenized culture in which Christianity does not have a “superordinate position.” It could also be a host culture, in this context Christianity (either as an active religious faith or as a cultural residue), promotes a societal tolerance and acceptance of minority faiths and culture. As was seen in the reception of public funding for Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish schools, a new position would seem to be emerging where a faith and cultural self-confidence are encouraged for ethnic minority and religious communities. If this is the case, it would be illogical to challenge the continued existence of Church of England and Roman Catholic schools.

As was seen earlier, it was necessary for Balfour to argue at the very beginning of the twentieth century that church schools were not inappropriate with the needs and objectives of “a progressive community.” They were to be seen then as part of “the normal machine for education” in England (quoted in Barber, 1994, p. 41). It is also clear that at the beginning of this new century, while individual voices speak out against them, there is no organized, substantial challenge, either political or academic, to their remaining part of that machinery. However, it must also be noted that while other commentators and activists argue the case for a more overtly confident Christian stance by these schools, that the attitudes and demands of these schools’ customers, namely, the parents, seemingly remain, in part at least, pragmatic, and so problematic. Secularization of English society may mean that strong feelings, one way or another, about these schools have disappeared; on the other hand, they may be lying dormant to return in a recognizable or new form. It is perhaps significant that politicians in England, as with politicians everywhere, being sensitive to the electorate’s feelings, expressed and subterranean, continue to prefer to “let sleeping dogs lie” and do not engage in debate.

References


VALUES AND RELIGION

From Abe to Zulu, the 300 languages spoken by London pupils. Evening Standard (2000, January 21).
This paper seeks to offer an exploration of an appropriate methodology for the study of Muslim schools in England. For this matter, it focuses on the need for an extensive contextualisation and awareness of cultural subjectivities and identifies some commonalties and dissimilarities that may influence the collection of data concerned with the culture of Muslim schools in one northern European country. The primary focus is an attempt to register the complexity of investigating cultural issues and to propose some tentative steps towards qualitative research that will tell the story of a significant development within state education in England.

1. Introduction

In the diverse English schooling system, comparisons, whether explicit or implicit, made between schools and the roles of actors within them are likely to use culture as a fundamental concept. Culture itself is a ubiquitous and multi-layered term that demands caution in its definition. Its use as a tool of analysis and interpretation also raises important issues of bias and political vested interests, possibly, if not probably, in all parties to the project. In any study of Islam and Muslim schools, whether or not set in a western context, the seemingly automatic attitudes of some western observers have to be noted and considered in depth. This is necessary lest such observers unthinkingly adopt the stance of orientalism, which Edward Said (1978, 1997), amongst others, has discussed as the western style for dominating, restructuring and interpreting Islam on western terms.
While acknowledging Said’s argument, it is also important to note that Islam in the West is itself undergoing change. As part of this change, Muslim schools are engaged in creating an identity for the school, the students and the larger communities associated with them. Most Muslim schools in England are multi-ethnic and draw children from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Although mono-faith they portray diverse interpretations of Islam. While respecting and supporting the cultural diversity within their student population these schools are also preparing young people for contemporary English society. It would not be an exaggeration to describe their task as developing a kind of English Islam, which is new and is finding its way and its identity within this new context.

The focus of this article is to discuss the considerations that must be addressed when devising a methodology with which to study publicly funded Muslim schools in England. In this context, there is a shared language of public everyday usage, namely English. So, it might appear that any significant methodological concerns might revolve around the technicalities of operationalisation, specifically those of data collection. However, it could be that something more profound and complicated is also present. There is interaction between culture and the meanings people acquire and attribute to events. So though, a ‘shared language’ seems to imply ‘shared meaning’, it could be that the ‘shared language’ often taken for granted sometimes conceals the subjectivity of different cultures or leads to simplistic and sometimes inaccurate ‘translations’ from the studied culture to the one in which the research study is framed (Trautmann, 1987). This could be particularly so in a northern European context where certain religions and cultural traditions have only comparatively recently coexisted in a multi-culturalised context. So as a research project is progressed through the stages of designing of a methodology, collecting and analysing data about Muslim schools in England, the omnipresent challenge will be the need to be self-reflexive about the nature of the cultural subjectivity brought by all participants to the process.

The structure of this article is as follows. For the readers unfamiliar with the English schooling system, we say something about the English dual system and the place Muslim schools occupy in it (section 2). Next we consider the complexity of culture and especially focus on the relationship between culture and identity (section 3). The subsequent section (4), then, constitutes the core of this paper. It is here that we reflect on certain key-aspects of an appropriate methodology for studying Muslim schools. We end our discussion by drawing some conclusions regarding data collection and validity (section 5).

2. The English dual system

State funding of Christian schools has a comparatively long history in England. In 1833, the British government paid small grants to the educational bodies of the Non-Conformist churches and the Church of England. In 1902 Catholic schools were incorporated into the state system and subsequently, a small number of Jewish school and, more recently, in 1998, Muslim and Sikh schools.
This inclusion of church/faith schools in the public/state system of English schooling to create a dual system distinguishes it from the public systems of the USA, Australia, New Zealand and most of continental Europe (Sallis, 1994). Church/faith schools were once criticised for the narrowness of their curriculum (Hirst, 1972, writing specifically of Catholic schools) and, in some instances, for their poor educational standards. However, today, church/faith schools are as subject to the ‘central template’ of the National Curriculum and inspection by the government agency OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) as any other school within the state system. Increasingly, church/faith schools (Anglican and Catholic schools in particular) are gathering a reputation for educational excellence and, despite some opposition, the present government is committed to increasing their number over the next few years.

Thus the Muslim schools in this research became part of the state system at a time when church/faith schools were enjoying some success. They were aware of this and aware also of the debate within the existing church/faith schools concerning church/faith values and the price of success within a state system. Research has shown (Johnson & Castelli, 2000) that church/faith schools see themselves as integral to the state educational system and, moreover, they feel they bring a particular educational philosophy that enriches and is enriched by this partnership. The two Muslim schools within this study share this commitment to the state system and are open to the dialogue that will ensue. The debate that has ranged around church/faith schools, and particularly Muslim state schools since the events in New York and Washington of 11 September 2001, has raised the question of the influence of Muslim schools upon contemporary English society. Within the Muslim community, both prior to and after 11 September, the debate has been around the compatibility of Muslim faith values and state values within schools. In this area they share common concern with other church/faith schools. How this intra-community and inter-community dialogue influences English society will be of interest to many.

3. The complexity of culture and uncertainty of identity

As was noted in the introduction, culture itself is a complex term, used by many disciplines, which has to be handled carefully. It can be seen in societal terms, as in Hofstede’s wide generalisations about cultural characteristics (Hofstede, 1980). The idea of a societal culture is a convenience that pinpoints a locale, a history, policies for the future and current salient operating characteristics of the educational system. But can it always be used so confidently? As Dimmock and Walker (1999) note, societal cultures are not homogeneous. In a contemporary British/English society that sees much of its past, and it would seem, its future in terms of a strong nation-state, recent Scottish and Welsh devolution have made the term ‘British’ now increasingly problematic. This has had a ‘knock-on’ effect on an English identity that has become a sharper, more specific, refreshed (and also problematic) cultural and national term within a society that has an
educational system that is distinctive from its immediate neighbours within the United Kingdom (Raffe, Brannen, Croxford & Martin, 1999). With such complexities and ongoing shifts in identity, it is clear that it is no simple task for researchers to explore and understand the full cultural hinterland that such national identities or labels represent. Hall (2000, p. 17) adds to the uncertainty by pointing out that “the concept of identity ... is ... not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one.” He goes on to say that identity “does not signal that stable core of self ... the bit which remains always-ready ‘the same’, identical to itself across time.” A recent article in a liberal, British newspaper about young English Muslims (The Guardian, 29 December 2000) would seem to offer support for Hall’s argument. The views of Mohammed Omar, a twenty-five year old English-born Muslim are reported. He commented that many young Muslims who had thought themselves westernised were shaken by the Gulf war. Further on in the article he is quoted as saying:

I grew up in Hackney, where a lot of people said OK I’m black. I think it was a lot to do with peer group pressure because in Hackney there were a lot of people from Jamaica. There’s nothing wrong with that, but in the end it’s just a fashion statement (our italics).

This statement would suggest that identity cannot be used to claim total security and permanence; in fact, it would seem that identities fragment and multiply and are more a matter of a chosen position rather than an automatic inheritance.

On a more specific level, it can be said that “educational policies have altered following changes in the composition of British society” (Todd, 1991, p. 39). Todd (1991, p. 39) goes on to note that “… there is no consensus on how many distinctive approaches have evolved” in respect of education in a multi-cultural society that the post-colonial Britain and England have become. Accordingly to Mullard (1984, p. 7), such approaches depend on how specific conceptions of educational issues link with wider models of British society:

... all the racial forms of education that have scurried across the landscape of educational history over the last twenty years – immigrant, multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, poly-ethnic, and anti-racist education – stand and face each other in a relatively similar way. This is so because they draw upon different or slightly different perspectives and perceptions of socio-educational reality and objectives. In short, they all evoke positions on the nature of the social and educational; they all invoke their own set of decisions in respect to (preferred) definitions of the problem in society and education and hence (preferred) conceptions of social and educational objectives.

As these positions have evolved, it is interesting that a current policy approach in England has been in terms of structures. The creation of new faith schools
(and the continuance of the previously established Christian ones) is a phenomenon of our secularised times (Johnson, 2000). The multi-cultural initiatives and programmes, discussed by Mullard over seventeen years ago, that place an emphasis on ‘inclusiveness’ and ‘similarity’ are judged by some as having been replaced or at least overshadowed by these new schools that respond to the needs and demands of newly arrived immigrant groups. Such school openings can be seen, in Mullard’s terms of preferred definitions of a social problem or issue and preferred solutions, in a number of ways. Without exploring this area further, three ways that immediately come to mind are:

- church/faith schools can be regarded as a confident expression of a mature multi-cultural society;
- they (and the longer-established Christian schools) can be seen as socially divisive;
- or, in Apple’s terms (1996), can be seen, within the arena of cultural politics, as a project of cultural restoration.

Culture is also an important term at the organisational level and has been written about extensively in management literature (Handy, 1994; Pheysey, 1993; Morgan, 1997; Schein, 1992). Hoyle (1986, p. 3), writing of the educational institution that is the school, notes that “central to the concept (of culture) is the idea of value, that which is regarded as worthwhile by members of the group.” So, within any school and linked community it is likely, if not certain, that many sub-cultures will co-exist. Each will reflect different ‘worthwhiles’ that may or may not correspond with the mainstream culture, that in Apple’s terms (1996) holds hegemonic sway within the school or community or society as a whole. Such comments are seemingly self-evident but of great significance when samples are being constructed or interviewees selected. More mundanely, but without less significance, will be the personal values of individuals that may be expressed overtly in political, social or religious allegiances or more subtly, as Goffman (1969) would have it, in the ‘ordinariness’ of everyday behaviour and interaction. All these (individual and collective) ‘cultures’ will interact in ways that are both predictable and unpredictable.

4. Methodological reflections

4.1. Knowledge about the studied culture as a prerequisite

If researchers need to have self-awareness about their own culture, involvement in a cross-cultural study requires knowledge about the culture of those they are studying. Here again, an on-going management of this awareness is necessary; otherwise, researchers are at the mercy of stereotypes. (How do you typically regard Muslims? Do you have an ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ understanding? On what is your ‘knowing’ based?) Common cultural stereotypes exist. They can be
accurate or a slander; they can be benign or malevolent; and they can be an objective statement or a patronising put-down. Stereotypes, collected on an anecdotal basis by these researchers, can be illustrated as follows:

1. From direct or indirect interactions with a range of others within across contemporary English society:

   About faith schools, in general:
   “Aren’t all faith schools fundamentalist or at best indoctrination shops?”
   “Do children receive a relevant, modern education in them?”
   “Aren’t children taught to believe rather than think?”

   About Islamic schools, in particular:
   “Don’t Muslim schools prevent children integrating into contemporary society?”
   “Do girls experience the same curriculum as boys?”
   “Are girls treated as the equals of boys? Are they hidden behind veils?”

2. From the researchers’ own feelings:
   “How will I be treated at the schools by the staff?”
   “Will I be regarded as a ‘woman’ rather than as an ‘individual’?”
   “Will I have to be acquiescent, bite my lip, let my colleague take the lead in the interviews and other social situations?”
   “What should I wear or not wear to visit an Islamic school?”
   “I really do not want to offend anybody by committing some dreadful social gaffe”.
   “These anxieties are likely to be ridiculous, but I must take notice of what I am feeling”.
   “How should I address female members of staff?”
   “It is permitted for me to shake hands with the head teacher or other staff?”

From these anecdotes, it is possible to see these apprehensions about the purpose of Islamic schools and social unease are based on a lack of knowledge and previous social interaction. (However, the gender differences cannot be too quickly dismissed. After all, they do exist).

Beyond anecdote, more profoundly, Karen Armstrong’s (2000, p. iv) sympathetic history of Islam outlines a common western view:

No religion in the modern world is as feared and misunderstood as Islam. It haunts the popular Western imagination as an extreme faith that promotes authoritarian government, female oppression, civil war and terrorism.

Exploring this fear, Said (1997, pp. xxix–x) talks not merely of Apple’s cultural politics but of a cultural war being waged against Islam, derived “from nine-
teenth century Orientalists of the British and French school, who saw in Islam a danger to Christianity and liberal values . . .”. The Palestinian-American scholar has called this the ‘grandest of all narratives’ and although orientalism can be considered as a general theory of representation of The Other, it can be regarded as applying more specifically to Islam and Muslims. Said (1978, p. 3) defines orientalism as “the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient . . . as a western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient”. Thus, it is clear that orientalism must be faced head on and that there are important issues here for researchers about the achieving of an objectively informed position. This is even more apparent since the events in United States of America on 11 September 2001.

4.2. Adopting qualitative research techniques

Clearly positivist-based research that is concerned with the input and outputs of systems has a meaningful place in the social sciences and in the field of school and education management in particular. But as the preceding discussion on the complexities and subjectivities of culture and their impact on meaning has shown an approach that delves beneath the surface realities is required. The qualitative perspective offers a means by which some of the main themes of sociological thinking and theory can be addressed. These themes revolve around issues of power, ideology and, most importantly of all, subjective meaning. Weber (1978 [1921], p. 4) himself defines sociology as:

. . . a science concerning itself with the interpretative understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its course and consequences.

In this, the social sciences are conceptualised as “cultural sciences with a systematic intent.” Habermas (1990, p. 10) notes that in this definition Weber combines:

. . . methodological principles that philosophers had found in opposing types of sciences: the social sciences have the task of bringing the heterogeneous methods, aims, and presuppositions of the natural and cultural sciences into balance.

From this, Schutz (1964, pp. 269–270) states that:

. . . all scientific explanations of the social world can, and for certain purposes must, refer to the subjective meaning of the actions of human beings from which the social reality originates.

While there may be social constructions of reality that are governed by identifiable rules and regulations, contrary to the Durkheimian view, no objective
patterns of reality exist. Individuals have the capacity to make their own reality and so exercise a choice in deciding to act out this rather than that: “... the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning” (Weber, 1978 [1921], p. 24) to his or her own behaviour “be it overt or covert, omission or acquiescence.” Freire (1990, p. 61) summarises this view in a pithy fashion: “... no one can say a true word ... for another”. So, in practical terms, whereas quantitative research seeks to measure behaviour, qualitative research attempts to go beyond appearances to explore a deeper understanding of the meanings of the reality, within a particular situation, as offered by the situational actors themselves.

This approach has been successful in generating much reportage and vivid thick description about, in the main, urban subcultures. But how can the reader assess, whether implicitly or explicitly, its relevance to his or her situation, if no historical and/or structural contextualisation is attempted? Going beyond the what of culture and perception formation, how can the reader understand why it developed in such a manner? What can be surmised about the ideological and hegemonic pressures and influences on those views and perceptions, however individual? It could be argued that the ‘value-free’, theory-free, uncritical sociology that this approach seemingly produces, in fact, in some instances, conceals more than it reveals.

Hammersley (1992) has sought to synthesise the traditional, ‘Chicago perspective’ with a wider and broader view of the historical and structural context in which the perceptions of individuals are embedded. He states (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 234): “... we have no grounds for dismissing the validity of participant understandings outright.” He takes the point further to argue that such ‘understandings’ “are a crucial source of knowledge, deriving as they do from experience of the social world”. However, they are not to be accepted unquestioningly and “they must be treated in exactly the same manner as social scientific accounts.”

In this vein, Jorgensen (1989, p. 18) argues for a position that allows both form and flexibility for the researcher, who, while perhaps having “a theoretical interest in being there”, has not made any definitive decisions about “... what concepts are important, how they are or are not related.” He concludes that:

... what therefore, is problematic should remain open and subject to refinement and definition based on what the researcher is able to uncover and observe.

This view allows the researcher a theoretical position, that he or she is likely to have, as long as it is not given precedence over the data that is collected in the field. This theoretical position itself is a starting-point that can and is likely to be modified (as is the original research design). The issue is perhaps how far from this starting-point is the end result. After all, as Powney & Watts (1987, p. 23) wryly comment:
There is a sense in which this must always be the case – that the researcher has explicit (or somewhat implicit) theoretical conceptions of the outcomes, otherwise he or she would not embark on the research in the first place.

With these provisos that attempt to distinguish a theoretical position from a cultural and or political prejudice, we now turn to consider the reflexive and ‘self-policing’ qualitative researcher.

4.3. The researcher as the instrument

The qualitative researcher’s own role in the research has been broadened out from the reporter of certain social phenomena and situations as seen by their actors. Thus, it is clear that certain ‘checks’ have to be built into the research design to assist the researcher to minimise bias and to maintain the balance between observation and theory in an authentic and meaningful way. Reflexivity is not primarily concerned with the arguing for the validity of the research to its readers, but with offering the researcher self-consciousness about how he or she designs, implements and interprets the research project. Ward-Schofield (1993, p. 202) suggests that at its core qualitative research has: “... the assumption that a piece of qualitative research is very much influenced by the researcher’s own attributes and perspectives.” She goes on to say that:

The goal is not to produce a standardised set of results that any other careful researcher would have produced ... it is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of the situation.


Clearly, reflexivity is more than a relaxed mulling over of what has happened today in school or in the office. According to Imel (1989), reflective practice is the integration of thought and action with reflection; and so is a more rigorous and demanding exercise. Reflective thinking can be structured:

... according to the mode of thinking or the process an individual progresses through to reach a level of reflection that complements both the context of the situation and the background the individual brings to the episode.

(Taggart & Wilson 1998, p. 2)

The evaluation and decision-making engaged is to be informed, logical and systematic – and may be conducted solely by the individual concerned or as a group activity with ‘critical friends’. But even in this, testing out the issue of cultural bias and/or ignorance is relevant once again. What should be the cultural
background of that friend or friends? Does the loop remain closed if their back-
ground is similar to that of the researchers? Or can communication be really
effective if the friends are ‘within their own, different culture’?1

5. Some general conclusions about data collection,
analysis, and validity

As has been seen, data collection from both documentary and other sources has
been considered, as has issues revolving around the objectivity of the researcher in
the emerging categories within the data in the subsequent analysis. From this it can
be seen that it is clearly necessary to embark on such a cross-cultural project with
some caution and careful though flexible planning. Though a qualitative approach
cannot be used in a slip-shod or casual fashion, it has been selected as it offers “a
means for inquiring into unsuspected connections within and across the levels of
individual, school, society, national and supra-national culture” (Johnson & Hill
2000).

Thus in order to collect data, relevant government, religious, and school doc-
uments might be examined to ascertain the purpose, structure, and mechanisms
of Muslim schools in England. This means that the two publicly funded Muslim
schools and other privately funded ones need to be approached for access and to
open up and widen comparative sources of data. In this way, misinterpretations
can be avoided or minimised. An interview inventory design has to be attempted
that is culturally aware and sensitive (since it is accepted that the likelihood of
devising one that is culturally free is impossible in the field of education, which
is, of course, concerned with culture).

As regards validity, the first concern will be description validity – the factual
accuracy of accounts. This is the essential of every qualitative study. As Geertz
(1973, p. 17) puts it, “behaviour must be attended to, and with some exactness,
because it is through the flow of behaviour – or, more precisely, social action –
that cultural forms find articulation.” Interpretative validity will be the next
concern. Beyond a valid description of places, behaviours, and reportage, atten-
tion must be paid to what they mean to the people involved with them. Interpre-
tative accounts will be grounded in the language and culture of the people
studied. In this type of research, then, generalising is limited to the community,
group, or institution studied.

Note
1 The role these ‘friends’ may play is illustrated by the following example. Through a
series of three preliminary interviews, we established an increasing rapport with a
subject who was himself a convert to Islam before studying the culture of Muslim
schools. This subject has travelled from one set of paradigms to another, and retained
the memory of the experience. Essentially, in Hall’s (2000) terms, he has proactively
chosen his identity. He has become both a critical friend and a guide for us, specifically
about the following:
The translation of language: recalling Trautmann’s (1987) comment about simplistic translation, our guide to cultural difference has explained the true meaning, for example, of *fatwa* as ‘struggle’, a term in the West that carries an emotional and political agenda but in Islam has a spiritual meaning:

**Non-Western sources on Islam:** he encouraged the researchers to move beyond Western writers such as Armstrong (2000) to read writers such as Seyyed Hossain Nasr (1996, 1987) who as Muslims write about their religion in English;

**Other sources of data and access to Muslim education:** he suggested, for example, the use of job descriptions in the delineation of the role of the Muslim head teacher and made access to them possible through IBEER (International Board of Education and Research);

**The difference between Classical Islam and Modern Islam:** he has shown to the researchers a breadth of Islam that is not evident in contemporary society. Modern Islam is vociferous, visible and ‘in your face’. There is in Modern Islam an iconic identity that is visible and exclusive. Classical Islam focuses on spiritual values and has a narrative identity that is eclectic and inclusive. Classical Islam can be seen historically in the diversity within Moorish cultural expressions. A contemporary English Islam will have to take account of both of these.

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VALUES AND RELIGION


Part 2

EMOTIONS AND GENDER
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Examining the emotionality of leadership by exploring administrators’ recall of key junctures in their lives as leaders, this pilot study was designed to begin to investigate the associations between an individual’s philosophy of leadership and his/her experience of emotionality in leadership work. Employing an interview method, the study used stimulated recall of emotional experiences associated with leadership work. Interviews were transcribed and, along with researcher’s observation notes and participants’ written submissions, all data were subjected to analysis. An assessment of the situations that evoked emotions, patterns associated with the emotions themselves and some of the effects of the act of reflection, led to noteworthy conclusions which may hold important implications for further research in the sociology of emotions and educational leadership theory and practice. Emerging findings support the position that emotions may be fundamental to the intra and intersubjective realities of life in schools, in general, and of leadership work, in particular.

Teaching and leading are profoundly emotional activities (Fried, 1995). You would not guess this from much of the educational change and reform literature, however . . . If educational reformers ignore the emotional dimensions of educational change, emotions and feelings will only re-enter the change process by the back door.


The emotional experience of educational leadership has not been explored in sufficient depth to date in the Educational Administration literature. This pilot study investigated the emotions of leadership – their provocations, origins, qualities – and some of their effects on the working lives of educational leaders.
Researchers have identified a number of different styles and behaviours associated with leadership work (Burns, 1978; Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990). In the past ten to fifteen years, the widespread acceptance of the need for change in education and elsewhere has led to extensive reconsideration of ‘what is leadership?’ and ‘what are effective ways in which to lead?’ Struggling to define leadership, from the mutual exclusivity of management as ‘maintaining’ and leadership as ‘creating’ (Bennis, 1989), through to the suggested recombination of these dimensions in a composite blend (Fullan, 1991), characterizes the range of perspectives on how to define leadership and how to do it best.

Human emotions have been consistently marginalized in educational leadership research. However, in education, several writers and researchers do acknowledge emotions as relevant to teachers’ work (Acker, 1992; Blase and Anderson, 1995; Dinham 1995; Hargreaves, 1994; Jeffrey and Woods, 1997; Nias, 1989; Noddings, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1989 and others) in terms of themes that include morale, stress and burnout, motivation, empowerment, the self, change, deprofessionalization of inspection and emotions of learning to teach. The emotions of leadership are virtually unmentioned.

There are exceptions.

In a revealing narrative reflection of his own inner journey as principal, David Loader suggests we need “… a more balanced view of leadership … those who have researched the current educational writing have identified a gap … Little seems to have been written about the person of the leader and the emotions that person experiences while leading.” He offers many insights, like the following:

Leadership has its highs and lows, its successes and failures. Principals cry, laugh, dream and become suspicious. There are times when principals do want the fairy godmother to come and save them. While leadership is about courage, about creating the tomorrow of our choice, heroism does not come easily.

(1997, p.3)

His candor about his personal and professional self is exceptional in educational administration literature.

Criticisms of my school were taken personally, as criticisms of me. With this mind set it became very hard to have a private life … My personal failure was that I had no sense of myself as separate from the institution.

(1997, p. 147)

In her study of several principals and the ‘emotional labour’ of competing in the educational marketplace at the expense of shared collegiality, Blackmore found
the need for an increased appreciation of the emotional labour involved in educational leadership during times of severe fiscal restraint and aggressive educational reform.

As well, we find that for principals, there are some emotional implications for leaders who are learning to “let go” of control in shared governance of schools (Blase and Blase, 1997). Principals, mandated to implement distributed leadership in their schools, reported emotional and professional rewards for themselves and their teachers. However, the anxiety and fear that accompanied making the adjustment held them back and in some cases undermined their ability even to try to make the necessary changes.

In the educational administration literature, leadership behaviours that have emotional implications are repeatedly recommended: lending support, exhibiting moral integrity, providing safety, fostering collaboration, offering intellectual stimulation, encouraging organizational learning and practising consultative and shared decision making. Optimally, it is theorized, these features combine to create cultures in schools that generate and sustain the energy necessary for change and transformation. Csikszentmihalyi might call this ‘finding flow.’ The emotional causes and effects of so many conditions an effective leader might try to create, remain under explored. The emotional processes of the leader her/himself remain virtually uncharted territory in educational research.

The emotions have been treated, if they are mentioned at all, as little more than pesky interlopers, distracting us from a higher, rational purpose.

Analysis of political and cultural forces that condition emotional experience across time and space is neglected [while] emotional processes are treated as separate from other kinds of subjectivity such as thinking and somatic experiences . . . As a result, emotional and cognitive orientations are viewed as competing perspectives . . . [and] little has been done to unravel the complex manner in which emotion, cognition and the lived body intertwine.

(Ellis and Flaherty, 1992, p.3)

This dualist paradigm continues to pervade our consciousness harkening back to the age of enlightenment and obfuscating a more complete view of the human mind – body continuum. As Davies (1992, p.67) warns, in the context of examining cultural narrative,

The binary pairs male/female, mind/body, reason/emotion, light/darkness, fact/fantasy take their meaning not only in relation but in hierarchical opposition to each other. Our new stories must rework the element of these dualisms, such that both sides are equally valued, their meaning is no longer part of any oppositional binary form of thought, and both become necessary elements of each person’s subjectivity. In the meantime though, personal identities have been (are being)
constituted in terms of those very dualities we are in the process of challenging.

(Davies, 1989c)

The hierarchical relationship between reason and emotion has particular implications for life in organizations – for leaders and for followers – in that it is often characterized as one of mutual exclusion. The power position in the hierarchy may be ritually reasserted through strict emotional control or repression in an attempt to appear exclusively and dominantly rational. There is a constant enactment of the notion that optimally, saner heads prevail and that sane is synonymous with unemotional. However, this may be the antithesis to the way people are really feeling. Reason itself is not free of emotional foundation, and even in the purest of intellectual moments, emotions are present. The mind is actually a seamless blend of thinking and feeling (Damasio, 1997). Traditional educational administration research’s consistent exclusion of the emotions, therefore, is limiting, for it distorts our theoretical understanding of human experience. Problem solving, strategic planning, and even reflective practice are considered from an exclusively rational standpoint. Educational administration research can no longer afford to treat the emotions as peripheral if we are to explore fully the way we are and can be.

Despite their apparently “unpleasant” or “dangerous” qualities for researchers because of their capacity to “contradict so much of the rational actor world-view on which mainstream sociology is premised” (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992, p.1), subjective experiences are fundamental to our notion of reality. The emotional dimension of our subjectivity has a foundational role to play in the development of our socially constructed reality. Lived experience then, may be more appropriately treated as “an interpretive story, rather than a causal one” (Ellis and Flaherty, 1992, p.5). An interpretive story “lives willingly with plurality, embracing the power of language to make new and different things possible; ... focuses on how we talk about the world and tries to deal with it; ... recounts improvisations, changes, contradictions, ambiguities and vulnerabilities” (Bochner, 1990, pp.5–6). We need to study the stories of emotional subjectivity in this spirit.

This thesis is therefore grounded in a new paradigm of the human mind, one which recombines the previously polarized cognitive and affective domains and is based on a vision of the ‘whole body as mind’ (Pert, 1998). With this image of the whole mind in mind, we may begin to pursue lines of research which could lead to a more meaningful understanding of people whose realities are largely defined and whose values are heavily influenced by their emotions. Research into the emotional dimension of the total human experience then, may complement cognitive and behavioural emphases that have gone before, giving us a closer look at some of the less considered parts, and moving us nearer to a fuller appreciation of human beings as whole persons.

It is not only the educational research community which has excluded the emotions. Emotions are political. Within the culture of schools themselves, there
is the tacit expectation that ideal ‘professional’ demeanour is primarily rational and, for the most part, emotionally controlled if not repressed. This is especially the case in terms of emotional display rules among adults in schools. Unfortunately, in attempting to retain appropriate professional decorum, the continual denial or suppression of the emotionality of our experience can create an artificiality to organizational life that is energy depleting and even unhealthy.

Typically, in organizations, people suppress ideas and feelings about ongoing problems at work, behaviour often viewed as politically useful and adaptive. Paradoxically, successful efforts at organizational change and development rely upon participants’ genuine expression of feelings and ideas. Nevertheless, sincerity may challenge the political nature and defensive strategies that characterize most work relationships. Resistance to change is therefore inevitable. (Diamond, 1993, p.117)

This denial of the emotionality of experience may also be limiting the potential for professional renewal and synergy that can only occur when the whole self is safe to grow and to discover in collaboration with trusted colleagues (Barth, 1988; Little, 1993). Perhaps leaders themselves need a forum of trust and safety within which to examine and reflect upon the emotionality of their experience. (Fineman, 1992; Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993). There is, for example, for teachers, a connection between the emotions of feeling safe and secure, and authentic collaborative professional learning, creative risk taking in shared hierarchical leadership (Beatty, 1999a). However the relationship between teachers’ emotional experience in this context and that of the leader, may be one of inverse proportionality. In other words, the more secure and empowered the teacher, the more threatened, insecure and anxious the leader (Blase and Blase, 1997). This ‘either or’ relationship between leaders’ and teachers’ emotional security is a central to the inner workings of educational stasis and critical to our understanding of the possibility for educational change. It is important to note however, that we find teachers’ willingness to make voluntary commitment to extracurricular duties is not necessarily dependent on the extent of their perceived empowerment (Blase and Roberts, 1994). Closed and open, authoritarian and tranformative: leaders with various styles get results. Thus there may be other more elusive qualities to the effective leadership connection with teachers. Could these be emotional qualities? The characteristic emotional intersubjectivity of an organization is a measure of its energy system and its openness to learning, growth and change.

Some models of the learning organization are based on empowerment and shared decision making. Schools that have succeeded in fostering a truly collaborative culture report a self-generating creative synergy and commitment (Blase and Blase, 1997). However, despite much rhetoric about the desirability of a horizontal organizational structure characterized by shared decision making and
authentic collaboration, our present system is still typically hierarchical and exclusionary. The hierarchical regime is often characterized by centralized control, favouritism, and highly restricted information flow (Blase and Anderson, 1995). Thus, the processes whereby leaders experience their emotional capacity, or lack thereof, to provide the necessary impetus for optimal personal and organizational change are worthy of our consideration. The emotional attachment of leaders to their values of power and control, for example, may be the source of the seemingly irressippressible, self-replicating power of hierarchy. Thus an emotional link may be partly responsible for the corresponding loss of opportunity to energize the system. Or worse, in the highly controlled, closed regime, wherein authoritarian or even emotionally damaging leader restricts the possibility of transformation, there is the danger of entropic depletion of personal and organizational energy. Importantly, therefore, the shaping and maintaining forces in the culture of educational leadership, and the underlying emotionality that is associated with these forces, are worthy of closer examination.

Much has been written about transformational leadership styles, theoretically facilitative and fostering of shared growth and organizational change. However, even the most well intended leader is subject to her/his own transrational values (Hodgkinson, 1990) and, I would argue, the emotions that sustain them. The leader whose need for power and control exceeds his/her intellectual acceptance of the desirability of a heterarchical distributed leadership may be faced with an obstacle to organizational success that is essentially an emotional one. A better understanding of the emotions of leadership could be used to build, or alternatively, may continue to undermine our capacity for learning and change in schools. Further research is needed therefore, in order to discover the intra, inter, social, micropolitical and structural factors that contribute to, create and sustain the emotional processes underlying our attachment to stasis, at a time when embracing change may be essential to survival. Thus, this study was born out of the need to research the emotional reality of life in organizations, especially schools. Its particular focus is the emotional experience of educational leaders.

**Context**

At the time of this study, the ongoing need for organizations to become places that are safe, dynamic, learning, evolving, adaptive and creative existed concurrently with the increased momentum of a new external political reality. Increasing demands for fiscal restraint and professional accountability created pressures for change and improvement with little money to support these initiatives. Thus, there was an increasing demand on human resources at a time when there were few supports to facilitate human adjustment and more importantly, real deep organizational change or transformation.

The need for transformation was beginning to be felt keenly in the education milieu. Educators were aware of the need for change. They were not however,
informed, prepared or supported in these changes. For instance, making the transition from having exclusive control over what students will learn, to joining them as fellow learners in an information flooded world is, like the principals learning to share leadership, an emotionally challenging feat. Importantly, it is the teacher who is encouraged to be a life long learner, looking inward as well as outward for growth, who can best exemplify this most potent lesson for students. However, it is usually the teacher who is emotionally safe to take the necessary risks who becomes such a model (Beatty, 1999a). The ability of the leader to foster such a safe environment, to promote and perhaps exemplify such a learning model is in part an emotional capacity (Loader, 1997). At the time of this study the emotional self-awareness and capacity of the leader was a little researched link in the chain of professional growth and organizational change.

Decades of study have been devoted to ‘Educational Change,’ ‘Learning Organizations,’ ‘Transformational Leadership,’ ‘Leadership Behaviours,’ ‘Values in Education,’ and other attempts to understand the inner workings of life in schools with a view to effecting educational improvement. Nevertheless, theory, policy and attempted implementations have been largely ineffective in bringing about deep meaningful change.

To discover why change has been so difficult to effect, some have sought answers by trying to reconfigure elements within the various organizational and leadership models that have been developed to try to describe the ways leadership occurs in different kinds of schools (Leithwood et.al., 1999, in press). However, these models are characterized by a heavily cognitivist and behavioural perspective. Leithwood et.al.’s summary of clusters of leadership concepts gleaned from educational administration journal articles since 1988 are useful, offering the categories of ‘instructional’, ‘transformational,’ ‘moral,’ ‘participative,’ ‘managerial’ and ‘contingent.’ But the emotions get scant attention. They are considered as indirectly related to motivation, highlighting the desirability of “emotional arousal states” the leader may attempt to create in others. However, their chapter entitled “Emotional Balance” is actually a treatment of emotional exhaustion among teachers as synonymous with burnout. Focussing on the emotions the leader stimulates in others, there is no mention of what the emotional states of the leader her/himself might be. A comprehensive study of the subtle interplay among cognitive and affective processes responsible for allowing and preventing change, processes which may be far more emotionally based than has been fashionable to acknowledge, is needed.

The marginalization of affectivity has led to a kind of subversion of the emotions in the research and practice of educational administration. The emotions are undoubtedly present but they go unacknowledged. Furthermore, the absence of research into emotions of leaders themselves represents a significant gap in the literature.

This study was undertaken at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Theory and Policy Studies – Educational Administration Department, as a “Field Research” component of the Education Doctoral Programme.
Research question: How do leaders experience, express, reflect upon and understand the emotionality of their work?

Sub questions

1. What are leaders’ inner experiences of emotion as associated with their work: intrasubjective emotionality and the ‘self.’
2. How do leaders experience the emotionality of the ‘other’: emotional intersubjectivity?
3. How do leaders recall and make meaning from influential experiences in the theoretical and practical evolution of their leadership?
4. How do gender and micropolitics play a role in the emotional experience of leaders?
5. What other understandings of the inner world of the educational leader might emerge from the data of this study?

Theoretical framework

Emerging from the analysis of the data were confirmations of the relevance of several concepts. These include the following:

1. The concept of ‘self’
as ‘I’ and ‘Me’ experienced relative to the ‘Other’ as introduced by Mead (1932) and discussed by Heidegger (1927/1962, p.275, as cited in Denzin, 1984) and explored later by others, notably Nias (1989).

*Emotionality is a circular process that begins and ends with the transactions and actions of the self in the social situation interacting with self and others.*

The internal experience of emotions by leaders often results in felt implications for the leader’s sense of self. The felt emotions are referred to here as emotional intrasubjectivity. As Nias advises, the “substantial self” seeks internal and external congruence. The cognitive dissonance that occurs in situations that clash with our “beliefs” and “values” about our substantial self, demands a “strongly protective and sometimes far from optimal change of view or action” (p.16), a fragmentation of the professional self, which would presumably be associated with some manifestation of emotionality. Through stimulated recall, participants gained some access to these aspects of their experience.
2. Intersubjectivity

as explored by Denzin (1984) is helpful in considering the emotions of the leader in conjunction with the emotions of others.

If emotionality is conceptualized as a process of self-feeling, then it can be seen as arising out of the self-interactions that individuals direct toward themselves and out of the reflected appraisals of others, both imagined and real.

(Sullivan, 1956, as cited in Denzin, 1984, p.54)

Denzin (1984, p.146) reminds us that “As recurring fields of common interactive experience, organizations provide the contexts for the preperforming, co-performing, and reperforming of those social acts that underlie all emotional understanding.” His examination of forms of emotional intersubjectivity is useful. Feelings in Common, Fellow-Feeling, Emotional Infection, Emotional Identification, Emotional Embracement, and Spurious Emotionality constitute the range, kinds and levels of emotional understanding in his construct. Presumably, for leaders and led, interpretations of emotional understanding bear on their lived experience in work. The ways leaders, who remain more isolated than many others in the organization, handle their emotional understandings and apply these in their practice is of interest in this study.

3. Micropolitics

Blase and Anderson’s (1995, p.18) treatment of leadership styles as relatively open or closed, transactional or transformative provides a useful construct with which to consider power and emotions in leadership. Leaders in this study described their self-definitions of what leadership should be. These then could be compared to feelings associated with instances involving themes of power, influence, control and other aspects of leadership. Emerging patterns could be identified. Perhaps, for instance, certain emotions whether pleasant or unpleasant, can be linked to particular leadership practices and examined for their interrelationship. The notion here is that the emotions of the leader are likely to be fundamental to her/his practice, even if they are not displayed, or perhaps even acknowledged at the time. Authoritarian and adversarial leadership styles were noted for their provocation of “anger, depressive, anxiety, resignation and satisfaction” states in teachers. The latter, “satisfaction,” was mixed with “concern for ethics” and “feeling sorry for those who were not” among the favoured group (Blase and Anderson, 1995, p. 40–41). Leaders gained access to these and other kinds of micropolitical interrelationships between power and emotionality through stimulated recall and focused reflection.
4. Gender

Work by Gilligan (1982), Noddings (1984), Hochschild (1983), Blackmore (1996), Shakeshaft (1989) and others, suggests there are gender distinctions with the emotions. Gilligan sees the female sense of morality as socially constructed in ways that are distinctive, indicating a contrastingly high value on connectedness, integration and continuity. All of these have significant emotional implications and play out in the daily social interaction of organizational life. Noddings positions the role of caring as central to our lives. Associated with the classically feminine role of nurturing, it is at the root of receptivity, relatedness and responsiveness in many realms including education. Examining the leader’s feelings about his/her role as caring, (an inherently emotional experience I would argue,) and the associated moral and ethical implications, is assisted by her work. Hochschild introduces the notion of emotional labour, required when in the line of your work, you feel one thing but think you are expected to feel another. Leaders’ work seems well described as emotional management of self and others, involving significant amounts of emotional labour. Blackmore contributes a case study of several principals whose emotional labour requires them to abandon the comforts of professional collaboration in deference to a new policy of competition between schools for students and funds. Clearly her work may bear directly on educational leadership in the present political and economic context in Ontario. Also, Shakeshaft’s noting of women administrators’ distinguishing characteristics and different experience of the culture of power and control lends credence to the argument in favour of considering gender as highly relevant to the research of the emotions of educational leadership. When being known means being known for one’s authentic self, and one’s authentic (female) self is inherently marginal to the dominant organizational culture, the resulting potential for cognitive and emotional dissonance is worthy of consideration. Leadership’s stricter codes of emotional display rules may intensify this aspect of the leadership experience for females, who may be encouraged to undergo more extensive reshaping of the self. Together, all of these feminist perspectives provide significant insight into some of the universal processes involved in learning and interacting, in schools and in life.

Design/method

Data collection/sources

A. Each participant shared in 35–45 minutes of focussed reflective conversation. Interviews moved loosely through all or most of the following:

1. Clarification of “leadership” and what it means to the participant.
2. “Leadership” as it has been part of the participant’s life, from early experiences of other leaders or in being a leader.
3 A recollection of a specific occasion of a meaningful association between emotion and leadership; i.e., “What associations have you experienced between emotions and leadership?”

4 Additional probes to develop and elaborate on the ideas offered in response to #3 to identify the emotions themselves, the provocations, the inner emotionality and the emotional intersubjectivity of any occasion or incident being discussed.

5 Depending on whether the selection in #3 & #4, was about a relatively pleasant or unpleasant experience, the second type would be solicited here.

6 The participant was asked to recall a time which epitomized his or her sense of leadership, perhaps a turning point in understanding. He or she was asked to revisit the experience, with a particular emphasis on its emotional dimensions.

B. Written reflections about the interview process or content were invited.
C. Researcher’s observation notes.
D. Transcriptions of all interviews: 25,000 words of typewritten data.
E. Analysis of data for patterns and relationships:

1 Kinds of emotions: pleasant and unpleasant;
2 Kinds of situations that provoked emotions;
3 Emotional intrasubjectivity of leadership experiences;
4 Emotional intersubjectivity of leadership experiences;
5 Leadership: emotions, micropolitics and gender.

F. DISCUSSION Patterns emerging from the data: the emotional work of leadership
G. CONCLUSIONS Theoretical implications of findings.

Participants

The five participants were actively involved in leadership/administrative positions in public education, private education, higher education or health care in various locations in Canada. Ages ranged from 35–49. Two were under forty and three over forty. All were in the middle years of their professional lives. Each had fairly extensive experience in leadership ranging from eight to twenty years in designated leadership positions. There were four females: Joan, 35, University professor and administrator; Linda, 49, Superintendent with the Ministry of Education; Carol, 36, health care administrator; Sue, 43, Vice Principal in a private school; and one male, John, 46, elementary school principal. Participants were selected on the basis of their willingness to participate.
Findings

1. Kinds of emotions and their provocations

Positive emotions

In this section the positive emotions and the kinds of situations associated with them are summarized.

‘FLOW’ THROUGH EMPOWERMENT AND COLLABORATION

Among the emotions selected by leaders to describe experiences that were positive and pleasant were a number associated with creative flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). “Passion,” “excitement,” “determination,” “confidence,” “satisfaction of letting go,” “relief,” “joy,” “high” “adrenalin rush,” were terms used to describe situations where the leader felt challenge, and focus, where people were working together and accomplishing things. For instance, for one leader, initiating a major new project was exciting and included some stress, but good stress. For another, the “synergy of bringing important people together” in a “meeting of the minds” led to “satisfaction, togetherness, feeling included and letting go of control” associated with great “relief” at having learned to share responsibility and credit with others. A third leader reported that in collaborative problem-solving, “finding the way through” caused “joy, validation and satisfaction.”

SUPPORT

Leaders also needed the emotional support of validation. They felt “affirmed, sustained, sheltered and liberated” by sharing responsibility and credit as facilitator of a committee. Shared decision making and authentic collaboration also evoked these kinds of feelings. Being allowed and encouraged to grow as a leader made one woman feel “supported, secure, and able to risk.”

BEING KNOWN

Sharing an important update with subordinates and being appreciated in the feedback led to feelings of “adrenalin rush, excited, supported, known.” While after being emotionally candid about feelings associated with a conflict of interest as a committee member, one leader felt “relief, affirmed, seen, caring, happy and real.” Showing her real feelings caused one leader to receive feedback that made her feel “genuine, proud and happy.” When “truly collaborating” several of these leaders enjoyed feeling “connected.”
SELF-AFFIRMATION

The leader’s self is challenged in the line of work and when his/her values, capacities, and abilities are sufficient to accomplish a difficult task it is, not surprisingly, an occasion of affirmation. Positive emotions were associated here. Affirming her values in the balance between justice and care was helpful in an altercation with an extremely pushy parent. The successful interaction boosted this female vice principal’s confidence.

Negative emotions

In this section the negative emotions and the kinds of situations associated with them are summarized.

DISEMPowerMENT

Leaders who felt pressure to succeed but not the support or empowered autonomy to accomplish their objectives found the leadership role emotionally difficult. They were “overwhelmed, insecure, questioning, discouraged, fearful, anxious” and experienced a sense of “loss of control.” A leader who, believing she must be perfect and that she should have total responsibility and control over her subordinates’ success, characterized these as times of “anxiety and fear.” Later, when she learned to share responsibility and success with others, to empower them, she reported feeling much “relief,” and could “relax and enjoy the process.” These leaders reported feeling “resentment and frustration” when being controlled and limited “from above.” They suffered for lack of their own empowerment and suffered when they failed to empower others and share the burden and the glory.

THREATENED SELF

A critical, threatening and limiting boss was described as the provocation for feeling “insecure, anger, resentment, nervousness, hesitant.”

CONTROL AND EMOTIONAL DISPLAY

A defiant aggressive accusatory parent who was very upset confronted and insulted this leader causing “anger, frustration and hurt.” She learned not to let the attacker know how much she was affected in order to retain power and control. Becoming “emotionally shut down” was the answer for this leader, learning to take control of an emotionally charged situation by refusing to participate. In other words “this interview is over.” One leader’s worst memory of an unpleasant emotional experience was a loss of control and subsequent embarrassment about having engaged in a yelling match with a student. She never did this again.
IT’S A DIRTY JOB …

Sometimes the work itself was responsible for creating the emotionally unpleasant situation. One leader was required to serve on a committee to help eliminate some of the jobs of her subordinates. She felt deeply conflicted, and great “sadness, resistance and worry.” A vice principal, finding that her principal was embezzling, had to turn him in. She felt “fearful, grief, sorrow, and sadness.”* Having empathized with her well respected boss and found it very hard to do the dirty work of turning him in. However, in the process, their superintendent began to accuse her of impropriety, as if she had turned her boss in as a kind of lover’s spat. Wrongfully accused, her empathy for his plight was instantly eclipsed* by “anger, defensive, aggressive” feelings.

DISILLUSIONMENT WITH THE SYSTEM

The unpleasant emotions experienced by finding the politics of the system diluting the outcome of a major project led this elementary school principal to decide that the system discourages passion of purpose. This experience caused him long term “frustration and disappointment.” He had lost his faith in trying to make a difference at the board-wide level, and retreated to focus his energies locally in his school.

2. Emotional intrasubjectivity of leaders

All participants described their inner experience of emotionality with a sense of sureness. It seems that although leaders don’t talk about their emotions much, when they do, they expect themselves to know what they feel. Even so, all participants had to struggle to find just the right words, to accurately describe emotions associated with particular experiences. The vocabulary of the emotions was not readily available to them, although they persevered with confidence and determination.

Gender

No participants showed any difficulty remembering times of emotional intensity or the feelings and emotions. However, female participants seemed more at ease with verbalizing and revisiting particular moments and their associated emotionality than the male. This was indicated by the frequency of times probes were used to encourage further depth, and the success of the probes in evoking depth and specificity, as well as the apparent immediacy of the reexperience. Fewer probes led to more depth and specificity in females. Female participants seemed to be able to return to the situation in their mind’s eye and to reexperience the whole situation with their emotions in recall as they were speaking about it. All of the women used many different ‘emotion words,’ going into great detail and striving to sharpen and clarify what it was they were trying to render. All the
females were quite successful at this. The male participant referred to a total of only five different ‘emotion words,’ even though the word “passion” was used repeatedly to refer to most strong feelings related to his work. The reason for his limited choice of vocabulary was not apparent. It would seem that “passion” was one of the emotions he could feel comfortable acknowledging. Some of the others not mentioned may not have been as easy to acknowledge. A highly cognitivist analysis of the role of emotions in his leadership life characterized a clear distinction between his interview and that of all four of the women, who were musing, pausing, intuiting and reexperiencing as if reliving the experiences, and were expressing emotional intensity in the form of volume, gesture, voice tone, facial expression – a kind of replaying for the interviewer of what it was like at the time of the experience being described. In contrast, this immediacy in reexperience was not apparent in the male who exhibited a tendency to shift away from specific details and emotional nuances, preferring instead intellectual speculation and distancing generalizations. It would seem that a safe distance from the scene of the emotional experience was repeatedly sought. This stood in somewhat ironic juxtaposition to his clear commitment to the “passion” he felt about his work and his lamentations about education being an emotionless organizational culture. All of these perceptions by the researcher would be well served by having the time to confirm them with the participants, a design feature that will be built into the larger study.

Age

Three of the participants were over forty. Two were under forty. The under forty participants chose examples which were project-specific to illustrate the pleasant and unpleasant experiences as well as those which epitomized leadership. In contrast, the over forty participants selected process oriented examples, preferring to emphasize for instance, “synergy” and “sharing” and “collaborating” in committees as opposed to particular projects that yielded “satisfaction,” “pride” or personal and professional “affirmation” by their completion. There was some indication that the older, perhaps more mature leader had come to see the meaning of emotions in leadership experiences in terms of larger ongoing processes, a kind of metacognitive and emotional reflective blend.

4. Emotional intersubjectivity of leadership

In addition to references to their own emotions, in a few instances, participants spoke about the emotions of others in conjunction with their work.

Emotions of others impact feelings of affirmation

Carol spoke of the emotional effect of her work on others, bringing them satisfaction and motivation of which they spoke to her, and from which she drew a
sense of being appreciated and supported. Her analysis of a problem boss who
would not select her to participate in committee work despite her repeated offers
was that he was threatened and thus his emotions were preventing him from pro-
viding her with creative and leadership growth opportunities. This caused her
much disappointment and anger. Although she handled it by becoming resigned
to something she said you “can’t control.” What may be of note here is that the
emotional reason inferred by Carol for her boss’s behaviour and attitude was
deemed to be unchangeable, as if the emotions are waters too deep to navigate.
Whether this was the reason for her boss’s way of acting toward her or not,
Carol’s interpretation of his emotional predisposition toward her made this for-
bidden territory, something she might just as well accept as unchangeable.
Oddly enough, the emotions are highly changeable, in fact. Personal interactions
can quickly change perceptions and feelings we have about each other. Yet this
was territory Carol chose not even to contemplate exploring. It would seem that
the exploration of emotional territory is well overdue for leaders.

 emotional display of others leads to detachment

Sue used the words “desperate” and “distraught” to describe her boss when he
was caught juggling the books. She felt the “loneliness of this man” and
described her associated feelings of “compassion, grief and incredible sadness.”
She also described students’ fathers who try to take control with “power” and
“anger” and her own response of simply “shutting it down” and “refusing to be
intimidated.” Mothers, on the other hand, would cry in desperation in her office,
and she found it was important to distance herself from their feelings in order to
keep a “balance of justice and care.” Thus emotional detachment is perceived as
an essential part of leadership, for maintaining control and power.

Leader’s emotional responses to perceptions about others’ emotions and lack
thereof, shape leaders’ behaviours and attitudes. Leaders are human!

John referred to the “hostility, defensiveness” and “lack of passion” in
others as sources of great “frustration” to him. John had withdrawn from the
larger board level forum as a result of his feelings about some of these experi-
ences which were draining his energy with no observable reward. The leader’s
emotional response to the feelings of others is a distinguishing feature of
her/his leadership style. Blase and Anderson (1995, p.133) refer to facilitative
leadership styles as simply supporting teacher autonomy and professionaliza-
tion. In contrast, democratic/empowering styles go further, to achieve a sup-
portive environment for critique and voice, a kind of emancipatory discourse. It
would seem that for John, an elementary principal, the emotional feedback of
others was highly influential, having caused him to withdraw. Clearly emo-
tional intersubjectivity has a bearing on the availability to the organization of
individual voice for critique. Shared emotional understanding in leaders war-
rants further research, especially in light of its powerful relationship to capacity
for change.
Discussion: How do leaders experience, express, reflect upon and understand the emotionality of their work?

Emerging patterns in the data

What are leaders’ inner experiences of emotion as associated with their work: intrasubjective emotionality

1. Passion and peril: Leadership is a matter of mixed emotions

The passion and excitement of being able to realize the opportunity and potential for growth are sustaining and inspiring to leaders. However, perils accompany passions.

- Passion of purpose and determination are key to providing the emotional drive and force necessary to lead even when you are the only one who can see the goal line.

Joan characterized some of the emotional aspects of leadership:

... things I was passionate about because I saw ... there was an opportunity and I was excited by the opportunity or the thought of growth and being able to make that happen ... I wouldn’t think excitement was the whole thing. Determination, I don’ know if that’s an emotion ... Determination helped me go through the emotional fluctuations, because sometimes, sometimes you’d be excited and energized by the way it was going and other times you’d be overwhelmed because you’d wonder, why am I taking this battle on when no one else has?

- Sustaining passion is often intertwined with troubling anxiety associated with vulnerability and need for approval and success.

Carol referred to these mixed emotions:

adrenalin ... kind of like there was a lot of anxiety. They’re kind of mixed though. It’s like a big ... Well it’s kind of all intertwined ... it’s one day feeling excitement about it and thinking, great I can do something about it, and the next day feeling sort of anxiety you know and also feeling in the organization that there’s some conflict there, so it’s also saying I’m sticking my neck out here and even in terms of a supervisor maybe not appreciating me going for that, so there’s mixed feelings.
EMOTIONS AND GENDER

• The passion of purpose in the leader may exceed that of others in the organization creating an emotional dissonance between the individual leader and her/his environment.

John spoke fervently of his passion as the driving force in his work and his sense of frustration at the lack of passion in others.

I’m passionate about what I do in my profession and I have, I guess, I feel I have a high degree of integrity about my work. And in many respects I guess the organization and some of the expectations of the organization either conflicts with my professional intensity or my integrity about my work, and that stuff may have conflicts and certainly it’s a conflict between my passion for my work and what I see as a lack of intensity in my, in many of my colleagues and in the organization itself as it expresses itself as an organization or as a culture of the organization.

2. Control of self and others and learning to share responsibility

Control of self and others and learning to let go of control present challenges to the leader.

• The handling of the fear of loss of control can be a significant part of the emotional experience of a leader. It is illustrative of the leader’s emotional coping strategies and indicative of the style of leadership ‘in use.’

John describes her feelings associated with the sense of loss of control.

Who says that what I came up with is the right way and what happens if it fails? . . . [I feel] insecure, but probably messy. You don’t have any control over where you’re going to go even though you’re taking everybody there. Sort of like going on a bus trip but not remembering to get enough gas, so you’re not sure if you’re going to make it. That kind of feeling, so it can be a little intimidating.

Linda, who considers herself an empowering leader, offers her working knowledge of emotions and the control-empowerment continuum:

It’s such a downward spiral because the more you control and the less you share, the less people support and feel they have any ownership, and so then you become more and more isolated. It’s hell I’m sure. You see if you must have control and people withdraw their support over time because you don’t trust and give them control, it’s a spiral . . . I don’t know if anybody breaks free of it is that’s their style. I learned the
power of collaboration and empowerment of others by sharing in the responsibility.

Sue shares her beliefs about emotional control and leadership:

I personally have found that it is important to control emotions, that the few exceptions when I have become very very angry with a student, angry with a parent, angry with a faculty member, that things are said that are not in the best interests of anyone, that it’s better to stay rational. That to be able to express your emotions of frustration at times through tears, or sadness, is okay, but to feel anger is one thing but to express it, I question the appropriateness of it, and have not found it helpful.

Managing others’ emotions is seen as essential to leadership

Sue illustrates her way of keeping control of a situation by managing her emotions and those of others:

I had a parent who did the attack. I was hurt. I was visibly hurt. I let this person have the power to hurt me. With experience, if a person is going to take that tack, is going to attack me personally, I will shut it down: “I don’t think this is a healthy conversation. I am not going down that road with you.” . . . I do not have to carry on a conversation with a parent just because they’ve come through the door.

Sue offers perceptions about attempts at emotional control taking by others:

Many Moms in my office in tears, and feeling very desperate about what the next step is with their children. Fathers are interesting. With more fathers than moms I’ve dealt with anger, and they do a power anger thing, thinking that I’ll intimidate her and she’ll back down, and I don’t.

Sue on control and connectedness:

It was very important for me to work with others and yet be in control. So connected with others and yet in charge of my own . . .

The importance of a leader being given sufficient support and autonomy by superiors - feeling safe in order to take risks.

Sue:

I worked with a principal at the time who said “make this thing fly.”
You know carte blanche. So it was important to establish myself as a leader within the subject area . . . Wonderfully supportive people that I worked with, within the school, very professional staff, did more than any other staff that I have worked with . . . You felt very safe. You could take risks. They’d do anything for you.

Linda:

I think frustration is when you’re dealing with authority that is controlling, and uh there’s only one way to do things and so whatever you do is either right or wrong, and it’s frustrating when you don’t know the whole agenda and you only see one little piece of it.

- Display rules: playing by them exemplifies ‘appropriate leadership demeanour’.

Most participants demonstrated fairly traditional views of emotional display rules (emotional self-control) in leadership, with some notable exceptions. Emotion is, regrettably say some participants, something to control and keep out of the way. John shares concerns about his own display of passion and his observation that this can become problematic:

 Often [I am] responded to by the fact that I’m being too personally aggressive about the issues and interpersonally I’m being too forward with people sometimes and yet I see and view it very much as simply expressing my issues with passion and rather than the issues becoming the focus of the concern or the context, it becomes personalized that it’s myself that is responded to or attacked or whichever, not the issues that I raised.

John on emotions and conflict resolution: feel but don’t show emotions.

Well, conflict resolution I think is something, that requires that the person who is mediating the conflict resolution be very unemotional. . . . I’m a firm believer in removing emotions from behaviour management and conflict management. It’s usual that I remain calm and . . . I try to remain very neutral and objective about the situation and assist in the process while calming people down is involving a process of just timing out too . . . I already developed a sense of self control and that’s an internal thing as well.

Asked if too much emotional control might create a gap in emotional authenticity and be perceived to always give him the upper hand in terms of the power dynamic, John responded

Yeah but . . . Yeah.
FEELING LIKE A LEADER

Carol, on the importance of openly displaying emotions, emotional authenticity as helpful to her as a leader:

When I’ve shown that, sharing when I’m happy; I genuinely cried; I’ve shown that I’ve cared by sharing my own personal incident . . . I took the time to listen and share that I was there emotionally. It wasn’t just words, because those are the kinds of things that let people see that you are real.

Sue on display of anger and joy:

I think it’s okay to verbalize. It’s how it’s expressed is that “I feel angry when you do this” is very different from losing it and speaking out of anger. Sharing a student’s joy with hugs is okay.

3. Internal emotional management system is important to sustaining confidence and commitment.

Managing emotions means generating certain emotions and restraining others.

• True grit and determination epitomize leadership.

Joan’s image of the emotional power of determination:

It’s like you’re going on a marathon or a long run. You know how you sort of get that second wind; you don’t know where it comes from but it’s going to get you there. I don’t know what emotion that would be . . . part of it would be past experience, part of it is just determination that if you keep running, if you keep going you’re going to get somewhere.

• Depersonalizing and detaching are favored techniques.

Linda, describing her system for problem solving in an emotionally challenging situation – isolating the issues and removing the personal element.

Okay, so I’m confronting a director with a staff member that is sabotaging an assignment and it normally wouldn’t be my role to discuss with [her] staff that are not doing their job. But in this particular role, other agencies around the table saw it as my role as a leader of this group to carry this forward. I was the leader of the group. [animated, emphatic] So! What I had to do was this. I had to isolate the issue, remove it from the person, describe the situation, and then let the director do what she had to do.
Reframe the perspective to separate issues from people and emotions from cognition.

Linda, having felt frustrated and somewhat anxious about how to deal with the situation, reframed her perspective, diffusing the emotional intensity of it. She did this by considering the problem person who was “dropping bombs” on her meetings, “sabotaging the agenda” as follows:

The real issue was that he didn’t understand the broader picture and so he would focus on the little bit that he could that had a relationship to him.

*Repress, deny or remove emotions.*

John tells of learning to ‘remove’ his emotions as an internal coping device:

I arrived at the idea that I had to remove my emotions from my work and my passion for change from my work because the emotional energy I was expending was enormous and was affecting me in terms of draining me emotionally and it was also having a very negative and reactive result in terms of the kids. . . . so I became a lot more controlled in terms of managing my emotions better and stated dealing with kids more neutrally and objectively.

*Pragmatism is a way of understanding human experience to manage the emotional power of disappointment over a thwarted intention or preempted passion.*

John shares his formula for internal management of otherwise debilitating disappointment.

[Pragmatism] is just a way of understanding human experience. I think human experience is contextual. I think human emotions are contextual. So in terms of contextualizing your understanding of life I think pragmatism is one aspect of understanding life experience . . . a good balance for passion.

4. Emotional management systems external to the leader contribute to the emotional quality of organizational life

The information withholding leader causes frustration while the sharing leader reduces frustration in subordinates and creates a support system for herself.
FEELING LIKE A LEADER

• Sharing the way you see and feel about things creates emotional as well as rational understanding.

Linda’s story:

If I have frustration it’s with the people I work for. Once you understand the big picture then it’s not so frustrating . . . if everybody has a piece of it then it will work.

Carol speaks of feeling supported by her subordinates for having shared her emotional conflicts with them.

What also helped me was hearing from some of them, the fact that we know why you’re on the committee and we know that you may not be able to change the decision and I think that was comforting and I felt some relief . . . They said we know that you’re going to do the right thing, and that was reaffirming for me and I just felt like whew. I just felt good about that.

• Significant others

Joan speaks of a personal relationship beyond the organization as vital to her emotional well being within the organization.

I can probably get three quarters of the way through it but probably only with my spouse, turn to him to get the rest of the way. I can do it on my own determination because I haven’t always had him around but it’s easier. It helps you reflect and see things more objectively.

5. Emotional conflict of interest

Intrinsic conflicts of emotional interest characterize a central challenge for the creative transformational leader. Dissonance in selves and relationships to others creates discomfort and makes heavy demands on the leader.

• Reconciling conflicting personal, professional and organizational needs places heavy emotional demands on the leader

Carol:

I just felt it’s one thing if you’re responsible for your own actions and you know what the outcome can be. But when you have the burden of others as well and knowing that some of them are single parents and they’ve got all this anxiety and they’ve lost their job, you just feel all
that and it’s very hard to separate caring for them as individuals and also realizing how much everyone cared about their job.

• Working beyond the comfort zone: –out of my jurisdiction, pushing the envelop –is an emotionally challenging, often thankless part of leadership, requiring creativity and courage.

Linda speaks of working beyond her mandate as creating emotional discomfort, but recognizes this is the stuff of real leadership.

It was uncomfortable because I wasn’t . . . I was clear on what my leadership was within the group but this was outside of the group, and I had a different relationship outside of the group.

John, on challenging the status quo: I tend to be somebody who is passionate and so I tend to challenge the status quo and challenge the system to improve itself . . .

• Emotionless organizational culture is dysfunctional to the individual and to the organization itself.

John, on the conflict between the norms of emotion in organizational culture and personal and professional intensity/passion.

I think that the organizational culture, personally, I feel it is very repressive, and it is very repressive to the honest expression of emotions, whether it is personal emotions or professional emotions about issues that we’re involved in education. And as a result, you have a very clinical or scientific model of organizational management that still persists in school systems and in education and it’s a fairly emotionless model. So people with passion or with drive and excitement and interest for projects or ideas are not encouraged or supported or reciprocated at any level of the organization. And I think that’s a big roadblock to the passion of education and achieving goals in education. The organization itself operates in a way that represses or suppresses emotion in our work and I think that’s a really negative aspect of our work and I think that’s really a negative aspect of organizational culture.

Conclusions: theoretical implications

Emotional intrasubjectivity and the self

Among the leaders interviewed, clearly the protection of the self from emotional hurt which might undermine confidence, was of paramount importance. Emotional
well being was associated with the ability to do the job even when it was a dis-
tasteful task. This emotional well being was fostered by sharing and collaboration.
In contrast, leadership styles that were controlling and perfectionistic were associ-
ated with high anxiety, fear and reticence to risk. The evolution toward letting go
and sharing responsibility and credit was described as a personal awakening
accompanied by satisfaction and relief. Being known, acknowledged, seen, able to
be real, feeling included, understood and accepted were all important to the self of
these leaders. Self-control was central to each leader’s story of the nature of the
job. Essential to the nature of leadership work, were the ability not to feel emo-
tions or ‘emotional’ and certainly the ability to avoid showing them. This theme
was held in common by all participants. Some spoke matter-of-factly about this as
a necessity, while others lamented the need to deny or repress emotions. Clearly
these leaders’ work requires the authentic emotional self to be heavily guarded and
carefully hidden at most times. The need to control others, something that is not
possible, led to feelings of insecurity and anxiety. Living with ambiguity was
threatening to the self of the leader if the self was controlling and perfectionistic.
The antidote seemed to be a distributed leadership and collaborative synergy
enjoyed in group projects. Learning not to take things personally was a first step in
effective problem solving and conflict resolution for these leaders. This was a
demotionalizing process, requiring a kind of rational overdrive. The only male
participant spoke adamantly about the emotionless organizational culture as dys-
functional to change and achieving goals in education. This, he offered, was a
function of the repressive culture’s effect on the individual’s self.

Intersubjectivity

Authentic collaboration was a successful anxiety reducer and optimizing strat-
 egy. A recurring motif among the stories, shared emotional understanding,
achieved through communicating openly, held distinctive, highly valued, and
intensely recalled pleasure for these leaders. Assumptions about what others
were feeling were more often made than shared emotional understanding
through communication. A more thorough application of Denzin’s (1984) con-
struct is warranted in further research as the quality of the emotional understand-
ing is strongly associated with some of the most emotionally pleasurable
experiences of these leaders. Distanced, disconnected, misunderstood and unap-
preciated leaders, who did not feel they could do other than theorize about a
superior’s troublesome attitudes and motivations, characterized some of the
most emotionally unpleasant experiences chosen. It would seem that leaders and
led benefit from access to sharing about emotional realities among the indi-
viduals in the organizations. The culture of communication about feelings as
well as thought would support such sharing. The current culture of emotional
repression and control, generally, does not. These leaders chose most often to speak
of interactions with superior or parents as examples of unpleasant interchanges.
They spoke of interactions with peers or subordinates with pleasure.
**Gender**

Distinctions between the one male and the collective of four females did emerge, that suggested a stronger capacity to use language and reexperience the emotions of the self and others in recall in the women. It was very difficult to get the one male to speak about any particular occasion, person, event or feeling in specific detail. Rather, there was a preference for generalizations about his passion for his work and some frustrations and disillusionment about the system. A larger sample and a more extensive exploration of the apparent gender distinctions and a cooperative inquiry into the underlying causes, that may or may not be gender related, is warranted in order to make any theoretical application of these findings. However, the accessibility through recall of these women was consistent throughout the sample, supporting findings of Shakeshaft and Gilligan about the distinctive experience of women. It may or may not be that the emotionality of experience is inherently different for men and women at the time. Rather, differences may lie in assimilation, memory, recall, or articulation of remembered emotionality of experience.

The women spoke predominantly about connections and associations with particular others in various contexts and situations. The one male spoke in generalities about feeling different and disconnected. This would concur with Gilligan’s construct of the feminine paradigm.

**Micropolitics**

To describe leadership styles and use of power, one may use Ball’s “Four Styles” of leadership: Interpersonal, Managerial, Political-adversarial and Political-authoritarian (1987, p.87); or Blase and Blase’s four quadrants measuring leadership style as relatively Open or Closed and relatively Transactional or Transformative (1995, p.18); or Leithwood’s “Instructional, Transformational, Moral, Participative, Managerial and Contingent” (1999, in press p. 7). In any case, the emotions of leadership are present. Clearly the emotions caused by having a leader exercise ‘power over’ or even ‘power through’ you, are not as closely shared and mutual as ‘power with.’ Effective involved teachers work in regimes of every variety. They report feeling intensely unpleasant emotion states in association with adversarial authoritarian styles (Blase and Anderson, 1995, pp 40–41). However, the emotions of the leaders themselves, associated with their preferred leadership styles are just beginning to emerge. Consistent with Blase and Blase (1997) these leaders felt anxious and afraid at losing control, until they developed a new view of shared responsibility. This reframing of the risk as borne by all seemed to characterize a significant source of comfort and enjoyment for these leaders. Being highly controlling was anxiety-inducing for the leader, complementing what we already know about the emotional effects of these leadership regimes on teachers. One reason these styles persist can be inferred from the unanimous acceptance of the need to heavily mask emotions in
order to retain power and control when threatened. This pseudo rationality, the stock-in-trade of the experienced traditional leader is something that would have to be unlearned in order to begin to redefine leadership. As Diamond argues

The contribution of mastery in communications to organizational change may rest on the development of linguistic and interpersonal competence for sending and receiving affective messages. Communication of feelings rooted in, but not exclusive to, organizational experience presents the opportunity to alter activities and relationships that cause errors, distortions, demoralization, and ineffectiveness at work. The aptitude for transmitting affective messages within institutions and among participants is essential to organizational change and long-term effectiveness.

(1993, p.118)

Among the participants in this study, while emotional authenticity was special and pleasant, it was rare. In the educational setting, the freedom to communicate openly at work about their own emotions had been all but eliminated, replaced by a repertoire of more emotionally managed techniques. This was a matter of reluctant resignation for some and lamentation for others, but ultimately it was accepted by all participants as the way power and control is maintained in leadership. Whether in leadership it is better to be, or not to be this way, remains a question for another day and another research project.

References


FEELING LIKE A LEADER

This article, the first empirical study of its kind, presents findings from a larger qualitative study of teacher perspectives of principal mistreatment. A grounded theory method was used to study a sample of 50 U.S. teachers who believed they were subjected to long-term mistreatment from school principals. The authors briefly discuss descriptive, conceptual, and theoretical findings about principals’ actions that teachers define as mistreatment. The harmful effects of such mistreatment on teachers psychologically/emotionally and physically/physiologically as well as on classroom instruction and relationships with colleagues are more fully discussed. Implications of study findings are discussed for administrator and teacher preparation, professional educators, and further research.

During the past decade and a half, researchers have produced a strong stream of “bright side” empirical studies in the field of educational administration focusing on the considerable contribution of exemplary school principals to schools in general (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase & Kirby, 2000; Good & Brophy, 1986; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood, Thomlinson, & Genge, 1996; Murphy & Louis, 1994a, 1994b) and teacher development and student learning in particular (e.g., Blase & Blase, 1999; Heck, Larsen, & Marcoulides, 1990; Heck & Maroulides, 1993; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Sheppard, 1996). Notably, this knowledge base provides ample theoretical and empirical evidence that effective principal leadership can have important effects on student learning (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993). Specifically, effective principals develop positive relationships based on mutual trust, respect, openness, support, and understanding (Blase & Blase, 1998, 2001; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001; Lambert et al., 1995; Sergiovanni, 1996; Walton, 1990); develop learning communities of professionals and constituents able to openly communicate, make decisions, solve problems, and resolve conflicts (Schmuck & Runkel,
THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP

1994; Wald & Castleberry, 2000); maintain a collaborative focus on teaching and learning (Fullen, 1997; Joyce & Calhoun, 1996); and encourage teacher reflection, peer coaching, and shared critique and inquiry (Blase & Blase, 1998; Calhoun, 1994; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Schön, 1987). The importance of related leadership skills and corresponding attitudes and values to the development of strong, positive relationships between principals and teachers cannot be overemphasized; indeed, respectful, constructive relationships between principals and teachers are essential for school improvement (Boyer, 1995; Cotton, 2001; Hoachlander, 2001; Schlechty, 1997; Senge, 2000).

In stark contrast, no empirical studies have systematically examined the “dark side” of school leadership, in particular principal mistreatment/abuse of teachers, and the extremely harmful consequences such forms of leadership have on life in schools. This article is based on a larger qualitative study of school principals’ mistreatment/abuse of teachers and the subsequent destructive effects on them, from the perspectives of teachers themselves. It focuses on the effects of principal behavior that teachers perceive as abuse or mistreatment (teachers in our study used both terms synonymously), that is, effects that teachers experienced as seriously harmful over the long run. The principal behaviors teachers defined as abusive are also briefly described. In reporting the findings of our study, we recognize that the principal mistreatment phenomenon may be a function of problematic interactions provoked by both principals and teachers. We also acknowledge that different reference groups have different perspectives on the same problem (Blumer, 1969); in fact, we expect that the perspectives of the purveyors of mistreatment (i.e., principals) differ significantly from the perspectives of the victims of mistreatment (i.e., teachers) (Baumeister, 1996). However, given the degree to which people in public schools routinely suppress conflict (a point we discuss below), it is not possible to obtain “objective” measures of the mistreatment problem.

To date, two long-standing avenues of research in education (i.e., teacher stress studies and micropolitical studies of the school principal-teacher relationship) have produced only glimpses of how principals mistreat teachers. A number of stress studies have linked elements of principals’ leadership style and behavior (e.g., nonsupport, assertiveness) to significant stress and burnout in teachers (Adams, 1988; Barnette, 1990; Blase, 1984; Blase, Strathe, & Dedrick, 1986; Diehl, 1993; Dunham, 1984; Dworkin, Haney, Dworkin, & Telschow, 1990). Micropolitical studies have yielded richer descriptions of some aspects of principal mistreatment; these studies describe, among other things, principal favoritism with regard to appointments, promotions, enforcement of rules, evaluation, and recognition and rewards (Blase, 1988). Other micropolitical studies have examined principal behaviors including sanctions, harassment, lack of accessibility, and manipulation as well as teachers’ response to such behaviors (Ball, 1987, Blase, 1990, 1991; Blase & Anderson, 1995). Taken together, these two areas of research provide provocative clues to the principal mistreatment problem and its destructive outcomes for teachers; however, such studies
are few in number and have generated only limited understandings of the range of abusive principal behaviors; how such behaviors interact to form a “pattern” of abuse in a given situation; and the damaging effects such behaviors have on teachers, teaching, and schools.

Undoubtedly, the failure of both academic and professional educators to study principal mistreatment of teachers, applying the same rigorous research protocols we use to investigate other educational problems, has resulted in incomplete, naïve, and even false understandings of how some, perhaps a noteworthy percentage of, school leaders and teachers experience their work (Hodgkinson, 1991). Moreover, this failure allows mistreatment to continue without challenge and without hope of improvement (Keashly, Trott, & MacLean, 1994; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). As a first step, this study provides an inductively derived knowledge base and initiates an area of inquiry essential to developing a constructive approach to a deeply disturbing problem in American public education.

**Workplace abuse: a conceptual, theoretical, and empirical review**

**Terms and constructs**

Internationally, systematic research on the problem of workplace abuse, notably nonphysical forms of abuse, has increased significantly during the past two decades in countries such as Sweden, Norway, Germany, Austria, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Several of these countries have also enacted legislation against workplace abuse, and private organizations have been created to help victims of abuse (Björkvist, Österman, & Hjelt-Bäck, 1994; Davenport, Schwartz, & Elliott, 1999; Keashly, 1998; Namie & Namie, 2000). For most of this same period, organizational scholars in the United States have largely ignored the problem of work abuse. In recent years, however, scholars have begun to address the problem; indeed, the emerging national literature suggests that workplace abuse may lead to serious deleterious consequences for both employees and organizations (Baron & Neuman, 1996; Davenport et al., 1999; Hornstein et al., 1995; Keashly, 1998; Keashly et al., 1994).

In addition, organizational scholars have developed a variety of empirically
grounded constructs to define the workplace mistreatment/abuse phenomenon.
To illustrate,

- Andersson and Pearson (1999) conceptualized *workplace incivility* as “low-
intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in vi-o-
lation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are
characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for
others” (p. 457).
- The construct of *mobbing* (or psychical terror), the most common term used
in Europe, refers to “hostile and unethical communication that is directed in
a systematic way by one or a number of persons toward one individual. . . .
These actions take place often . . . and over a long period (at least six
months) and, because of this frequency and duration, result in considerable
psychic, psychosomatic, and social misery” (Leymann, 1990, p. 120).
Mobbing consists of humiliating, intimidating, and abusive communication,
committed directly or indirectly, to confuse, discredit, intimidate, and
isolate an individual, to force the individual into submission or out of the
workplace (Davenport et al., 1999).
- Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) defined *bullying*, a term commonly used
in the United States and Europe, as “harassment, badgering, niggling, freezing
out, offending someone . . . repeatedly over a period of time, and the person
confronted . . . [has] difficulties defending him/herself. It is not bullying if
two parties of approximately equal strength are in conflict or the incident is
an isolated event” (p. 191).
- Ashforth (1994) developed a measure of tyrannical behavior that consists of
six dimensions. He defined a *petty tyrant* as “an individual who lords his or
her power over others . . . , acts in an arbitrary and self-aggrandizing manner,
belittles subordinates, evidences lack of consideration, forces conflict reso-
lution, discourages initiative, and utilizes noncontingent punishment” (p.
772).
- *Abusive disrespect*, a concept developed by Hornstein et al. (1995), is made
up of eight behavioral dimensions of disrespectful supervisory behavior and
specifically refers to “transgressions” by bosses that include deceit (i.e.,
lying), constraint (i.e., controlling subordinates’ actions outside of work),
coercion (i.e., threatening excessive or inappropriate harm), selfishness (i.e.,
blaming and scapegoating subordinates), inequity (i.e., favoritism), cruelty
(i.e., harming subordinates through name calling, personal attacks, disre-
gard), disregard (i.e., being unfair and unkind, displaying an obvious lack of
consideration), and deification (i.e., conduct that communicates a “master-
 servant” relationship to subordinates).

From a comprehensive review of the workplace mistreatment/abuse liter-
ature, Keashly (1998) developed the concept of *emotional abuse* that subsumes
elements of the constructs defined above. Emotional abuse emphasizes the “hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors . . . directed at gaining compliance from others” (p. 85). Keashly identified emotional abuse with the following: a pattern of abuse (not a single event), behaviors that are unwanted by the target, behaviors that violate norms for appropriate conduct or an individual’s rights, behaviors that are intended to harm the target (as perceived by the target), behaviors that result in harm to the target, and power differences between the abuser and the target of abuse.

In addition, empirical research has generated a handful of models of mistreatment in the work setting. Baron and Neuman (1996) constructed the three-factor model of workplace aggression, which includes expressions of hostility, obstructionism, and overt aggression. Expressions of hostility include verbal and symbolic behaviors such as facial expressions, gestures, staring, dirty looks, silent treatment, ridicule, unfair evaluations, and gossip. Obstructionism refers to actions that are often passive aggressive in nature, such as withholding a resource or behavior. Some examples are not returning phone calls, refusing to provide needed resources or equipment, and failing to warn an individual of imminent danger. Overt aggression, the third factor, refers to threats or acts of physical violence and theft or destruction of an individual’s work equipment.

Ryan and Oestreich (1991) produced a model of abrasive (i.e., less harmful) and abusive (i.e., more harmful) categories of boss behavior, with behaviors (listed from less to more harmful) including silence, glaring eye contact, abruptness, snubbing or ignoring, insults, blaming, discrediting and discounting, controlling others aggressively, making threats about the job, yelling and shouting, making angry outbursts, and threatening physical harm. Ryan and Oestreich contended that any behavior may have greater impact on individuals depending on timing, place of occurrence, and level of repetition.

**Theoretical work**

Theoretical work in the general area of workplace mistreatment/abuse is very limited. Existing theories discuss the causes and consequences of mistreatment as well as relationships among personal factors (e.g., Type A behavior pattern, hostile attributional bias), interpersonal factors (e.g., provocation, frustrating events), and environmental (i.e., situational) factors (e.g., restructuring, organizational culture) (e.g., Hoel, Rayner, & Cooper, 1999; Neuman & Baron, 1998). Andersson and Pearson’s (1999) theoretical ideas are particularly useful in understanding how aggression could evolve between individuals in nonhierarchical relationships in organizational contexts.

In addition to general theories of workplace mistreatment/abuse, several scholars have specifically developed theories of boss abuse of subordinates. Hornstein et al. (1995) constructed a theory of supervisory disrespect that draws heavily on symbolic interaction, organizational justice, and the psychological and stress literature. These authors argue that people’s feelings of both self-
worth and security are affected by how respectfully others treat them; and feelings of self-worth and security, in turn, affect one's mental health and well-being. Hornstein et al. established validity and reliability for the Boss Behavior Questionnaire (BBQ), which uses measurable constructs of respect and disrespect to examine eight domains of supervisory disrespectful behavior described above. Among other things, these researchers differentiated between a “demanding boss,” that is, a boss who is rigorously task-oriented (i.e., focused on production), and a disrespectful boss. As well, Hornstein et al. demonstrated that disrespectful behavior is always inappropriate, regardless of conceivable circumstances that exist in organizations, because it violates a person’s dignity and generates loss of self-esteem and generalized distress (i.e., anxiety and depression).

Ashforth (1994) developed a model of the antecedents and effects of tyranny on subordinates. He contended that petty tyranny is an interaction between superordinates’ predispositions (i.e., beliefs about organizations, subordinates, and self and preferences for action) and situational facilitators (i.e., institutionalized values and norms, power, and stressors). Ashforth argued that tyrannical management causes low leader endorsement and high frustration, stress, and resistance; high helplessness and work alienation; low self-esteem and poor work performance; and low work unit cohesiveness. He emphasized that such affects could trigger a vicious circle that sustains the tyrannical behavior. For example, the exercise of power may induce a manager to do the following: attribute subordinates’ success to himself or herself, develop an inflated sense of self-worth, create greater psychological distance from subordinates, and view subordinates as objects of manipulation (Kipnis, 1972). Likewise, subordinates’ responses to tyrannical behavior, such as helplessness and low commitment, may contribute to managers’ already negative stereotypes toward subordinates (e.g., lazy, untrustworthy), which further justifies coercion. To the extent that such tyrannical behaviors reduce leader endorsement and incite resistance, the vicious circle becomes complete. Ashforth explained that this is why managers may persist with an ineffective management style, supported by defensive attributions and self-fulfilling attitudes and behaviors. They may not recognize the role their attitudes play in the genesis of the very behaviors they are presently trying to prevent. Also, tyrannical behavior may produce short-term subordinate compliance, which may seduce a manager to discount longer term, more serious disruptive effects of tyrannical behavior. Ashforth noted that this vicious circle results in the “tyrant’s paradox” (p. 771)—the means used to gain control undermine the viability of that control.

Studies of workplace mistreatment/abuse

Studies disclose a wide range of nonverbal and verbal/behavioral forms of workplace abuse. To illustrate, nonverbal behaviors include aggressive eye contact (e.g., staring, “dirty looks,” snubbing or ignoring, “the silent treatment”) and
physical gestures (e.g., violations of physical space, finger pointing, slamming objects, and throwing objects). Some examples of verbal behaviors are sexual harassment, angry outbursts, yelling and screaming, put-downs, lying, public humiliation, threats of job loss, physical harm, name calling, excessive or unfounded criticism of work abilities or personal life, unreasonable job demands, stealing credit for another’s work, blaming, exclusion or isolation, initiating malicious rumors and gossip, withholding resources or obstructing opportunities, favoritism, dismissing an individual’s feelings or thoughts, unfriendly behavior, not returning phone calls, and behavior that implies a master-servant relationship (Björkvist et al., 1994; Davenport et al., 1999; Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Neuman & Baron, 1998, Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991).

Furthermore, according to the research, abuse in the workplace is associated with a host of serious adverse effects on an individual’s physical well-being, psychological/emotional well-being, work performance, and social relationships. Examples of effects on physical well-being include sleep disorders (e.g., nightmares or insufficient rest), headaches, backaches, fatigue/exhaustion, illness, hyperactivity, weight changes (e.g., significant increases or decreases), irritable bowel syndrome, heart arrhythmia, skin changes, ulcers, substance abuse (first-time use), and suicide. Some psychological/emotional effects of abusive workplace behavior are depression, anger, rage, helplessness, powerlessness, cynicism and distrust, self-doubt, guilt, shame, embarrassment, insecurity, disillusionment, poor concentration, lowered self-esteem, aggression or revenge, hypervigilance, panic attacks, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Effects on work performance include reductions in job effort, extra effort, commitment, and satisfaction and morale plus increases in absenteeism, turnover, and attrition. Social effects noted in the literature are isolation and loss of friendships (Björkvist et al., 1994; Davenport et al., 1999; Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Northwestern National Life Insurance Company [NNLI], 1993; Pearson, 2000; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991).

Examination of the research on abusive bosses (versus coworker abuse, for example) has revealed a number of disturbing findings. First, abusive conduct by bosses is commonplace in a wide range of both profit and nonprofit organizational settings. Second, studies indicate that bosses (e.g., superiors, managers) are more frequently workplace abusers rather than an individual’s coworkers; in various studies, bosses have been identified as engaging in abusive conduct toward subordinates between 54% of the time and 90% of the time (Björkvist et al., 1994; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; NNLI, 1993; Pearson, 2000; Rayner, 1998). Several scholars have persuasively argued that they expect abusive conduct by superiors to increase given organizational changes such as the
growth in diversity, a decline in unionization (Yamada, 2000), and increases in electronic monitoring (Hornstein, 1996).

Third, studies of workplace mistreatment have demonstrated that male and female bosses are equally likely to engage in abusive conduct (Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Keashly et al., 1994), although abusive male bosses tend to use explosive behaviors more frequently than female bosses (e.g., Harlos & Pinder, 2000). In addition, both men and women are victimized by such behavior; however, men are abused primarily by men, and women are abused by both men and women (Campaign Against Workplace Bullying [CAWB], 2000; Leymann, 1990). Research has also demonstrated that women experience significantly more harassment than men (Björkvist et al., 1994; CAWB, 2000). Finally, Keashly et al. (1994) found that gender does not influence a victim’s perception of the degree of abusive behavior.

Fourth, the research on abusive bosses indicates that victims of this type of abuse seldom have viable opportunities for recourse. Studies emphasize that because of organizational culture (e.g., a “macho culture”) and off-putting management practices (e.g., a cavalier attitude about abuse, attempts to justify abusive conduct), victims’ complaints about abusive bosses usually result in (a) no action (i.e., no response) from upper-level management/administration and departments of human resources, (b) efforts to protect an abusive boss, and/or (c) reprisals against the victim for registering complaints (Bassman, 1992; Davenport et al., 1999; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly, 1998; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Pearson, 2000; Rayner, 1998).

**Theoretical framework: symbolic interactionism**

Although there is some significant scholarly work on the problem of workplace mistreatment/abuse, there is no conceptual, theoretical, or empirical work on the school principal mistreatment/abuse problem and, in particular, none drawn from the perspectives of victimized teachers themselves. Symbolic interactionism served as the theoretical framework for this study. This perspective on social inquiry rests on three major premises: (a) Individuals act toward things and people on the basis of the meanings that things have for them; (b) the meaning of such things are derived from, or arise out of, the social interaction that individuals have with one another; and (c) these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by individuals to deal with the things and other people they encounter (Blumer, 1969). This theoretical perspective recognizes that although structural factors (e.g., organizational, cultural) influence action, the interpretations and meanings that people attach to such factors account for action. In other words, people’s capacity for reflexivity has more influence on action than structural factors. The symbolic interaction perspective views the individual as a social product who is influenced by others but also maintains distance from others and is able to initiate individual action (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934).
In contrast to some qualitative applications, the Blumer-Mead (1969 and 1934, respectively) perspective on symbolic interactionism emphasizes the examination of human subjectivity. In short, it examines perceptions and meanings that people construct in their social settings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Lofland, 1971; Morse, 1991; Schwandt, 1994; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998; Tesch, 1988). According to Meltzer, Petras, and Reynolds (1975), symbolic interactionists who employ this approach study "what goes on inside the heads of humans" (p. 55). They stated,

Human beings are defined as self-reflective beings. . . . The behavior of men and women is “caused” not so much by forces within themselves [e.g., instincts] . . . or by external forces impinging upon them . . . but [by] what lies in between, a reflective and socially derived interpretation of the internal and external stimuli that are present [p. 2]. . . . Perception functions as a meditative experience for the individual in the relationship between himself/herself and the social environment.

Consistent with the Blumer-Mead (1969, 1934) approach, this study employed an open-ended theoretical and methodological perspective designed to focus on the meanings teachers constructed from long-term mistreatment/abuse experiences with school principals. The purpose was to create a substantive model of principal mistreatment/abuse behaviors and their effects—that is, an inductively derived model constructed entirely from the empirical world under investigation. Therefore, the model we present contains no concepts from the relevant extant literature and no logical elaboration (Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Research method and procedures

Clearly, the study discussed in this article is extremely sensitive and even incendiary in nature. To actually conduct our study in a variety of school settings, we would normally be required to identify principals responsible for long-standing abusive conduct as well as the teachers they have targeted. However, we assumed that school districts would not grant permission to conduct on-site interviews with teachers victimized by principals and that teachers would not volunteer to participate in a research project of this nature (even if it were authorized) given the potential risks of doing so.

We employed a snowball sampling technique that requires others to recommend teachers who they believe have experienced long-term, significant abuse by a school principal. Snowball sampling techniques are especially useful in grounded theory research that attempts to draw samples from a variety of settings. This technique maximizes variation in the database to generate a large number of categories that describe the phenomenon under study (Bogdan &
Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Therefore, we contacted professors as well as school administrators and teachers for referrals. We explained the nature of our study to referring individuals and asked them to discuss participation in our study with a victimized teacher.

We then contacted (by telephone) teachers who had expressed an interest in participation, explained our study, addressed questions and concerns, discussed our backgrounds, and generally got to know the teacher. Four teachers were excluded from the study, 2 because their abuse was not long term and 2 because the teachers felt that it would be too emotionally trying to discuss the abuse they suffered. Only teachers who had experienced long-term and significant abuse (i.e., 6 months to 9 years) by their school principal were included in our study. In this way, we identified 50 teachers in the United States and Canada who believed they had experienced significant principal mistreatment/abuse.

As expected, teachers were very fearful of possible disclosure; however, several safeguards seemed to alleviate their fears and promote trust and rapport. We explained to teachers that their identities would remain anonymous. Teachers were informed, per our agreement with the Human Subjects Committee at our university, that our entire database (i.e., audiotapes, typed transcripts, official and personal documents, and other related materials) would be destroyed upon completion of our analysis. We also indicated that all identifiers (including teachers’ gender and grade level) would be redacted from any materials used in any presentation of our findings. This, of course, required using pseudonyms for the names of people and places. Finally, we shared our general research questions and asked teachers to think about their abuse experience in preparation for the next interview.

As noted, trust and rapport are essential to conducting successful interviews with research participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Fontana & Frey, 2000, Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Because we were primarily using telephone interviews, we expected that achieving both rapport and trust would be uniquely challenging. Surprisingly, this was not the case; in fact, teachers spoke quite freely and in detail about their abuse experiences, despite the deeply disturbing nature of their experiences. (In about 25% of our interviews, teachers were so emotionally overcome during the retelling of their experiences that the interview had to be stopped briefly or rescheduled.)

Discussions with participants indicated that several factors account for the rapport and trust developed. These factors extend beyond our promises of anonymity and destruction of raw data: By asking meaningful questions, listening attentively, expressing our deep-felt empathy for their suffering, and in general, treating participants respectfully, we were able to gain their trust and thus openness about their experiences. Indeed, we found that “to learn about people, we must remember to treat them as people, and they will uncover their lives to us” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 374).

Three additional factors enhanced teachers’ trust and willingness to share
their experiences. First, our initial contact occurred through a trusted friend or colleague or both. Second, and perhaps most important, our study held special significance for teachers who participated; as painful as the interviews were, they strongly believed that the problem of principal mistreatment should be made public and, as one put it, “This study might crack open the door of hope and eventually change the world of education.” Third, teachers indicated that telephone interviews, conducted in the safety of their homes over an extended period of time, added to their sense of comfort, security, and trust in the researchers.

In total, 50 teachers participated in our study over a 1½-year time period. The sample consisted of male ($n = 5$) and female ($n = 45$) teachers from rural ($n = 14$), suburban ($n = 25$), and urban ($n = 11$) school locations. Elementary ($n = 26$), middle/junior high ($n = 10$), and high school ($n = 14$) teachers participated. The average age of teachers was 42; the average number of years in teaching was 16. The sample included tenured ($n = 44$) and nontenured ($n = 6$); married ($n = 34$) and single ($n = 16$) teachers. Degrees earned by these teachers included B.A./B.S. ($n = 7$), MED./MA ($n = 31$), Ed.S. ($n = 11$), and Ph.D. ($n = 1$). The mean number of years working with the abusive principal was 4. Forty-nine teachers resided in the United States and 1 resided in Canada. Fifteen of the teachers we studied were with an abusive principal at the time of this study; most others had experienced abuse in recent years. Teachers described both male ($n = 28$) and female ($n = 22$) principals.

It was noted earlier that the research question, interview guide, data collection, and analyses were based on the Blumer-Mead (1969, 1934) approach to symbolic interaction theory. Consistent with this perspective, specific theoretical ideas from the literature were not used to control data collection. Instead, we used only a few sensitizing concepts such as principal mistreatment/abuse to focus our study. Sensitizing concepts provide “a general sense of reference and guidance . . . [and] merely suggest directions along which to look” (Blumer, 1969, p. 148). Thus, teachers are less likely to be influenced by researchers’ preconceived ideas about a topic of study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Accordingly, we used an open-ended format to investigate the following broad question: How do teachers experience significant long-term mistreatment/abuse by school principals? Interviews are required in qualitative research that focuses on the determination of meanings from the participant’s perspective (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). We developed an interview guide rather than a pre-determined schedule, consisting of a set of topics to be explored, a “checklist of sorts” relevant to the topic at hand (Lofland, 1971, p. 85; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Specifically, we used two primary questions to gather data from teachers involved in our study:

1. What principal behavior/conduct do you define as mistreatment/abuse?
2. How did such behavior/conduct affect you, if at all,
   a. psychologically/emotionally?
   b. physically/physiologically?
   c. with respect to your involvement/performance in the classroom?
   d. with respect to your involvement/performance in the school?

Between two and four interviews were conducted with each of our research participants; these interviews consisted of unstructured and semistructured questions. To avoid premature conceptual/theoretical analyses and to produce full descriptions of each teacher’s experience of mistreatment/abuse, we used the same initial set of questions with all 50 teachers who participated (Lofland, 1971; Noblit & Hare, 1983). We spent about 135 hours interviewing teachers; this procedure generated about 4,000 pages of transcription for analysis.

We discovered that in conducting in-depth telephone interviews with each participant, we could efficiently and unobtrusively make notes and draw diagrams that identified emergent categories and relationships between categories; we were also able to probe categories in great depth during each interview (Fontana & Frey, 2000). This generated a level of descriptive detail beyond what we had ever achieved in other studies using face-to-face interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Put differently, categories emerged and became saturated quickly and efficiently.

Given the limitations of using computer software for grounded theory research, especially for conceptual and theoretical work (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), we analyzed all of our data line by line and by hand. This is consistent with a Blumerian emphasis on meaning in symbolic interaction studies (Charmaz, 2000). This procedure, although very time-consuming, allowed us to keep teachers’ perspectives on mistreatment/abuse at the center of our research and to generate robust descriptions of each participant’s experience (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Subsequent interviews with our participants were used to “fill out” emergent categories, clarify areas of ambiguity, and explore relationships between and among emergent categories (Bogdan & Bilken, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

We also requested personal documents from teachers (e.g., letters, diaries, journal entries) and official documents (e.g., administrators’ letters, law briefs, faculty meeting minutes) relevant to their mistreatment/abuse experiences. Personal documents were especially useful in deepening our understanding of the meaning of teachers’ mistreatment/abuse experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). It should be mentioned that examination of the personal and official documents submitted to us and reports from those who had worked with and referred us to the veteran teachers we studied suggest that they were highly accomplished, creative, and dedicated individuals. In most cases, such teachers had been
consistently formally recognized by their school and district not simply as effective teachers but also as superior teachers; in many cases, such recognition for their exceptional achievements as public educators extended to state levels.

As noted above, our primary interest in conducting this study was to describe and conceptualize the teachers’ perspectives on reality, that is, the “meanings” teachers associated with their experience of mistreatment. Thus, this study conformed to general guidelines for inductive exploratory research that emphasizes meanings as well as descriptive and conceptual results. We used constant comparative analysis to produce descriptive categories and conceptual and thematic analyses from our data. One of us analyzed the entire data set independently, and the other examined the results of this analysis independently (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Charmaz, 2000, Lofland, 1971; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Both researchers met to resolve questions that arose. Upon completion of numerous cycles of analysis, we also made comparisons with the extant empirical and theoretical literature on workplace abuse as a check on the viability of our descriptive and conceptual findings. However, we made no changes in our analysis at any level as a result of this last procedure. To be sure, careful collection and line-by-line comparative analyses of the data reduce the probability of inappropriate borrowing of concepts from the literature (Charmaz, 2000).

Although interview-based protocols are essential to qualitative studies that focus on meanings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), interviewees may present idealized versions of themselves and their situations. To address this and other issues related to trustworthiness and reliability of our findings, we used an inductive-generative approach to data collection and analysis. Specifically, we used no a priori concepts to control data collection, developed rapport and trust with our participants, conducted multiple interviews with each participant, audiotaped and transcribed all interviews, probed for detailed responses, examined data for inconsistencies and contradictions within and between interviews for each participant as well as across participants, compared interview data with available personal and official documents, searched for negative or disconfirming evidence, generated low-inference descriptors, and checked for researcher effects. Finally, as a supplemental validation of our findings, we made comparisons with the existing literature on workplace abuse (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

In accordance with guidelines for inductive analyses, all of the categories of findings discussed herein were derived directly from our data. This article focuses on teachers’ perspectives of principal mistreatment/abuse and, in particular, the effects such behavior has on teachers. Given space limitations, principal behaviors teachers defined as mistreatment are only briefly described. By and large, our database consists of victimized teachers’ experience of mistreatment/abuse. However, at times, teachers also discussed the mistreatment/
abuse experiences of others in their schools. Occasionally, these data are presented as well. Relevant theoretical and empirical literature are presented in the Summary and Discussion section of this article for interpretive and comparative purposes and for supplemental validation of emergent findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Charmaz, 2000; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Additional descriptive, conceptual, and theoretical findings, particularly with regard to principal behaviors teachers defined as abusive, will be presented elsewhere. Excerpts from the database are included to illustrate selected ideas.

Findings: a model of principal mistreatment

In essence, we have organized the principal behaviors derived from our database according to level of aggression: Level 1 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (indirect, moderately aggressive; e.g., discounting teachers’ needs, isolating teachers, and withholding resources), Level 2 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, escalating aggression; e.g., spying on, overloading, and criticizing teachers), and Level 3 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, severely aggressive; e.g., threatening teachers, giving unfair evaluations, preventing teacher advancement) (see Table 1). Please note that this model does not imply that individual Level 1 behaviors always resulted in less harm to teachers when compared to Level 2 or Level 3 behaviors; to the contrary, the degree of harm related to any single aggressive behavior varied from one victimized teacher to another, as one would expect. Moreover, our study focused on long-term mistreatment (6 months to 9 years); therefore, each teacher discussed the “cumulative effects” of a multiplicity of principals’ continued, systematic mistreatment/abuse as described within any or all three levels of our model.

Level 1 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors: indirect and moderately aggressive

Indirect forms of principal mistreatment, as described by teachers in our study, included nonverbal and verbal principal behaviors. This category of principal behaviors was considered generally less abusive as compared to Level 2 and Level 3 behaviors, and this finding is consistent with studies conducted with the general population (e.g., Keashly et al., 1994; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991). At the same time, the frequency of occurrence; timing; amount of negative affect; nature of the location in which mistreatment occurred (e.g., public versus private); association with other, more severe, behaviors constitutive of a pattern of abuse; and the generally hierarchical, “power over” nature of the principal-teacher relationship—a factor consistently discussed in the workplace mistreatment literature (e.g., Keashly, 1998)—contributed considerably to the degree of harm teachers experienced from Level 1 behaviors. Level 1 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors include (a) discounting teachers’ thoughts, needs,
Table 1 Principal Behaviors by Level of Aggression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (indirect, moderately aggressive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discounting teachers’ thoughts, needs, and feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal insensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonewalling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolating and abandoning teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling teacher-to-teacher interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonsupport of teachers in difficult interactions with students and parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding resources and denying approval, opportunities, and credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding resources and denying approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstructing opportunities for professional development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withholding or taking credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favoring “select” teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offensive personal conduct</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, escalating aggression)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabotaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stealing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destroying teacher instructional aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making unreasonable demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overloading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitpicking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticism: The ubiquitous form of Level 2 behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stigmatizing and pejorative labeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentionally vague criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossiping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfounded third-party criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soliciting others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunchroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, severely aggressive)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explosive behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwarranted reprimands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfair evaluations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mistreating students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forcing teachers out of their jobs (reassigning, transferring unilaterally, terminating)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing teachers from leaving/advancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and feelings; (b) isolating and abandoning teachers; (c) withholding resources and denying approval, opportunities, and credit to teachers; (d) favoring “select” teachers; and (e) offensive personal conduct. Such behaviors were always a part of a more extensive pattern of mistreatment/abuse. The reader should keep in mind that this is a study of the teachers’ perspectives only; such a study cannot determine principals’ intentions, although teachers typically inferred negative intentions because individual principal behaviors occurred within the context of a larger pattern of mistreatment.

Discounting teachers’ thoughts, needs, and feelings (including verbal and nonverbal behaviors)

Teachers reported that when mistreatment occurred through face-to-face interaction, principals usually displayed offensive nonverbal behaviors. One of the most common forms of nonverbal behavior was repeated ignoring or snubbing a teacher, especially in public places.

I went to introduce the principal to my husband. She looked at me, turned around, and just walked off. She was flat out rude. I couldn’t believe that someone would stoop so low. If we passed in the hall she would turn and walk the other way or she would give me a dirty look. She even snubbed me in the store. I remember saying, “Hi,” and she turned and walked off. I feel like I am dealing with a middle schooler.

Teachers described many abusive principals as extremely insensitive to personal matters, even illness; they also viewed stonewalling as a form of discounting.

Isolating and nonsupport of teachers

According to teachers, abusive principals frequently attempted to isolate them by preventing their contact with others, especially colleagues.

She threatened all of us from day one not to talk during our planning period with other teachers. . . . She said, “It promotes gossip.” She didn’t even want us in the lounge during our planning period. She would say, “You don’t need to say anything to your friends.” You couldn’t say anything negative about the school. It was just a control thing.

In addition, teachers indicated that abusive principals frequently failed to support them in confrontations with problematic students when, in their view, such support was clearly warranted by the circumstances (“She always told us, ‘I am going to support the children, not you.’ ” In all cases of nonsupport with
students, teachers reported that principals were “shamelessly unfair”; they not only failed to properly investigate problems, but they often blamed teachers for the problems, gave them written reprimands, and verbally mistreated them in front of students. In addition, teachers reported that abusive principals typically failed to support them in conflicts with parents who, in the teachers’ view, were clearly at fault; blamed teachers for problems with parents; and reprimanded teachers in the presence of parents.

She would say that you were the person with the problem and not the child . . . that you were making the child have low self-esteem and act out in class. It was your fault. I wasn’t even in the conference with the parent and the principal asked, “What exactly is it that you were doing to her child?” She accused me in front of the parents without even investigating. When the parents left, the principal said, “I know that you didn’t do anything wrong.”

Withholding resources and denying approval, opportunities, and credit

Abusive principals mistreated teachers by withholding necessary resources and denying approval. The experiences of a music teacher who had resources withheld and approval denied over a number of years were particularly destructive:

She moved me and my classes into the gym lobby with no place to store my students’ instruments. The bathrooms had that old urine smell, the heat didn’t work, and there was no air conditioning. She denied all my requests to play at the hospital or to go to the symphony, and all requests for funds for the music program. She wouldn’t repair instruments. She denied my requests to create a fund-raiser. She cut rehearsal time. She did this to let me know that she was the boss, she was in charge of the school and I jolly well had better learn that. It gets worse. I was placed in a closet, 8 feet wide and 30 feet long. This storage closet was my orchestra classroom. The parents said, “Look this situation is just awful.” I was in the closet for 5 months.

Our data reveal that some abusive principals undermined teachers’ efforts to initiate and involve themselves in professional development opportunities:

I had this idea to initiate professional growth plans that focused on trying to discover ways in which teachers can help each other grow. It was meaningful professional growth. . . . I certainly was aware that people had been victimized by this principal, and I had observed people being embarrassed publicly. I had even cradled people who were crying and angry and disenfranchised . . . and damaged by this principal. . . .
She said, “Forget it [professional development].” She hid behind saying that people were too burdened. She didn’t want to come out clearly as abusive. I felt that this was abusive because she is the one who told me to try it. She [also] criticized what I was doing [to other teachers] to make sure it became an unacceptable and undesirable thing for teachers to do.

Furthermore, all of the teachers we studied indicated that their principals withheld or took credit for work-related achievements. In fact, principals were often seen as “conspicuously” withholding recognition and praise.

I asked him, “Why did you sign the grant that I wrote?” He said, “Well, central office would question it. As long as you are my employee your work is my work and I get the recognition.”

Favoring “select” teachers

All teachers we interviewed attributed the practice of favoritism to their principals. According to our findings, favoritism refers to “inequitable” treatment of faculty; “select” individuals are rewarded whereas others are punished and/or neglected. Some examples of rewards to favored teachers include being released from attendance at meetings, being assigned better students and classrooms, receiving positive evaluations, receiving support for advancement, being placed on “good” committees, and receiving public recognition. Clearly, favoritism toward others exacerbated teachers’ feelings of mistreatment.

Moreover, favored teachers supported abusive principals directly and indirectly, which reinforced the principal’s domination of targeted teachers and intensified their sense of mistreatment; the favored teachers encouraged others to comport with the principal’s agenda, demonstrated their appreciation for the principal publicly, criticized other faculty, represented the school with external evaluation agencies, and colluded with the principal on decision making.

Offensive personal conduct

Two mistreated teachers complained that their abusive principals displayed offensive personal habits (e.g., belching, uninhibited flatulence); such habits and conduct negatively affected school morale and school climate. Several teachers reported that their abusive principals were also generally unprofessional in their conduct: “He spent a lot of time doing personal things during the day. He had some kind of machine in his office where he polished rocks. It was his hobby.”

And,

He’d always corner me and give me mean, really mean looks. I was very intimidated. He was my principal, my boss, and my superior. He
would shrug a lot, blow, and like just breathe heavily. He would stand real close to me.

Other teachers noted that several abusive principals had “affairs” with their colleagues: “There was one teacher in particular who spent so much time with him, like hours in his office. She would just leave her classroom unmanned.”

**Level 2 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors: direct and escalating aggression**

This section describes some of the direct and escalating aggressive forms of mistreatment analyzed from our data. Level 2 behaviors include spying, sabotaging, stealing, destroying teacher instructional aids, and making unreasonable work demands, as well as one of the most prevalent types of mistreatment: unfair and harsh private and public criticism of teachers’ work and abilities (see Table 1).

**Spying**

Most of the teachers who participated in our study accused their principals of personally spying on them. Some abusive principals ominously situated themselves in hallways near teachers’ classroom doors; others surreptitiously used the intercom to listen to classroom activity. Several teachers reported that their principals monitored their telephone conversations. Most of the teachers we interviewed indicated that abusive principals also solicited the services of other, favored teachers and/or parents to spy on them.

**Sabotaging**

Teachers disclosed that principals manipulated other faculty to sabotage efforts designed to benefit students or colleagues:

> When I was awarded a grant for a project she did everything she could to sabotage the project. . . . The principal said that no one was supposed to help me and she made sure no one did. . . . The grant I got was wasted.

**Stealing**

Several abusive principals were accused of stealing (e.g., personal journals, food) from teachers.

> The principal said, “I hope you didn’t mind but I sold my pickup truck yesterday afternoon and the only way that I could sell it was if I threw your air conditioner in with it.” It was a new, very expensive air
conditioner! I was shocked but I was afraid to say anything. My husband had a fit.

Destroying teacher instructional aids

Some abusive principals literally destroyed classroom instructional aids and/or ordered teachers to remove them from their rooms. The experience of one highly recognized veteran was especially poignant.

I had a beautiful loft in my room with pillows and a huge bookshelf that you could convert into a stage. It was great. The principal ordered it destroyed. But I went over his head—a bad thing, according to him. I asked the county ware-house people if they had to take the loft. They said no. So, I wanted my husband and some men to dismantle it so I could store it in my basement. When I came back one day after lunch, the warehouse people had axed the reading loft! The principal also ordered me to move a shelf from under the blackboard, which was so convenient for the children. Everything that I have ever learned about math and teaching supports using concrete objects. He said the solid oak desk in my room was really a piece of junk and we are going to get rid of it. . . . I had a guinea pig and he made me get rid of it. He said that it was unhealthy and dangerous; if a child was bitten, we could be sued. [Reading from her journal,] “He stripped away everything that made my room unique, that makes teachers special, sets one teacher apart from another. . . . I was a teacher who had a special style of teaching. But everything that made me special has been done away with. Circle meetings were stopped. The Friday workshops were ceased. I was told I needed to control [students] rather than making learning a joint venture. I became a teaching box—filling up heads with information so that they could pass the test. . . . I was Teacher-of-the-Year, sponsored the educational fair, won first place in other competitions, and was nominated for teacher of excellence. But all that was me is gone now. I want out.”

Making unreasonable work demands

Some teachers were consistently subjected to unreasonable work demands (i.e., overloading); indeed, one teacher’s workload, described as “too difficult and excessive,” was a dominant form of one principal’s mistreatment that spanned several years. Other teachers were subjected to “nitpicking” with regard to time.

At that point he started clocking me to make sure that my class ended exactly on time and that I had 5 minutes between classes. He was outside my door many, many, many, times to make sure that I ended at exactly at 10:11. It wasn’t even an even number, 10:11.
Criticism: the ubiquitous form of Level 2 Principal Mistreatment

All the teachers we studied indicated that their principals unfairly and routinely criticized them. Teachers reported several types of private criticism (i.e., stigmatizing and pejorative labeling, intentionally vague criticism, use of an informant’s information, gossiping, soliciting others) and public criticism. More important, criticism was, according to teachers, based on false or “manufactured” information and was thus considered grossly “unfair.” Principals were perceived as failing to conduct proper investigations (or any investigation) of the issue at hand before “attacking” the teacher; in other words, “accusations without investigation” were commonplace.

PRIVATE CRITICISM

Teachers explained that they were privately and routinely criticized for a wide range of issues. Principals’ criticism was usually conveyed with strong negative affect, both verbal (e.g., yelling) and nonverbal (e.g., pounding the desk); it was also considered false or extremely exaggerated and therefore “unjustified.” To illustrate, principals directly criticized teachers’ instruction and planning:

He would bring teachers into his office and intimidate them. You could hear him pound on his desk and yell at them for all kinds of things. He took my plan books every week and graded them in red ink. He’d write ugly comments. He would leave little notes in teachers’ boxes about things that weren’t true, like “Your class was noisy.” He would sit in your classroom and later leave a note that would say, “I was disappointed in your English lesson today.” He would just make things up!

For instance, principals privately criticized teachers for what they defined as “messy” classrooms (a teacher reported that the principal yelled at her because “one piece of paper was on a shelf”), the way teachers conducted department meetings (the principal could not provide reasons for his criticism), the color of ink teachers used, and being pregnant. One teacher described how her principal overreacted when she had used a particular color of ink on a form:

One morning I found a note in my box that said I had signed my report cards with the wrong color ink, blue instead of black. The principal pulled me out of class into the hallway and said, “You were told this was the way it was to be done and you have not followed those directions!” I apologized twice but he kept berating me. The next day I got a reprimand in my box. I was totally humiliated as a professional.

Another teacher discussed how the principal criticized her colleagues for being pregnant:
A teacher said she was thinking about starting her family but she wanted to wait and see if the principal would retire, because the principal had previously confronted people about being pregnant. That’s against the law! The principal would say, “What poor timing. How dare you think you can have a baby at the beginning of September!” One of the teachers miscarried; she was devastated. She said she thought it was from the stress at school.

Not infrequently, unjustified principal criticism of teachers was nonspecific; it consisted primarily of pejorative labeling such as accusing individuals of being “negative”:

As the union representative, I wrote a letter to the principal saying there was no educational substance behind his approach and that my students weren’t learning anything. He wrote back, “You are just being negative and unwilling to change. Your attitude is the problem and you are undermining the staff and morale.” He circulated the letter to the whole staff. I filed a grievance that forced him to back down. After that, it’s been a cold war.

In other cases, teachers reported that principals’ criticism was intentionally vague and based on unfounded criticisms they claimed a third party, “a snitch” (e.g., teacher, student), had initiated or reinforced. Nonattendance at an assembly, having a negative attitude, and yelling at students are but a few examples of the actions principals falsely attributed to teachers. Frequently, principal criticism was indirect and took the form of gossiping to other teachers and sometimes parents. One teacher disclosed that a principal tried to solicit the help of others to disparage her.

PUBLIC CRITICISM

Our data indicate that teachers were also publicly criticized and humiliated by principals and that such criticism was based on fallacious or distorted information and was accompanied by strong negative affect and offensive nonverbal behavior. Teachers described abusive incidents by principals that occurred, for instance, in the front office area of their schools, at faculty meetings, in their classrooms (with students and others present), over the intercom, in the hallway, in the lunchroom, and in the parking lot.

She would yell at teachers quite often on the PA as well as in person, and in the lunchroom lobby in front of all the students. . . She pointed her finger about 3 inches from one teacher’s nose and was just blasting him right there in front of the entire lobby. She said he was not being professional, he should not joke around with students and he should
keep his voice down because he was irritating. A hundred students were present. I was standing there, too. I can remember thinking if that were me I would just die.

My principal and I had an agreement that I could leave 5 minutes early at the end of the day because I teach a pullout program in the morning. The first time I walked out of the building 5 minutes early the principal started running after me and yelling at me, “Where are you going! It’s not time yet! Get back in the building!” Even if I had been wrong, I don’t think screaming would have been the way to handle it. I was very shaken.

**Level 3 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors: direct and severely aggressive**

From the foregoing, it is apparent that principals who abuse teachers do so in a variety of verbal and nonverbal ways and that such abuse includes Level 1 (indirect, moderately aggressive) and Level 2 (direct, escalating aggression) behaviors. As devastating as these levels of mistreatment are, collectively, for teachers, principal mistreatment includes even more aggressive forms of abuse—Level 3 behaviors, glimpses of which have been seen in Level 2 behaviors.

According to our data, victimized teachers believed that most of the principals they described “intended to harm” and even “destroy” them and that many such principals were quite aware of the damage they caused. For instance, in addition to the repeated nature of abuse over long periods of time, most principals failed to investigate issues before “attacking” the teacher. And when teachers confronted abusive principals about their conduct and its destructive effects on them, such principals typically denied all allegations, blamed the teacher, and engaged in further reprisals against them. Most Level 3 forms of principal mistreatment were strongly associated with various forms of deception and included lying, explosive behavior, threats, unwarranted reprimands, unfair evaluations, mistreating students, forcing teachers out of their jobs, preventing teachers from leaving/advancing, sexual harassment, and racism (see Table 1).

**Lying**

Most of the teachers we studied identified principal deception, in particular “blatant lying” (i.e., intentionally false statements) as a common form of principal mistreatment. Lying was attributed to principals when they repeatedly made statements that conflicted with the teachers’ direct personal experience regarding an issue. Lying was associated with other forms of abusive behavior already discussed, such as nonsupport of teachers in conflict with parents and students, unfounded criticism as well as behaviors to be discussed (e.g., unfair formal evaluations), and forcing teachers out (“You can expect principals who
do bad things to lie to protect themselves”). Lying was also associated with countless issues including placement of children, faculty voting outcomes, teacher termination, reimbursement for in-service, library responsibility, authorization, and stealing funds.

**Explosive behavior**

When principal mistreatment occurred through face-to-face interaction, principals frequently escalated and became explosive and engaged in particularly nasty behaviors:

He would address us at meetings by yelling, pounding his fist, and carrying on at length until his face was scarlet and the veins stood out on his neck. No meeting with this man was complete without our usual verbal beating. I believe this man thought that it actually helped us. Quote, “The beatings will continue until morale improves.”

**Threats**

Not surprisingly, teachers defined all abusive actions by principals as implicitly or explicitly “threatening.” That is, teachers experienced such conduct as putting them “at risk,” in “danger,” and in a state of fear. In addition, teachers reported that abusive principals, with few exceptions, directly threatened groups of teachers as well as individual teachers. Our data indicate that threats were usually overt, but at times they were implied. Teachers explained that principals threatened groups of teachers to stop the spread of rumors about the principal, for making negative statements about the school to a review committee, for losing games, and numerous other issues:

She came to a staff meeting one time with a pack of transfers and said, “Anybody that doesn’t like it here, you can just get one of these. I have got plenty of them.” She said, “The thing that I want to get straight is I am here for the children. I am not here for you,” meaning the teachers. . . . She also said, “It is going to upset your evaluation.”

Individual teachers were threatened for a wide range of reasons, for instance, to coerce a teacher to change a student’s grade, for expressing opinions that disagreed with the principal’s, for confronting a principal for his conduct, for making a request to central office for needed resources, for use of personal days, and for having to miss a parent-teacher association (PTA) meeting due to serious medical reasons.
Abusive principals threatened teachers with unwarranted written reprimands. Teachers described the use of reprimands as “grossly unfair,” “irrational,” and based on false accusations. Principals “wrote teachers up” for stealing a video camera (stolen by a student), use of the intercom (the teacher was answering an intercom call from the office), and for being in a storage closet during class. The teacher who was forced into a closet by her principal disclosed,

I was constantly intimidated and harassed. He sent me letters of reprimand, delivered during class, and filled with false accusations. My students witnessed my reaction. I was not able to teach effectively. Once he cornered me in a closet and discussed inappropriate [sexual] topics to which I would not respond. I then received a letter of reprimand for being in the storage closet.

In all cases, teachers worked in school districts that required principals to complete “objective” teacher evaluations. These consisted of classroom observations, usually several per year, as well as conferences with the teacher. Such evaluations were described as important to the school district as well as to the teacher; in fact, most of the teachers in our study defined one negative evaluation as “seriously damaging” or “career ending” in their respective districts.

Our data show that teachers who were victimized by principals worked in a constant state of fear about unfair evaluations. (“She would come in at any time and decide that she didn’t like things. She did it to me, and I saw her do it to others.” “We are always in a state of fear, and I am the bread winner in my family.”) In all cases, teachers stated that principals included flagrantly false information on their evaluations.

Teachers’ fear of unfair evaluations were exacerbated by their belief that no viable recourse existed to overturn such evaluations. (“As far as evaluations go, there is really nothing you can do. It doesn’t matter what you say; it is there on paper, and you just sign it.”) It is important to mention that with the exception of beginning teachers who had not worked with other principals, all but one experienced teacher reported that they had, before mistreatment began, consistently received superior evaluations from former principals and even from their abusive principals.

Teachers also reported that principals failed to give legitimate reasons, or any reasons whatsoever, when requiring them to submit to extended or special evaluations. Several teachers indicated that abusive principals intensified their use of unfair evaluations when they were consumed by personal life tragedies.

When my father was dying . . . he comes to do an evaluation. I felt like a whipped dog; I didn’t have any energy to get up and dance. He wrote
a bad evaluation, and within 2 days he came back for a second one. . . .
The third evaluation came right after Dad died in April.

Mistreating students

Our data indicate that principal mistreatment of students had harmful effects on both students and teachers. Such treatment was considered an aspect of principals’ authoritarian-abusive approach to school leadership. Generally, students were mistreated for what a principal defined as “misbehavior.” Many were special education/behaviorally disabled students.

The principal and advisor of special education programs brought a child to my room fighting, struggling, kicking, and screaming. They held him down in the middle of the room by his arms and put their legs over his legs to restrain him. Both of them were White and he was a little African-American child. When his mother came, the child called her a bitch. . . . He told me to suck his dick. The two male administrators snickered; they thought it was funny. I shut up. . . . Eventually, the child got angry and called the principal, who was White, a “cracker.” Immediately, the principal called the child a “nigger.” . . . They struggled and the principal wound up hitting him in the mouth . . . his hand slipped. His lip split open and he was all bloody. I was sick to my stomach. I thought, “This is child abuse.” I stood there frozen.

Forcing teachers out of their jobs (reassigning, unilaterally transferring, terminating)

Most of the teachers we interviewed stated that they were subjected to a variety of abusive actions by their principals such as unfair reassignments, forced transfers, and termination. In unilaterally reassigning teachers, principals changed their teaching locations and/or professional responsibilities.

The principal said to this teacher, and I quote, “You have got yourself knocked up [pregnant] and you are out.” She gave her a traveling remedial position between four classrooms. It was awful to watch somebody torture her, it wasn’t physical, but it sure was mental. This teacher had been the principal’s favorite. But the principal would turn on people unexpectedly and they would just fall apart. The principal would smile, be nice, and all of a sudden, attack. She is sadistic.

Preventing teachers from leaving/advancing

Also frequently reported were principals’ attempts to obstruct transfers of teachers, both within a teacher’s district and to other districts. Routinely, abusive
principals wrote unjustified negative letters of reference to other school administrators in response to queries about teachers.

He said that he would not recommend me for a teaching position. I said, “You’ve got to be kidding!” He said, “What I will say is that you are an excellent teacher and you are wonderful with children, but you are a troublemaker.” He said, “I don’t care if you think this is right or not.” I didn’t get the transfer. He wanted me to leave, but he didn’t want me to leave for the school of my choice.

In several cases, principals assured teachers that they would give them positive references; however, their assurances proved false. Abusive principals also used negative letters of reference, even when prohibited from writing such letters by union agreements, to undermine teachers’ attempts to obtain new teaching positions in other school districts, in some cases, for years.

Sexual harassment

Several female teachers accused their principals of isolated episodes of sexual harassment; others accused principals of ongoing sexual harassment. In one case, the harassment occurred over a period of 9 years. Teachers viewed the principal’s sexual harassment as obvious assertions of power and control.

I had problems with him calling me to his office. He would close the door and say, “Does this make you nervous to be in here with me by yourself?” Then he would tell me inappropriate jokes. He was very flirtatious and very controlling and he knew that he was making me nervous; the jokes were sexual. Once, he said, “I want you to come over here and stand behind the desk with me.” He tickled the backs of my legs and said, “I have been wanting to do that all day.” I got out of his office. The secretary was aware that he was harassing me and would look at me like, “I am so sorry.” Once, he came by my classroom and poked me right under my arm, not a very good place to be poking a female. He just kind of laughed.

Racism

Teachers defined six principals, three African Americans and three Caucasian, as racists; they reported that racism resulted in poor school morale and poor school climate.

He was definitely a racist. He didn’t want to hire Black people. He said that he had been made to hire a Black teacher before and he had to hire two this year but he didn’t want to. He never put Black teachers in
charge of prestigious committees. We never had a Black teacher-of-the-year. The Black teachers were very strong, but didn’t stay very long; the stress was too much for them.

**The adverse effects of principal mistreatment of teachers**

Workplace bullying can have serious, even devastating, effects on targeted individuals. Psychological effects include stress, depression, mood swings, loss of sleep (and resulting fatigue), and feelings of shame, guilt, embarrassment, and low self-esteem. More serious effects can include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, which, left untreated, may cause an individual to react violently against either the bully or anyone else who happens to be in the vicinity. Physical effects include reduced immunity to infection, stress headaches, high blood pressure, and digestive problems.

(Yamada, 2000, p. 483)

Here, we explore some of the seriously damaging effects of long-term patterns of mistreatment on the teachers involved in our study, mistreatment that lasted from 6 months to as many as 9 years; some of the teachers’ initial emotional responses to abusive principals as well as some far-reaching effects on teachers and schools are discussed. Other research on workplace mistreatment (i.e., described in the introduction to the article) conducted in a large number of public and private work settings, both nationally and internationally, has generated findings consistent with those that follow.

**Early psychological and emotional problems**

According to our data, teachers’ early emotional responses to principal abuse included feelings of shock and disorientation, humiliation, loneliness, injured confidence and self-esteem, and being corrupted and guilty (see Table 2).

*Shock and disorientation.* Teachers experienced a strong sense of shock, disorientation, and confusion as a result of mistreatment. Teachers used words such as bewildered, confused, shocked, disoriented, helpless, stunned, and mystified to describe feelings associated with early “attacks” by their principals.

It always bothered me that I never knew how to react or correct the problem; that was because I didn’t know what the problem was. I kept chalking it up to her being in a bad mood. I didn’t make the connection between the fact that I had disagreed with her and the things that she was doing to me. I was real frustrated. Then I woke up and realized it wasn’t just a bad day.
Teachers’ sense of disorientation was not short-lived; nor was it merely an initial response to the sudden, “out of the blue,” nature of principals’ actions against them. To the contrary, for most, such feelings persisted throughout their mistreatment experiences, in part because they were unable to understand why they were targeted and in part because they were unable to identify any course of action to resolve their situations.

I couldn’t understand what I had done to provoke this. I felt a loss of power, loss of center, loss of balance. I felt reduced, like when you have a parent who has turned on you. Our school was like a dysfunctional family and I was the abused child. I lost my confidence. I was becoming dysfunctional in my personal life. I had bad dreams. It is very painful, devastating. I felt sad, betrayed, angry, indignant, outraged, disoriented.

HUMILIATION

Our study also demonstrates that principals’ mistreatment provoked, early on, strong feelings of humiliation and embarrassment in teachers, especially when such treatment occurred in public places.

I had been waiting for the principal in the office area, doing a good deed, trying to help the secretary. When the principal arrived, I jokingly said, “I

Table 2  Adverse Effects of Principal Mistreatment of Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early psychological and emotional responses</th>
<th>Long-term (chronic) psychological and emotional problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shock and disorientation</td>
<td>Fear and anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humiliation</td>
<td>Depression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loneliness</td>
<td>Feeling isolated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injured self-confidence and self-esteem</td>
<td>Feeling trapped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrupted and guilty</td>
<td>Feeling unmotivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and physiological problems</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damaged schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damaged relationships</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Damaged classrooms</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Impaired decision making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving one’s job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

236
am glad you finally got back.” She flew into a tirade, saying, “I don’t care how long you have been waiting. What do you think I have been doing, standing around the corner picking my nose?!” It was awful. I was so embarrassed. Everybody had the same dumbfounded look on their faces. I froze. I was in shock. She had these kinds of incidents with other teachers . . . bawling them out in front of their students and coworkers. It was embarrassing. I was disappointed and hurt. It was a public reprimand.

LONELINESS

During the early periods of mistreatment, many of the teachers we interviewed received some support from other faculty; however, many of the targeted teachers reported that individuals, and sometimes groups of teachers, began to ostracize them, typically because these teachers also feared principal reprisals for association or because they were “taking the principal’s side” in the ongoing ordeal. Teachers experienced feelings of profound loneliness throughout their mistreatment experiences.

I went to my friends, my confidants, and said, “This is miserable, this is terrible.” They looked at me as though I had obviously done something wrong and deserved what was happening to me. Their loyalty was to the principal. They were afraid about being mistreated too. They knew to play it safe, and they knew they had better stay away from me. They also didn’t want to talk to me because they didn’t want to know about it . . . it might make them feel badly.

INJURED SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Most teachers reported that from the beginning, principal mistreatment seriously harmed their self-esteem. Specifically, both veteran and beginning teachers developed substantial self-doubt and loss of confidence in their ability and competence as teachers. Many teachers actually internalized, in varying degrees, principals’ negative views of them, usually for years.

I had been given a program to work on because of my professional reputation and my skills in technology. Then, I was pulled out without notice and told things weren’t working. I felt I was not successful, that I had no talent and I wasn’t worth trying to fix. Then I was transferred to another school to teach in an area I was not qualified to teach and in a school I did not want to be at. It was quite a blow to my self-esteem . . . [I] felt like I was a person of no value. I began to doubt that I could do the job anywhere.

I was put down and getting the shaft. I felt I constantly had to justify myself. I felt worthless, useless, like I couldn’t meet expectations. I lost
EMOTIONS AND GENDER

respect for myself because I didn’t stand up to him. I was afraid and I knew it. I wondered why he picked me out. . . . Did he see me as a weak person and feel like he could manipulate me? He affected my self-worth.

CORRUPTED AND GUILTY

Teachers felt “corrupted” and “guilty,” for example, by being “forced” to change a student’s grade, to violate district policy, and to remain silent about such matters. Our data also indicate that the principal’s negative modeling influenced other teachers’ behavior negatively and set in motion a host of dysfunctional behaviors on the part of others and thus corrupted teachers and students in a given school. To illustrate, in one case, some teachers imitated the racism of their abusive principals. In other cases, teachers disclosed that students were forced to comply with the unethical demands of abusive principals; principals used students politically, coaching them to make false statements against victimized teachers.

In the following section, we examine additional devastating effects of principals’ mistreatment of teachers. In addition to feeling shocked and disoriented, humiliated, lonely, beset by low self-esteem, and corrupted, teachers discussed long-term effects such as chronic fear and anxiety, anger, depression, physical/physiological problems, and adverse effects on schools (i.e., damaged relationships, damaged classrooms, and impaired decision making) (see Table 2).

Long-term (chronic) psychological and emotional problems

FEAR AND ANXIETY

Fear is essentially an awareness of psychological distress; it is also considered the most toxic of all human emotions (Tomkins, 1962). Moreover, fear has “a profoundly noxious quality that compels efforts to change the situation that elicited the emotion” (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996, p. 35). In contrast to other primary emotions (e.g., joy, anger, and grief), fear “is the emotion of avoidance of a consciously recognized, usually external, imminent danger” (Bartley, 1994, p. 12). Fear is associated with escape and avoidance; however, when such actions are thwarted or blocked (e.g., as in an uncontrollable situation and when one feels constant uncertainty about a potential danger), fear is transformed into anxiety, a state of arousal following the perception of threat (Epstein, 1972); this involves “a cluster or pattern of emotions that may motivate both approach and avoidance” (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996, p. 35).

Fear, because of its unavoidable links to the body, has particularly injurious effects; it subtly and profoundly degrades human perception, cognition, and action. Fear “reduces working memory, increases superficial cognitive processing, generates cognitive bias, and tends to put indelible traces in memory” (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996, p. 12). Even more serious, a generalized anxiety/fear dis-
order can evolve into post-traumatic stress disorder, into phobias, and finally, at the top of the diagnostic hierarchy, into a panic disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 1987).

Our study revealed that intense and chronic fear and anxiety were among teachers’ primary long-term responses to principal mistreatment. There were several reasons for this: First, teachers viewed the various forms and patterns of principal mistreatment as extremely threatening and punishing, and they perceived themselves to be particularly vulnerable. Second, teachers tended to internalize their fears, and this provoked a chronic state of anxiety, apprehension, obsessive thinking, and hypervigilance regarding the possibility of further mistreatment. Third, fear of mistreatment provoked an array of powerful secondary fears, for example, fear of losing one’s job, losing one’s reputation, being ostracized by colleagues, expressing one’s opinion, receiving poor evaluations, lack of support from the central office, and failing one’s students instructionally and socially. Fourth, fear was experienced as pervasive: It permeated all aspects of a victimized teacher’s work life; for many, it also profoundly and adversely affected the quality of their personal and family lives. Said differently, fear dominated teachers’ entire “sense of being” for long periods of time ranging from several months to many years. Some terms that teachers used to denote chronic fear and anxiety states were fear, scared, panic, dread, and paranoid.

I take it day by day. It is the only way that I can get through it. I am apprehensive, fearful. He is not on my case everyday, but he has set the tone. We did a unit on food and fruits, and at one time I would have taught my students the song about sipping cider, but I wouldn’t want him to be walking by and not get the connection. I hated to see this happening, and I dreaded going to work. . . . I was always fearful of repercussions . . . the uncertainty of the day. I was in constant fear and would cry because he would accuse me of things. I was worried . . .

I felt worthless, intimidated. I said to him, “You make me shake.” When I knew that I had to meet with him, I became fearful. I knew what the outcome what be. If he came into my room. I would get edgy. I felt I constantly had to explain, to justify. I felt like I couldn’t go to him for help because he [didn’t] value my concerns. I felt angry with myself because I took this treatment for years. I ate lunch in my room and went to my mailbox once a day. I would try to get there by a quarter ‘til 7 to avoid him. I would stutter and stammer. . . . I knew what was coming and what he was going to do to me when I saw him. I felt defeated. I dreaded going to school on faculty meeting days. I hated it. I would sit in the back of the room at faculty meetings.

Many teachers we interviewed indicated that principal abuse was sufficiently extensive among faculty at their schools to create what one described as a
“culture of fear.” Fear affected entire schools, fostering a situation in which most teachers were afraid to express their opinions and concerns under any circumstances; silence was the pervasive response.

There is a very strong culture of fear and caution. You best keep your head down, say as little as possible, and stay away from the front office. A teacher told me, “If you try to make any changes around here you will be her victim. Every year she has at least one and as many as three or four, maybe five or six people, whom she victimizes in order to demonstrate her power and control.” I had bad dreams about it. If I were called to the office my heart would absolutely race. I now feel apprehensive about going into administration given how much pollution goes on there. One fear I have is that she may begin to try to infiltrate or pollute or poison my doctoral program. . . . It takes a lot to stick your neck out. Most teachers simply stop championing new creative ideas because the reward is punishment. It is a pretty deep culture of fear. The self is at risk when you are trying to do your thing.

Most of the teachers we studied were so thoroughly traumatized that they generalized their fear of their abusive principals to other school administrators (“I vowed that I would never work under another woman and I never have”). Some teachers experienced this fear of administrators, sometimes years later, in different schools and with good principals.

ANGER

Also considered a primary human emotion, anger is a more or less primitive response to “being either physically or psychologically restrained from doing what one intensely desires to do” (Izard, 1977, pp. 329–330). Hence, anger motivates individuals to prepare their bodies for real or imagined battles and to defend themselves with vigor and strength. Ekman and Friesen (1975) stated that the major provocation to anger is “frustration resulting from interference with [one’s] activity or the pursuit of [one’s] goals” (p. 78). They noted, “anger will be more likely and more intense if you believe that the agent of interference acted arbitrarily, unfairly, or spitefully” (p. 78). Indeed, Averill (1982) asserted (as did Aristotle) that anger involves an appraisal that another person has intentionally and unjustifiably wronged one. Such were the thoughts and feelings of the teachers in our study, many of whom described intense feelings of anger/outrage and indignation toward their abusive principals; in addition, they felt angry with themselves for their inability to confront and/or successfully curb their principal’s mistreatment. Martin (1986), after an extensive review of the relevant literature, concluded that individuals tend to accept unjust treatment from authority figures without responding.

All of the teachers we interviewed expressed strong feelings of anger, both
explicitly and implicitly. For most teachers, anger was chronic; it was a dominant emotion throughout their mistreatment experiences and, for many, continued long after mistreatment ended. As mentioned, teachers’ anger always included strong feelings of indignation, a form of anger due to the unjust and unfair nature of their victimization by principals. Teachers used many strong words such as *bitter, hate, furious, angry, enraged, outraged, appalled, disgusted, despise, resent,* and *hot* to convey the intensity of their anger.

Principals would call me up and say, “Would you go down and open the school?” or do a tournament or some chaperoning? I built up a great reputation in the district. “Who is this guy to come in and treat me like dirt?” You give your sweat, blood, and tears, and what you get back is, “Thank you, but get out of our way!” Some administrators just don’t appreciate the sacrifices the individual makes for the system. I get incensed about injustice!

It is awful to say, but I hate this person. I have never felt that way before. It bothers me that I feel such a strong dislike for another human being.

A handful of teachers also expressed strong feelings of revenge, another form of anger rooted in the emotion of “moral outrage” or a “sense of injustice” (Bies, 1987, p. 293). After carefully studying the phenomenon of moral outrage in organizational life, Bies (1987) wrote, “When people feel harmed wrongfully, or witness others enduring such an injustice, they are likely to become morally outraged” (p. 290); and this often leads to “the sympathetic reaction of outrage, horror, shock, resentment, and anger, those affections of the viscera and abnormal secretions of the adrenals that prepare the human animal to resist attack” (Cahn, 1949, p. 24).

He could have been on the show, *In the Heat of the Night.* He was a complete redneck idiot. I hated him. I was extremely angry. I was just as hateful toward him as he was toward me. I hated his guts. . . . If they were to do a buyout tomorrow I would take it. I wouldn’t teach again. I am disgusted that he thought I would respond positively to sexual harassment. I am angry that he knew he had the power to get away with it. This is a sick puppy. . . . I would have sabotaged him if I could for what he had done. I was extremely furious!

**DEPRESSION**

Depressive states refer to pervasive, absorbing, and chronic feelings of being out of control. As described above, anxiety is a kind of “mobilization” response to a future threat that may be developing or coming and that, one hopes, can be avoided. On the other hand, depression is a “demobilization” response to a loss,
a “static or unlikely-to-vary situation that can no longer (with any hope) be avoided because it has already developed or come to pass” (Riskind, 1997, p. 687).

Most of the teachers who participated in our study reported being chronically depressed throughout their mistreatment experience. In describing feelings of depression, teachers used terms such as depressed, futile, helpless, hopeless, devastated, beaten down, paralyzed, broken, worn out, defeated, disoriented, distraught, trapped, isolated, sad, down, and despair. Clearly, for most victimized teachers, going to work as well as being at work was a “constant struggle to survive each day.”

The feelings dogged me every time I thought about it. It made me half sick. I turned it into depression. You turn it against yourself and you start asking yourself, “What is wrong with me?” I didn’t trust my own judgment. I felt beaten down. I don’t like conflict. I don’t like verbal abuse. I just felt really tired all the time. I really did look 10 years older. I was so tired that I couldn’t sleep. I would go in tired in the morning and come home tired at night. I dragged around a lot. My energy level became very low.

By the end of the 3 years, I would sit on the edge of the bed in the mornings and just cry. One morning my husband was rubbing my back and said, “You know what, darling? I don’t care if you have to work at Burger King. You don’t have to go back there next year, no matter what.” Twenty-two people left the school that year. All the stress had accumulated; I almost had a breakdown. I broke down at least once a week the 3rd year.

Many teachers’ depression was so severe that they sought counseling or psychiatric care for therapy and medication.

I would wake up in the middle of night thinking, going over the same thoughts, over and over again. I went to the doctor and I had blood work ups. I ended up seeing a psychiatrist and being diagnosed as having clinical depression. I couldn’t see the good side of anything anymore. I had diarrhea and I couldn’t eat.

In addition, feelings of isolation, being trapped, and feeling unmotivated were strongly associated with feelings of depression.

**Feeling Isolated** To avoid further mistreatment, teachers usually withdrew both emotionally and physically (when possible) from social and professional activities (e.g., faculty meetings, committee work, sponsorship of student activities, professional associations). They refused, for example, to volunteer for committee work and sponsorships; when required to attend certain events, they
did not participate. According to our findings, teachers’ protective actions may have inadvertently exacerbated their feelings of isolation and depression. Other factors typically associated with principal mistreatment—showing favoritism, being ostracized by other teachers, and lack of viable opportunities for recourse (e.g., from central office, unions)—also contributed to a targeted teacher’s sense of isolation.

I never had lunch with the teachers. I stayed in my room. The only time that I was out of that room was to go to the bathroom. I am pretty social and pretty funny, but I just completely withdrew. I felt alone. I was very alone but I had to protect myself. I had to get through the day. I think if I talked about it [the mistreatment] at school, it might have made it worse.

I dropped every professional organization except two that I had been very active in. These were organizations that helped me to be productive in the classroom, but I didn’t feel motivated anymore, so I closed myself down. Then he began to freeze me out. I felt very isolated. I went to as few faculty meetings as I could and I was never chastised, which indicated to me that he didn’t mind. I cut my connection to the building.

Feeling Trapped Feeling trapped in a classroom or a school, with few or no avenues for escape, was also associated with teachers’ feelings of depression; such feelings were characterized by a lack of control and not knowing where to turn or what to do to resolve a situation. Feelings of being trapped were, as teachers reported, “like being in prison,” “damned if I complained, damned if I didn’t,” “in an iron cage.” These feelings were a direct result of principals’ threats of reprisals for requesting transfers, for unsuccessful attempts to transfer, the prospect of negative letters of reference, unresponsive central office personnel, and weak union representation, among others. It was clear that chronic fear and depression and related responses (e.g., fatigue, self-doubt, and lowered self-esteem) reinforced teachers’ feelings of being trapped, as did personal life factors (e.g., being a major or the sole breadwinner in the family, having children in the school district).

She said, “Maybe you shouldn’t be in this business.” That was a direct quote. I had been afraid to ask for a transfer because she tends to blackball people who ask for transfers. She made us turn in transfer requests to her first, before they went to the county office. She belittled one teacher who asked for a transfer and had another teacher’s transfer interview canceled.

Feeling Unmotivated We found that long-term mistreatment and chronic feelings of depression and fear/anxiety were strongly interrelated with teachers’ motivation to teach.
My first 8 years of teaching, I thrived on the challenge. . . . But I gave up my special vision. By the end of those years with her, I had lost a lot of my motivation. I was going through the motions. It had taken the heart out of me.

*Physical and physiological problems*

We found that mistreated teachers suffered a range of physical/physiological problems. Like psychological/emotional problems, physical/physiological problems were typically chronic; they began with the onset of mistreatment and usually ended when mistreatment terminated. In a few cases, problems persisted for several months and even several years later. The seriousness of these problems appear to be related to the longevity of teachers’ mistreatment, at least in part. Roughly two thirds of the teachers we studied sought medical treatment for their problems. The most frequently identified physical/physiological problems were chronic sleep disorders (e.g., insomnia, nightmares, obsessive thinking), chronic fatigue, stomachaches, nausea, weight gain or loss, neck and back pain, and headaches or migraines.

I gained 50 pounds. The final year was the worst year. I would come home with my neck and back in knots. It would lead to a headache. I had headaches all the time. It affected my sleep. I would toss and turn, and I would scream in the middle of the night. I had bad dreams about fear, like someone was after me. I was always exhausted. Now I have a new life and my health is great.

I would go home with headaches and tense upper back muscles. I would get colds, headaches, stomachaches, and anxiety. I had headaches to the point that I went to my gynecologist, who put me on medication, saying that it was stress. I would take medication quite often. The headaches would last for days. I would come home and turn off the lights and stick my head underneath a pillow just to get still.

Examples of other severe physical/physiological problems teachers experienced included diarrhea, high blood pressure, blurred vision, nausea or vomiting, respiratory infections, hives, vertigo, heart palpitations, gum disease, auditory impairment, chest pains, and frequent colds and allergies.

My doctor put me on a combination of a beta-blocker to correct my heartbeat and Valium. I went in once a week so that he could help me with the stress. He was my counselor, too. Every evening I had an upset stomach, every single night. I had lost a bunch of weight. I was down to 91 pounds, which for me is pretty skinny. I still have the erratic heartbeat. Every time I get upset now it comes right back, I have had it while we have been talking. As soon as the principal left, my heart problems stopped.
My physical reaction included blurred vision. My blood pressure was 180 over 120, which is stroke level. My body was suffering tremendously because of the stress. I am now on blood pressure medicine and I can’t sleep well. I don’t sleep more than 2 or 3 hours. I gained probably 25 pounds; I am much bigger than I was before. I have many more headaches than I used to.

Our data indicate that in addition to the psychological/emotional problems discussed earlier, individual teachers simultaneously experienced, on average, at least four of the physical/physiological problems described here throughout their mistreatment experience.

DAMAGED SCHOOLS

Over time, principals’ mistreatment resulted in far-reaching, destructive effects on schools, particularly with regard to relationships between and among teachers, their instructional work in classrooms, and collective decision-making processes.

Damaged Relationships Historically speaking, most of the experienced teachers we interviewed reported that throughout their professional careers and in their work with former principals, they had been “totally” involved in their schools and, in fact, frequently provided the leadership necessary to initiate innovative arrangements among faculty focusing on student development. Our data demonstrate that abusive principals severely undermined the development of innovative and collaborative structures among faculty as well as teachers’ overall level of involvement in their schools. Consequently, in addition to ostracism by colleagues, mistreated teachers typically withdrew from all discretionary involvements, such as committee work, schoolwide events, special projects, and staff development. When involvement was considered mandatory, such as faculty meeting attendance, teachers minimized their participation and, in general, maintained silence. Briefly, teachers indicated that such extreme responses on their part were designed to protect themselves from further “attacks” by abusive principals. These teachers became “islands,” support from others was limited and was often given only “secretly” because, as one teacher stated, “friends were afraid that they could become a target of mistreatment, guilt by association.”

There were a lot of little cliques. There was no sharing among the faculty, no sharing of ideas or methods, no getting together and looking at students or doing assessments, none of that. Committees were few and far between and generally composed of her little pets. That is how all decisions were made. No one else wanted to be on the committees under these circumstances. We supported each other. I spent a lot of time on the phone with a really good friend . . . having a good long
gripe session. She and I would make popcorn and just talk. Sometimes I would cry.

She had some pets, her stoolies, and you knew right fast who the stoolies were. She would praise them. You were very careful whom you talked with. People would gripe all the time. It was a mass exit at checkout time, a real indication that people are not happy. Teachers would push each other to get out of the view of the video camera in the hallway so they could chat about what they had heard about her that day.

The extent to which many teachers withdrew from former social and professional commitments is noteworthy:

I withdrew from all professional organizations, except two. I just withdrew. I closed myself down. Before all this started, I was the Teacher of the Year. I truly enjoyed teaching. I loved it. I thought that I would teach forever. I would come home happy every day. . . . I have always believed that we need to put a lot into our profession, that we need to work extra with other teachers and students. Before, I sponsored the science club, academic debates, the scholars bowl team, and students against driving drunk. I was senior class sponsor; I sponsored the class—all four committees at the school and county level. . . . I just withdrew from all of that. I was not going to put time and effort into a system that treated me that way.

Although teachers directly targeted by principals significantly withdrew from schoolwide involvement, as described, our data also point out that principal mistreatment, particularly when it was widespread in the school, occasionally resulted in greater social cohesion among faculty; however, this was usually limited to a “defensive” banding together for social support and protection: “When teachers got together, they would share their complaints, get angry and share frustrations. She treated everybody badly. It became a gripe session—everybody felt the same way about her leadership.”

Repeated attacks and reprisals against teachers appeared, at times, to be a function of favored teachers, teachers who served as informants or spies for principals. Thus, abused teachers were typically alienated from others, their relationships damaged, and they had to rely on the social and professional support of only a handful of trusted colleagues.

**Damaged Classrooms**  
With one exception, principal mistreatment had serious deleterious consequences for all major aspects of classroom life, including the quality of instruction and social relationships with students. In general, teachers described feelings of stress, paranoia, insecurity, fear, dread, and self-doubt with regard to classroom teaching.
My emphases and my thoughts went away from the curriculum as I wondered where the principal was. I was paranoid. Was he coming to my class, what was going on? ... I have avoided new ideas that I would have implemented in class because they would have involved the principal’s support. I felt vulnerable. I knew the principal would not back me. My relationship with students became stressed.

More precisely, teachers disclosed that abusive principals forced them to employ traditional methods of teaching that they viewed as “rigid,” “authoritarian,” “dated,” and “ineffective.” Such methods emphasized lecture, rote and recitation, drill, and worksheets and were associated with significant reductions in teachers’ motivation, responsiveness to diversity, risk-taking, creativity and innovation, planning, preparation, and variation in the use of instructional strategies and materials. Furthermore, teachers described the increased use of authoritarian, control-oriented, “impersonal” methods of classroom discipline, an expectation of most abusive principals. Important adverse effects were also discussed for teachers’ social relationships with students; reductions in teacher caring, patience, tolerance, and humor were apparent:

I was less motivated to try new things or even ask for advice on how to implement a new instructional unit and methods in my classroom. I was constantly angry at the students, but I couldn’t show it. I had to internalize my anger to prevent trouble from students or parents because I knew that the principal would not support me. My authority in the classroom had been undermined; so I was very uncomfortable about how to deal with the students and the class. I did not try as hard or put forth the effort toward my classroom duties. Every teacher was guarded in the classroom and in discussions and conferences with parents. Eventually, coming to school and to class was a dreaded event. When I received letters of reprimand during class, my students witnessed my reaction. I was not able to teach effectively at all. At first, I tried to ignore the negative environment, but eventually I became withdrawn. I taught straight from the book. I put in as little time as possible. I didn’t get very close to the students. My motivation for teaching became zero. I was constantly on edge. My nerves were shot and I would sometimes treat students in a negative manner because of the principal’s abuse.

In my teaching, I was hesitant to try anything new. I didn’t do anything different that would draw attention to me, especially anything that might not work the first time. ... I have passed kids who failed just to avoid conflict with the principal. ... In a strange way, I almost started treating children like he was treating me. I never berated them, but, when I would give directions, if a kid would ask about it, I would say, “You know what I just said!” I had no patience. I felt like I had to
control the environment because, if I didn’t, he would get me. I had kids with bracelets on their ankles, kids out of mental institutions and jails. They needed special service referrals. But I knew I couldn’t do anything to set the students up for a referral, because the principal looked at that very negatively. Everything had to look good.

Impaired Decision Making  Typically, teachers used words such as autocrat, tyrant, dictator, authoritarian, despot, and control freak to describe the leadership approach of abusive principals. Our data suggest that with regard to school governance and decision making, principals were overtly authoritarian or covertly authoritarian; in both cases, abusive principals were extremely coercive and control oriented, decisions were made unilaterally and, often, arbitrarily. Furthermore, in both cases, communication was one-way and intimidation was used to secure teachers’ compliance to decisions and decision-making processes. However, principals who used an overt approach to schoolwide governance frequently employed a direct, “in-your-face,” “make-my-day” approach to leadership. Teachers’ comments illustrate how overtly authoritarian-abusive principals approached faculty meetings and schoolwide decision making.

You don’t ask the principal anything, because he is just going to yell. If he knows the answer, he is not going to tell you. Faculty meetings were crazy; they didn’t accomplish anything. He would read a typed written agenda to us; it was just a joke. If you said something and he didn’t agree with it, then he would respond, “Did you understand what I said? Well, we are going to do it this way, because I am the principal.” We just sat there and wrote notes like, “Can you believe we are sitting here?”

Teachers also described overtly authoritarian principals’ approach to faculty committees.

Committee members were appointed by her based on whom she liked and whom she didn’t like: favoritism. She ran some of the committees. She just told you what to do; she didn’t participate. We knew that you couldn’t do anything to the contrary of what she would want, so the meetings went something like, “What do you think she wants us to do? Okay, let’s do that.” She had her spies. There was no way to discuss anything. There was no professional discussion. Everything was an order, and you just followed it and hoped to dodge criticism.

Indeed, all abusive principals used thinly veiled manipulative techniques to control teachers, such as negative comments (“We have done that before, it won’t work”) and pejorative labeling, vetoing faculty decisions, inviting dissenting faculty to “private” meetings, limiting time, and limiting agendas to particu-
lar topics to control faculty. However, covertly authoritarian-abusive principals attempted to maintain a veneer of shared decision making:

She said, “I will tell you how much shared governance there will be, what you can do, and the topics you can consider.” She is an absolute dictator. She has displayed, many times, that she didn’t care for people to express their feelings. Anybody who dared to speak up was not chosen to be on the committee to talk to the accreditation team. She put the wealthy Whites on committees, but she put Blacks, the “sucker uppers,” who do what she says, on committees as chairs. At one of those prep meetings, she said, “This is what you are going to say” and if we spoke up about anything negative, that was grounds for dismissal. We had shared leadership supposedly, but the principal was head of the leadership team. She made all the decisions.

Leaving one’s job

Most of the teachers we studied had been recognized as exemplary educators throughout their careers, and they reported that they “loved children.” For them, teaching remained a deep and enduring commitment, notwithstanding the chronic feelings of fear, anger, and depression that dominated their lives. Their decisions to leave the schoolchildren they loved and the schools in which their mistreatment occurred could be viewed as a form of final withdrawal from the profound pain and suffering that permeated their personal and professional lives. (“Every minute of every day I thought, ‘Please get me out of here.’”) (“I struggled with the idea of quitting. A lot of teachers just walked out and didn’t return.”) Other teachers were prepared to leave teaching altogether if they could not find employment in another school.

Before the end of the first year there, I thought that I made a horrible mistake. I knew that I couldn’t stay in that county. If I hadn’t been forced to stay, I would have quit—I would have gotten out of education. I just couldn’t do it another year.

Summary and discussion

Although this article has briefly described our findings related to what teachers perceive as abusive principal conduct, the deleterious effects of such conduct have been emphasized. A review of our findings points out that abusive principals, like abusive bosses in general, engage in similar behaviors. However, in contrast to the existing literature on boss abuse, we have conceptualized abusive conduct in terms of three levels of aggression. Such behaviors and related patterns of conduct are consistent with studies of abusive bosses conducted throughout the world in both profit and nonprofit organizations (Björkvist et al.,

Although we used no particular theoretical framework of workplace mistreatment/abuse to control data collection (Blumer, 1969; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), a comparison of our findings with Keashly’s (1998) definition of emotional abuse—constructed from a comprehensive review of the workplace abuse literature—indicates that teachers’ experiences of abuse and, in particular, the conditions under which teachers define a principal’s behavior as mistreatment or abuse, are consistent with what appears in the available literature. According to Keashly, individuals will tend to define a superior’s behavior as abusive if there is a pattern of verbal and nonverbal abuse, behaviors are unwanted, behaviors violate norms for appropriate conduct or an individual’s rights, behaviors are intended to harm as perceived by the target, behaviors result in harm, and there are power differences between the abuser and the target of abuse.

We also found that the effects of such mistreatment are extremely harmful to teachers’ professional and personal lives; like many thousands of workers represented in the extant literature—a number that has been extrapolated to be multimillions of workers—abused teachers experienced the same devastating effects. Beyond the teachers’ responses of shock and disorientation, humiliation, loneliness, and injured self-esteem, principal mistreatment seriously damaged in-school relationships, damaged classrooms, and frequently impaired all-school decision making. In addition, principals’ abuse of teachers resulted in severe psychological/emotional problems including chronic fear, anxiety, anger, and depression; a range of physical/physiological problems; and adverse personal/family outcomes (with respect to our findings, this last result is discussed in Blase & Blase, 2003) also discussed in the general empirical literature on boss abuse (Björkvist et al., 1994; Davenport et al., 1999; Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; NNLJ, 1993; Pearson, 2000; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991).

In addition, we found that teachers victimized by abusive principals seldom had viable opportunities for redress. This is consistent with other research that had demonstrated that victims’ complaints about abusive bosses typically result in (a) no action (no response) from upper management, (b) efforts to protect abusive bosses, and (c) reprisals against victims who complain (Bassman, 1992; Davenport et al., 1999; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly, 1998; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Pearson, 2000; Rayner, 1998). In fact, according to our findings, teachers rarely complained to district-level administrators because they expected “no help” and because they “feared” reprisals.

Furthermore, our findings point out that teachers were often unable to leave a
school in which they were abused, at least in a timely manner. Several factors of considerable importance frequently result in strong feelings of being “trapped,” for example, district policies prohibiting transfers; the high probability of negative letters of reference (and blackballing); weak unions; need for a job and health insurance; and the chronic effects of long-term abuse itself, that is, chronic fear, depression (self-doubt, feelings of helplessness), and fatigue, all factors that diminish one’s ability for proactive action, particularly in difficult circumstances (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996).

Finally, we reiterate that, consistent with Namie and Namie’s (1999) finding that workplace abusers often targeted “the bold, best and brightest,” the veteran teachers we studied were highly accomplished and dedicated individuals; these teachers had been recognized at the school, district, and frequently at the state level for their exceptional achievements. Such individuals, Namie and Namie speculated, might be threatening to administrators dominated by feelings of inferiority. Others have ascribed the problem, for example, to narcissism, an aggressive disposition, or a controlling disposition (Kets de Vries, 1989).

Theoretically speaking, our data indicate that principals employ a wide variety of indirect and direct verbal and nonverbal actions over the long term against targeted teachers that range from moderately to severely aggressive. For a given teacher, such actions constitute a unique pattern of mistreatment with regard to the types of actions (behaviors) employed and the frequency with which such actions (behaviors) are employed. In addition, teachers experienced all individual patterns of action (behavior) as seriously coercive, threatening, critical, deceptive, self-serving, and fundamentally unjust. Principal mistreatment is predictable inasmuch as teachers, once mistreated, believe that additional mistreatment is likely to occur, such actions are unpredictable in the sense that they could occur “anywhere, anytime . . . for any reason.”

Long-term patterns of principal mistreatment tend to dramatically, adversely, and comprehensively affect the teachers’ professional life. Regarding the former, principal mistreatment tends to result in substantial damage to teachers psychologically/emotionally and physically/physiologically, to classroom instruction, to relationships with colleagues, and to schoolwide decision making. Teachers’ early responses to principal mistreatment (e.g., shock, disorientation, confusion, humiliation, self-doubt, and lowered self-esteem) seem to increase the teachers’ vulnerability to additional mistreatment by an abusive principal by reducing her or his ability to cope with such mistreatment. These responses, in conjunction with the cumulative effects of long-term stress, tend to result in chronic fear and depression. Such psychological/emotional states, together with adverse physical/physiological states, as well as adverse professional (e.g., poor classroom instruction) and social states (e.g., damaged relationships with colleagues), combine to create significant “life-altering” experiences for teachers.
Implications for administrator and teacher preparation and professional educators

Most prospective administrators have been teachers and, as such, undoubtedly have experienced, observed, or heard about abusive conduct with regard to colleagues. Clearly, many are aware of its effects on victimized teachers and on schools as a whole. Nevertheless, preservice (e.g., university-based programs in educational leadership and teacher preparation programs) and in-service programs (e.g., those provided per school district policy, by union contracts, and within staff development opportunities) seldom directly address the “dark side” of school leadership and, as such, fail to equip prospective and practicing administrators and teachers with an understanding of and ability to deal with this incredibly destructive problem (Hodgkinson, 1991).

Interestingly, a survey of more than 300 school administrators and teachers about the practical value of studying the mistreatment problem (J. Blase & J. Blase, 2003) demonstrates the critical importance of this topic to administrators’ and teachers’ development as school “leaders.” One participant wrote,

The most important thing for me as I develop as an educational leader is to guard against behaving in an abusive way. After seeing the video and participating in class discussion, I reflect back to 2 years ago when I feel I was a victim of mistreatment by a varsity coach under whom I worked. I remember how vulnerable I was and how naïve I was going into the newly-acquired, sought-after position. My boss consistently snubbed me, called me out in front of the other players, and made me feel inferior and foolish. I feel like I am a very strong person but the effects of his position and his mistreatment had me questioning myself on a daily basis. I felt I was “asking” for the treatment I received; I constantly asked myself what on earth I was doing to upset this man so much that he would treat me in this fashion.

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1982) and theories of self-regulations and internalization (Vygotsky, 1978) point out that people often derive their most profound learning from a reflective understanding of social and linguistic life experiences (Tharp & Gallimore, 1998). Studies have confirmed this conclusion with respect to school leadership in particular (Blase & Blase, 1998; Ginsberg & Davies, 2001). This, of course, further signals the importance of vigorously addressing the mistreatment problem at both the pre-service and in-service levels, although the latter may be the safer place to address this problem, at least for the foreseeable future. To this end, university-based programs and field-based professional development programs can examine the phenomenon of principal mistreatment of teachers and consider questions such as the following:
• What conduct by school principals do teachers and administrators perceive as abusive?
• What is it about a school’s context, the principal’s role (e.g., negative role modeling by superiors, conflicting role expectations, unreasonable district policies), and those who occupy this role that can result in abusive conduct?
• What effect does such conduct have on teachers (e.g., What are the emotional and physical consequences for teachers, and how does such conduct affect teachers’ classroom instruction and student learning?)?
• What are the consequences of abusive conduct by principals on school climate and school culture?
• What coping strategies are efficacious for mistreated teachers?
• What actions can mistreated teachers take to deal with the problem?
• What actions can school-based administrators, school district office personnel, and school boards take to help principals deal with this problem (e.g., providing opportunities for principals to consider ways they encourage or discourage a respectful and supportive climate in the school, ways to become more aware of the impact of their behavior on teachers, and ways to deal with teachers’ concerns about being mistreated)?
• What policies and procedures can school personnel develop to protect teachers and provide relief from mistreatment?
• At what point should district office personnel move beyond counseling, guiding, and providing performance reviews of principals who mistreat others and move to disciplinary action or discharge?

All concerned with public education should work to create awareness of factors potentially related to the problem of abuse. For example, areas for study and action include gender issues, power issues, work stress, crisis management, conflict resolution, labor laws, development of positive psychological and social work environments, development of mission/vision/values statements including how employees should be treated, development of norms conducive to respect and caring in the workplace, friendly and respectful collegial interaction, and effective administrator and teacher orientation programs that include standards of professional ethics and codes of conduct.

Implications for further research

This study of principal mistreatment is the first study of its kind, and as such has generated new descriptive, conceptual, and theoretical knowledge in the general area of workplace mistreatment. It also contributes to the well-established micropolitical and leadership literature, for example, by describing in detail and for the first time the behaviors associated with abusive-authoritarian forms of school leadership as well as the serious adverse effects of such leadership on teachers and their work with students. As well, our study contributes directly to the teacher stress literature by providing detailed descriptions of the effects of mistreatment on teachers.
This article is the first empirical report of the experiences of abused teachers, that is, what, in teachers’ perspectives, constitutes principal mistreatment and its common effects on teachers’ work. Yet although we have begun to illuminate this problem, it nevertheless requires much more investigation. For example, principals’ mistreatment of teachers is contingent on a multitude of internal (i.e., personality) and external (i.e., organizational) factors (Hornstein, 1996). We would argue that as the call for educational reform and accountability become even more deliberate, the job of principal will become more complex, challenging, political, and stressful; this, in turn, may provide an even more fertile ground for the emergence of abusive conduct on the part of principals. (In fact, we have already heard numerous stories of principal mistreatment of teachers linked to new accountability measures.) Useful research could focus on the relationships between abusive principals’ personalities, preparation, and school contexts. Studies focusing on race, gender, and ethnicity of school principals and victimized teachers would be valuable. Studies of school district office personnel’s and boards of education’s perspectives and actions vis-à-vis the mistreatment problem would also be valuable.

In addition, quantitative studies using random samples of teachers are critical to understanding the pervasiveness of the principal mistreatment problem in our nation’s schools and elsewhere. Qualitative studies can provide descriptions beyond those provided here (i.e., beyond forms of abuse, effects, and how abuse is perceived by victims) to include the extent to which abusive principals recognize the effects of abuse, abusive principals’ intentions, how and under what contextual conditions abusive relationships evolve, victims’ interpretations of abusive principals’ behaviors, the degree to which victims may contribute to the abuse, when and how victims are willing to challenge abuse (i.e., Why does a teacher, who works in a professional culture wherein workers assiduously avoid conflict, ultimately decide to confront abusive treatment?), the effectiveness of district policies designed to stop abuse, and the exorbitant costs of abuse (e.g., related to investigations of complaints, teachers’ time, legal fees, union representation, health insurance claims, hiring, training, and teachers’ performance and productivity [Field, 1996]).

Knowledge of the principal mistreatment problem has special significance for school reform and restructuring efforts. Recent studies have found that principals’ use of manipulative and coercive types of power in school-restructuring initiatives (designed along collegial/democratic lines) has drastically undermined such efforts (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2001; Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Murphy & Louis, 1994a, 1994b; Reitzug & Cross, 1994). More research is necessary to fully understand how and under what circumstances school principals both consciously and unwittingly subvert school reform outcomes. Also, as noted above, our study is timely and useful in the field of education given recent research interest in schools as “caring” and “just” communities (Beck, 1994; Bolman & Deal, 1995; Glickman et al., 2001; Katz, Noddings, & Strike, 1999; Noddings, 1992) and the recent emergence of themes such as “organizational justice” in the
general organizational literature (Bies, 1987; Cropanzano, 1993; Enomoto, 1997). Educational researchers should consider studies of schools grounded in such perspectives.

Finally, it should be mentioned that school districts will undoubtedly be reluctant to grant researchers access to conduct studies of the mistreatment problem; it is not surprising that a majority of studies of general administrator abuse have been conducted outside the workplace (Hoel et al., 1999). This may mean that for the foreseeable future and until educators recognize this problem, future research will have to be conducted in limited ways and in places outside of schools.

Conclusion

As professors of educational leadership, we have spent decades researching and teaching about school leadership. We are aware that school principals are confronted with what seem to be insurmountable challenges and pressures: Their work is characterized by long hours and inadequate compensation (Olson, 1999) and they now face an explosion of demands and pressures related to school safety and violence, drugs, diversity, inclusion, site budgeting, aging teaching staffs, and unresponsive bureaucracies (Rusch, 1999) as well as new responsibilities linked to school reform including new power arrangements, collaborative planning, evaluation, and accountability (Murphy & Louis, 1994a). We are also aware that principals are confronted with unique challenges associated with the retention of quality teachers, inadequate facilities and instructional materials, and discouraged and disillusioned faculties (Steinberg, 1999). Moreover, we recognize that such challenges can result in dramatic emotional experiences for principals (Ginsberg & Davies, 2001); feelings of anxiety, loss of control, disempowerment, insecurity, anger, and frustration are not uncommon (Beatty, 2000; Evans, 1996). Indeed, we cannot adequately express our appreciation and respect for the women and men who meet such challenges with professional integrity, courage, and ingenuity.

Nevertheless, we are convinced that all of us, professors and professional educators, have failed to address the destructive problem of principal mistreatment of teachers. We believe that university and public school settings are frequently dominated by cultures in which conflict is strenuously avoided—a predictable phenomenon in that “conditions of conflict and ambiguity . . . are not merely irritating; in persistent and extreme form they are identity destroying” (Kahn, 1964, p. 6). Furthermore, avoiding a problem is a common way to ignore the difficulty inherent in working toward a genuine solution (Argyris, 1990; Owens, 2001); although such an approach consumes no time and energy, it fails to solve the problem that led to the conflict. Unfortunately, even small, avoided conflicts, derived, for example, from insensitivity in interpersonal relationships or from mere misunderstandings, often escalate into huge, debilitating crises. Indeed, lingering, hidden, unresolved problems constitute “conflict traps” that
may ultimately elicit strong, explosive, negative reactions (Boulding, 1964). The study discussed in this article provides the first step necessary for addressing and overcoming the mistreatment problem in constructive ways.

Now, more than ever before, school reform efforts require that principals and teachers at the school level work together collaboratively to solve educational problems. Such collaboration is successful when school principals build trust in their schools; trust, in turn, serves as a foundation for open, honest, and reflective professional dialogue; problem solving; innovative initiatives; and more directly, the development of the school as a powerful community of learners willing to take responsibility for and capable of success. All principals need to work toward these ends, and all individuals and organizations associated with public education should willingly confront the kinds of administrative mistreatment that, most assuredly, undermine such possibilities.

References


THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP


EMOTIONS AND GENDER


THE WORK OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS IN BUILDING CREATIVE AND PASSIONATE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Chris James


Introduction

It is a truism that all institutions – those organisations that have a specific purpose for the society in which they exist – are under the influence of emotions. Schools and colleges, as significant institutions in our society, are no exception. Although, educational institutions may appear to be rational places that function logically to achieve reasonable goals, which are intended to improve individual and societal well being and advancement, the reality is very different. Schools and colleges are heavily influenced by non-rational forces especially emotions, which can both enrich and disrupt their work. The emotional nature of the work can be overwhelming, taking those who work in schools and colleges from feelings of intense pleasure and satisfaction to the depths of despair, from feeling that teaching is the best job in the world to the worst, from facing the day in excited anticipation to one of fear and dread.

Although we may wish to remove emotion, dismiss it or even rationalise it – to de-emotionalise our work, it is ever present in educational leadership and management and always accompanies apparently rational processes. The very interesting point to be made in saying that is not what is being asserted but that it needs to be asserted at all. Such is the problematic nature of emotions – gate-crashers at the party, pesky interlopers, unexpected visitors who outstay their welcome, however you want to image them – that we seek to ignore them, wish them away or dismiss them as a display of weakness, frivolity or naivety. Unfortunately, emotions cannot be dismissed or set aside but need to be worked with using very different approaches.

So, the key question is: ‘How can leaders work with the emotional experience of their institutions to create them as places where creativity and innovation are
welcomed and where there is a passion for the work of educating young people? I hope in this paper to make a contribution to answering that question.

In this presentation, I will first explore some basic premises, so you are aware of the perspective I am taking. I will then briefly explore the nature of educational institutions as locales of high levels of emotion and anxiety and will describe some of the defences that are frequently put in place to defend against the emotional experience of leading, managing, teaching and learning in educational institutions. I will then will consider how emotions can be worked with to release the creativity and passion required to build transforming institutions that can generate, embrace and sustain new ways of working.

The basic premises

In this section, I outline some of the basic premises, that is, the ideas, concepts and aspects of theory, which underpin my thinking about the emotions, educational institutions and educational leadership and management.

**Emotions may be experienced both consciously and unconsciously and may be the consequence of phenomena important to us in our external and internal world – they are systemic processes.** Many of these phenomena, such as sexuality, rivalry and fear are deep and archaic and have an almost instinctual presence within us and in the worlds in which we live. They are therefore very powerful. Other forces, perhaps the consequence of other influences and experiences, started when we were born and perhaps began before then.

In educational institutions, emotions and the feelings they engender flow back and forth – sometimes dangerously. Emotions move between and within individuals, groups and institutions – throughout the whole system. Emotion is how power is experienced and interpreted within the system. Hence the very close link between emotion and politics. Emotion is inextricably linked to the micro-politics and macro-politics of the system. Over time, the continual flow of power and the experience of emotion create ways of working. In this way emotions have a significant impact on the culture of the institution – ‘The way we do things around here’ – and the culture of the individual – ‘The way I do things round here’. This emotional experience can create in the mind an institution that is stable, permanent and enduring. The dynamics of these emotions and the defences that are put in place to protect against them can compel the institution to work in certain ways. They can entrap those who work there and block the creativity and neutralise the passion required to undertake good educational work. The emotional experience, which is essentially abstract and untouchable, becomes reified and made real. Such institutions can be very resistant to change.

**The unconscious is a significant influence on our conscious behaviour and can help to explain why actions that have surface rationality and validity may at the same time have an unconscious and hidden meaning.** The unconscious contains our secret hopes, fears, desires, anxieties, urges and terrors and by definition we are not aware of them. We can never gain direct access to
the unconscious. So, whilst it is very helpful to have the emotional terrain or the geography of teaching and educational leadership mapped out in the way that Andy Hargreaves and others have, it is only a partial picture. To continue the earth science metaphor, the geology is at least as important if not more so. The emotional geology – the unconscious – has a very significant influence on what we do in institutions – especially educational ones. It shapes the surface layout, has enormous and uncontrollable power, and is unpredictable. We have some sense of its fault lines, but the reality is, the underlying structure is known only through occasional eruptions when it breaks through to the surface, and by occasional tremors and eruptions when it lets us know it is there.

Rational understandings, procedures and techniques may be helpful but emotions are not handleable in that way. So, while it may be helpful to attempt to ‘know emotions’, to understand them and to manage your own emotional state, it is not sufficient. Being ‘emotionally intelligent’ is not enough. The value base of emotional intelligence, what’s acceptable emotionally, and the purposes of those who advocate emotional intelligence are all open to question. Moreover, it is in experiencing emotions that the unconscious can come into play in unpredictable ways that can derail any emotionally intelligent behaviour. Likewise, to be emotionally literate, to be able to describe how one is feeling and to have a vocabulary through which to articulate one’s emotional experience is important. But we also need to make sense of the turmoil when we are inside it, which is of course, the worst place to be for emotional sense making. We may be unable to clear our heads of the emotional disturbance because emotions do stop us from thinking straight. And of course, it is one thing to be able to describe the profound comfort or discomfort that emotions can bring but quite another then to understand how to move forward from that place. Finally, it is also very helpful to have some skills and techniques for dealing with our emotional experience although on their own those capabilities are not sufficient. How we communicate, interact and relate to others of course has an emotional component. So, if we can improve those processes so that negative and perhaps unhelpful emotions are not generated, our emotional world is likely to be more comfortable. The problem is that those techniques can in themselves become tools for manipulation, defences against unwanted emotion and the tricks can be easily seen through and worked against.

The concept of the boundaries is helpful in understanding social systems. The boundary essentially separates that ‘which is part of a phenomenon’ from that ‘which is not’. This rather open definition is in a way helpful because it opens up the possibility for exploration rather than limiting those possibilities. The management of boundaries is a key aspect of institutional leadership. The notion of the boundary is usually used in connection with open systems theory and here are some specific points about the system boundary and leadership.

- The boundary separates the core of the system from the environment.
- Management of the boundary ensures that the core has the resources it requires to do its work, that resources in the core are not lost.
Management of the boundary ensures that the outputs of the system are appropriate for the environment.

Those responsible for boundary management have a sense-making role, interpretive, meaning-making role.

Occupying a position on the system boundary is not only the task of the boundary manager, but occupying that role enhances their authority.

Leaders need to occupy a position on the boundary of the system boundary.

Those in the core will attempt to pull the system leader off the boundary. It is a form of attack on the leader’s authority.

There is a good case for arguing that anxiety is the dominant emotional force in many educational institutions. Anxiety, which has very primitive roots, is present in its own right and can be closely connected with other emotions and instinctual drives. For example, a person may be anxious about experiencing unpleasant feelings such as sadness, sorrow and dismay. There may also be anxiety associated with pleasurable feelings. What price might one have to pay in the future for feeling good now? Anxiety can also drive the generation and expression of feelings. Having feelings of any kind relieves the anxiety that one’s existence is empty and apparently meaningless. Anxiety may be difficult but anxiety in the right amounts may be a key motivator and driver of creativity – more of that later. So, anxiety and emotion are inextricably inter-twined, with anxiety having a central and crucial place.

Schools are locales for high levels of anxiety and emotion. For number of reasons, schools are places of high levels of anxiety.

1 The special nature of the primary task of educational institutions. The primary task of schools, enabling pupils to learn, will carry anxiety, as do all primary tasks. However, it is a primary task centrally concerned with change. So, the primary task of educational institutions carries additional anxiety.

2 Learning is associated with risk and uncertainty. Almost every aspect of learning – the imperative to learn, the learning process and the outcomes of learning – are associated with risk and uncertainty and therefore anxiety.

3 The process of teaching. Teaching is likely to be associated with anxiety. It is a complex, inter-connected, and inter-personal activity, which has a history and the many different facets to it, which have to be coped with publicly and at the same time. All these characteristics are potential instigators of anxiety. Also, teachers may be the recipients of the projection by society of the troublesome feelings associated with any national failure, deficiency or decline.

4 The nature of relationships in educational institutions. Relationships in schools, which are continually changing, can invoke strong feelings and desires that can potentially cause anxiety.

5 New models of professional practice. New understandings of professional
practice, such as reflective practice, place responsibility on teachers to improve their practice through reflection on their actions. These models can convey a message that teachers are to be condemned to a professional life of unending change driven by a fear that they will never be, and can never be, ‘good enough’.

6 Curriculum and management changes. The level and extent of imposed change in recent years have increased levels of anxiety for teachers and educational leaders and managers.

7 Changes in the external environment. Recent changes in technology and in society generally are changing the nature of education and increased accountability in education and eroded the *ex officio* professional authority of teachers.

8 The centrality of education. Educational institutions are about the management of processes that are central to society in general and to every person’s life. ‘Education’ therefore carries a high emotional content and the education system is likely to be the recipient of projected anxiety from the rest of society.

9 The continual re-creation of ‘the school’. Although schools may seem to be machine-like in the way they run – with the term dates set, the school diary organised for this week’s meetings, everyone’s timetable in place, the bell ringing absolutely on time, in fact they have to be created from scratch continually by those who work there. This continual process of re-creation is an additional source of anxiety.

We try to protect ourselves against the pain associated with unpleasant and difficult emotions and seek out pleasurable emotions. These protective patterns of behaviour are called social defences. They may have been learned over a long period and their origins perhaps date back to the earliest stages of an individual’s or institution’s life. Social defences are important because of the way they protect against the pain linked with strong feelings.

The different types of social defence are listed below.

*Resistance*. This social defence is the maintenance of the *status quo* by opposing change. In this way, the anxiety associated with the change is reduced. Importantly, resistance, especially when it is given a gloss of rationality, also reduces the anxiety associated with revealing that a response to the proposed change is essentially emotional and not rational.

*Repression*. When recollections, urges and feelings are too anxiety provoking they are assigned to the unconscious by a process known as repression. For example, the professionally and personally unacceptable feelings of sexual attraction that teachers may have their students may be repressed in order to give protection from the anxiety that such feelings provoke.

*Regression*. When events at work carry a great deal of emotion and/or anxiety, individuals may resort to behaviours that have been learned earlier in their lives in order to limit the pain associated with those feelings. These behav-
iours will include those learned in the earliest stages of a person’s life and therefore may be very child-like.

**Covert coalitions.** As a way of coping with the emotions of working, members of an institution may make recourse to familiar relationships that have protected them from anxiety and emotional pain in the past. This defence can be viewed as a particular form of regression. To gain relief, individuals regress to the kinds of relationships in which they and the colluding other or others are well versed.

**Identification.** Individuals may seek to limit the anxiety associated with enacting their own behaviours by identifying with others. In a school, heads of department may seek to identify with the headteacher in order to gain protection from the anxiety associated with their managerial work. For this reason and others all leaders have to ‘re-create the new’, that is to change and adapt themselves regularly and frequently. In this way, the followers do not become limited and restricted in the expression of their full potential by what is, in effect, the object of their envy.

**Reaction formation.** Occasionally, individuals will gain protection from the complexity of organisational life by the process of reaction formation. Working life is full of contradictions and unresolvable paradoxes. These can cause an inner tension and anxiety. Protection from this anxiety is gained by over-emphasising one of the pair of contradictory characteristics rather than holding them all in balance. So, a headteacher may find it hard to hold in mind that all his staff have both valuable and not so valuable qualities but seek to idealise the behaviour of some at the expense of others. These others are consigned to the not-favoured category.

**Denial.** The process of rejecting and putting aside any unacceptable aspect of the external reality is termed ‘denial’. These aspects may be thoughts, feelings and emotions which are too difficult to cope with largely because they are too anxiety provoking. They are pushed out of conscious awareness and into the unconscious. For example, a teacher in a primary school may deny that a forthcoming inspection is likely to be a cause of anxiety and real concern. Denial may on occasion be confirmed through negation. In negation, an individual may persistently and repeatedly reject a particular idea when that idea does not need to be disavowed so overtly. The teacher anxious about inspection may consistently assert that there’s really nothing to worry about and that the impact of inspection is always over-estimated.

**Organisational rituals.** The term ‘ritual’ is used to describe an established procedure or aspect of practice that has no apparent connection to a rational understanding of experience. These reified practices are probably the most durable and externalised form of defence against work-related anxiety. For individuals in a work institution, including teachers, these rituals can give structure, security and a sense of order to a potentially unstructured, insecure and chaotic working life.

**Splitting and projection.** A very common protection against anxiety and
emotion is a process whereby difficult feelings that give rise to internal conflicts are split into their differentiated elements. The process of splitting is often accompanied by projection where difficult elements are located in other individuals and objects rather than in the individual themselves. This condition of splitting and projection is known as the paranoid-schizoid position. The alternative to the paranoid-schizoid stance is the integrated position. With this approach, which is called the depressive position, the individual gives up the security and simplicity achieved through splitting and projection and faces the confusion, paradox, inconsistency, incongruity and conflict created by the mismatch between internal and external realities. Splitting and projection is a very common social defence in institutions.

The transformation of anxiety and emotion into creativity

Whilst some social defences are useful they can have a very negative effect organising in institutions and institutional change.

Their purpose and value to the individual – and the institution – is to protect from reality by blocking contact with it. They can prevent the members of the institution from realising that change is required. They can hinder meaningful engagement with the work of the institution. They can prevent the consequences of actions being known, understood and reflected upon. Very importantly they impede learning.

Because of their important purpose and the fact that they do their job very effectively, they are often repeated in response to new anxiety-laden situations. They become part of the scripts on which individuals and institutions base their lives. Moreover, and very significantly, social defences can be very resistant to change. There is a case for arguing that the more anxiety-laden an institution, the more it is likely to resort to defensive behaviours.

The excessive presence of social defences and the creation of a ‘defensive’ institution can make change very difficult in educational institutions and brings into play the ‘double whammy of educational change’. A change to a social defence of any kind, is like any change, a source of anxiety. But it will be a change to a process the purpose of which is to protect against anxiety. So the change is likely to increase anxiety levels. We therefore get double the dose of anxiety when changing social defences.

So, leaders in educational institutions need to minimise social defences in their institutions and manage the high levels of anxiety that result from educational change. Educational leaders have three important and linked tasks in this work: Boundary management, containment and acting as a transitional object.

Boundary management

The emotion-laden nature of educational institutions can disrupt the boundary management of those who work in them causing them for example, to take on
too much (boundary too permeable) or to becoming very defended and cautious (boundary impermeable). Leaders of schools and colleges need to work on boundary management in three important ways.

1. Managing the boundary between the internal experience and the external reality of those who work in the organisation and ensuring that defensive behaviour is not preventing meaningful contact with the external world.

2. Managing the boundaries between roles. The basis of this is clear definition of job responsibilities, encouraging others (individuals and groups) to find appropriate roles, to make appropriate roles and to take appropriate roles.

3. Managing their own boundaries so they are not prey to the emotions that are inevitably projected towards them in their leadership role.

**Containment**

Containment is a term first coined by Wilfrid Bion in the context of psychoanalysis. It is primarily concerned with providing the conditions that facilitate effective and authentic receptiveness and reflection. The secure framework provides a holding environment in which the emotions and anxieties of experience can be surfaced and worked with. It contrasts with a controlling environment where emotions and anxieties are restrained, held back and not allowed to become apparent. In a controlling environment, emotions and anxieties have to be dealt with in other ways and because they may be painful may need to be defended against. Controlling environments may therefore call up social defences.

Here we can see again the important part that leadership capability throughout the institution (or shared or distributed leadership) can play especially when it complements leadership capability at the head of the institution. Leadership that emerges and is part of the processes of organising – organisational leadership – within the institution helps in the process of containment. The container is strengthened by the cross-links that leadership throughout the institution can provide and of course the more widely it is spread the more secure that containment function becomes.

**Acting as a transitional object**

Elsewhere, I have argued that educational leaders have a role in being the temporary (ideally) recipient of difficult feelings that others in the institution cannot manage themselves (James and Connolly 2000). These feelings need to be acted out somewhere.

For example, where better (sic) than in the headteacher’s office or in the department office ‘sounding off’ to the head of department. In this role as a holder of difficult feelings, which many leaders will recognise, the leader’s role
may simply be to hear the feelings of others, rather than respond to them, and importantly, to ‘take them on’ rather than ‘take them in’. The danger with taking them in (introjecting them) is that they can then become a burden and source of stress to the recipient. Furthermore, it is usually unwise to act on the basis of projected emotion. The action may be out of proportion, imagined or itself be the response of the projections of others.

But I want to extend that role, the holder of difficult feelings, to one of acting as a form of transitional object. Winnicott first used the idea of the transitional object to explain the part that articles such as teddy bears and comfort blankets can play in an infant’s development. The transitional object, as the first ‘not me’ object (Davis and Wallbridge 1981), can create and occupy a mental space that is neither subjective nor objective. This space is a transitional zone that is retained throughout life in the intense experiencing that belongs to art, imagination and creativity (Winnicott, 1951 p 242).

So, leaders have a role with others in containing anxiety and emotion and developing and sustaining the transitional zone, thereby transforming anxiety and emotion into creativity. This work involves:

- managing boundaries particularly between subjective and objective worlds to ensure that there is a continual interplay and free movement between the subjective and the objective worlds because that is the zone of creativity;
- ensuring that boundary between the subjective and the objective is not blocked by social defences;
- providing a containing environment that allows emotions and anxieties to be experienced and held and not projected out into the external world or retained in an internal world but are held and worked with.

How might leaders make this happen in practice? Here are some examples.

- Providing a secure framework within which the work of the institution can take place
- Continual explanation of what might really be going on – especially in times of change – in terms of internal and external realities.
- Modelling – ‘walking the talk’, not falling prey to their own emotional mismanagement.
- Learning to identify defensive behaviours – their own and others’.
- Spotting and rectifying anti-task behaviour.
- Talking to people about their experience rather than their defences.
- Encouraging colleagues to talk about how they feel.
- Facing up to and resolving conflict.
- Checking out that their feelings are theirs and not the introjected feelings of others.
Releasing passion in educational institutions

We are all driven by psychic forces – for which Freud coined the term ‘libido’. These forces may be predominantly sexual, Freud’s termed the life instinct ‘Eros’, or may be a desire for death withdrawal and return if you take Freud’s death instinct, ‘Thanatos’. Although Freud used the term instinct to describe these forces, ‘drives’ may be a better term. The ‘drive’ concept has been broadened by other theorists. Drives may be the forces within us that give us ambition, a desire to make some kind of difference, or to lead a good life, however we configure that. At a fundamental level, they are about sex, aggression, and rivalry. At a more learned and acquired level, they might be about narcissism, a desire to control, to please people and to be well thought of, to achieve, to be perfect, to repair inner damage, or a desire for security and safety.

Some of these forces are very strong – so strong that we may wish to conceal them or to hope they are not there. They can become pathological and then very dangerous. They can combine to become fetishes and significant disturbances. There is a good case for arguing that they are seen simply associated with the typically male oriented agentic behaviour, but that is a narrow view of what they are. Whatever, in a ‘civilised society’ some of these forces can be seen as difficult. But they are very important and of course, they are the wellspring of passion and I would argue that it is important to be passionate.

Some important issues

Drives are of course very important; they are what push us to do what we do. It is important that they are recognised and worked with. Leaders of institutions need to be aware of them, to work with them and enable the institution and its members to become passionate about their work.

A degree of narcissism can be helpful. There’s nothing wrong with having a sense of justifiable pride. But in extreme, such people become virtually unmanageable, all problems are of others causing and they attract passivity and subservience in others who are prepared to collude with their delusion.

Passions and drives are crucial but they can very easily become distorted, mis-directed or come to dominate action over reflection and other more thoughtful processes.

Importantly passionate energy can be mis-directed into defensive behaviour so that people work harder dissociating themselves from the outside world than engaging with it with their full energy.

The sexual energy of working with colleagues to whom we are attracted is important in schools and colleges but it is often underplayed. It disappears as part of the de-emotionalisation of work in schools.

The aggression needed to undertake difficult work can spill over into a sense of anger and negativity towards others.

Rivalry can become a competitive urge that can distort the rationale for
achieving the primary task. Do the teachers in a school work hard to be seen to be the best in the eyes of the headteacher, a kind of re-worked sibling rivalry, or are they motivated by wanting to do good educational work with their pupils? Is a headteacher driven by wanting to be the head of the best school or by being the head of a school doing the best that it can in the way that it wants? The key question is ‘What you are really competing for and what you want to be doing?’

The desire to control – monitoring, checking, ensuring things happen are important management activities, but if that is all you do then the organisation feels restrained, repressed and held in check. And of course an excessive desire to control can make delegation more difficult which may have many unwanted consequences.

A desire to please and to be well thought of is of course very useful. Such colleagues can be great to work with. But all too often it can lead to role overload, a lack of focus and can be a cause of stress and burn out.

A desire to achieve again can be very valuable quality but if achieving is all that counts it can drive out collaborative and enabling ways of working, which are essential in good leadership, can lead to an obsession with doing at the expense of being and reflecting (and therefore learning) and can narrow the focus at the expense of seeing the bigger picture.

Being a perfectionist can also be very helpful. It is good to have things done well but if it becomes obsessive then nothing is ever good enough, jobs don’t get completed and job may not be started because to do it perfectly becomes a monumental task.

To repair inner damage or to undertake what Melanie Klein called reparation can be a very important drive. It may be what drives headteachers to turn around failing schools. By doing so they create an object of beauty in the way that artists may seek to repair inner damage through their work. However, over-identification with the object that has been created can cause difficulties in succession and in enabling continual change.

A desire for security can be of value. To be standing on secure ground can be very helpful but if that desire becomes excessive so that much needed change is blocked, then that desire has become unhelpful.

**Some thoughts about working with passion**

Passion, just like anxiety and emotion needs to be continually worked with for example, as follows.

Don’t address the distortion; address what people want to do, to achieve, to become.

Reflect together – schools need to be communities of leaders. If leaders are going to lead together, they must learn together. Organisational leadership needs organisational learning.

The pathway of development in this way is not a straightforward one. The process ‘zigzags’ – sometimes forward to a new place, sometimes backwards in
regression, sometimes sideward to a different perspective. That is the nature of development of this kind. Give space for the energy to emerge and time for reflection and renewal.

The resolution of the distortions of energy can result in a sense of authenticity and the notion of ‘flow’ that is “being totally, and positively, absorbed in what one is doing: a deep sense of rightness, goodness, engagement or being” (Fineman, 2003 pp23).

So, what happens when creativity and passion are released? That is when schools can move to a new place in their development, that of transformation. Importantly, by integrating passion and creativity, they can move beyond recognising the importance of sustainability in educational change and work to achieve generativity (Gutmann 2003).

The notion of generativity

The concept of generativity was first explored by the psychologist Erikson, who has made a significant contributor to our understanding of ego development and identity. Essentially, Freudian in perspective though critical of Freud’s work in many ways, he sees development, for which he borrows a term from embryology – epigenesis – as an organised or stage-wise process of acquiring essential “qualities of strength” or “virtues” (Erikson, 1964 p113). Each stage of the development process has a “time of ascendance and crisis, yet each persists throughout life”. Each part exists before “its decisive and critical time normally arrives . . . and remains systematically related to all others . . . so that the whole ensemble depends on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item” (Erikson, 1982 p29). The virtues may be passed on from generation to generation and each preceding stage has both the seeds and the remnants of the other stages and each preceding stage sets the conditions for the subsequent ones.

Erikson describes eight stages from birth to death, which are characterised by a dialectic, the resolution of which creates a virtue. So, for example young adulthood is characterised by the Intimacy-Isolation dialectic, which, when resolved, yields the virtue of fidelity. Virtues to emerge include hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity in early adulthood, and love, care and wisdom in later adulthood.

In the period of adulthood that spans the late 20s to the late 50s, the crisis is represented by Generativity versus Stagnation. The resolution of this crisis yields ‘care’, which is a concern for obligations “generated by love, necessity or accident” (Thomas, 1996, p146). The goal of this stage is development of productivity set in the context of a wider contribution to society at a higher level than individual achievement, and key accomplishments include the passing on of knowledge and skills, training of the next generation and becoming a leader in their organisation. In these middle adult years, Erikson considered that a person might come to realise that “I am what survives me”. According to McAdam and de St Aubin (1998) who
have explored the notion of generativity, it is a new definition of success. Highly
generative adults see their lives as filled with redemptive sequences where negative
events give way to a positive ones, which redeem the initial negative experience.
Erikson argued that to be generative people must have a “basic belief in the
species”. They must have faith that despite suffering and setback and despite evil,
human beings are potentially good, and human life can be good for generations to
come. It is this belief that sustains most of our generative efforts. Holding out hope
for ultimate redemption gives us faith that our legacies will be good and that things
may work out in the long run.

Schools and generativity

Of course, in so many ways these schools have a generative purpose. They care
for the next generation and seek to pass on skills and knowledge to that genera-
tion. But how must schools be to be generative in their work. Generative schools
and colleges and those who work in them and lead them:

- have within them the virtues of hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity,
  love, and wisdom, very importantly, they are caring institutions
- are creative and value creativity in all aspects of their work
- are passionate about their work, their passion is grounded and their work
  has meaning and significance to them
- work to enhance their change capacity – their capacity for re-generation.
- are effective and efficient in all aspects of their work – they have determina-
tion (a ‘will’), direction and an idea of the ‘destination’ (that is, they have a
  sense of purpose)
- recognise, value and develop uniqueness and individuality (not do so would
  be not to care).
- are inclusive (again, not ‘to include’ is a manifestation of a separation – a
defence, and would deny the obligations “generated by love, necessity or
  accident” that are the essence of care).
- are transforming institutions where there is continual learning, creation,
  continuance and extension. They embrace their responsibility to develop
  those with less experience or expertise – not just the pupils.
- are conscious of succession and continually look to develop the capability
  that will sustain the institution in its transforming state.
- are generous with what they give to others.
- are led generative leaders who recognise that they are but ‘temporary custo-
dians’ of the institution, who must endeavour to ensure that they hand on
the school or college to others as an established, purposeful and dynamic
institutions capable of sustaining transformation.
Concluding comments

So, in conclusion, I have briefly explored the nature of educational institutions as locales of high levels of emotion and anxiety and described some of the defences that are frequently put in place to defend against the emotional experience of leading, managing, teaching and learning in educational institutions. I have also considered how emotions can be worked with to release the creativity and passion required to transform schools and colleges into generative institutions. Such institutions can generate, embrace and sustain new ways of working and are of course led by generative leaders. Perhaps the next step is to start exploring the characteristics of generative leaders.

References

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
A feminist critique and reconstruction

Jill Blackmore


We now have fewer women heads of educational institutions than we had in the first two decades of this century. . . . When women move into male areas, they remain clustered at the lower levels, marginally represented at the middle levels and absent from the top other than the occasional deviant, nonconformist, articulate, pioneer. On a national scale there are fewer than 3% women heads of mixed institutions in education.

(Byrne, quoted in Sampson, 1983, p. 52)

The structural barriers can be seen in the cultivation of young male teachers in appropriate administrative and organisational tasks, while in the first five years of teaching, many women teachers concentrate on child centred tasks. In this way, authority in schools becomes linked with masculinity and leadership in education takes on a masculine image.

(Sampson, 1983)

This chapter constitutes a marking out of territory which has significance for education and educational administration. Leadership is a concept central to theories of how organizations such as schools and educational bureaucracies work since, historically, schools have been organized in hierarchical ways. Authority is seen to be legitimately accorded to the principal, generally a male. Increasingly the ways in which schooling and school knowledge are defined and organized have been contested. The implications of the gendered and hierarchical division of labour within education for pedagogy and organizational life have been recently theorized about and questioned (Connell, 1987; Apple, 1985). Similarly organizational theory, the source of many central concepts of educational administration, has only begun to be criticized for its gender-blindness (Hearn and Parkin, 1983). Emphasis in this criticism has been on the masculinist
model which has been assumed to portray all experience. The assumption of the
universality of the male experience has been the consequence of a privileging of
positivist knowledge claims and research approaches. It is this positivist
research paradigm which has informed the liberal interventionist policies of
equal opportunity during the 1970s and early 1980s. Premised upon sex role
socialization theory, such policies sought to facilitate individual women taking
on ‘leadership roles’ in schools in order to create a more equitable gender
balance, and in so doing establish role models for girls and other women as
‘leaders’. But the reduction of women in such positions over this period suggests
that the issue is more complex than merely a matter of numbers.

This paper argues that whilst the conceptualization of leadership in education
is seen to be unproblematic, there is little hope for education becoming a site for
emancipatory change. A particular view of leadership premised upon liberal the-
ories of abstract individualism and bureaucratic rationality, and supported by
positivistic theories of knowledge which privilege universal laws of administra-
tion and human behaviour, has become dominant in educational administration.
The universal individual central to this perspective of leadership is modelled
upon men’s experience. Hierarchical relationships are considered to be the
‘givens’ of ‘rational’ organizational life. Leaders display attributes and behav-
iours, possess moral virtues and principles, which are generally associated with
‘masculinity’. It is a view which has effectively displaced women in educational
thought, and therefore rendered women invisible in administrative practice
(Martin, 1984). Currently it is epitomized in the view of school principals as
corporate managers.

It is necessary, therefore, to reconstruct a view of leadership which counters
the emphasis on individualism, hierarchical relationships, bureaucratic ration-
ality and abstract moral principles. I propose, therefore, elements of what would
constitute a feminist reconstruction of the concept of leadership. These would
include a view of power which is multi-dimensional and multi-directional.
Leadership is seen as being practised in different contexts by different people
and not merely equated to formal roles. Leadership looks to empower others
rather than have power over others. Such a view assumes a relational view of
morality in which moral practice is rational within given contexts and social and
political relations and not according to abstract moral laws or principles. Leader-
ship is concerned with communitarian and collective activities and values. Thus
the process of leading is both educative and conductive to democratic process,
and, one would hope, consistent with education.

Problems and explanations: the liberal interventionist
approach

During the last fifteen years federal and state governments have introduced affir-
mative action and recognized the principle of equal opportunity through both
legislative and policy initiatives. Despite this, the number of women in ‘leader-

278
ship positions’ in education in Australia, Great Britain and the USA has
decreased (Yeakey, Johnson and Adkinson, 1986). In the state of Victoria,
Australia, in the period 1971–1983 the percentage of female principals in the sec-
ondary system fell from 20 to 11 per cent, whilst the percentage of female
teachers increased from 45 to 52 per cent of all teachers. In the adjoining state of
New South Wales the percentage of female primary principals decreased from
28 to 19 per cent of all principals (Sampson, 1987). This phenomenon can be
partially explained as a consequence of the declining school population, the
reclassification of staff appointments, and major educational and administrative
restructuring in most state systems since the early 1980s. Opportunities for
advancement in the promotional stakes are often reduced in a contracting
system, particularly for latecomers, as many women are, to long-term careers.
But economic conditions and structural impediments alone are inadequate expla-
nations of another feature of what is a re-emerging pattern of masculine domi-
nance. This second feature is the tendency for many women who have the
qualifications, expertise and aptitude often not to apply for positions of leader-
sip in schools as principals. Furthermore, those women who do apply indicate a
‘preference’ for more democratic styles of school organization and administra-
tion (State Board, 1986). This ‘problem’ is the focus of this chapter.

There are a number of conventional explanations which have dominated the
social science research over the past two decades which suggest reasons for
this ‘failure’ of women to possess those aspirations, behaviours and attributes
for leadership so readily displayed by their male counterparts. Women, it
would be construed from such research, ‘fear’ success and lack ‘self-esteem’,
are passive and non-aggressive. These explanations, it will be shown later,
imply a female ‘deficiency’ in terms of ‘leadership’ skills, attributes and
vision. At this stage I wish to suggest that there will be little change in the
historical dominance of males in educational administration whilst policy-
makers and many liberal feminists merely look to increase the numbers of
women in educational administration, in what I call the ‘liberal interventionist’
approach. It is necessary to ‘go beyond the numbers game’, in which gender
equity is assumed to result purely from the better ‘representation’ of women in
positions of authority, and to question the very concept of leadership itself,
how it is portrayed in the literature, and how it is perceived by women and the
community in education. It is the continuing association of masculinity with a
particular view of leadership, especially in education where women constitute
over half the occupation, which is problematic. How the particular notion of
leadership dominant in educational administration has been socially and
historically constructed in a way that connects so-called ‘masculine’ character-
istics to leadership will be a theme of this paper. The deconstruction of
this ‘masculinist notion of leadership’ will largely be at a theoretical and
conceptual level, in laying out and displaying the assumptions underlying the
dominant notion of leadership, although the policy ramifications will not be
totally ignored.

279
Whilst I would argue that liberal feminism, in supporting this ‘interventionist approach’, has only achieved ‘success’ for the few, largely middle-class women by not challenging the norms, institutions and structures of masculine dominance in education, this is not to be dismissive of the achievements of liberal feminists during the past decades, or denigratory of liberal reforms as merely co-option of feminist discourse. It is necessary to record, analyze and account for the discrepancies, contradictions and failures of this period in order to create the basis for more radical change. Much of the valuable work on women in educational administration has mapped out the patterned discrimination against women, analyzed why and how it has been historically constructed and reproduced, indicating the structural, psychological and social factors influencing women’s opportunities (Adkinson, 1981). Strategies have been developed and undeniably affirmative action policy has gone some way in removing the structural impediments in particular to the progression of women into ‘leadership positions’ (equating them at this stage with formal bureaucratic roles), whilst enforcing at least superficial change to the sexist attitudes pervading state controlled educational institutions. But it is necessary to go a step beyond having women ‘represented’ in administrative positions, and undertake a more radical critique from a feminist perspective of the very nature of educational administration and leadership.

Feminism as critique

First, let me discuss my intentions in mounting a feminist critique. Although I talk of a feminist critique, it is necessary to remember that there is no single feminist theory, but rather a body of theories which take on different political hues ranging from liberal feminism to radical separatism. Furthermore, there is a high level of scepticism amongst some feminists about the need for theory at all because of the feminist emphasis on personal experience and understandable distrust of intellectualism. Some radical separatists urge that feminist theory must necessarily reject all that is masculine and set up a theoretical framework in opposition. I would reject both views in favour of the stance that all world views are theory-ridden. The issue is whether these theories are made explicit or not, and the level of theoretical generalization (Gatens, 1986, p.14). Nancy Hartsock expresses it well:

We must understand that theorising is not just done by academic intellectuals but that theory is always implicit in our activity and goes so deep as to include our understanding of reality . . . we can either accept the categories given us by capitalist society or we can begin to develop a critical understanding of our world. If we choose the first alternative, our theory may forever remain implicit. In contrast, the second is to commit ourselves to working out a critical and explicit theory.

(Hartsock, 1979, p.57)
It is necessary to critique the established social theories of politics, economics, philosophy and psychology in order to understand what, how and why the feminine perspective has been obliterated from social theory, and more specifically in this paper from what is construed to be ‘leadership’. Barbara Johnson describes what such a critique would involve:

It is an analysis that focuses on the grounds of that system’s possibility. The critique reads backwards from what seems natural, obvious, self-evident, or universal, in order to show that these things have their history, their reasons for being the way they are, their effects on what follows from them, and that the starting point is not a (natural) given but a (cultural) construct, usually blind to itself. . . . Every theory starts somewhere; every critique exposes what that starting point conceals and therefore displaces all the ideas that follow from it.

(Johnson, 1981, p.xii–xvi)

Such a critique raises epistemological, moral and political and not merely methodological questions. At the same time that social theory is reworked from a critical perspective, theory can act, in the Foucauldian sense, as a working tool, a strategy through which to critique instances and historical moments intent on reconstruction rather than construction of an alternative theoretical perspective (Morris and Paton, 1979, p.57). In constructing a ‘feminist critique’ of leadership in education I will be undertaking a critical analysis of and reflection on how women have been displaced from or submerged in both organizational and political theory, and how much of this invisibility of women has permeated the everyday commonsense notions of ‘leadership’.

Before commencing this critique, a further consideration must be acknowledged, although it will not be developed here. Problematic to both stating theory explicitly and critiquing social theory is the nature of language and text. Sarah Fildes asserts that the traditional invisibility of women in theory can be explained partially by the conceptual language and terminology which have implicit masculinist values and models which must be questioned (Fildes, 1983, p.62). The use of certain concepts often sets the agenda and boundaries of a discourse (whether in theory, practice or policy), which in turn determines the direction and force of the final analysis. An essential aspect of feminist theory and feminism, therefore, is to question all that is ‘given’, to question what is not included in the discourse as much as what is, and what has been reinterpreted in a manner which displaces women’s interests. Such a questioning can often commence from the dissonance between personal experience, commonsense knowledge and theory. This is the position implicit in the liberal interventionist model, which assumes that if more women can and do become ‘successful’ leaders, then societal behaviour and attitudes will change when personal experience ‘bumps up against’ myths about females in leadership roles. As to whether the success of women such as Thatcher in the particular mode of
leadership I will be critiquing — that which focuses upon hierarchy, authority, individualism and claims of rationality — is desirable for women is another matter. Similarly, in a period of rampant corporate managerialism in education, whilst the rhetoric centres on notions of efficiency, skill, hierarchy and control, leadership takes on particular forms and encourages particular approaches (Ministry of Education, 1986). In this sense discourse itself is a form of ‘power over others’, of masking conflict, of being deployed to reinforce consensus, of constraining action and prescribing behaviours. Power therefore infuses discourse. But discourse can be an instrument of either domination or emancipatory effort (Elshtain, 1982, pp.127–9). This particular point will be elaborated in the last section, in which new elements and parameters for an alternative feminist discourse on educational leadership are offered.

Therefore, essential to a critical feminist perspective of leadership is a critique of the central concepts in the bodies of theory which inform educational administration and which control the parameters of the discourse — concepts such as rationality, individuality, competence and merit. Such a critique undermines the gendered historical and social construction of the relationship between social structures which are construed to be ‘given’ and ‘neutral’, such as bureaucracies and organizations, and the individual. Secondly, it challenges the particular views about the nature of human activity and potentiality implicit in such theories. Finally, such a critique analyzes the particular epistemological underpinnings of theories of leadership. These aspects of social structure, human agency and epistemology are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and will be dealt with accordingly.

The next section addresses the ways in which traditional views of leadership have dominated educational administration and how leadership has been socially and historically constructed in a manner which looks to characteristics of ‘successful’ masculine leaders as those constituting leadership. The following section attempts to develop a better understanding of how liberal political theory has encouraged this hegemonic masculinist view of leadership, which is premised upon particular interpretations of rationality, morality, organization and individualism, and is typical of Western societies. In turn, other social, economic and political arrangements such as the dominance of a positivistic epistemology in social science, together with the bureaucratization of social life have supported this particular leadership perspective. The ‘liberal interventionist’ approach underlying many equal opportunity policy initiatives is derived largely from within this tradition. Next the notions of individual competitiveness, bureaucratic rationality and abstract morality are discussed as central to the traditional, masculinist construct of leadership. Finally, an alternative feminist perspective of leadership will be presented; one that takes into account the historical and social construction of organizations and knowledge, and which presents a view of leadership which is essentially relational and communitarian.
Leadership in organizational theory: a masculinist construct

To return to the initial question, how has the underrepresentation of women in formal leadership positions been explained in the conventional literature on leadership? Women have been cast in organizational theory as being deficient in terms of leadership skills and attributes. Theories of leadership developing within a positivistic epistemology have relied upon empirical studies of those who are or have been in formal positions of leadership; that is, men. Historical accounts of ‘great men’ merely substantiate what is already seen to be self-evident. The behaviours, traits and characteristics displayed by men in formal positions of authority have become the ‘givens’ of leadership. Therefore, leadership in organizations has been historically associated with particular characteristics which are more frequently depicted as ‘masculine’ than ‘feminine’ — aggressiveness, forcefulness, competitiveness and independence. Positivistic social science in general, and organizational and administrative theory in particular, have construed that what is masculine experience is universal across time, context and gendered subject. Theoretical work on the social construction of sexuality, from both functionalist and feminist perspectives, has rarely been related to organizational processes or theory (Hearn and Parkin, 1983, p.231).

This ‘masculinist’ characterization of leadership is common across the main approaches to leadership in organizational theory, whether they be trait model, the charismatic/behavioural model or the situational/contingency models of leadership central to educational administration. (For examples of such theories in a standard text in educational administration see Hoy and Miskel, 1978. For a critique see Watkins, 1986, and Foster, this volume). Whilst trait theory considers leadership qualities or skills to be inherent attributes of the individual, the behaviourist model allows appropriate leadership behaviours or styles to be learned. More recent situational/contingency theories tend to perceive a ‘match’ between the individual attributes or leadership styles (innate and learned) and particular situations or contexts.

Although the ‘trait’ theory model of leadership has been denigrated in organizational literature for its failure to differentiate between effective and ineffective male leaders, it has been duly resuscitated as an explanation for why women are not found in leadership positions. Given that the ‘traits’ associated with leadership have been defined and prescribed in a gendered stereotypic manner, women are in a double bind. If a woman displays the culturally defined traits of ‘femininity’ (being emotional, passive, dependent, nurturing, intuitive or submissive), she is perceived to be a ‘poor’ leader. If she acts according to the male role definition of a leader (being aggressive, achievement-oriented, self-confident, forceful or competitive), she is condemned as being ‘unfeminine’ (Chapman and Luthans, 1975). More specifically, the literature on women in management focuses on three sets of personality traits: aggressiveness/dominance, emotional control/sound judgment; self-confidence and self-esteem. Women’s apparent
lack of such ‘traits’ as perceived in their behaviour is seen to make them unsuited for leadership (Bannon, 1978; Brown, 1979).

Let us consider these ‘myths’ in more detail. Firstly, there is little empirical evidence to support the connection between certain ‘traits’ and good leadership. The literature is unable to substantiate the connection, for example, between aggressiveness and various ‘management’ skills seen to be essential to leaders in organizations and schools, such as tackling challenges, setting achievable goals, planning, organizing, persuading, conciliating and conveying enthusiasm. The second myth that women are unsuitable leaders and decision-makers because they are too emotional and subjective is equally unfounded, both theoretically and empirically. Theoretically it assumes that decision-making is rational, logical and objective, when increasingly the irrational, subjective and illogical nature of decision-making is the basis of current revisionist theorizing within the traditional organizational research paradigm. It is increasingly accepted that decision-making is value ridden and theory laden, ideologically prescribed, generally based on inadequate and even incorrect information and consequently emotive. Therefore the dominance of a particular ‘scientistic’ view of what leaders do when they make decisions (as being rational and objective) and what ‘traits’ are required to lead (non-emotional) cannot be upheld. Ironically, more recent studies of leadership, in an attempt to produce a more balanced conceptualization of leadership, look to these very ‘feminine’ qualities of emotionality, sociality and caring values which traditionally imparted connotations of weakness (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1980, pp.306–26). Likewise school principals are required to become facilitators, not dominators (Chapman, 1985).

The third myth, that leadership is associated with a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem, is again highly suspect. The literature portrays women as lacking these ‘qualities’, whether learned or innate. For example, Antill and Cunningham’s Australian study, ‘Self-esteem as a Function of Masculinity in Both Sexes’, argues that men have higher self-esteem than women (Antill and Cunningham, 1979. For a critique of ‘self-esteem’ see Putnam and Heinen, 1976; Kenway and Willis, 1988). Since 1968 a dominant theory as to why women have not gained more representation in higher levels of decision-making is that of ‘fear of success’ (Horner, 1972; Condy and Dyer, 1976). This ‘fear’ explains why women are more ‘anxious’ than men in leadership positions and why they lack the desire to ‘take on’ leadership responsibilities. Women are seen to fear success because of the negative consequences which derive from succeeding in competitive situations — social rejection and perceived loss of femininity (Sassen, 1980). Or perhaps it was fear — more of being perceived as being deviant from role models by taking on masculine behaviours (Moore and Rickel, 1980; Greenfield et al., 1980). Ironically, studies which replicated the ‘fear of success’ model on male subjects found that men also admitted to the same fears (Carlson, 1972, p.21). More recently the ‘fear of success’ model has been reinterpreted to argue that women were not so afraid of ‘success’, just more prepared than the male subjects to admit to the negative or ‘other side of

EMOTIONS AND GENDER

284
competitive success’ generally ignored in the literature — the alienation, loneliness and conflict (Carlson, 1972). The effect of this research was inevitably to blame the victim. Notions of success and esteem are socially constructed and context bound. The underlying theoretical paradigm, the trait approach to leadership, therefore emphasizes innate rather than learned psychological differences between males and females, ignores the ways in which certain behaviours are developed through experience and positive reinforcement, and portrays leadership as a set of individual characteristics without regard for how behaviour is both learned and situation specific.

Whilst the trait approach assumes innate difference, the behaviourist perspective accepts the notion of learned behaviours which are gender stereotypic. The political effect is the same as that of trait theory in justifying observed behaviours as proof of difference. There are particular sets of learned behaviours which are perceived as being appropriate leadership behaviours or styles. The dominant theory to explain the lack of women in administration and leadership positions is socialization and sex role stereotypes (Adkinson, 1981). This argues that gender differentiation is constructed by the internalization of certain gender role behaviours imparted through such agencies as schools, family, work and the media (see Marshall, 1979, for an example of the argument on the need to ‘socialize’ female educational administrators). Thus boys learn to be rational, logical, objective and to suppress their feelings. They are encouraged to be aggressive and dominant in social situations. Girls learn to cultivate their emotions at the expense of their rationality, and are therefore more subjective. Their role is to be more dependent, nurturing and passive. This prepares each sex entrance into the public and private spheres of life, since these were the attributes required in each domain respectively. By imparting such significance to socialization, the behaviourist model assumes the passivity of the individual male and female who are ‘socialized’ into particular roles. At the same time this behaviourist model ‘allows’ women to acquire the necessary attributes. But in so doing it casts women into a deficit position in that it blames the victim when ‘socialization’ does not occur; it ignores resistance or the notion that an individual’s socialization is partial and selective. It implies the need and precondition for women to take on masculine attributes of leadership (rationality, aggression, the ability to control and dominate) in order to succeed; it accepts the hierarchical relationship in schools and state educational bureaucracies as necessary and given; and it defines success/relevant experience in male terms (occupation, hierarchy, expertise). Ultimately particular sets of observable behaviours are valued more than others.

Finally, the recent emphasis within the traditional organizational research paradigm has been on situational or contingency theories of leadership, best represented by the work of Vroom and Yetton, Blake and Mouton and Fiedler (see Fiedler, 1978; Hoy and Miskel, 1978, for a summary; for a critique see Watkins, 1986). These theories argue that there is a package of leadership skills and behaviours ranging from democratic to authoritarian which can be learned,
selected and used according to particular definable situational factors and contexts. Leaders must acquire the skill to recognize, diagnose and select the appropriate style of leadership to ‘fit’ the situation. No specific leadership style is given preference or more valued because of its intrinsic good. Each ‘style’ is selected as a means to achieve a particular organizational end most efficiently. By implication, although the gender issue is never confronted in these models, such theories assume that leadership styles and administrative contexts are gender neutral, and that such skills are context and content-free to be freely applied across a variety of ‘categorizable’ organizational situations. That is, any individual can assume an appropriate style provided she or he possesses this baggage of leadership skills and is able to diagnose the situation correctly. Such models ignore research from within the positivistic research paradigm on small groups and organizations (Jenkins and Kramer, 1978). Regardless of the ‘appropriateness’ of leadership style adopted by females, female leaders are judged differently by their colleagues and subordinates from men in like situations. Firstly, their competence is judged according to whether the task itself is perceived to be ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’. Success by a female at a ‘masculine’ task (such as leadership) is more often attributed to luck than competence by observers, whereas success by a male at a masculine task is attributed largely to competence. Thus there is different recognition for similar performance. In other words, ‘what is skill for a male is luck for the female’ (Deaux and Emswiller, 1974; Bayes and Newton, 1978). Secondly, the legitimacy of an action is generally associated with the legitimacy of the actor who performs it and the role he or she occupies. Since leadership is perceived largely to be a masculine role, this gives some reason why within such research paradigms there is systematic variation between males and females in similar situations (Borman et al., 1978; Walker and Fennel, 1986, pp.270–1). Even the definition of task and skill, merit and competence in work situations is an historical construction which is gender biased (McNeil, 1987; O’Donnell and Hall, 1988).

Such conclusions are not surprising given the nature of the empirical research upon which the traditional construct of leadership has been premised. Because such research has focused largely upon leaders in formal positions of organizational authority, on male occupations and the achievements of men, and within a psychologistic framework, inevitably leadership attributes are perceived to be masculine attributes (Sherif, 1979; Kellerman, 1984; Sayers, 1986). Accordingly findings about male behaviours are generalized to females. Furthermore, research on women in positions of leadership is largely confined to stereotypic areas of women’s work. Even when research is in comparative fields, male characteristics are more highly valued than female characteristics in linking them to ‘good’ leadership. Women who enter male dominated careers are therefore seen to be stigmatized as they are seen to be ‘disabled, deficient or deviant’ (Marshall, 1985). In such contexts rationality is seen to be a better signifier of leadership than emotionality. Consequently there is a built-in male bias in the
research methodology in its assumption of homogeneity and universality of experience (Stewart, 1978; Hearn and Parkin, 1983). But it is more than a matter of methodology, since underlying such methodologies is a set of epistemic assumptions which will be discussed later.

Finally, the research in support of the various organizational theories of leadership, and some could say the ‘theory movement’ in educational administration per se, is inconclusive. In this field of study Foster points out the state of disarray because leadership is a ‘slippery concept’ (Foster, 1986). What is not disputable is that organizational and leadership theory neglects the significance of gender. Rather, it discusses authority, power and the division of labour in organizations as being both essential and neutral. It fails to recognize that there exists a gendered division of labour in organizations which historically defines women’s position in a negative manner. Such divisions are justified by notions of rationality, expertise and merit. Kanter refers to how the ‘masculine ethic’ of rationality is found in the image of managers and in the social science models of organizations in a manner which elevates the traits assumed to belong to men with educational advantages to necessities for effective organisations; a tough minded approach to problems; analytic abilities to abstract and plan; a capacity to set aside personal, emotional considerations in the interests of task accomplishment; and a cognitive superiority in problem solving.

(Kanter, 1975, p.43)

Performance is judged in gender biased contexts. Burton cites research which suggests that the effort of women in organizations is ‘perceived as diagnostic of men’s ability and compensatory of women’s lack thereof’ (Button, 1987, p.429). She suggests that ‘definitions of what is meritorious can undergo change depending upon the power of particular groups to define it . . . skill is a direct correlate of the sex and power of those defining it, an ideological category rather than an economic fact’ (Burton, 1987, p.430).

Likewise, success can be conceived in different ways, just as self-esteem is evident in ways other than a display of uncaring aggression, competitiveness or dominance in particular social situations. Because women may value different types of success and achievement, success and actions are interpreted in negative terms for women. The construction of success is elaborated upon by Markus.

. . . in contemporary society the organisational and technical changes in work make it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate individual achievement, but at the same time, the work organisations and society at large, are increasingly in need of maintaining the disciplinary and legitimising function of the achievement principle. This means, then, that the evaluation of ‘performing capacity’ has to be accomplished symbolically. That is, based on ‘extrafunctional’ attitudes and
ascriptive criteria of different sorts rather than effective achievement . . . as Offe points out . . . the ‘achievement principle’ has been transformed from an ethical attitude into ‘one of the important forms of class-based power-games that rewards loyalty to dominant interests and forms of life’, perpetuated cultural divisions and legitimised the existing organisational and social hierarchies.

(Markus, 1987, p.104)

The manner by which authority and power in organizations are perceived and exercised is significant for women in that many do not measure their ‘success’ by the same external or symbolic criteria. Markus’ research on female engineers in managerial positions indicates how they formulated their notion of success as being basically private. Job satisfaction was connected to internalized concrete achievements gained through personal experience (overcoming some difficulties, maintaining double roles, helping others in their work) rather than external social recognition. It was a form of success she called ‘vicarious achievement’ — success resulting from the contribution of the subject to the achievement of some other person. This privatized conception of success in a public arena which rewarded outward achievement (formal status, position of authority) through uniformization of success standards is thus read as indicating that women lack motivation to succeed and has the ironical effect of maintaining the inequity of their work situation (Markus, 1987, pp.101–2). They are labelled for not ‘planning their careers’, or ‘keeping their eyes open for the next step to promotion’. Markus indicates how this is seen to be a problem particular to women, ‘given the observable switch in the basic hierarchical advance within different work organisations increasingly obtained not through internal promotions, but rather through external recruitment to higher positions’, as in, one could argue, the case of local selection of school principals (Markus, 1987, p.105). Thus the cultural association of masculinity and authority, of maleness and management, is reproduced by those in power who do not wish to disturb this ‘natural’ arrangement. Authority in organizations is judged by external and overt symbolic signs of power such as salary, space and titles rather than ‘complex staff positions that involve significant discretion’ (Burton, 1987, p.431). Organizations, as are all workplaces, are socially constructed along gender lines (Acker and Van Houten, 1974).

Thus the social science model utilized in organizational theory assumes that organizations such as schools are value-free, and that the social organization of schooling is neutral. It also assumes that relatively complete explanations can be found about individual behaviours within the organizations themselves and in the public domain of paid work. Little consideration is given to the private domain of human activity and how it connects to organizational situations or paid work. This distinction between the public domain of the rational and the private domain of the emotional and affective is critical to ongoing power relations in that it allows the perpetuation of the invisibility of class or gender rela-
tions in organizations (Stewart, 1978; Shakeshaft and Hanson, 1986). Furthermore, any collective activities by women to alter the ways in which organizations are structured must challenge the masculine ethic of leadership premised upon individuality, rationality and hierarchy. It is this collectivity that sociologists have failed to identify (Hearn and Parkin, 1983, p.233).

It is therefore necessary to undermine the theoretical paradigm dominant in administrative theory, which assumes that conflict is pathological and a problem to be controlled by administrators. Whilst the notion that conflict is abnormal is legitimated by administrative theory, a feminist perspective will be marginalized, controlled or dismissed as irrelevant. O’Brien aptly comments, ‘The central defects of the liberal social science is that they do not treat patriarchy as an essential component of exploitation but as an accidental aberration’ (O’Brien, 1986, p.96). The next two sections look to the historical contexts from which the above ideas about leadership emerged, and the political and epistemological traditions which supported and informed such a perspective.

Liberalism, bureaucratization and the subordination of women in education

So far I have laid out some of the conceptual approaches towards leadership dominating traditional administrative and organizational theory, and since the 1950s the theory movement in educational administration. The last section has indicated how organizational theory has made women ‘invisible’ or ‘deficient’ as leaders. This section examines why the particular view of leadership portrayed in administrative literature has come to be considered applicable to education. It suggests that the social formation of bureaucracies (as in education) was informed by liberal political theories which conceived of a relationship between the individual and society in a way which influenced and promoted hierarchical and individualistic views of leadership, and in turn justified patriarchal dominance in education. This is not to argue that there is necessarily some causality between bureaucracy and liberal democratic or capitalist states, as Pateman points out in her analysis of the parallel bureaucratic formation in communist states (Pateman, 1970). Rather, it is to try and understand why in liberal democracies such a view of leadership has become dominant.

The displacement of women in organizational theory is derived from their invisibility in social and political theory in general. Thiele argues that social and political theory has practised three forms or typologies by which women have become invisible: exclusion, pseudo-inclusion and alienation. Exclusion exists, for example, when Hobbes, in discussing his initial State of Nature, states that all men and women were equal, that women had natural authority over children. Yet in the civic society envisaged by Hobbes (and Locke) the Commonwealth is entirely inhabited by men. Rousseau, in his notion of the social contract, takes women into account in a pseudo-inclusive fashion, but marginalizes them by making women a ‘special case’. ‘What is normative is male’ (Thiele, 1986,
Alienation occurs when women are included as subjects, but the experience and parameters of women’s lives are distorted by being ‘interpreted through male categories because the methodology and values of the theorists are androcentric’ (Thiele, 1986, pp.33–4). Thus Marxist theory is both pseudo-inclusive and alienating of women in arguing that women’s inequality will disappear once women enter the paid labour force. Ultimately women’s perspective is rendered invisible in political and social theory firstly, by the decontextualization or abstraction of real events and people from their situation in order to make generalizations or universal statements, and secondly, by the creation of dualisms between nature/culture, public/private, mind/body, rational/emotional, which cast women into the private sphere of emotionality and men into the public, civic sphere of political and economic activity. This process of decontextualization and conceptual dualism is characteristic of liberal theory, and is focused in the notion of individuality. As Carole Pateman points out, the abstraction of the individual had unfortunate consequences for women. ‘In order that the individual could appear in liberal theory as a universal figure who represents anyone and everyone, the individual must be disembodied’ (Pateman, 1986, p.8). The public individual, the universal man, was masculine. He possessed the material and symbolic interest which invested his political status with power.

Hester Eisenstein, in her analysis of contemporary feminist thought, traces the dilemmas created by the connection between the parallel growth of feminism and liberalism because the roots of both lie in the emergence of individualism as a general theory of social life. Both feminism and liberalism have conceived in some way of individuals as free and equal beings, emancipated from the ascribed, hierarchical bonds of traditional society. Feminism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was, Eisenstein argued, merely making claims for an extension of these liberal principles to women. In attempting to universalize liberalism across gender, it inevitably challenged it because of the essential separation between public and private spheres in liberalism, which excluded women from public roles and which perceived of the family as a natural given. The contradiction which emerged centred on the issue of participation and equality when feminists were to claim equal rights to participate in the public sphere in terms of the vote (Eisenstein, 1985, p.xv).

Feminists turned to more radical and socialist demands for equal economic rights in the workplace — equal opportunity in access to education and occupation and equal rewards in terms of pay — on realizing the ‘hollowness of political liberalism without the economic means’ to achieve its promises (Eisenstein, 1985, p.xvi). But the failure of Marxists to explicate the alliances of interests which have acted to maintain the masculinist ideological hegemony continues to, and in fact has exacerbated, the sexual division of labour and existing power structures in capitalist societies (Stacey and Price, 1981). As with liberal feminism, socialist feminism has tended to perpetuate the private/public dichotomy, and thus fails to produce an adequate theory of social change which can lead to
radical social action. Both theories look to universal categories of ‘individual’, ‘worker’ and are

sexually particular, constructed on the basis of male attributes, capacities and modes of activity. . . . The ‘individual’ is masculine, but because he appears to be universal and because the categories of liberalism and socialism appear to hold out a universal promise, it seems either (for liberals) that the task of feminism is to make good this promise and incorporate women into existing institutions as equals, or (for socialists) to carry out the class revolution which will bring true universalism into being.

(Pateman, 1986, p.7)

Liberal political theory has thus reified the notion of the abstract individual, freely making choices, autonomous and motivated by external rewards. At the same time liberal capitalism has spawned another form of organizational life — the bureaucracy.

Ferguson traces the links between liberalism, the bureaucratization of social life and the ‘feminization’ of the lower ranks of educational bureaucracies since the late nineteenth century (Ferguson, 1984; Hansot and Tyack, 1981). The significance of the bureaucratization of education for women in education lies in the embeddedness of the hierarchical relationships, the division of labour premised upon expertise and notions of bureaucratic rationality. It is best exemplified in the gendered and hierarchical distinction between administration and teaching as categories of work based on expertise, for example, rather than as inextricably dependent and within the same field of practice (Blackmore, 1987). Such hierarchies reinforce existing power relations and the ways in which femininity and masculinity are socially constructed and reproduced in schools. The emphasis on authority as being legitimately and rationally imparted through neutral organizational or bureaucratic means renders the gender relationships which co-exist in bureaucratic life non-problematic. Thus

bureaucratic control . . . operates through denial that there is discrimination. It is asserted that gender is irrelevant, that women can make it the same as men, that all will be rationally and fairly evaluated according to the same criteria. This ignores . . . the way the world is structured around men’s norms.

(Game and Pringle, 1983)

Mary O’Brien considers the epistemological and political implications of this unsteady co-existence of liberalism and the bureaucratization of social life.

Liberal statism has spawned an administrative mode — bureaucracy — in which crass indifference to the much vaunted rights of individuals is
passed off as ‘objectivity and efficiency’. Objectivity too is the myth on which liberal theory and research thrive, forming the intellectual — or preferably scientific — basis of liberal perceptions of knowledge. As liberal statism has grown and flourished to the point of bloat, the attenuated epistemology of liberalism and the notion of state organization and control of knowledge and/or ideology have been central to liberal strategy for the maintenance of political power. Further, the major strategic achievement for liberalism — the vitiation of democracy by the political party system — ensures the limitations of women’s political power . . . liberal aspirations to epistemological sophistication and the development of scientific, empiricist and structuralist research models probably owe more to the capitalist political economy than to the development of liberal philosophy.

(O’Brien, 1986, p.96)

The irony remains that the expansion of bureaucracies which increasingly regulate all aspects of social life has been accompanied by modern political theory centring on individual freedom and autonomy (Ferguson, 1984, p.31). ‘Educational institutions generate and reflect both the course of bureaucracy and the roles and events that recruit individuals into bureaucracies’ in that the bureaucratic discourse seeks to promote individual merit and bureaucratic rationality (Ferguson, 1984, p.42). In this sense leadership is ‘earned’ by those with merit. Meanwhile, corporate capitalism leads to the fragmentation of work and the productive process, which has meant ‘the withdrawal of aspirations from the workplace into private goals, the disruption of indigenous networks of support and mutual aid’ (quoted in Ferguson, 1984, p.48). Individual happiness has come to be identified with success in organizational life. ‘Hence parents seek upward mobility for their children increasingly looking to education, not simply to provide access to a better job at a higher salary, but to supply an institutional linkage to an established occupational hierarchy’ (Ferguson, 1984, p.45). Bourgeois individualism so promoted this bureaucratic means of organization to the extent that children have come to appreciate and understand the workings of hierarchical organizations at an early age. They do not distinguish hierarchy as characteristic merely of organizational life but of social relationships generally (Ferguson, 1984, p.46).

Thus the tenet of liberal, bourgeois individuality has done little to alter the gendered division of labour in work, school or at home. Instead, liberalism has advocated equality for women as articulated through the notion of individual merit and success, the autonomous, universal individual making rational decisions. The upward mobility of individual, generally middle-class, women through affirmative action and the institutionalization of equality as conceptualized in the liberal state have been illusory in that the rhetoric is not matched by the reality of what is occurring in the organization and structuring of education (particularly state education). Walkerdine indicates how class and gender within the liberal paradigm have continued to be the main structuring factors:
Females may cross over on to the side of masculinity in so far as they are permitted to enter into these practices. Similarly, given it is bourgeois individuality, possessed of rationality, which is taken as the key to normality, the working class can in principle become ‘bourgeois individuals’ by dint of those liberal practices which provide that possibility. However such an individuality and autonomy is produced at a price. Playful rationality is made possible through work, the hidden work of servicing, manual labour and nurturance. Here the ultimate irony is to be found in the position of the middle-class male, whose powerful position is guaranteed by the trap of reasoned argument.

(Walkerdine, 1985, p.235)

The unfortunate consequence of the adoption of the liberal tenets of individualism is that feminist values are incorporated, appropriated and submerged. There is little opportunity to question the fundamental nature of organizations, to challenge relationships premised on hierarchy or individualistic competitiveness or the privileging of scientific knowledge upon which it is premised.

**Positivism and the rationalization of administrative work**

Nineteenth century liberalism was imbued with a worldview well suited to capitalist economic structures and work ethic. By the mid-twentieth century positivistic social science offered predictability, universality and certainty to the policy-makers of the developing liberal bureaucratic state. Thus many tenets of liberalism, individual merit and expertise, for example, found justification in positivistic epistemology. Positivistic theories of knowledge hold that all genuine human knowledge is contained in the boundaries of science, that is, the systematic study of observable phenomena that can be explained by scientific laws. Social science, in emulating the physical sciences, also made claims of prediction and control, thus giving privilege to its knowledge claims of objectivity and universality over other forms of ‘subjective’, non-observable, particularistic or experiential knowledge. The implications for women have already been addressed in the discussion of how positivistic social science constructed a masculinist model of leadership.

Educational scholars and practitioners alike, by claiming status for educational administration as a science in a period when both progressivist and conservative educational traditions valued social efficiency, sought to gain both professional and public legitimation in the first decades of the twentieth century (Hansot and Tyack, 1981). Since the 1950s the theory movement in educational administration has taken as its own the industrial metaphor central to administrative theory, and applied the industrial model to schooling (Griffiths, 1979). Implicit in the functionalist view of education was the epistemological assumption that scientific knowledge, gleaned through observation and empirical studies, was objective; that knowledge derived through scientific method could be generalized across
situations, time and gender. In this way positivism and liberalism shared like views about the abstraction of the individual in order to universalize experience.

In this framework organizations such as schools were considered to be value-free contexts, in which organizational objectives could be stated and adhered to; in which individuals were treated as autonomous beings whose interests and objectives could be moulded through the gentle direction of their leaders to those of the organization or school; in which consensus was the norm and conflict regarded as aberrant behaviour by those in authority; in which power was not confused with notions of authority and control. Organizational control was legitimately invested in formal institutional roles. Power was ignored as having connotations of being manipulative, political and devious. Administration in schools thus came to be conceived as a neutral practice carried out by experts in a scientific and rational manner. Decision-making was seen as a rational and a linear procedure, not a matter of values or subjective opinion. Means were separated from ends, fact from value. Valerie Walkerdine comments:

The investment of reason in the sexed-body, as the foundation of modern western scientific rationality, not only locates self-control in rational argument, but also places it at the centre of an omnipotent fantasy of control over the workings of the universe. Mastery and control of the ‘real’ are centrally located in claims to truth and therefore to possess knowledge. In this sense mastery, control and bourgeois masculinity are conjoined in that uncertain pursuit of truth.

(Walkerdine, 1985, p.235)

What are the consequences of this privileging of positivism in educational administrative theory? External factors (family, relationships, politics, etc.) have come to be seen as merely disruptive to productive organizational relationships (Stewart, 1978; Shakeshaft and Hanson, 1986). When women’s subjective experience does not fit this ‘reality’ of scientific management, it is treated as an aberration, non-relevant and deviant. Jan Grant suggests that women’s incorporation into masculine domains in organizations has been at a cost. It often requires women publicly to reject and submerge their definition of self as women (Grant, 1985). Such co-option is because women’s subjugated knowledge or subjective experience is not valued as a resource or valid alternative worldview. Conversely, it means that radical action or opposition by women in organizations such as teachers (predominantly female) to employers has been interpreted by sociologists and political scientists primarily as a male search for professional status rather than a female rejection of the values implicit in a systematic and dehumanizing control by men of women. Women’s activities are thus cast more as ‘submission’ than ‘subversion’, but in neither case legitimate (Markus, 1987, p.98). This is not to suggest that male teachers do not value other than occupational success, or are not motivated by humane values, or that women do not aspire to occupational mobility or status, but rather that dominant
explanations for particular attitudes and activities are framed by narrow and limiting masculinist perceptions and experience of what is problematic. Likewise, the dominant definition of educational leadership has been historically constructed in a manner which ignores, reinterprets or denigrates feminine values and experience.

The positivistic epistemology underlying conventional organizational and administrative theory has undergone an attack from within its ranks since the early 1970s for its naive scienticism which separates fact from value, and assertion that administration is a value-free science (Hodgkinson, 1981; Greenfield, 1986; Codd, 1988; Bates, 1986). This ‘intellectual turmoil’ in educational administration has not ruffled the calm of masculine domination in education at either the theoretical or practitioner level. The inability to incorporate a theoretical explanation for continued masculine domination, despite increased sensitivity to gender issues, has been excused on the grounds that ‘organisational theories have been based on the perspective of executives’, the emphasis being on the disempowerment resulting from the emphasis on social control, hierarchy and bureaucracy rather than recognition of the reproduction of gendered dominance as a set of power relations as a significant phenomenon of educational organizations (Griffiths, 1979, pp.43–65). The interpretivist perspective of educational administration which has emerged maintains as its essence the individualism of liberal political theory and the fact/value distinction of positivistic epistemology (see Greenfield, 1984, 1986). That there may be some shared experience of particular social groups who have a different way of seeing from their position of non-control at the base of male dominated, hierarchical organizations is only implied. Perhaps women share certain common organizational experiences through their patterned subordination and powerlessness as women, and not merely in their commonality as subordinates. The issue is one of control, but by whom, over whom, and on what basis?

Both the positivistic and interpretivist traditions which have dominated approaches to educational administration have come under attack from the perspective of critical theory for their common epistemological assumption of the distinction between fact and value, which effectively excludes moral commitment and ignores the historical, political and personal nature of organizational relationships (Codd, 1988). Such critiques tend to presume that discussions of domination and subordination, of power relations and the significance of ideology, necessarily include women as objects of subjugation. But there has been little attempt overtly to connect this powerlessness to matters of the social construction and reproduction of gendered power relations in educational organizations (see Fraser, 1987). Depending upon whose interpretation of the Frankfurt school is taken to portray their position best, there would appear to be some convergence of feminist approaches and that of the critical theorists. Salleh discards the view that critical theory is ‘drenched in a Freudian inspired nostalgia for patriarchy, an obsession with the “ideal bougeois” family, a static and cynical brand of individualism’ (Salleh, 1981, p.5). What is evident, she argues, is the shared concern for
the merging of theory and practice, the moral commitment to social change, the ongoing critique of all ideologies (including that of critical theory itself), and an historically materialistic analysis which displays a sensitivity to subjectivity without neglecting structural constraints, a dimension ignored or exaggerated in positivistic and interpretivist approaches respectively to educational administration. Salleh suggests that critical theory in fact contributes to the radical feminist problematic in that its analysis rests upon a ‘more profound materialism than that of the “mode of production”’, that perceives that social change must have a biological and psycho-social basis and which has an epistemology which does not split consciousness from the act of knowing (Salleh, 1981, p.12).

Lather and Fraser share similar optimism when considering how critical theory, and the work of Jürgen Habermas in particular, can contribute to feminist theory. Lather suggests that critical theorists and feminists share the desire to transform the production and dissemination of knowledge, a commitment to more democratic forms of governance which empower disadvantaged groups, a view that looks to the sociality rather than the autonomy of individuals as the guiding force of practice (Lather, 1984). Whilst Fraser is happy to extrapolate from Habermas what she perceives as the gender sub-text, she is still conscious that Habermas fails to theorize ‘the norm mediated character of late capitalist official-economic administrative systems . . . the systemic, money and power-mediated character of male dominance in the domestic sphere . . . nor the gender-based separation of the state-regulated economy of sex-segmented paid work and social welfare. Ultimately, he also seeks to universalise experience’ (Fraser, 1987, p.55). Yet critical theory and feminist theory would appear to share common concerns. The extent of this commonality needs to be explored further.

So far I have elaborated upon the ways in which gender-biased educational structures, organization and practice have been justified as necessary and rational. The gendered and hierarchical division of labour in educational administration, for example, has rested at various times upon notions of natural, psychological and social difference. It is further legitimated by theories of knowledge which are supportive of notions of rational and hierarchical forms of administration as givens or technical necessities. Leadership has thus been portrayed within liberal political theory and positivistic theories of knowledge as an individualistic enterprise essential to the given hierarchical arrangements and premised upon notions of technical expertise.

**Individualism, rationality and morality**

A feminist critique of educational organizations and the ways in which educational leadership has been conceptualized would therefore involve a reconsideration of the concepts of the universal individual, abstract morality and bureaucratic rationality central to liberalism and positivism.

Carol Gould sees the starting point of liberalism as the assumption that ‘human individuals are essentially solitary, with needs and interests that are
separate from, if not in opposition to, those of other individuals’ (Gould, 1983, p.24). It has already been illustrated how social contract theory, upon which liberal polemics is based, specifies the interests of the individual as protection of life, civil liberties and property as exemplified in the autonomous, abstract individual. The emphasis on the individual’s interests in liberal political and positivistic organizational theory has many consequences. In particular it denies the individual’s need for collective action and sociality. Elshtain argues:

The problem with a politics that begins and ends with mobilizing resources, achieving maximum impacts, calculating prudentially, articulating interest group claims, engaging in reward distribution functions and so on is not only its utter lack of imagination but its inability to engage the reflective allegiance and committed loyalty of citizens. Oversimply, no substantive sense of civic virtue, no vision of the political community that might serve as the groundwork of a life in common is possible within a political life dominated by self interested, predatory individualism.

(Elshtain, 1982, p.141)

Liberal theory also produces an instrumental interpretation of rationality which assumes that the individual has a set of interests and preferences which are known and constant, and that individuals are motivated purely out of a desire to maximize these preferences. The state merely facilitates this process and protect the individual’s preferences. Rational behaviour is therefore depicted as when individuals (as organizations) act to maximize their own interests. Gould refutes this assumption, arguing that humans must live in social groups, and that ‘human interdependence is thus necessitated by human biology and the assumption of individual self-sufficiency is plausible only if one ignores human biology’ (Gould, 1983, p.24). At the same time she is not advocating biological determinism, but rather recognition that ‘interests’ (whether self-interests or altruistic interests) must take into account the material situation of people and their relationships with others — that is, community. A rational person in Gould’s perspective values her abilities to empathize and connect with particular others by recognition not ignorance of social interdependence. It is a notion which is both materialist and non-deterministic. This requires turning liberal theory upon its head. Instead of community and cooperation being problematic in liberal theory, the existence of egoism, competitiveness and conflict, which liberalism sees as endemic and natural, would be the puzzle.

Thus feminists argue that the notion of the abstract individual so implicit in liberalism ignores the essential interdependency of human beings. Sandra Harding suggests that notions of abstract rationality expressed by Kohlberg, Kant and Rawls exemplify a modern liberal ideal not only of the individual as a citizen but also an abstract, transcendental view of morality which is ahistorical (Harding, 1983, pp.40–50). In their view the resolution of moral problems in a
‘rational’ manner requires abstract judgments arrived at through abstract principles. Harding points out that such a view of moral reasoning does not take into account the contextual and inductive thinking characteristic of taking the role of the particular other. In so doing it creates an opposition between reason and affectivity. Furthermore, the hallmark of this moral reason is impartiality.

Impartiality names a point of view of reason that stands apart from interests and desires. Not to be partial means being able to see the whole, how all the particular perspectives and interests in a given moral situation relate to one another in a way that, because of its partiality, each perspective cannot see itself. The impartial moral reasoner thus stands outside and above the situation about which he or she reasons, with no stake in it . . . .

(Young, 1987, p.60)

This causes a problem which Adorno has called ‘the logic of identity’ in that it looks to order and describe particulars of experience, to create unity, to eliminate uncertainty and unpredictability. It requires the reasoner to treat all situations alike according to a set of rules, in effect to universalize.

as a consequence of the opposition between reason and desire, moral decisions grounded in considerations of sympathy, caring, and an assessment of differentiated need are defined as not rational, not ‘objective’, merely sentimental. To the extent that women exemplify or are identified with such styles of moral decision making, then women are excluded from moral rationality.

(Young, 1987, p.63)

This dichotomy between reason and desire, we have shown, appears in political theory as the distinction between the public realm of the civic and the state and the private realm of needs and desires (Young, 1987, p.63).

What are the implications of such a stance for leadership? Such a view does not require the impartial reasoner to acknowledge other subjects’ perspectives, since they are incomplete. Thus impartiality often results in authoritarianism, in that one claims authority to decide. Furthermore, it is argued that the impartial reasoner has a holistic view, able to abstract himself or herself from self-interests in the interests of the unity (organization). Chris Hodgkinson in his books, *A Philosophy of Leadership* and *A Theory of Educational Administration*, exemplifies such an approach. Hodgkinson calls for a new form of moral leadership in which he posits a hierarchy of values giving priority to cognitive reason over emotive preferences. Thus conflict and self-interest are seen as a debasement of human activity. Throughout his analysis he assumes Plato’s view of a leader as a philosopher-king, a rational individual able to abstract himself from value judgments embedded in specific situations but based upon universal principles.
Hodgkinson, 1981). Such a position assumes a notion of transcendental morality which is ahistorical and ignores the sociality of humans. Such a view invests this capability for superior moral reasoning in the occupants of formal institutional positions, and would divest all others of the moral potential to take decisions which are rational. Hodgkinson does not tell us how to learn or acquire such superior moral powers or how they are recognized. In effect, the consequence would be to reassert the hierarchical relationships premised upon a concept of moral rationality and impose them upon organizational reality in a manner which is detrimental to certain types of valuing and reasoning which are other centred, affective and caring.

Thirdly, in educational administration, as in organizational theory, the dominance of a science of administration has legitimated power relations in schools and maintained a myth of bureaucratic rationality and individualism. Administration is value-free, hierarchy is technically rational and domination legitimate. Urban talks of this bureaucratic rationality ‘as a mode of thought, which can be understood as an expression of power relations in the social world, on the one hand, and a mystification of those relations on the other’. Furthermore, ‘the defining element of relations inside a bureaucracy is hierarchy, itself another word for domination. Given the worldview of technical rationality, however, bureaucracy does not appear as a structure of domination; on the contrary, the bureaucratic hierarchy manifests itself as a technical necessity (to co-ordinate the subdivided tasks), as a rational organisational arrangement for the accomplishment of collective ends’ (Urban, 1982, pp.23–4). The hierarchical arrangements in organizations such as schools are thus premised upon such notions of individualism and rationality. Rizvi has elsewhere developed the ways in which this notion of bureaucratic rationality has particular political implications. He suggests that the traditional notion of administrative leadership reifies the role of the principal as a leader. Principals are seen to be effective only when they are ‘in charge’ or ‘in control’. This encourages manipulation and control of subordinates by principals, generally not conducive to mutual benefit (Rizvi, 1986). He suggests that if schools are seen in terms of individuals and their position in hierarchies, then ‘leaders will always be set apart from followers’, ‘relationships will be one-sided’ and mediated through bureaucratic definitions of role (Rizvi, 1986, p.39).

Ferguson criticizes this bureaucratic mind set in which the ‘interaction with others is debased and the self is created as a rationalised commodity’ (Ferguson, 1984, p.20). In her view bureaucracy rests on assumptions of scientific rationality, the generalized other which is apolitical and ideologically invisible (Ferguson, 1984, p.16). Women are thereby a marginalized group who possess ‘subjugated knowledges’ located low down the hierarchy. At the same time women are both active creators and passive victims because their experience is more continuous with than in opposition to others. That is, women are neither purely self-interested nor purely altruistic and self-sacrificing. Rather, self and other can be seen to be attached and continuous, making human sociality a fundamental component of the individual. Because women tend to assume
responsibility for taking care of others as defined by traditional roles, they tend to pass judgments that are based on contextual rather than abstract criteria, focus more on process than outcome. In management terms this has been recognized as women’s tendency (and failure) to be task- rather than organizationally oriented (Ferguson, 1984, p.25). This is not to deny that men live in families and women work, but the traditional public-private dichotomy means that the members of each gender carry the worldview of their own domain with them into the other realm, and must consciously put it aside to succeed in the other world on its own terms (Ferguson, 1984, p.27).

The masculine image of leadership in education is therefore historically constructed and maintained by its ideological underpinnings of dominant theories of a value-free science and liberal political theory. Leadership is justified on the grounds of rational necessity, individual behaviours and opportunities, and technically necessary hierarchical social arrangements. Founded upon a positivistic epistemology which separates the body from the mind, which extracts feeling and emotion from the material, leadership is defined to be a rational, cognitive process. Because expressive behaviours are denigrated as irrational, it is possible to argue that gender relations are unproblematic and are not a substantive issue in the culture and structure of organizations. The lack of women in higher positions can be excused within such a theoretical framework as a consequence of women’s irrationality, subjectivity and emotionality. They choose not to aspire for such positions, or are excused on the grounds of their moral inadequacy in not being able to make the ‘hard’ decisions in the interests of the organization. The question remains, how then can feminist theory not only deconstruct these dominant epistemological and political perspectives but also reconstruct an alternative which opens up different ways of seeing educational leadership. What then would constitute a feminist perspective of leadership?

The elements of a feminist reconstruction of leadership

Feminist theory does not ask merely to include women as objects in the patriarchal discourse, in which sameness is emphasized rather than difference. It rapidly becomes evident that it is impossible to incorporate or ‘add on’ a feminist perspective. Rather, a feminist critique ultimately leads to the need to reformulate the methodologies, criteria of validity and merit and ultimately the political and epistemological commitments underlying the dominant notions or discourse. Feminists demand not just equality, but that they become the subjects and objects of an alternative, autonomous discourse which chooses its own measures and criteria. It is necessary not only to explain the pervasiveness and persistence of gender divergence and gender subordination (which are not the same thing) but also to provide an explanation that avoids a rigid universalism and provides a way of understanding cultural and historical difference. It is also essential that theory provides the basis for a politics directed towards changing this subordination, a politics of change (Thornton 1982, p.53).
A feminist alternative to the view of leadership criticized in this chapter would consist of a number of elements including the central concepts already discussed, concepts which are common to most feminist perspectives. Such a view would focus on the relationship between the individual and a more egalitarian notion of community and civic participation which does not adhere to abstract principles of rational judgment or morality outside specific contexts. Harding, for example, calls for a more practical, contextualized notion of rationality. Perhaps a more politically universal conception of human rationality would refer to normative conditions as personhood and human good in a relational morality which emphasizes attachments and responsibilities to others as well as to self. This suggests that ‘interest’ should not be regarded as either total self-interest or altruism. A relational view of morality and judgment recognizes the interdependence of people, and sees moral judgment as not being predicated upon some abstract universal morality or individual rights, but upon concern and responsibility consequent upon the relationships of self to others within specific contexts. In this sense administration as moral judgment would need to be aware of the context of the judgment and the responsibilities of the actors. In effect, it is arguing that the relational bias in women’s thinking, which has been seen to compromise their moral judgment in the past and impede their moral development, in fact has significant moral value for all. Gilligan has argued that this relational morality should not be regarded as the deficit model, but that it merely reflects a different social and moral understanding — a different set of interests (Gilligan, 1977, pp.481–2).

I do not take the stance that women’s worldview or perspective is either biologically determined or premised on an essentialism which perceives female morality, interests or behaviours as being superior to those of males. Rather, I adhere to the view that at a specific historical moment, traditional patterns of behaviours prescribe certain roles to which individuals, males and females, partially conform to differing degrees. For example, women’s centrality to the family and as principal child rearer is not greatly challenged in practice, and is therefore a dominant part of women’s identity, value systems and needs. That is, women’s ‘interests’ are associated with caring and commitment to others. Carol Gould argues that ‘a dialectical conception of human biology sees human nature and the forms of human social organisation as determined not by biology alone but rather a complex interplay between our biological constitution, our physical environment and our forms of social organisation, including our level of technological development’ (Gould, 1984, p.22). Within this framework feminism would not expect that everyone be treated exactly the same, since responsibility and relationships have specific temporal and historical contexts.

Such a perspective would mean a reconstitution of the public sphere in what Markus calls ‘the more or less fluid self-organisation of a public committed to principles of equality, plurality and democratic forms’ (Markus, 1986, p.9). This is not to return to the Enlightenment ideal of civic public
which excludes the bodily and affective particularity as well as the concrete histories of individuals that make groups unable to understand one another. Emancipatory politics should foster a concept of public which in principle excludes no person, aspects of persons’ lives or topic of discussion and which encourages aesthetic as well as discursive expression. In such a public, consensus and sharing may not always be the goal, but the recognition and appreciation of difference, in the context of confrontation with power.

(Young, 1987, p.76)

It is also time to consider why it is that women’s accounts of power differ so systematically from those of men. Men see in power domination, whilst Hartsock argues that women take a more emancipatory perception in that they see ‘power as a capacity of the community as a whole’. Women tend to characterize power over others as domination and illegitimate, without questioning why there are systematic relations in which some have more power over others. Individual power (or leadership) is often treated with scepticism. This comes largely from Arendt’s formulation, when she treats individual actions outside community with contempt, as non-political. Hartsock warns that in so doing power is described in terms that emphasise the submersion of the identity of the individual in the community, thereby falling into a form of female pathology of loss of self, a fluidity that may submerge individual identity. . . . It is better to have an understanding of power for the individual which stresses both its dimensions of competence, ability and creativity and does not lose sight of the importance of effective action . . . in part defined by its sensuality and its variety of connections and relations with others in the community.

(Hartsock, 1983, pp. 253, 256)

Rather than condemn the notion of leadership as anathema to democratic community, it is essential to reconceptualize a different type of leadership in a caring community, to recognize that at particular instances individuals can and do act in a powerful manner but with good intention for the community, whilst laying themselves open to communal scrutiny (Noddings, 1985).

An adequate theory of power, according to Hartsock, would give an account of how social institutions have come to be controlled by only one gender; it would locate where and how the points of conflict between men and women are generated; and it would make clear the specific relations between individual intentional actions and structural constraints (p.254). Such an approach would necessarily subvert the hierarchical structures of social institutions such as bureaucracies. Ferguson argues that women already offer an alternative construct to the dominant bureaucratic discourse in which ‘women’s lives constitute a submerged voice’. She continues:
The traditional experiences of women in our society shed light on bureaucracy in two ways — by revealing persistent patterns of dominance and subordinance in bureaucracy that parallel power relations between men and women, and by suggesting a different way of conceiving the individual and the collective that reflects the caretaking and nurturant experiences embedded in women’s role.

(Ferguson, 1984, p.x)

She suggests that a feminist discourse in organizations would therefore encourage the caring and reciprocity central to a relational worldview which gives prior concern to others, which would recognize both familial and friendship connectedness and acknowledge the civic as well as the personal importance of friendship. It would also be committed to participatory democracy, whilst being aware that the sharing of power, language and knowledge critical to participation can assume gendered formations which must be constantly analyzed.

Given the attack on abstract individualism and organizational hierarchy implicit in feminism, an alternative conception of leadership emerges. It is suggested here that leadership can take other forms than having power over others and that leadership ‘skills’ can be used in a different way. Rather than privileging the individual who is often already in a position of status and power because of the possession of specialist knowledge, capacities, skills or role allocation, expertise can, in a cooperative environment, empower the individual and the group. Leadership, and the power which accompanies it, would be redefined as the ability to act with others to do things that could not be done by an individual alone. Leadership, therefore, would be a form of empowerment and not of dominance or control (Ferguson, 1984, p.206; see also Burbules, 1986). Hartsock takes up this point when she claims that ‘to lead is to be at the centre of the group rather than in front of the others’ (Hartsock, 1983, p.8).

Authority based on skill and knowledge (both of which are imbued with power) would be, according to Hartsock, ‘compelled persistently to demonstrate its force to those concerned in terms which they can grasp and, by dint of being so compelled, be made in some real measure responsible to them’ (Hartsock, 1983, p.10).

It is suggested that women have been alienated by the masculinist portrayal of leadership and organizational life which emphasizes control, individualism and hierarchy. The false dichotomy between fact and value, ends and means, derived from the positivistic assumptions of the traditional ‘science of educational administration’ has political repercussions in the sense that it is exclusive of women’s experience by rejecting all that is affective or experientially-based. It casts particular groups as ‘others’, and privileges certain types of knowledge, experience and expertise over others. Furthermore, organizational theory has assumed and maintained the dualisms derived from social and political theory which have portrayed women’s experiential and knowledge claims to be in opposition, and thus peripheral or insubstantial. This has been exacerbated in
practice by the historical and social construction of the gendered division of labour in schools and educational administration.

What does this mean in practical terms and policy in educational administration? Educational leadership as portrayed in the conventional literature may have little to attract women. That is, the perception of what constitutes leadership is problematic, not women. If administration is no longer treated as separate from teaching, if leadership is not merely equated to formal roles and responsibilities, if what is worthwhile knowledge and experience is not restricted to formal qualifications or institutional experience, then it calls upon a new set of informed judgments which must be brought to bear on the valuing of people’s activities in educational organizations. What counts as administrative and leadership experience and skills or potential could therefore include community activities, teaching, curriculum development and child rearing, which recognizes what difference can bring to education. This would go some way towards recognizing women’s experience in the ‘private’ sphere, and imbuing it with equal status to male experience in the public sphere. It may challenge what Jan Grant describes as the way in which organizations reproduce themselves in the masculine view via ‘homosocial reproduction’ (Grant, 1985).

It would also require a shift to be made from the individual to a collective focus in terms of what is meant by leadership. This would require going against the renewed push towards more masculinist notions of leadership embedded in corporate managerialism, the impetus for current restructuring of secondary and tertiary education, which equates efficiency and effectiveness with organizational rationality and hierarchy (Blackmore and Kenway, 1988). While administration and leadership are premised upon conventional theories which reify hierarchy, rationality and individualism, which are perceived to be masculinist attributes or behaviours, women’s experiences and values will continue to be displaced. To conclude, Hartsock suggests that ‘. . . it would raise for the first time the possibility of a fully human community, a community structured by its variety of direct relations among people, rather than their separation and opposition’ (Hartsock, 1983, p.262).

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307
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THE FEMALE SECONDARY HEADTEACHER IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Leadership and management styles

Marianne Coleman


Summary
This paper reports on data relating to management and leadership derived from a survey of all the female headteachers in England and Wales. The quantitative data presented here are complementary to previous research on gender in education which has tended to be qualitative. The use of the Gray paradigms in the research instrument has allowed an empirical redefinition of the ‘feminine’ style of management, but the research confirms that the majority of the female heads use a collaborative and ‘people-oriented’ style of management. In addition, the key values promoted by the headteachers are related to achievement and respect for all. The headteachers generally make themselves available to staff and spend a considerable proportion of their time in school outside their office. They tend to encourage staff development, often through individual consultation, but only a minority make special provision for the development of female teachers. Male resentment of female leadership was found to be relatively prevalent and the majority of the women felt they had to ‘prove their worth’ as a woman manager. Despite the difficulties encountered, once the women had achieved headship, they were aware that there were advantages in being a woman headteacher. They reported the ability to defuse ‘macho’ behaviour, the benefits of being unusual and therefore singled out and the fact that girls, mothers and female teachers found them approachable. The relative disproportion of female secondary headteachers raises issues of equity. However, in view of the effective management style of the majority, the question is also raised of the potential loss of leadership to our schools.
The study of women in leadership and management in education is relatively rare. Hall (1996), when researching female headteachers, makes the point that:

I found it difficult at first to avoid using men’s behaviour as educational leaders as a yardstick for describing women in similar positions . . . Putting the picture straight by changing the subject from men to women does not involve saying women are different or better. My purpose is rather to explain how they are in this role (headship), in this context (schools), in this period of time (1990s).

Theories of leadership and management have often been based on assumptions derived from the male discourse (Shakeshaft, 1989; Blackmore, 1989), but in relatively recent years the female manager in education has been studied in her own right (Adler, Laney and Packer, 1993; Ouston, 1993; Ozga, 1993). The disproportionate number of female secondary headteachers, only 24 per cent in 1996 (GB. DFE, 1997), also raises issues of equity. Evetts (1994) studied 20 secondary heads of whom ten are male and ten female, making gender an important variable in her study, and Grace (1995) included a chapter on women in educational leadership. Studies of individual headteachers have included a balance of male and female heads (Ribbins and Marland, 1994; Hustler, Brighouse and Ruddock, 1995; Ribbins, 1997). The present author has conducted interviews with five women headteachers (Coleman, 1996) and, most notably, Hall (1996) has undertaken an in-depth study of six female headteachers of whom three are secondary and three primary. Elsewhere, Hall and Southworth (1997) point to the fact that research into headship is the weaker for largely ignoring the variable of gender:

Using a gender perspective creates new possibilities for exploring the lives of men and women who teach, manage and lead in education. As researchers into headship we have both concluded that educational leadership is firmly rooted in professional identity. Gender, in turn, is a crucial component of that identity. Future research into headship that fails to take this and the gendered nature of schools and colleges into account is likely to be incomplete.

However, research on the management and leadership of women in education has tended to be qualitative in nature.
Survey of female headteachers in England and Wales

In summer 1996, the present author undertook a survey of all the 670 female secondary headteachers in England and Wales covering their leadership and management styles, and their career progress to headship. The response rate of 70 per cent, well above normal response rates, gives an objective measure of the interest that the headteachers had in the area. Comments included on the returned questionnaires and accompanying letters showed the measure of this interest and indicated the relative isolation that was felt by many of the respondents. Female headteachers have not previously been surveyed separately as a group, although gender as a variable was included in the survey research of Weindling and Earley (1987), Jones (1987) and Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996).

The survey data reported here are those relating to the management and leadership styles of the headteachers, including the values that they were promoting in their schools. In addition, this paper covers aspects of their experience of management and leadership, including the ways in which they relate to their staff and their professional development. Finally, data relating to the perceived difficulties and the advantages of being a woman headteacher are reported.

Approximately half of the headteachers were aged between 40 and 49 and half between 50 and 59, with very few under 40 or over 60. More than two-thirds of the headteachers were married, with marriage more popular amongst the under than the over 50s. Just over half of the heads had a child or children, but childlessness was more common amongst those under 50. Just over two-thirds of those responding were heads of coeducational schools, the remainder were heads of single sex schools. Of these, only three individuals were heads of boys’ schools.

The management and leadership styles of female headteachers in England and Wales

In analysing management and leadership styles, there are certain qualities that are identified with a ‘feminine’ or a ‘masculine’ style of management. Both of these styles may be adopted by men or by women, although the expectation is that men might adopt a style that is predominantly masculine and women one that is predominantly feminine. The lists of qualities identified by Bem (1974) and by Gray (1989, 1993) are both attempts to identify such a paradigm or ideal type. In the survey, the headteachers were presented with the masculine and feminine qualities identified by Gray (1993) and asked to indicate which of the qualities they felt applied to them. These qualities are derived from work associated with the training of headteachers, and are not based on empirical research. Their use in this questionnaire was intended to provide a possible redefinition of the paradigms. The qualities were not identified in any way as ‘male’ or ‘female’ in the questionnaire.

Six of the adjectives and descriptions that are included in the feminine para-
digim (see Table 1) were identified by 59 per cent or more of the headteachers. More than three-quarters of them judged themselves to be ‘aware of individual differences’, ‘caring’ and ‘intuitive’. However, there were also four adjectives in the masculine paradigm which were identified by over half of the headteachers as applicable to them. Although the characteristics identified most often were from the feminine paradigm, those chosen by more than 50 per cent ranged across both paradigms (see Table 2). The qualities listed in Table 2 present an empirically based alternative to the feminine paradigm identified by Gray (ibid.).

Overall, it would appear that there is a strong identification with most of the feminine traits on the part of the headteachers, and a weak identification with most of the masculine traits. However, there are a number of masculine traits, specifically ‘evaluative’, ‘disciplined’, ‘competitive’ and ‘objective’, which are identified by 50 per cent or more of the respondents, and which therefore temper the picture of a pure feminine paradigm of management style amongst the female secondary headteachers of England and Wales and indicate a more androgynous style of management.

Table 1 Qualities identified by headteachers from the masculine and feminine paradigms of Gray (1993): percentages indicate they felt they had the quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine paradigm</th>
<th>Masculine paradigm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of individual differences</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>76.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-competitive</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective</td>
<td>13.8</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masculine paradigm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly regulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Normative</td>
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Table 2 Qualities identified by 50 per cent or more of headteachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualities</th>
<th>(f)</th>
<th>(m)</th>
<th>(f)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of individual differences</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>79.4</td>
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<td>Intuitive</td>
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<td>Creative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competitive</td>
<td>50.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>50.6</td>
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Note
(f) = feminine and (m) = masculine in Gray’s (1993) paradigm.
Key words to describe the headteachers’ style of management

Open-ended questions included in the survey were intended to allow the headteachers to express their own perceptions of their style and of the values that they are trying to promote in the school. The headteachers were given the opportunity to list three separate words that describe their style of management. This question appeared in the survey before the question involving the list of masculine and feminine paradigms, so it is unlikely that these adjectives had any influence on the free choice of the three words. No guidance whatsoever was given, to allow them to provide unprompted responses. This led to there being a large range of adjectives offered. However, it was possible to group them, and establish some idea of the prevalent styles of management that the female headteachers considered that they adopted. The themes that were identified are listed below, with the percentage of the total number of adjectives in each group:

1. A collaborative style of management
   – e.g. consultative, open (38.5 per cent)
2. A people-oriented style of management
   – e.g. team-related, supportive (23.8 per cent)
3. An autocratic/directive style of management
   – e.g. decisive, firm (14.9 per cent)
4. An efficient style of management
   – e.g. focused, planned (11.7 per cent)
5. A values style of management
   – e.g. visionary, fair (11.1 per cent).

There is a clear indication that the single most popular style of management was that termed ‘collaborative’. However, it is notable that most of the headteachers use terms like ‘consultative’, ‘open’, ‘collaborative’ and ‘participative’ rather than ‘collegial’ or ‘democratic’. It appears that the majority of the headteachers adopting this style of management reserve the right to make the final decision. The potentially overlapping ‘people-oriented’ style of management was also strongly indicated by the choice of adjectives grouped within that theme. The range of adjectives chosen is very wide, but the styles of management that are indicated in the majority of responses are consistent with the adjectives most often chosen from the female paradigm – i.e. ‘aware of individual differences’, ‘caring’, ‘intuitive’ and ‘tolerant’.

Certainly, the identification of the collaborative and people-oriented style of management with the way that women manage is in accord with a range of earlier findings. Research on female headteachers and principals in the USA, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada appears to indicate that female managers are likely to work in a cooperative style, empowering their colleagues and characteristically making use of teamwork (Blackmore, 1989; Adler, 1994; Hall,
This generalization is borne out by research findings from outside education (Ferrario, 1994).

The author’s survey of all female secondary headteachers in England and Wales thus largely endorses earlier research, but although it is clear that the preferred management style of female headteachers is collaborative, there appears to be a minority of the heads for whom this is not true. Although the collaborative and people-oriented styles were endorsed by a majority, there were a considerable number of adjectives offered that were grouped as either ‘autocratic/directive’ or ‘efficient’. This represents a proportion of headteachers who, through their choice of adjectives, identified their style of management as probably more akin to the masculine paradigm than the feminine. This style of management might be identified with some of the ‘male’ adjectives, such as ‘disciplined’, ‘evaluative’, ‘formal’ and ‘competitive’.

In the above analysis, the adjectives were considered singly. When considering the adjectives in their groups of three, it was rare for all three to be grouped within the same theme. For example, ‘efficient’ adjectives might be combined with either ‘people-oriented’ or ‘autocratic’ adjectives. However, a dominant style was considered to be where at least two of the three adjectives came from either collaborative and people-oriented or from the autocratic/directive and efficient categories.

For those headteachers aged 49 or under, about ten per cent chose at least two of their three words from the autocratic/directive style of management combined with the efficient style of management, but the proportion of those 50 or over doing so was just over 20 per cent. The tendency to be more collaborative may be linked with ‘youth’, and this appeared to be the case in earlier research with headteachers (Weindling and Earley, 1987). Alternatively, a difference in style of the younger heads may be linked to a change in the expectations of what is required in headteachers in the last years of the twentieth century. Several of the heads interviewed by Hustler et al. (1995) indicated that their management style had moved towards being one of collaboration in keeping with: ‘a reformulated idea of the leading professional’ (Thompson in ibid., p. 90). Hall (1996) comments on the need for a different style of headteacher to cope with the demands of the post-1988 reforms, and identifies that all six of the women heads she studied are different from their predecessors whether male or female. In addition, a more ‘collegial’ style of management is now generally considered to be normatively superior to other styles (Wallace, 1989; Bush, 1995), at least in Western cultures.

The final group of adjectives, termed ‘values driven’, represents a strand of thinking that is probably not separate from the others, but identifies the values that may well underpin the management style of many headteachers. The most common category of adjectives within this group referred to being ‘visionary’, the second to being ‘fair’ or ‘honest’.

Overall, there appears to be a range of management styles indicated by the lists of adjectives provided, with one side of the spectrum occupied by the majority of the headteachers who adopt a ‘collaborative’ and ‘people-oriented’
style of management and the other side of the spectrum occupied by a minority of the headteachers operating an autocratic/directive style of management often linked to choice of the more ‘efficient’ adjectives. The ‘values-driven’ style may well underpin any or all of the other styles (see Figure 1).

Key values promoted in the school

The headteachers were also given an opportunity to indicate a free choice of the key values that they are trying to promote in the school. The respondents tended to indicate phrases, rather than individual words. The sentiments that are included in the value statements can be divided into four areas.

1 Academic excellence and educational achievement

Many of the value statements mentioned academic achievement, sometimes in association with caring values:

‘academic achievement in a caring community which develops all pupils for their own potential.’

‘The pupils’ learning is central.’

2 The importance of every individual achieving their potential

These statements are often linked to the importance of hard work:

‘everyone committed to the success of each student.’

‘everyone has the potential to achieve, but you must work hard to succeed.’

3 Respect for self

There was awareness of the need to promote:

‘high self-esteem for all.’

‘the importance of self-worth, and valuing others.’
Respect and caring for others

There was awareness in these statements of the need for:

‘respect for individual differences; valuing others [pupils and staff]’

and that:

‘students should aim high, with compassion for those around them.’

The achievement of academic excellence could be considered an objective that is innate in the purpose of almost any school. This value is very much in accord with the key quality of strategic direction and development of the school outlined in the National Standards for Headteachers (TTA, 1998), in terms of the creation of an ethos and vision which will secure achievement by pupils. However, the remaining values identified are related to the qualities of caring and respect for individuals that the headteachers have already identified within the Gray (1993) paradigms, where the four most popular qualities – ‘aware of individual differences’, ‘caring’, ‘intuitive’ and ‘tolerant’ – were all drawn from the feminine paradigm.

The words listed in Table 3, are those that were mentioned most in all the statements about values from the headteachers. These words indicate the importance of both achievement and respect as key values – achievement sometimes, but not always, specifying learning, and respect including respect for self and for others, both individuals and the community.

Aspects of educational leadership can be seen very clearly in the key values that the headteachers in the survey were trying to promote in their schools, and these aspects also endorse the idea that women are particularly concerned with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>No. of times used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High/higher/highest</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care/caring</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value(s)/valued/valuing</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual(s)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil(s)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the teaching and learning aspects of their role in comparison with administrative or other responsibilities. There is no doubt that the two key value words used most frequently: ‘achievement’ and ‘respect’, are in keeping with the concept of educational leadership, and very much in line with existing research on the ways in which women in educational management operate (Gross and Trask, 1976; Shakeshaft, 1989, 1995; Hill and Ragland, 1995; Richl and Lee, 1996; Grogan, 1996; Gold, 1996; Kruger, 1996). This research was concerned only with female secondary headteachers, and it may be that a survey of male colleagues would reveal that men too are moving towards a ‘feminine’ style of management and share many of the key values identified by the surveyed female headteachers.

**Management in action**

The headteachers were asked a limited range of questions relating to the practicalities of their style of management. In particular, they were asked about their availability to staff, and the amount of time they spent out of the office when in school. They were also asked about the ways in which they encouraged all teachers to develop their careers, and if there was any special way in which they tried to encourage the careers of female teachers.

The majority of headteachers seem to make themselves available to their staff whenever possible (see Table 4). The headteachers also appear to be visible in the school for quite a large proportion of their time (see Table 5). In answer to the question ‘while you are in school, what proportion of your time do you spend out of your office?’, approximately 80 per cent claimed that they spent between 10 and 50 per cent of their time in the school, but out of their office.

Most of the headteachers report that they spend a considerable proportion of their time out of their office. They were not asked how this time was spent, but presumably some of it would be in teaching and some would involve ‘management by walking about’. When coupled with the information about the availability of the majority to talk to teachers, there would appear to be some evidence to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4</th>
<th>Opportunities for staff to talk to the head (percentages)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any time if not in meeting</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any time within specified limits</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By appointment</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5</th>
<th>Time spent out of office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 10%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10%-25%</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%-50%</td>
<td>47.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51%-75%</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
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</table>
support the dominant management style indicated by the majority of the headteachers. It seems that a large proportion of the headteachers consider that they operate in an open way and are highly involved with their staff and the operation of the school.

**Encouragement of all teachers to develop their careers**

Headteachers sought various ways to encourage teachers to develop their careers. Courses, appraisal and mentoring were the most often cited means, but ‘other’ ways were written in by 52.9 per cent of the respondents (see Table 6). Of those who indicated ‘other’, most stated that they were encouraging one-to-one meetings for all members of staff to discuss career planning. The meetings either took place with themselves as headteacher, with another member of the senior staff, the INSET coordinator, a consultant or an unspecified person. The general feeling was that it is:

‘very important to find time to have one-to-one conversations about individual strengths and needs.’

Other possibilities mentioned were career development opportunities inside and outside the school, and other, generally practical, means of encouragement such as practice interviews. The development opportunities included specific interventions:

‘departmental monitoring, work shadowing, teacher placement.’

There was some indication of encouragement of development through means other than promotion:

‘Involvement in teams to develop projects.’

‘Opportunity for role rotation, being given support to lead initiatives (curriculum and pastoral).’

One headteacher specified the development opportunity that was available in a largely female school:

*Table 6* Means of encouraging teachers to develop careers (percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>87.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisal</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role play</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>52.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking on “acting” responsibilities during our frequent maternity absences.

Since a minority of headteachers in England and Wales are women, they present important role models for other female teachers. The heads were asked if they particularly encouraged women teachers in their career progress. The largest single group responding to this question indicated that they did not treat women differently from men (see Table 7).

Some of the headteachers indicated more than one way in which they encouraged female teachers. The large proportion indicating ‘No special ways’ is actually greater than 46.6 per cent, since some of those commenting in the ‘other’ category reiterated that all staff were treated equally in their school (18.6 per cent) or that staff were all treated according to the equal opportunities policy (4.2 per cent). A further 6.7 per cent stated that they pursued the same policies that they had indicated for the staff as a whole.

In addition, some of the headteachers of girls’ schools commented in the ‘other’ comments, that the question of treating female staff differently does not really arise for them, since the majority of their staff are women. Such comments accounted for about ten per cent of those in the ‘other’ comments.

It is therefore likely that the majority of headteachers do not have any special policies with regard to the encouragement of female teachers. However, over 20 per cent do state that they encourage women through women-only courses and a similar proportion through mentoring. In addition, the largest proportion of comments written in as ‘other’ referred to specific encouragement of women. This encouragement often included the headteacher’s own importance as a role model and, in some cases, referred to the doubts and lack of confidence evidenced by their women staff:

‘Personal conversation: I always encouraged competent women, from being a scale 1 teacher onwards, making sure they see themselves as possible runners, and boosting their confidence.’

‘Individual discussion, also with male staff, but I find many women, although very good, do not have confidence to put themselves forward for promotion. Three examples in my school spring to mind . . .’

The encouragement of women through being a role model was seen to be important, particularly in the context of the domestic role of women:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No special ways</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women-only courses</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
‘I talk to them about the issues, making it clear I have children, etc. – i.e. trying to be a role model.’

There was also awareness of the need to overcome stereotyping:

‘There is a high percentage of female role models – SMT, heads of science and maths, etc.’

Finally, some of the encouragement specifically addressed to women was associated with issues such as the handling of maternity leave, and more radical suggestions to help women such as job-sharing:

‘Being flexible about moves between part-time and full-time. Job shares (though not yet at present school).’

‘finding opportunities for responsibility in a variety of ways – particularly important for returners. Enhancing the role of positive women in whole-school issues.’

‘Flexible return to work after maternity leave.’

Whilst there is a commitment to staff development as a whole, it would appear that a substantial minority of the headteachers are aware of a need to separately foster the career progress of women. However, it is only a small minority of the headteachers who have moved beyond courses and mentoring to actively encourage female staff in practical ways such as job-sharing and flexible work practices.

**Male resentment of female leadership**

Over half of the surveyed heads reported experiencing sexist attitudes from their male colleagues. This experience was reported more by those under 50, and those who were married and had children, in comparison with those who were single and childless. Similarly, the heads of girls’ schools were less likely to report sexism from their peers than the heads of coeducational and boys’ schools (see Table 8). These differences are statistically significant. It would appear that women who are married and who have children, particularly those working in coeducational schools, may be identified more strongly with a domestic stereotype and implicitly considered less able to lead and manage.

Once established as headteachers, they were strongly aware of the fact that men found difficulty in dealing with female leaders. Being patronized and feeling isolated were two common features of the experience of headship. The female heads also reported examples of stereotyping linked to their sex. Many comments express: ‘difficulties with the concept of women as a boss’; some were more specific:
‘I inherited a school with a good number of staff who didn’t want a female head. The secretary and caretaker threatened to resign, some male teachers made it clear they didn’t want a woman telling them what to do.’

Occasionally, the resentment is linked to disapproval of management style that is not seen as ‘traditional’:

‘Some staff wanted as head a “big man who shouted” – I’m the opposite.’

There was also expectation that females would manage in a certain way:

‘The assumption was that you will be a female stereotype – keep changing one’s mind, can’t handle difficult male pupils, etc.’

Whilst the stereotype of the woman as a ‘soft’ manager predominates, there is evidence of a different range of stereotypes associated with women:

‘the suggestion that career women are cold, hard and single-minded.’

‘more a question of little bits of prejudice against single-woman role. Rumours seemed to vary: I’m assumed to be either a promiscuous heterosexual or a latent homosexual.’

The majority of the headteachers (62.7 per cent) stated that, as a woman, they had felt the need to ‘prove their worth’ in a management position. There was little difference in the proportion of women who felt this amongst those of differing age-groups, but some differences between those of different marital status and those who headed girls-only schools, compared with the rest. The need to ‘prove your worth’ is felt more strongly by those with children, and less strongly by the single and heads of girls’ schools. This difference may well be linked with the tendency to stereotype married women who are mothers with the domestic role, which was particularly evident in responses relating to discrimination linked to promotion. The largest category of responses to the question of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of heads stating they had experienced sexism from peers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Table 8</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heads of girls’ schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heads of other schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

322
the need to ‘prove your worth’ related to combating the range of stereotypes that are held about women in management.

Despite the range of stereotypes relating to female leadership, much of the resentment was linked to the softer, more participatory style of management of the female heads on the part of subordinate males who were used to a more decisive, autocratic style. The present research appears to replicate the findings from qualitative research in the UK (Hall, 1996) and quantitative work in the USA (Riehl and Lee, 1996) and Israel (Goldring and Chen, 1994), that there are considerable difficulties for some men in adjusting both to working for a woman and adapting to the preferred management style of most women.

The advantages in being a woman headteacher

The majority of the group surveyed have been successful in terms of a traditionally male career path, and some have adopted the norms associated with a career that takes little account of family life. Only 10 per cent identified ‘being a woman’ as a reason for success. By far the most frequent reason for success quoted was ‘hard work’, with support from others being the second most important reason. Both of these tend to indicate the difficulties that a woman may face in reaching a position of leadership, particularly when the leader is stereotypically expected to be a man. However, there are benefits in being a woman once headship has been achieved. Nearly two-thirds of the headteachers reported that they had found it an advantage to be a woman headteacher (see Table 9).

The most mentioned advantage was in terms of being able to defuse macho behaviour on the part of males: students, teachers and parents. In this case, the fact that men feel the need to be aggressive with other men, and that aggression is not associated with females, acts to their advantage. A number of the headteachers quite consciously acted up to the stereotype of femininity and played on the susceptibilities of males, such as governors or local authority personnel, who were likely to perceive them first and foremost as women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantage</th>
<th>%age of total examples given</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to defuse ‘macho’ behaviour</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being noticed</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not constrained by male stereotype</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approachable to women and girls</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using ‘feminine guile’</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy and use of emotion</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head of girls’ school</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 Advantages of being a woman headteacher
Another advantage quoted by the headteachers was ‘being noticed’. Since they were a relative rarity as a female, they tended to be offered opportunities, particularly by the local education authority. It is possible that a rise in the number of female headteachers, which would lead to a reduction in such opportunities, might therefore not be entirely welcomed by some of the heads.

The headteachers were positive about their gender in terms of their approachability. They felt that people, particularly girls, mothers and female members of staff, could approach them more freely than they might a man. In addition, they considered that they had the freedom to empathize with families and be sympathetic in a way that most men could not. Although the general assumption that the leader and manager is male may prove a handicap for the female manager, there is the other side of the coin, namely the freedom of the female manager to behave in a way that is not constrained by the normal stereotypes associated with leaders. It may be that being a woman in management allows some freedom (Hall, 1996) and gives the opportunity to the female headteacher to develop in fresh ways that are unencumbered by the perceptions of others. In addition, Grogan (1996) refers to the life experience of women, as wives and mothers, moulding them as administrators – the experience making them different from males in the same positions.

Conclusion

The survey of the entire population of female headteachers in England and Wales has contributed in a number of ways to the understanding of the management and leadership of women headteachers in the 1990s. The high response rate to the survey gives confidence in the validity of the findings and allows the possibility of some generalizations to complement existing and future qualitative research.

One of the major findings emerging from the research is the continuing discrimination that has been faced by women who are now senior managers in education. The experience of isolation and instances of sexism from peers, recounted by the headteachers, indicate that they are operating in a context which may be inimical to success unless women are prepared to adapt to the prevailing values. These might include opting for a single state, childlessness or working harder and longer than any competitors, male or female.

Many of the headteachers in the survey reported on their experience of resentment, on the part of males and some females, at being subject to female leadership. However, the majority also identify ways in which being a woman leader frees them from the stereotypes of male leadership. Both of these factors exemplify the differences in the context within which male and female headteachers operate, indicating the relevance of gender to the study of leadership and management.

The research strongly endorses the view that most women manage their schools in a way that can clearly be identified as consultative and people orien-
The majority of the headteachers, particularly those under 50, chose adjectives that identified them as collaborative and caring. The choices also endorsed the importance placed on teamwork and on ‘power to’ rather than ‘power over’. However, they do not claim to be democratic, rather they say that the final responsibility for decisions rests with them. In reviewing effective management in schools, Bolam et al. (1993) commented that the headteacher of an effective school ‘has consultative “listening” style; is decisive and forceful but not dictatorial; is open to other people’s ideas; and is easily accessible to staff’ (p. 119).

The headteachers’ choices of adjectives to describe their management style and values generally reflected and endorsed the findings of previous research. The predominant management style was collaborative and people-centred. However, there is a small proportion of the heads for whom this is not true. About 15 per cent of the heads may be adopting, consciously or unconsciously, a style of management and leadership that may have more in common with elements of the more stereotypical ‘masculine’ style, which involves a more directive way of operating. The survey also endorses the tendency for women to be educational leaders, placing stress on the learning of their students rather than on the importance of administrative tasks. The values that the headteachers chose were indicative of the values of educational leaders, ‘achievement and respect’.

Whilst the quality of leadership may best be judged within the context of the individual school, the majority of the surveyed heads operate in a manner that largely coincides with concepts of effective leadership in education. It was noted in the introduction that the under-representation of women in senior management in education constitutes an issue of equity. Since women tend to operate in a collaborative manner that is likely to empower others and endorse values of educational leadership, their under-representation also indicates a loss of potentially effective leadership in schools.

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325


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CHANGING THE DEAFENING SILENCE OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN’S VOICES IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Tanya Fitzgerald


**Abstract**

The critique of western ethnocentric notions of leadership presented in this paper is informed by debates on issues such as gender and educational leadership that have produced meta-narratives that explore and explain women and men’s ways of leading. One of the troubling aspects of western leadership theories is the claim that the functions and features of leadership can be transported and legitimated across homogeneous educational systems. Despite changes that have been made in definitions and descriptions of educational leadership to provide a focus on gender, there is the implicit assumption that while educational leadership might be practised differently according to gender, there is a failure to consider the values and practices of indigenous educational leaders. Thus, the construct of educational leadership needs to be more broadly theorised in order for knowledge of indigenous ways of leading to emerge.

**Introduction**

There are now considerable theoretical and empirical studies on women and educational leadership that have emerged predominantly from the USA (Chase, 1995; Grogan, 1996; Shakeshaft 1987), Britain (Adler *et al.*, 1993; Coleman, 2001; Ozga, 1993), Australia (Blackmore, 1999; Limerick and Lingard, 1995) and New Zealand (Court, 1995, 1998; Strachan, 1999). These studies have fundamentally contested claims such as those expounded by two of the “fathers” of educational administration theory, Hodgkinson (1991) and Sergiovanni
[144x655](1992) that top-down “visionary” leadership is possible and permissible and that issues of social class, gender, race and ethnicity are unproblematic. In their critique, feminist authors have argued that the primacy of positional and propri- etorial leadership is a contested domain and that there can be no unitary explanation of what it means to exercise educational leadership. While the literature on educational leadership is expansive, conclusions that theorists posit pinpoint their concern with determining and defining the nature of educational leadership. Just who might be leaders and how circumstances of social class, location, ethnicity and cultural world view might underpin their work and identity is not fully discussed and disclosed. Essentially while these discourses of “masculinity, rationality and leadership” (Blackmore, 1999, p. 4) and the search for a normative theory of leadership (Duke, 1998) remain gendered, they also remain raced. That is, considerations of race and ethnicity are not uncovered to examine ways in which these trajectories impact on the exercise of educational leadership.

The reform of educational administration that was widely experienced in the late 1980s and 1990s has produced new images and understandings about the nature and role of educational leaders. In essence, good (male) leaders are portrayed as visionary, multiskilled, self-regulatory, facilitative, goal oriented, entrepreneurial and service oriented (see Duke, 1998; Marsh, 2000; Senge, 1990). In a subliminal and subtle way the literature popularises women’s leadership in oppositional ways and suggests that they might exercise traits characteristically described as flexible, supportive, nurturing, collaborative, collegial and socially just. Values such as openness, trust, empowerment and compassion provide a relief map for charting ways in which women inevitably exercise leadership in schools. In the process, debates centred on the common theme that “gender matters in educational leadership” (Blackmore and Kenway, 1993; Hall, 1999; Shakeshaft, 1987) have produced discourses of privilege. That is, women as educational leaders have been theorised about as if they are an homogenous group and considerations of circumstances such as ethnicity/social class/location and beliefs have been discounted. Or, at the very least, distinctions between and among women have collapsed in the attempt to provide a meta-narrative that describes and defines women’s experiences and practices as educational leaders. Against a backdrop of the contested and continuing reform of educational administration, discourses that universalise the complex participation of women and “women’s leadership” have produced universal and somewhat troublesome narratives that privilege “feminine” values. In this way categories of “woman” and “educational leader” have become fixed and the possibility for substantive diversity among and between women does not appear possible. And in particular, whiteness becomes a privileging construct that is played out differently across gendered lines.

This paper will examine literature relating to educational leadership and critique assumptions concerning the homogeneity of this construct and the apparent invisibility of indigenous leadership models and discourses within
these narratives. Despite the shared rhetoric about what it means to simultaneously occupy positions such as “woman” and “educational leader”, silences surrounding indigenous women and educational leadership are deafening.

**Educational leadership in a reform framework**

Since 1988, educational administration and the nature of educational work in the western world has undergone widespread reform that was predicated on the need to re-conceptualise education as a market commodity (Smyth, 1993; Thrupp, 2001). One of the direct consequences is that schools and their leaders have been required to shape their policies and practices according to the stated (and at times not stated) demands of their stakeholders (Glatter, 1999). Conservative and competing demands for parental choice and participation, school autonomy, cultural diversity, educational standards, core curricula, teacher accountability and leadership have radically altered the educational environment that teachers, students and educational leaders occupy (Court, 1998). Despite differences in location, identity and (social and educational) structure, countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Britain have exported and imported educational policy solutions to rectify and resolve these complex educational problems (Thrupp, 2001).

One of the survival mechanisms that schools in New Zealand have adopted is the shift towards entrepreneurship. In an attempt to simultaneously retain a financial and competitive advantage, schools have actively recruited fee-paying international students, sought corporate sponsorship (and in some cases have incorporated the corporate brand within the school name) and focused on image management (Ball, 1994). Schools that are able to offer well-resourced and comprehensive programmes that produce high performing students are deemed to be “good schools” with (presumably) “good leaders” (Education Review Office, 1998). Coincidentally, these schools are often situated in highly sought after residential areas (Gordon, 1994) and are most likely to be led by white, middle class and well educated men (Blackmore, 1999). This is primarily problematic as discourses centred on the conceptualisation of what constitutes a “good school” have been closely connected with models of “good leadership” that associate masculinity with rationality, accountability, efficiency, line management styles and practices, entrepreneurship and the requisite political and administrative expertise (Blackmore, 1999). In this way educational leadership is re-constituted as a “technology of the masculine” as Marjorie Theobald (1996, p. 174) has suggested. This is perhaps a partial explanation for the numerical dominance of men in leadership positions in schools and a central reason to interrupt orthodox educational leadership knowledge and practices in raising questions regarding the apparent silence of women’s voices and, more specifically, indigenous women’s voices.
Debates about gender and leadership are, in the main, raised by women for and about women as evidenced in bibliographies provided by writers such as Jill Blackmore (1999), Diane Dunlap and Peggy Schmuck (1995) and Charole Shakeshaft (1987). What is needed therefore is gender to be located at the centre of debates on leadership, not at its periphery where it is largely ignored. For this to be achieved a redefinition of educational management and leadership that “provides an appropriate stage for giving gender not only a speaking part” (Hall, 1999, p. 156) should be sought. In this way, persistent masculine images of leadership and educational leaders can be contested and questions can be raised concerning taken-for-granted-assumptions surrounding the gender neutrality of these images and discourses. Alternative possibilities for thinking about leaders and leadership may then be possible.

While systems that educators work within are hierarchical and centrally determined and controlled, this is not to suggest that individuals might exercise leadership in a variety of valid ways. What is being called for is a discourse of leadership that does not seek to privilege gender but opens up opportunities for women and men to exercise leadership in non-exclusive ways. In order to achieve this we should begin with an understanding of the systematic inclusion of masculine discourses in the definitions and descriptions of educational leadership and management and pinpoint reasons for the perpetuation of privilege based on gender.

Recent claims by Duke (1998) that a normative theory of leadership is possible exemplify the probability that educational leadership is exercised in a linear, rational and uniform way and predicated on masculine forms of leadership. Kerfoot and Knights (1993, p. 672) have variously described this as strategic or competitive masculinity that “privileges men vis-à-vis women, ranks some men above others, and maintains the dominance of certain forms and practices of masculinity”. In this way, women’s ways of leading are defined in oppositional ways.

Blackmore (1999) has identified ways in which power relations are reproduced and maintained within schools. These power dynamics have created assumptions regarding the normative role and position of the male leader and reinforced causal hegemonic links between masculinity, hierarchy and leadership. The “other” side of the picture is the inference that qualities such as nurturing and caring are necessarily feminine and that these qualities are in some way inferior to “normal” leadership traits. It is reasonable to suggest therefore that the pedagogy of leadership is constructed as “normally” the domain of men and the pedagogy of teaching as essentially the work of women. This form of hierarchical managerialism (Codd, 1993) is a privileging construct. The resultant emphases on technical, task-oriented responsibilities and accountabilities have been pinpointed as one of the central reasons why women predominantly occupy the lower level of workforce hierarchies (Court, 1998; Dunlap and Schmuck, 1995; Ozga, 1993).
For women leaders the emphasis on hierarchical leadership that is embedded within a managerial framework creates tensions and uncertainties about what constitutes effective leadership. As Jill Blackmore (1999) has argued unitary theories that explain ways in which women lead and experience leadership are problematic; women leaders are neither the binary opposite of male leaders nor can there be a model of the “natural and strong” female leader. Although accounts exist that explore the complex and contested educational work of women leaders (Strachan, 1999), further work needs to be completed on the interplay between gender, ethnicity and educational leadership. In particular I am concerned that indigenous voices are heard; not as a harmonious choir but as a cacophony of voices that celebrates distinctiveness within an indigenous framework.

**Indigenous educational leadership**

Discussing differences and distinctiveness within the scope of educational leadership is contested and dangerous terrain. Partially this is because these discourses are outside of my own territory as a *Pakeha* (white) academic in Aotearoa/New Zealand and because I neither wish to “add-on” difference nor theorise to produce an homogeneous discourse of indigenous voices.

There is a growing body of literature on cultural diversity and leadership (Bajunid, 1996; Gunew, 1994; Henry and Pringle, 1996; Jones *et al.*, 2000; Pringle and Timperley, 1995) that conceptualises and constructs theories that value and recognise indigenous ways of knowing, acting and leading. Significantly, the literature seeks to document ways in which leadership is experienced and exercised within a multicultural framework yet does not offer an understanding of strategies used to navigate dual cultures. This points to the possibility that for indigenous leaders they face the dilemma of double consciousness as they struggle to interpret, negotiate and survive in two distinct cultural worlds – one *Pakeha* (European/white) and one indigenous. For indigenous women in particular trajectories of ethnicity and gender present a tension-ridden and deeply problematic dichotomy that has the capacity to shape and determine patterns of social interactions, relationships, mobility and life choices. There is a need to formulate indigenous and non-western theories of educational leadership that are grounded in research that account for and explain indigenous women’s ways of knowing and leading.

This is not however a call for the “adding on” of indigenous women to current narratives about educational leadership. We need to challenge debates concerned with gender and educational leadership to ensure that the role and position of *Pakeha* women is not placed at the center of our theorising, thus re-locating indigenous women to the margins and in redundant positions. Furthermore, given location and family/whanau circumstances, we cannot unilaterally assume that the experience of one indigenous woman can provide a universal understanding of the interests and positioning of all indigenous women. The
effect of discourses of sameness is paralysing and constrains indigenous women to work in particular ways. A further difficulty is that the politics of gender and ethnicity define women in general and ethnic women in particular as problems. Categorical definitions render women as a female problem and race as a minority problem. As Sue Adler et al. (1993) have pointed out these categories allow non-indigenous women to identify themselves as women, not as white women. In this way, whiteness is the taken for granted norm that is deemed to be stable, unified and homogeneous. Difference is therefore expressed as a corollary of whiteness. This therefore has the potential to create a monoculture of the powerful that is expressed in gender and race specific ways as Penny Tripconey (1995) has documented.

One further criticism of the limited literature base is that indigenous women and women of colour are considered in unproblematic ways (Yeakey et al., 1986). That is, all women of colour are labelled as one group thereby negating their distinctiveness based on ethnicity, family, geographical location, language, social and familial relationships, knowledge, spirituality, philosophy and aspiration (Moreton-Robinson, 2000, p. xviii). A further difficulty is the double bind that indigenous women face (Blackmore, 1999, p. 199). While indigenous women represent their communities, they are implicitly expected (by Pakeha administrators) to work as change agents to simultaneously challenge existing power structures in their educational organisations.

In order to uncover the complexities and contradictions that women of colour face as educational leaders, it is imperative that a conscious attempt is made to understand the historical, social, economic and professional circumstances of indigenous women’s lives. It is feasible that such an understanding will permit indigenous women leaders to define their own realities and contest prevailing notions of the “universal educational leader”. One possible way is through a focus on bicultural life stories that examine the interplay of ethnicity and the interrelationship of the individual and her environment. What is being called for therefore is an indigenous theory of educational leadership that places indigenous women at the centre of the narrative. This might reflect or be a sharper, more radical critique of the perpetuation of power and authority within traditional hierarchies that questions the pedagogy of leadership and which centralises differences. I would like to focus this critique on Aotearoa/New Zealand and propose a framework that offers a possibility for indigenous leadership within a bicultural framework.

A framework for indigenous leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand

In 1989 the administration of New Zealand education was reformed. Although the focus was improving the quality of teaching and learning through the decentralisation of school management based on a partnership model between the school and its community, the net effect of these reforms was the demand for
schools to be fiscally efficient and publicly accountable (Codd, 1993; Thrupp, 2001). This changing legislative and administrative environment and the resultant industrial relations framework impacted variously on women’s participation as leaders and managers in schools. In particular, the legislative imperative to hire individuals identified as belonging to minority groups (including women, Maori, Pasifika) has satisfied specific institutional needs. Yet these demands and the intense level of scrutiny placed on minorities within a minority setting (Konrad and Pfeffer, 1991) have not been fully accounted for in explanations of educational leadership. Furthermore, as Yeakey et al. (1986) have argued, minority school leaders are frequently appointed in urban areas where the majority of students are of colour. This has contributed to a legalised form of urban segregation based on residential patterns and the idea that “minority school systems are the appropriate places for minority administrators” (Yeakey et al. 1986, p. 124). In Aotearoa/New Zealand experiences and challenges faced by Maori women school leaders (as a numerical minority) cannot be articulated or explained in terms of similarities with and differences to the leadership of Pakeha (white) women (Bowkett, 1996; Smith, 1992).

Studies such as those conducted by Marian Court (1995) in New Zealand, Margaret Grogan (1996) in the USA and Marianne Coleman (2001) in England and Wales have uncovered similarities in women’s social, economic and educational backgrounds, career progression, family circumstances and leadership styles. However, there has not been a conscious attempt to theorise how power is exercised and differentiated in gender and race based ways. While some studies have provided evidence of “black women in educational management” (Blackmore, 1999; McGee Banks, 2000; Ozga, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987; Slack and Cornelius, 1995) a glance at these texts suggests that this knowledge has been organised in a marginal way. Invariably it is the latter chapters of these texts that focus on the problematic nature of educational leadership and women of colour. It is not a case of arguing whether gender and ethnicity are relevant to debates surrounding the nature of educational leadership, but why the case for their centrality to our understanding still has to be made. In other words, educational leadership needs to be subject to a process of redefinition to ensure that the voices of indigenous women and their experiences are conterminously theorised and legitimised from their worldview.

Western views of leadership have placed primacy on the role of individuals (Sergiovanni, 1992), the organisation (Senge, 1990) and notions of excellence and individual success (Glatter, 1999). Ways in which women exercise leadership (Blackmore, 1999) and the interplay of gender and ethnicity have not been fully considered (Henry and Pringle, 1996). In the case of Aotearoa/New Zealand ways in which Maori women have experienced and acted as leaders have been subject to constraints of gender, ethnicity and colonisation (Smith, 1992).

It is often and erroneously assumed that Maori leadership is primarily exer-
cised by Maori men and that Maori women are subordinate to the authority of men (Henry and Pringle, 1996; Smith, 1992). This is a colonising assumption that rests on the predication that leadership is exercised by an individual and that the individual is “naturally” male. In traditional Maori society both men and women were necessary components of the collective whole and both formed part of the link through whakapapa (genealogy) to the past, the present and the future. All people were part of a collective identity and their survival rested on the collective responsibility of the group to value and respect each person for his/her skills, strengths and attributes. One of the more powerful indications of the gender-neutral way in which the Maori world operated was that there are no personal or possessive pronouns in the Maori language that signify a hierarchy of sex. In terms of stories, proverbs and language, women are spoken about in positive terms. For example, women are referred to as whare tangata (the house of humanity/people); hapu refers to a pregnant woman as well as the wider family group; and whenua means both land and afterbirth (Bishop and Glynn, 1999, pp. 11–25). The interrelationship between women, men and the life-sustaining land is evident in the phrase “he wahine, he whenua, e ngaro ai te tangata”, the interpretation of which is commonly cited as “by women and land, men are lost”. Without the nourishing influences of women and the land, survival is not, and was not, possible.

Traditionally it was the whanau family that provided women with their source of strength. Maori women were not considered the chattels of their husbands; they identified more strongly with their own family and property was not transferred on marriage. Although a woman might live within her husband’s whanau, their role was to ensure she was protected; she always remained a part of her own whanau. This form of social organisation did not confine Maori women within a nuclear family structure. Because of the extended nature of the family unit, child rearing was a communal task and this enabled women to perform a wide range of roles, including leadership roles (Smith, 1992).

Significantly, women played an important role in the maintenance and transmission of oral histories that ensured the survival of the history and identity of the iwi tribe. Missionaries who arrived in the 1820s brought with them culturally specific understandings of the role and status of women. This produced a shift in emphasis away from the powerful female influence and the emergence of the male warrior as the primary leader. One of the direct concerns of the missionary groups was to rescue and reclaim Maori women who they considered in danger of sexual exploitation by men (Fitzgerald, 2000). As Linda Smith (1992, pp. 48–9) notes:

Maori women were perceived either in family terms as wives and children, or in sexual terms as easy partners. Women who had “chiefly” roles were considered the exception to the rule, not the norm . . . Maori women were considered attractive in the absence of a pool of white women. Their autonomy was interpreted as immorality and lack of
discipline. Christianity reinforced these notions by spelling out rules of decorum and defining spaces (the home) for the carrying out of appropriate female activities.

One of the ways in which the colonisation of Maori women continued to occur was through the domestication of Maori women’s knowledge and status via the curriculum that was offered in the mission schools (Fitzgerald, 2000). These schools trained Maori women to inculcate the values of nineteenth century Christian and Pakeha society that rendered women subordinate to men as wives and mothers located within the domestic arena of the home.

While the impact of colonisation led to debilitating changes in the role and status of Maori women, leadership was still exercised by Maori women albeit in public ways within broader Maori society. Historical evidence points to the leadership roles of Maori women in Te Kotahitanga (Maori Parliament), the suffrage movement and the Maori Women’s Welfare League (Rei, 1993). In the Native Schools system, established in 1867 and disbanded in 1967, Maori women were head teachers in many of the schools as Simon and Smith (2001) have documented. This therefore raises two vital questions. In the first instance we need to question why it has become the norm to assume that leadership in Maori society was traditionally a male domain and that female roles are of less value than male roles. Second, why has the perception developed that Maori women leaders are conspicuously absent? This is, as Smith (1992) argues so poignantly, the colonised reality of Maori women’s lives. We must look beyond discourses that suggest that Maori women’s relative absence in school leadership roles is problematic to question why leadership theories are deeply problematic and demand serious critique as they fail to provide a forum for multiple indigenous voices to be heard, understood and theorised. This is not an easy task.

In more general terms, there are a number of central issues to be considered in the search for an understanding of “indigenous educational leadership”. In the first instance, it may not be possible to construct a unitary definition of indigenous leadership particularly as leadership may be exercised in multiple ways in a variety of settings as the previous discussion on leadership in Maori society has indicated. Second, personal qualities, skills and knowledge that contribute to “indigenous leadership” cannot be articulated as differences between indigenous and non-indigenous leadership, yet relationships within indigenous communities and relationships with non-indigenous communities are inextricably linked (Bishop and Glynn, 1999). This therefore points to the possibility that two layers of leadership may exist within indigenous communities: (traditional) community leadership that is derived from an indigenous worldview that recognises skills and knowledge according to the mana (authority, respect) of an individual; and leadership as advocacy between indigenous and non-indigenous communities: “indigenous leadership often requires people to be able to walk confidently and with influence in two worlds” (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 1998, p. 16).
In Aotearoa/New Zealand the official rhetoric of the State espouses the primacy of the *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (1840) as the founding document of the country that acknowledges Maori as *tangata whenua* (the people of the land) and the affirmation of their sovereignty. The three principles that underpin this treaty are partnership, participation and protection. The expectation was that these principles would guide all aspects of public and civil activities. In terms of the provision of education and its delivery by all educational institutions, Maori were guaranteed a share in decision making (partnership), the mandate to define, guard and treasure their knowledge and language (protection) and the benefits of involvement in education at all levels (participation) (Bishop and Glynn, 1999, p. 199). While *Te Tiriti* (the Treaty of Waitangi) provides a measure of legislative compliance, accountability lies at institutional level for the implementation and institutionalisation of the three principles.

Institutions of the state, such as schools and universities, are obligated to publicly state their commitment to the principles embedded in this treaty. This raises further questions concerning how this partnership might be constructed, articulated and legitimated and by whom. The suggestion could also be forwarded that the principles on which *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* is based provide an opportunity for institutions to recognise the sovereignty of their educational leaders and students. This is both difficult and deeply problematic. Therein lies the challenge of partnership, protection and participation within a framework of indigenous (and non-indigenous) leadership.

In considering how, if at all, indigenous leadership might be described, the work of Bishop and Glynn (1999) is insightful. While the model developed by Bishop and Glynn (1999) is directed at asking questions about power relations in education, it is a useful framework for conceptualising educational leadership that accounts for indigenous worldviews. There are a number of similarities with conclusions similarly drawn in the 1998 research report of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (1998, pp. 15–16). Both studies indicate the primacy of the following values:

- initiation of the role of the leader and authority to speak and represent indigenous communities;
- benefits and connectedness to indigenous communities by their leaders and wider benefits through interaction with non-indigenous groups;
- representation and articulation of issues for and within indigenous communities and links with non-indigenous groups;
- legitimation of authority from indigenous communities as a core credential for leadership; and
- accountability to indigenous communities for the actions and activities of leaders.

The following model has been adapted as an organising concept to incorporate the five values listed above (the vertical axis) and provide a possibility for con-
sidering the three principles of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, partnership, protection and participation (the horizontal axis) as a metaphor for advocacy and leadership (see Table 1).

This model is not an attempt to offer a unitary model; rather a framework that recognises and respects multiple voices (representation) that are authoritative (legitimation) within a partnership where there is mutual accountability from the beginning (initiation) and the protection of what is valued and important.

**Conclusion**

The central troubling aspect of western leadership theories is the limited and traditional way in which the work of school leaders and managers has been constructed and conceptualised. In suggesting that a normative theory of educational leadership is possible, the assumption is tendered that leadership is an absolute and rational activity that can be exercised in culturally-specific ways. We need to sincerely question whether these forms of leadership are relevant for the twenty first century. I would suggest not. It is impossible to create conceptualisations of leading and managing without taking into account issues of gender and ethnicity. One of the ways this can be partially achieved is through the authentication of indigenous women’s voices and an understanding of ways in which background, ethnicity, religion, gender, family circumstances and other identities serve to transform and shape their educational work. What is needed is for multiple voices to be heard and a multi-voiced approach to educational leadership and management to be adopted. One of the ways this might be achieved is the adoption of a framework that positions indigenous ways of knowing and leading at the centre of practice and theory.

**References**


Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (1998) *Concept Study into an Australian Indigenous Leadership Development Program*. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra.


### Table 1  A framework for indigenous leadership and advocacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Values and processes/principles</th>
<th>Article 1: partnership</th>
<th>Article 2: protection</th>
<th>Article 3: participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initiation</strong></td>
<td>Who initiates the appointment of an educational leader? What does each party bring to the relationship?</td>
<td>What are the goals of the educational leader, community and organisation?</td>
<td>Whose interests are established and promoted? Who allocates the work activities of the indigenous educational leader and how?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefits</strong></td>
<td>Who will directly benefit from the appointment of the educational leader? What will the leader, community and organisation bring to the relationship and how is this recognised?</td>
<td>What difference will indigenous leadership make for indigenous students and community?</td>
<td>How might the cultural aspirations and preferences of the indigenous educational leader be evident in the organisation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Representation</strong></td>
<td>In what ways can the voice of the educational leader be heard?</td>
<td>What agency does each individual have and how might this be exercised?</td>
<td>Whose voice is heard? Who will do the work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legitimation</strong></td>
<td>What authority does the leader have? Are the realities and experiences of the educational leader legitimised within the system?</td>
<td>Who determines what is accurate and how the findings might be theorised?</td>
<td>Who will nurture indigenous educational leaders? Who makes the decisions about the work and activities of these leaders?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accountability</strong></td>
<td>Who is the educational leader accountable to? Who makes this decision? How is accountability demonstrated?</td>
<td>Who will have access to the knowledge that is produced?</td>
<td>Who has control over the distribution of the knowledge, experiences and leadership activities?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (1840)


Further reading


Tracking down the invisible issue

Accompanying the invitation to contribute to this anniversary edition of the EMA journal was the suggestion that I should begin by reviewing the journal’s treatment of gender and education management over the last 25 years. The editor was right in assuming that the task would not take long. Gender only began to emerge as a discrete topic after 1980 and, since then, has hovered in the wings like a wallflower at a party. The first clarion call to its serious consideration was in Hough’s article which highlighted, but did not attempt to account for its previous scarcity (Hough, 1988). Prior to Hough a few writers (mainly men) had included gender as a factor in their exploration of education management issues. It must be assumed that the failure of women to raise these issues in this context (since gender is seen to be about women, even though it applies to both men and women) can be attributed to their more lowly positions in academic and professional life. Even Hough’s article concludes by acknowledging a woman colleague as having carried out all the empirical work. She is not, however, shown as joint author.

The articles by Johnston (1986) and Gray (1987) suggest men taking gender seriously. Johnston looked at differences in teachers’ preferences for primary school leadership styles. He did not, however, question the bias of the instrument he used—the Ohio Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire— which was based on studies of ‘head men’ in mainstream formal organizations. He found that men and women had different conceptions of their ideal man and woman headteacher and concluded that women managers in primary schools would run into difficulties if they tried to imitate men. The parallel question of whether men primary heads would have trouble if they imitated women was not raised.

In contrast, Gray (1987, 1989 and 1993) aimed to keep gender on the agenda, particularly as it applies to the development of men as education managers. He
notes the difficulties men face in engaging in personal change, whether in what he describes as the more ‘nurturing’ environment of the primary school or the more ‘macho’ culture of secondary schools. Like Johnston, he sees women managers under pressure to adapt to ‘the machismo of much school organization’ (Gray, 1987: 41). His proposals about differences between men and women’s management styles are based, however, not on research but on his experiences of running training programmes for educational managers. Later he writes of the challenge to management development to enable men to open up and develop a wider range and a new language of feelings (Gray, 1993).

At this stage, gender is still segregated from other issues, rather than integrated into our understanding of the behaviour of men and women in education management. The seeds sown by these writers bore little fruit, though there was a brief flowering in the summer issue of the EMA journal in 1989, when four articles appeared (Jayne, 1989; McBurney and Hough, 1989; Weightman, 1989; Gray, 1989). The then editor summarizes them as being on the theme of ‘gender characteristics of management’. His phrase is vague enough to ensure that the articles appear so loosely coupled that they cannot be seen to constitute a serious attack on knowledge. Given the editor’s expressed concern with the difficulties faced by ‘chaps’ at the top, he missed an ideal opportunity to suggest that we all (not just women) might learn something by looking at women in management, few though they were and continue to be.

Articles referring to gender continued to maintain a token presence, with minimal impact on the journal’s dominant discourse. Drawing on their research on headteachers new in post, Earley and Weindling (1988) conclude that there were no apparent differences in the experiences of or responses to men and women and therefore gender was not a significant variable (p. 13). Martin’s (1993) closely argued case for the necessity of a masculine orientation for administrative positions adds fuel to the ‘management as masculine’ debate. Using the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, she found the masculinity scores of women administrators were similar to those of their male counterparts and higher than those of women teachers not interested in an administrative position. She interprets the women administrators’ higher masculinity score as a ‘coping strategy’. Coleman (1996), on the other hand, in a small empirical survey of female headteachers, tentatively concludes that the headteachers were androgynous, able to select from a wide range of qualities. Both studies fail to explore the implications of their gender-based findings for both women and men in education management. This token presence was in spite of Shakeshaft’s influential review of women in educational administration, which raised issues about the ‘different world of women administrators’ (1987). Hitherto gender and educational management were mainly discussed in terms of why women were underrepresented in senior positions in every sector’s management hierarchy: primary, secondary and tertiary. While this remained the main focus of discussion it was unlikely that the debate would ever become central or include men. Shakeshaft’s (1987) review set the agenda for a wider range of questions needing to be researched, if
knowledge about gender and educational management is ever to challenge or support a reconceptualization of theories of educational management.

**Changing ways of knowing**

A scrutiny of the changing discourse on educational leadership as reflected in the *EMA* journal over the past 25 years pays further testimony to the marginalization of gender perspectives. From Hughes’s (1972) account of school headship in transition to the intellectual jousting of Hodgkinson, Greenfield, Gronn and others, the frameworks and language for understanding educational leadership have shifted radically, in ways that parallel evolving ‘ways of knowing’ emanating from the tradition of feminist research. The word ‘feminist’ on the pages of this journal may, Medusa-like, turn many readers to stone. Of course not all research about gender is feminist but it would be unrealistic not to acknowledge the influence of some feminist research methods on the questions and data-collection methods that characterize much research into gender issues. It is precisely in the commonalities of the discourse on gender and that of new approaches to understanding educational leadership (e.g. Ribbins and Sherratt, 1992; Gronn, 1996) that the potential for integration rather than segregation becomes apparent.

Looking for the new ‘phoenix’ in administrative studies, Greenfield (1991) described his sense of ‘putting one’s self in jeopardy’ as a result of challenging others’ profound convictions and bias (p. 201). His experience is not far from that of senior women academics who risk their professional reputations by pursuing gender issues (Acker, 1994; Delamont, 1989; Hall, 1996). Indeed, it is easy to see those studies in the 1980s, which looked for differences in the behaviour of men and women managers or sought to establish the superiority of one approach over another, as falling into precisely the technicist trap that Greenfield attacks. Where his critique comes together with the concerns of many of those exploring gender and educational management in the 1990s is in Hodgkinson’s vision of administration as a ‘moral art’ (Hodgkinson, 1991). Its pursuit and the research methods needed to understand it, in Greenfield’s words, ‘need courage and resolution . . . for it entails clear-eyed observation of the realities, dilemmas, difficulties and defeats of life’ (p. 215). Taking gender into their theoretical stances puts researchers and theorists through the same painful process that Greenfield quotes Perrow as describing; that of thinking oneself ‘out of a mainstream paradigm that one had lived with and even contributed to’ (quoted in Greenfield, 1991: 205).

Whether the issues discussed in this paper can encourage engagement with that painful process will depend on the acceptability and seductiveness of the gender perspective on educational management I describe. I aim to show how the shift in our attempts to understand educational leadership and management, represented in seminal papers in the *EMA* journal over the last 10 years, reflects and is strengthened by the questions raised by gender perspectives on these issues. My purpose in presenting some of the key findings from my own study
of six women headteachers (three primary and three secondary) is to propose a modern version of educational leadership that does three things. It confronts the demands of educational change, it is both (or neither) ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’; and it contributes ideas to the educational management agenda that result from the rejection of a narrowly defined androcentric view (the ashes from which Greenfield hoped his phoenix would rise). The discussion is organized around four themes: gender perspectives and research into educational leadership; becoming a school leader; being a school leader; and an alternative view on the debate about educational leadership as managerialist or emancipatory (Smyth, 1989).

**Background to the research**

Much literature on gender and educational management focuses on the barriers to women’s career progression in schools and colleges (see Hall, 1993, for a summary). There is less research-based evidence about their performance once in senior positions. Hence there continues to be a mystification about what it is like to be a woman at the top in education, a leader as well as a follower. Two years’ research funding from the Leverhulme Trust enabled me to explore the experiences of women in senior positions in schools in England, through interviews and observation. They were women who had broken through the ‘glass ceiling’, to become successful leaders in schools. They had circumvented the barriers that traditionally stand in the way of women seeking career advancement in organizations. In Beck and Steele’s (1989) words, they had gone ‘beyond the great divide’ and taken up leadership positions, with the implied possibilities of power and influence. This differentiated them from women in other sectors, where few are in positions of significant corporate power. It differentiates them too from other women teachers who either choose not to, or fail to, achieve promotion within the school or college system.

**Power, culture, gender: using a triple metaphor**

The book that details the research, *Dancing on the Ceiling*, shows women leading the management dance and making the dance floor their own. As a study of school leadership, as experienced by women, it challenges ideas and assumptions about leadership in schools, particularly those written by, mainly about, and implicitly for men. Some male writers (e.g. Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Grace, 1995; Southworth, 1995) have called for more evidence about effective educational leadership that considers gender, but the field continues to be dominated by women (e.g. Shakeshaft, 1987; Ozga, 1993; Ouston, 1993).

The four themes addressed in this paper each show how a gender focus (on women and men) can contribute to our understanding of the appropriate skills and attributes needed for quality leadership as we approach the year 2000. In a study (with Mike Wallace) of Senior Management Teams in secondary schools

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**EMOTIONS AND GENDER**

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(Wallace and Hall, 1994) we developed a dual power-culture perspective as a lens through which to view and interpret the phenomenon. Gender was included as a factor for consideration but not a specific focus for our observations of the teams’ operations. The project on women headteachers provided a further opportunity to use the power-culture metaphor; this time gender was added as a significant factor. The new triple metaphor provided an orienting frame for negotiating the territory of headship and gender and identifying the questions that data collection needed to address. A combination of the three perspectives (culture, power and gender) provided lenses for contrasting the ways in which the women heads interpreted and used power, and their impact on the school’s culture as, through their leadership, they worked towards changing the school in order to improve students’ educational experience.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. For many, a triple metaphor is indigestible and reduces the impact of individual flavours. Yet the study of women headteachers showed how a triple metaphor of power, culture and gender to examine women’s performance as school leaders provided insights that any one perspective might have failed to yield. It showed how men and women’s interactions in schools are influenced not only by their different uses of power and allegiance to particular cultural norms, but by contradictory gender expectations. Daily interactions were simultaneously an expression of the use of power, cultural norms and gender expectations. Though the details might vary, the patterns of these triple influences on interaction are unlikely to have been different had the study been of men.

**Women on their own terms**

I would not, however, want to lose sight of the fact that the study was of women. A primary intention was to show how women behave as school leaders and school leadership as done by women. They combined entrepreneurial characteristics with a value framework (particularly about relating to people) and a repertoire of behaviours that differed from those often associated in other research with men as managers. Conceptualizing education management by studying women on their own terms constitutes a challenge to both men and women practising, researching and writing in the field. I believed, and the belief was confirmed, that the art of headship (particularly as a moral art) has its roots in childhood and educational and career experiences that cannot be divorced from an individual’s gender identity, whether man or woman. Some of our understanding of individuals as school leaders must include an understanding of them as women or men. Understanding leaders and managers in education means understanding them as people. Understanding education management means appreciating the values that underpin management choices about goals and ways of behaving in the job.
Confronting the taken-for-granted

Most texts on research methodology stress the need for researchers to examine and publicize their biases that may affect the validity of the data they collect. Yet research on headteachers is replete with assumptions about what it is and is not important to address, and what is and is not worthy of comment. For example, most studies of women at work assume that an understanding of their workplace behaviour must take account of their lives away from work. This presumption stems from a recognition of the different and difficult choices women face as a result of conceptions of their role in contemporary western societies. Where women managers are concerned, the constraints on seeking or being offered promotion are shown to arise from the conflicting expectations of work and family responsibilities and the failure of organizations (including schools) to take account of their different needs, as well as their workstyle preferences (Marshall, 1984 and 1995). These same assumptions about the symbiotic relationship between men’s personal and professional needs and their impact on their workplace behaviour are rarely addressed.

In his plea for ‘a new world order in the study of headship’ Gronn (1996: 25) asks for:

more and better leader-watching or on-looking: longitudinal, naturalistic and biographical investigations, particularly the latter, to better enrich knowledge of where leadership comes from and to ascertain what leading and following look like when scrutinised in any depth.

Similarly, the interviews with headteachers conducted as part of the 1995 BEMAS conference included a focus on the heads’ early lives, although Ouston (1995: 1) notes that, of the eight men and women interviewed, ‘it is the four women interviewees who present their personal and professional lives as crucially entwined with each other’. Recognizing that this might be the outcome of mainly same-gender pairs of interviewers and interviewees, she asks whether female interviewers are more likely to elicit personal information.

Implicit in her question are two important pointers for future leadership research, particularly if it takes the road advocated by Greenfield (stressing values) and Gronn (stressing biography). First, men researchers need to subject their relationship to their subjects or co-enquirers to the same gender analysis as women researchers do. If, as many women researchers claim, some of their understanding of their women interviewees come from their shared experiences as women (see e.g. Coleman, 1991), then this is also likely to be true of men interviewing men. Unless this influence is recognized, the picture can be biased in unacceptable ways. Yet, in Wolcott’s (1977) classic study of the man in the principal’s office, the effects of ‘man researching man’ on the conclusions about school leadership are not questioned. Southworth (1995) acknowledges himself as a male researcher and Ron as a male headteacher but does not explore further
the implications of this shared gender identity for his findings. Ribbins and Marland (1994) and Grace (1995) comment on their women heads as women but not the men heads as men.

What then is the status of information relating to personal lives in educational management theory? Holistic research focuses on private worlds of family and emotions as much as public worlds of career and reason (Marshall, 1984), regardless of the research subjects’ gender. The accounts in Headship Matters (Ribbins and Marland, 1994) are all the stronger for paying attention to all these factors, although they are less evident in the interpretations. They show how the paths to headship of both men and women and their performance as school leaders must be understood in the context of their past as well as their present contexts. My study found that the women heads shared a commitment to young people’s education and to teachers as professionals which was fundamental to their conception of the job. Once on the teaching path, their commitment to the central purpose of their work kept them on track. In this respect they differed from women managers outside education whose career trajectories are more likely to include moving between different services and different products (White et al., 1992). More research into men’s career trajectories in education is needed if we are to know what drives men towards school leadership positions.

Working with the same sample as Ouston, McMahon (1995) was struck by similarities between the values of the headteachers interviewed, whatever their gender. In the 1980s such similarities would be taken as evidence that gender was not a significant factor for understanding headship (as in the Earley and Weindling article referred to earlier). In contrast, I found a specific focus on gender revealed the numerous subtle ways in which the women heads dealt with expectations that the person in charge would be a man. Taking over a new school has to be done within the constraints of existing organizational structures and cultures. Gender is a component of both of these, particularly when the new head is a woman. The people with whom she works will have expectations of her as a head that will be influenced by their relations with her predecessor and their experiences of and attitudes towards women in leadership positions. Margaret Thatcher’s thirteen years as prime minister did little to enhance the image of women as leaders in most people’s minds. What do we know about the constraints in the early years of headship on a man taking over from a woman?

**Becoming a headteacher: looking for natural histories**

In order to understand how these women arrived at their headship positions, I traced their experiences from family of origin, through school, college and early work experiences to family, educational and career experiences as adults. These experiences are set within the context of values about power, culture and gender that played a part in the choices made, and provided a basis for future leadership action. The study traces the relationships between the formation of personal identity (who you are), career decisions (what you want) and subsequent leader-
ship behaviour (how you act). I assumed that, at different stages of their lives, starting in childhood, women who had become headteachers had made choices about the relative importance they would attach to the following behaviours:

- being academically successful at school,
- being a leader at school,
- gaining higher education qualifications,
- having a career,*
- whether and/or when to marry,*
- whether and/or when to have children,*
- seeking promotion,
- becoming a school leader.

I argue that the choices they made were influenced and at times constrained by factors that in turn created dilemmas at different points in their careers. The influences and constraints included

- social class and parents’ educational background;
- division of labour in the household and expectations regarding men and women’s public and private roles;
- sibling relations;*
- the availability of role models at school, college and work;
- other non-family members’ influences;
- type of career chosen;
- type of support available from husband or partner where applicable;*
- other types of support;*
- number and ages of own children;* and
- demands of the job.

Some of the features shown in this list are evident in other research into school leadership; but those asterisked are less likely to appear in research with men school leaders. Then, they are either taken-for-granted or considered unimportant. Their potential for understanding what drives men as well as women as school leaders is lost.

Individual responses to the dilemmas faced in choosing a lifestyle are important components of learning to lead. As Kegan (1994: 182) shows in his discussion of ‘the mental demand of public life’, increasing mastery over one’s work: ‘is not merely time on the job or promotion to increasing responsibility, but the psychological capacity to find (or, really, to invent) one’s own way of “doing it”’. Within Kegan’s stage theory of development, the transformation of consciousness after adolescence or the personal unfolding of ways of organizing experience are not simply replaced as we grow but subsumed into more complex systems of mind (p. 9). Central to the transformations that occur are the processes by which individuals create meaning: of themselves, of others and of
the world. If we are to understand the meanings that leaders and other make of their work in education, we need to understand the totality of their meaning frames. As people progress through their careers they are trying out ‘possible selves’ i.e. their ideas of what they might become, would like to become and what they are afraid of becoming (Markus and Nurius, 1986: 394). This concept is not unfamiliar in discussions of women and work where ‘fear of success’, absence of positive role models in public life and poor self-image are common themes. It is less familiar in discussions of men at work, yet the concept of possible selves is relevant to both sexes. From Kegan’s perspective, the first issue any management training oriented towards transformation has to address is what the person has to manage psychologically. He aligns the ability mature individuals have to take an overview of the self and see how the parts hang together, with the same capacities required of leadership, management and administration (p. 167). Stoll and Fink’s (1996) summary of their research on school improvement lends support to this view through their advocacy of ‘invitational leadership’ as the appropriate leadership style. They describe leadership as ‘communicating invitational messages to individuals and groups with whom leaders interact in order to build and act on a shared and evolving vision of enhanced educational experiences for pupils’ (p. 109). In order to invite others, ‘leaders must first invite themselves, physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally, spiritually’ (p. 111).

Levine (1989) draws on these psychological theories of adult development to ask about the degree to which a principal’s own developmental level influences her or his ability to lead and support others. She hypothesizes a relationship between high ego level and the capacity to create a supportive and nurturant environment. In order to be effective in a helping role, leaders need to be at a point in their own development which she characterizes as ‘Autonomous’ (p. 193):

Autonomous adults are able to transcend concerns for their own immediate experiences, becoming more realistic and objective about themselves and others. This last tendency is especially useful in helping [a principal] understand teacher’s needs and concerns independent of [her] own. The fact that individuals at the Autonomous stage can be both intimate and independent affords them the capacity to identify and empathize with others as well as maintain a sense of distance and personal integrity.

Reaching this level of autonomy is not gender-specific, although Levine notes the relationship shown in research between effective leadership and individuals who demonstrate this high level of awareness, as well as an ability to integrate masculine and feminine tendencies (p. 192).

Sceptical readers may be asking whether this justification of a gender perspective is merely a back door to ‘psychologizing leadership’, for many an
unacceptable and already well-trodden path. I would argue that, combined with a gender perspective, it allows for the systematic ordering of biographical data that Gronn (1996: 19) identifies as the basis for ensuring the integration of agency and structure in a ‘leadership career framework’.

As I traced the women heads’ paths to headship, a set of themes emerged relating to school leadership that highlighted the centrality of the self-concept as an organizing feature of the heads’ leadership styles. In summary they included the value placed by heads on:

• an inner as well as an outer journey to school leadership,
• developing an inner locus of control,
• being authentic,
• being consistent,
• self-presentation, self-management and self-efficacy.

None of these had emerged as explicit themes in other analyses of headship which include men, with the exception of Levine’s (1989) case studies of principals’ own and support for others’ professional development; and Southworth’s (1995) research-based study of a single primary school headteacher. Both Levine’s conclusions about the relationship between adult growth and learning, and Southworth’s about the power of the head’s self-concept in shaping his professional identity, meshed with my own observations of what is involved in becoming and being a school leader.

The relationship of self-concept to professional performance is more readily identified in other studies of women. For example, Dillard (1995) shows how Natham (an African American urban high school principal) derives much of her leadership style from her own experiences of growing up black in the United States. In spite of a relatively affluent childhood, her shared experiences of racism with fellow African Americans led her to negotiate race relations and combat racism in the context of her school principalship through reinterpreting her responsibilities to those circumstances within her own African American framework. She is fully aware that her appointment related to this shared identity: ‘As the school population returns to being predominantly “white” again’, she says, ‘I’ll be reassigned somewhere else. The community, the teachers, they will want a white principal again’ (p. 547).

We still know little about how the life experiences of teachers and headteachers, both men and women, from ethnic minorities in the British context shape their approaches to the job. Dillard calls for ‘narratives of the principalship from those whose voices have much to tell us about relevant issues of leadership through diversity’ (p. 541). The same idea is reflected in Ribbins and Marland’s advocacy of ‘a natural history of preparation for headship’ (p. 12). They include an interview with Elaine Foster, an Afro-Caribbean head of a girls’ comprehensive school. For her, values supersede ethnicity and gender as explanations of her behaviour as a head. At the same time, she recognizes ways into manage-
ment ‘as a big issue for women, and a big issue for black women and black people in general’ (p. 105). In the same tradition of understanding headship by allowing heads to speak for themselves, Mortimore and Mortimore (1991) include Vasanthi Rao’s account, as the first Asian headteacher in Birmingham. Rao vividly describes how ethnicity features in her own and Asian/Afro-Caribbean colleagues’ relations with staff, parents and pupils (p. 81): ‘I had to work hard—doubly hard to prove that I was a good headteacher. I felt I was in a glass cage all the time, being watched.’

A dominant theme arising from my own study of women headteachers’ career paths was their development of an inner locus of control. This can be defined as having high self-efficacy beliefs which are reinforced by successful performance, leading to a further belief that success is contingent on behaviour in the job and not luck or fate or ‘who you know’. If crucial factors in the formation of ‘manager’ or ‘leader’ identities derive from life experiences, then any discussion of organizational life must take account of how men and women, as individual employees, have arrived at their conceptions of appropriate workplace behaviour.

When the women heads’ experiences of family life are compared with those reported in the Ribbins and Marland and Ouston surveys, there appear to be as many similarities between men and women as between men or between women. Two examples of similarities will suffice. Women heads often referred to the pleasure they took as children in playing at schools; they were inevitably the organizers, whether their pupils were other children or dolls. Peter Downes, in Ribbins and Marland’s study, also recalled always wanting to be a teacher (p. 16):

As far back as I can remember I never wanted to be anything else. My parents told me that I played at being teacher very early on in my life. When other children were playing cops and robbers or mummies and daddies, I was playing schools.

What a shame the interviewers did not explore further with him the form his ‘playing at teacher’ took. It might have contributed to an understanding of how he sees headship now. The desire of parents of the immediately post-Second World War generation to encourage their children to take advantage of educational opportunities they had missed out on, was another common feature in the accounts of both men and women heads.

These similarities are not surprising since it is now commonly acknowledged in the literature on women that there are as many differences between them as similarities, yet another reason why the ‘differences’ literature needs to move on. Differences between men as men have always been taken for granted. All these accounts, including my own, show the different influences of each parent. My focus on women, however, leads me to suggest that women may be exposed to a more diverse set of role options than men, as a result of the different
conceptualization of men and women’s roles in society. The women’s accounts gave the impression of families in which tasks and roles were clearly differentiated along gender lines. Just one of the heads had a mother who worked full-time outside of the home and she, together with a working grandmother, constituted a powerful influence on this head’s attitudes to having a career. Marshall (1984) suggests that women who positively value their mother’s role within the private world of the home (which these heads did) develop an appreciation of their own feminine strengths and abilities that does not depend on male approval. None of the heads, either as child or adult, felt the need to be more like a boy or man in order to progress or win approval. However, as has been shown in other research (e.g. White et al., 1991), deciding to follow a different lifestyle and career path from their mothers was the result largely of their father’s influence. It therefore appears that women take both parents as role models. This provides them with the potential for a broader range of behaviours on which to base their own actions, particularly at work, in later life.

In contrast, research into ‘becoming a man’ suggests that, at the age of 6, boys:

... make clear distinctions between the concepts of male and female and begin no longer to model their mother, who in most cases has been their most nurturing parent. At that point they have to figure out how to act like men and start modelling the behaviour of the men they admire.

(Harris, 1995: 42)

Harris describes this narrowing of role models to almost exclusively men (‘the messages men hear’) as presenting a picture ‘of emotional tragedy’. Strong words indeed, but they have their echoes in Gray’s concern (described earlier) of many male heads’ reluctance to engage in personal exploration as a basis of professional development. Unfortunately Ribbins and Marland (as men) do not offer their own interpretation of their seven heads’ accounts. There remains a task still to be done to see whether and how the leadership repertoires of men are inhibited by their need to behave in men’s ways.

The family constitutes one of the first arenas for learning about power. There is a general consensus in the literature (e.g. Astin and Leland, 1991: Cantor and Bernay, 1992: Adler et al., 1993) that many (not all) women in leadership positions use power differently. Some, though not the authors just cited, explain this in terms of innate female characteristics: a shaky argument that divides rather than integrates new approaches to understanding leadership behaviour. I would argue that, as a result of the continued legitimacy for girls to take both mothers and fathers as role models, they may have access to a wider range of strategies for using power and influence (in the sense of ‘transformative capacity’, Giddens, 1984) than boys. My study showed that, when this is translated into leadership behaviour in adulthood, ‘power for’ is preferred to ‘power over’. The heads were ever vigilant against the possible abuses of the power that came with
their position. Unlike many men colleagues, their reluctance to take power for granted made them sensitive to its components and consequences.

Where does this discussion of men and women’s paths to school leadership take us? It shows how we need to ask different questions about how women and men learn to lead. If an inner locus of control is indeed a characteristic of effective headship (whatever the context), then its identification and development or sustenance are important tasks for those responsible for selecting and developing school leaders. The research suggests that women who make it to the top demonstrate this characteristic. Yet, in education, professional success cannot and is not measured exclusively in terms of career success. Its true measure is successful outcomes for students’ learning. A woman (or man) leading a school that is failing its students cannot be called successful. Being a successful manager in education entails having strongly held values about the central purpose of the enterprise.

**Being a school leader: professing and doing**

Ribbins and Marland talk of procuring and professing a headship. The problem with professing is in its relationship to doing (other than for professors in universities where the professing is the doing). What does school leadership look like from what Ribbins and Marland (1994: 6) call ‘a contextualised perspective in action’ i.e. one that explores what school leaders say in the context of what they are observed and seen by others to do? Interview data must be complemented by observational data if the relationship between espoused theories and theories in action is to be identified. As those responsible for assessing applicants for senior management posts in any sector know only too well, candidates can articulate their values forcefully on paper or in interview but fail to demonstrate them (or call on different ones) once in post. In interview the women heads, for example, described the high value they gave to being consistent in their behaviour in the job. I observed this consistency in action across a range of situations and their concern on the rare occasions when they acted out of character. Demonstrating consistency of behaviour and consistency between values and behaviour was the women heads’ basis for giving credibility to the role models they provided for others.

McMahon’s (1995) interviews also reveal the declared importance to men and women heads of modelling desired behaviour in the school. I observed in action the strategies the heads used to lead their school in desired directions and to influence the organizational culture they considered appropriate for achieving the school’s goals. They prioritized self-knowledge as a basis for action (hence their willingness to engage in the intense scrutiny to which the research subjected them), thereby offering cogent role models for women and men’s development as managers and leaders. As Hodgkinson (1991) has proposed, leadership as a moral art depends on the leader’s willingness to ‘know thyself’.

The relationship between their self-perceptions and performance was crucial.
to understanding their symbolic leadership behaviour, manifest in the simple daily routines that communicate important messages. For example, they aimed to create schools characterized by trust, openness, involvement and a sense of self-worth: goals that probably most school leaders would profess. In order to do this they had to be trustworthy, open, willing to share power, attentive to people’s needs and confident. This included avoiding the ‘wheeler-dealer’ strategies they associated with some male colleagues; or being ‘political’, which they saw as illegitimate behaviour.

Particularly evident was their continued vigilance in managing themselves as leaders and as women. Their self-management strategies (of self-presentation, self-organization and self-development) were honed to enable them to demonstrate self-control as a legitimation of their claim to be in charge of the school. Any interactions involving them were inevitably influenced by contradictory norms about being a school leader and being a woman. The operation of these contradictory norms is difficult to establish empirically, since they happen at ‘black-box’ level and, in the context of education where at least-lip service to equality between the sexes exists, the box is tightly sealed. Gender also influences interactions between male school leaders and others. The difference is that the norms relating to being male and being a leader are not usually contradictory. Both men and women followers accept their congruence. In contrast, many of the women heads’ ‘political’ energies were directed towards establishing the legitimacy of their authority as heads without damaging their acceptability as women. At different times I observed them subtly adjust their behaviour, either to strengthen their influence as leaders (by playing down being a woman), or to remove any discomfort men and women might feel because they were a woman. In these respects they confirmed their awareness of what other research has found: that the expectations others have of school leaders vary according to whether they are a woman or a man. The women heads paid continual attention to the semantics of self as headteacher, as evidenced in how they dressed, talked, moved and organized their day. Their priority was to show that they were in control of the situation and themselves. They had thought much about the messages communicated by how they spoke, looked and moved, as well as what they did, with whom and to what effect.

In search of Florence Wayne and John Nightingale?

I have described some ways in which women heads seek to structure a domain for discourse in which what women value in communication is as legitimate as what men value. This conception of their influence on the domain of discourse takes me to my fourth and final theme: school leaders’ responses to educational reforms, particularly in the context of self-managing schools. This section’s somewhat quirky subheading derives from Schein’s (1989) critique of androgyny theories that are based on innate socialized differences between men and women. For her: ‘The same sex role stereotyping that often excludes women
from managerial positions can now be used to enhance their opportunities. Florence Nightingale meets John Wayne and together they lead us into the sunset of greater leadership effectiveness’ (p. 155). It is clearly not a partnership she finds attractive. It also misses the point. Identifying management as androgynous can open up possibilities for both Florence and John to extend and discover new dimensions of their repertoires. I take androgyny to refer to the mainly comfortable integration of qualities which, although not in themselves exclusively masculine or feminine, are commonly associated with one or other gender. As Bem (1975: 6) says:

The concept of androgyny contains an inner contradiction, and, hence, the seeds of its own destruction . . . Androgyny necessarily presupposes that the concepts of masculinity and femininity will cease to have such content and the distinctions to which they refer will blur into invisibility. Thus, when androgyny becomes a reality, the concept of androgyny will have been transcended.

One stimulus to studying how women manage and lead schools was to provide an empirical base for supporting or refuting claims that ‘management is masculine’. This belief has often been cited as an explanation of why women are reluctant to apply for promotion (Al-Khalifa, 1989: Evetts, 1990). It derives from the indisputable fact that in most societies men dominate numerically the higher echelons of almost every management hierarchy in the public and private sectors. The ‘masculine’ organizational culture that results from this domination reproduces to women’s disadvantage as employees the gender relations that characterize the wider society. The concept implies too a requirement of managers to operate in ways that are rational, bureaucratic and technicist: the effective utilization of staff takes precedence over their involvement through communication, motivation, development and teamwork.

The effect of describing management as masculine is to create obstacles to women’s promotion, implying that is antipathetic to the qualities that draw people in to teaching and, in its association with managerialism, possibly immoral. In the context of locally managed schools in New Zealand. Strachan (1995) finds management and the delivery of social justice inequitable. In Australia, Meadmore et al. (1995) take a more moderate line. Pointing to the paradoxes of devolution, in which accountability and surveillance sit uneasily alongside school-based autonomy, they ask how much space a school leader has to coopt managerialism into her own way of doing things. In the wider context of a Conservative government’s education policies in Britain, Evetts (1990) argues that the changes brought by recent reforms in the British education system require managerialist approaches that present cultural dilemmas for women headteachers. In her view, heads have to become tough, aggressive, competitive, directive and autocratic if they are to deal with the pressures created by the reforms. School management thus becomes an unsuitable job for a woman and women who aspire to and achieve headship are in a Catch 22
position. Demonstrating that they can do the job well, particularly by being successfully entrepreneurial, means they fail the critical theorists’ test by not challenging the effects of entrepreneurialism on educational values: and the feminists’ test for seemingly acquiescing to ‘masculine’ values. Yet is there any evidence that some successful education leaders are not also producing more efficient and equitable schools? Grace’s (1995) study shows that there are many men heads (and presumably deputy heads of both genders) who are unhappy with what is now expected of them in their role. The statistics on the reasons for the greater number of headteachers taking early retirement and the lower number of deputies applying for headships have their own story to tell.

The picture that emerged from my study failed to justify either of these disappointments. On the contrary, the women heads challenged the implicit fatalism of theories associating management and masculinity, first by going for and achieving headship: second, through their behaviour once in post. They had enough confidence in their own beliefs and values to use power in ways that they wanted to. This confidence led them to reject the need to become ‘masculine’ in management and question whether power was inevitably ‘political’. They resembled Marshall’s ‘creative individualists’ who have integrated their femininity into their sense of identity and learned how to combine individual power with structural constraints. The reforms were welcome as a way of providing them with the tools and opportunities to move their schools in directions both they and others associated with the school desired.

From observing their performance, a fundamental flaw in the ‘management as a masculine’ argument became apparent, as it applies to education. It implicitly divorces education from leadership. In education, every teacher is both a manager and a leader in the context of the students for whom they are responsible. However powerful the government’s pressures towards reformulating schools as profitable mini-businesses, the women’s approaches to headship demonstrated an interpretation of management that included leadership and the assurance that management acts can have a moral base.

In his own attempt to situate a study of school leadership in the context of critical perspectives, Southworth (1995: 192) supports the association between emancipatory leadership and gender. He concludes: ‘An emancipatory view of leadership is worth pursuing since it addresses both objections to power being understood as power over and the male bias of management theorizing.’

Gender thus becomes entwined with critical theories of education and leadership that condemn education management practice that controls rather than liberates and prioritizes efficiency and means over ethics and morals. Such leadership is seen by many (e.g. Bottery, 1992: Mac An Ghaill, 1994: Grace, 1995) as antipathetic to educational values and an attempt to replace them with the values of the market-place which encourage technicist, rational solutions to human problems. Yet, in common with the heads in Headship Matters and some of those in Grace’s (1995) study, they relished the opportunities the new reforms brought to practice ‘practical educational leadership’.
Blackmore and Kenway (1993) have suggested that organizations advocate ‘feminine’ characteristics to bolster continuing male privilege. Organizational recognition of what women have to offer that is different from men is, in their view, pragmatically rather than ethically grounded. As critical theorists they associate entrepreneurialism with masculinity: both men and women who are successful in taking their schools forward within a market-led education system are, within this perspective, failing. Women are failing doubly if they also appear not to challenge equity issues, particularly as they relate to gender, within their schools. This is rarely noted in the mainstream literature as a failing of men school leaders. Unlike other studies of women leaders (e.g. Adler et al., 1993: Astin and Leland, 1991; Strachan, 1995), the women headteachers in my study did not claim to be feminists. Like their women colleagues in Grace’s study, they rejected it as an explicit social label that would identify them with unwelcome stereotypes. ‘I am a personist, not a feminist’, said one head. Their conception of being a professional included taking care not to discriminate against or in favour of either men or women. It might be argued that, unlike men, their shared experience as women at least made them aware of the possibilities of discriminating on the basis of gender and keen to avoid it.

How far, then, can a gender perspective contribute to alternative conceptions of educational leadership? Inevitably, since my study was of women, I have concentrated on what we can learn from how they lead schools. Yet the lessons of both the research framework (with its triple metaphor of gender, power and culture) and the findings are equally relevant to women and men in education management, as well as those responsible for appointing and supporting them. The women heads provide an example of school leaders dismantling and then recreating images of headship, as they make sense of their new roles and forge their personal and professional identities in a new context. Their attempts to be positive role models for men as well as women may be overambitious. Harris argues (1995: 193) that men need role models of other men who have courageously challenged the assumptions of patriarchy. The characteristics embodied in this role model include self-nurturing, conscious choices about how to live their lives, being able to parent self and others, admitting mistakes, listening well and expressing feelings. Yet Gray (1993: 114) concludes from his work with headteachers that women’s awareness is greater than men’s (regarding gender and sexuality) and men fail to understand themselves. In his view, as heads become more aware of the importance of gender issues in schools, there will be a change in the way men and women think about each other and how teachers think about children. Florence and John may not walk hand in hand but they will at least talk to each other about their starring roles.

What I have aimed to show in this paper is that an understanding of the impact of gender on life in schools and colleges is an essential component of our ways of knowing about educational leadership. By essential I mean it is taken for granted that it should inform all our enquiries. This unquestioning acceptance is of a different order from the one I described earlier as conventionally
characterizing our approaches to understanding educational management. Using a gender perspective creates new possibilities for exploring the lives of men and women who teach, manage and lead in education. It requires researchers to look at their own assumptions as and about men and women and the effects of these on their findings and interpretations. Making gender figure rather than ground in studies of school leadership contributes to a more comprehensive picture of current practice. It raises questions about the relationships between home and work, family and career, early socialization and later performance. Educational leadership is firmly rooted in professional identity. To understand one, we must understand the other.

References


Introduction

A growing number of feminist accounts assert that gender matters when we examine leadership styles in schools and other educational establishments (Adler et al., 1993; Al-Khalifa, 1989; Grogan, 1996; Hall, 1996). In this paper we critically evaluate some of this recent feminist writing on gendered styles of management alongside more mainstream literature on educational management. We discuss some of the contextual aspects of educational management before tentatively exploring a range of other issues that we suggest might also influence women’s contemporary management styles. We recognize that the term ‘management’ covers a wide spectrum of posts, with access to very differing degrees of power and leadership possibilities. In this paper we focus specifically on school headship as a management post which includes both power and leadership. Put simply our argument is that a number of feminist texts on management and gender work with essentialized notions of femininity in which homogenizing conceptions of what it means to be female depict women as uniformly nurturant, affiliative and good at interpersonal relationships. In contrast, we suggest that gendered identities are in context more fluid and shifting than they are depicted in such texts. There are many different femininities and the form they take is powerfully shaped by the roles women undertake and the context within which they perform these roles. As a result, female leadership in practice frequently appears to be both more multi-faceted and more contradictory than the idealized depictions in some feminist texts. Finally we draw on research data from two ESRC funded studies in which a small number of female headteachers were interviewed. These data exemplify a number of the problems involved in depicting female management as essentially different from ‘male’ ways of managing.
Management means men

Patriarchal and male power has shaped the construct of leadership, its culture, discourse, imaging and practice for centuries. Alternative conceptions of leadership have to attempt to legitimate themselves against the pervasive influence of these established models.

(Grace, 1995: 187)

As Grace points out, female managers are operating in a context of male hegemony. The history of leadership to which Grace refers has resulted in the conflation of traditional male qualities with those of leadership. As a result management is commonly conceptualized as ‘masculine’, concerned with ‘male’ qualities of rationality and instrumentality (Blackmore, 1993; Blackmore and Kenway, 1993; Weiner, 1995). This would suggest that women, as well as men, promoted to senior management positions will aspire to ways of managing which draw on styles widely perceived to be masculine rather than feminine. Judi Marshall asserts that ‘leadership characteristics and the masculine sex role correspond so closely that they are simply different labels for the same concept’ (Marshall, 1984: 19).

This conflation of leadership with masculinity has significant implications for women headteachers and the ways in which they can, and do, manage and this is evidenced in various empirical studies. Morrison (1987) found that the psychological profiles of women who succeed in positions of executive leadership may be more like those of their male counterparts than they are like those of women in general, while Schein (1973, 1975) found that female senior managers were often ‘more like men than men themselves’. Meta Kruger found in her study of 98 paired male and female headteachers in Holland that women were no different to their male counterparts in terms of ‘internal communication’ and ‘personnel management’. She also researched whether women were ‘more involved with others and less task orientated than men’ and found that they were not, concluding that ‘Women heads hardly differ from their male colleagues in the way in which they experience power’ (Kruger, 1996: 454).

The feminist writing on management is a much needed riposte to mainstream tendencies to conflate management with masculinity. At the same time feminist accounts rarely explore women’s power over others, instead preferring to focus on power as something that is exercised in relation to, rather than by, women. In keeping with this general tendency, feminist texts on women and management often seem to operate with a notion of ‘the universal feminine’ which is frequently posited as an unmitigated good (Grundy, 1993). To ignore the ways in which the wielding of power modifies and reconstructs both men and women’s sense of self and their relationships with others is to overlook the shifting nature of gendered identities. As already noted, there is evidence that women in positions of power display the same characteristics as men, regardless of whether or not men are there to influence them (Fillion, 1997).
Psychological studies such as those of Snodgrass would support the view that, as women achieve power, qualities normally associated with femininity are modified. She found that women were not more sensitive than men overall when status was taken into consideration. Sensitivity varied according to status not sex, with lower status people being significantly more sensitive to the feelings of higher status people than vice versa (Snodgrass, 1985, 1992). In contrast, feminist work on women managers has repeated the oversights of mainstream feminisms, largely ignoring the impact of power and status on the construction of the femininities of powerful women.

In an effort to counter mainstream male conceptions of management a number of feminist writers appear to have played down the contradictory conjunction of femininity with power in the labour market. They work instead with an idealized model of femininity in which the assumption of power over others has little or no impact on female behaviour. Contrary to such idealized depictions, Kanter (1977) has argued that many of the so called gender differences in organizational behaviour stem directly from gendered differentials in opportunities and access to power. This would suggest that the acquisition of power within organizations results in women playing out their gendered identity in significantly different ways to those realized in normative, socially subordinate femininities. Indeed, female headteachers have to deal with, and act out, a number of contradictory and competing tendencies due to the conjunction of a gendered socialization which prepares women for relative powerlessness and a current occupational location invested with power.

Holding power continues to be an ‘extraordinary’ situation for women in a British labour market where only 4 percent of senior managers are women (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). And the constitution of this 4 percent has its own particular characteristics. The literature on women managers typically fails to address the constitution of this 4 percent in terms of class, race, culture, ethnicity, age and sexual orientation. Women who become senior managers in any sector of the British labour market cannot be deemed to be representative of women in general. They are largely recruited from a very specific group of women: white, middle or upper class, and in most cases by definition highly credentialled. Furthermore, in addition to particularities of class and ethnicity, exercising power for women is possibly influenced in significant ways by the particular variant of gender socialization experienced in childhood, the culture and ethos of the workplace, earlier role models, personality and political and philosophical perspectives. In her study of female headteachers, Valerie Hall (1996) identifies an interesting theme in all the women’s personal histories, namely that they identified with their fathers rather than their mothers, suggesting perhaps that the masculine traits associated with leadership could be more acceptable for them than they would be for women whose main identification is with their mothers. The socially disembedded nature of much of the research on women managers means such issues have been ignored in the rush to essentialize.
Despite the recent trends in management theory which celebrate a ‘feminized’ management style, the practice of management, especially in educational institutions, remains a paradoxical context for women. While it may be that these style trends have had some impact on some aspects of management behaviour, it is patently unrealistic to argue that there has been a major transformation in management practices and culture, especially not in educational institutions. Indeed, as we go on to argue, the major transformation that has taken place in educational and other public sector organizations, that is, the introduction of the market form, has had the effect of legitimating and encouraging assertive, instrumental and competitive behaviour.

As a consequence there remains an inherent paradox in women occupying the upper echelons of any public sector profession because such a positioning confounds and contradicts traditional notions of femininity. To be a successful professional near the top of an institutional hierarchy involves at the very least the performance of a markedly different femininity to that inscribed in traditional (or radical) notions of being female (see Tseelon, 1995). Within a wider social context in which femininity continues to be denigrated while masculinity is still frequently elevated as manifesting a superior form of development (Archer, 1989; Nicolson, 1996), it would be surprising for women managers to uncomplicatedly valorize feminine ways of working. The inherent tension between being female and being a leader invariably results in adaptations and adjustments and the assumption of a femininity that is more congruent with leadership than traditional variants of femininity which are grounded in positions of relative powerlessness. Efrat Tseelon’s study of the construction of femininity in Western society found that traditional conceptions of the woman continue to frame women in contemporary society. Femininity for most women is lived out through paradox in which they are ‘simultaneously socially invisible while being physically and psychologically visible, an object of the gaze’ (Tseelon, 1995: 54). As social visibility is intrinsic to leadership, women in leadership positions inevitably have to develop more masculine ways of interacting in order to be seen as authentic leaders. Recent research by Kitch (1994) found that senior women rarely call themselves feminists and often take a male view of behaviour and knowledge for granted.

Policy and discursive influences on educational management

Any analysis of gendered differences in management styles needs to take account of the policy and discursive contexts within which educational management is operating. Styles of management, administration and professionalism change and evolve over time. Discourses of leadership in schools have shifted towards understandings in which ‘the good head’ is conflated with strong leadership rather than ‘being a team player’ (Grace, 1995). The new managerialism, celebrated in the school effectiveness literature, has given prominence to qualities such as ‘effi-
ciency, accountability, ambition, striving and competition’ (Evetts, 1990: 183) and has led to a culture in which both male and female heads are expected to demonstrate particular kinds of effectiveness and leadership qualities. In this sense the new managerialism can be considered ‘to be an indication that a new form of patriarchy is emerging wherein the perpetuation of traditional masculine values is more important than the gender of the social actors whose actions reflect those values (Hopton, 1999: 76). Management goals are increasingly preoccupied with measured outcomes rather than organizational processes, and yet it is in the processes that relationships with others can be emphasized. There is more attention given to monitoring of work, to speedy decision-making, to corporate culture and responsiveness to the customer; but arguably less to democratic decision-making, consultation and participation.

Nonetheless, Valerie Hall talks in terms of women heads’ use of power ‘as transformative capacity’ (1996: 141–2). For them power was about empowering others. She describes her female headteachers’ understandings of power as:

being able to make things happen by distributing the resources, interacting in ways which left others confident in their actions, enabling others to do things, being thoroughly organised and prepared, having a vision and shaping a culture.

(Hall, 1996: 145)

Embedded in such a definition are tensions between empowering others and the images of directive leadership that ‘having a vision and shaping a culture’ conjure up. Women and power have always been an uncomfortable, problematic coupling in which women find it difficult to deal with the distance from other women that leadership positions bring. This unease is evident in the text of one of Hall’s female headteachers:

I had to be tough and say it was staying but it’s not something I did comfortably, even though I felt justified. I see myself as an equal and don’t want to set myself apart as something different because I’m a headteacher.

(Hall, 1996: 144)

Maybe, in part, what we are seeing here is (a) that Hall is convinced by the ideology of new management and its discourse of individual empowerment, autonomy and devolution, and (b) that in relation to this she is persuaded by the heads’ self-serving accounts of their style and behaviour through which occasional contradictions and difficulties peek.

Paula Nicolson comments that ‘much has been said in favour of women managers and female management style, relying on the assumption that it is fairer and more democratic’ (Nicolson, 1996: 84). However, there exists a conundrum, even for those women who consciously aspire to operate in democratic, cooperative
ways of working in the labour market, that is whether, in practice, maintaining
caring, collaborative ways of working is consistent with career progression in
management. Despite the rhetorics of ‘new management’, we suggest that in
order to obtain professional success many women at, or near the top of, institu-
tional hierarchies have had to modify some, if not all, of the qualities tradition-
ally associated with femininity (see also Billing and Alvesson 1994). Arguably,
career success may be seen as part of a distancing process from normative femi-
ninity. Such a thesis is supported by Tanton’s description of women attending a
workshop on developing women’s presence in senior management. She found
that the focus of the group was on positioning women generally as ‘the other’ to
the characteristics of a male norm with which they themselves identified. Tanton
concludes that their complicated positioning

   could be seen as a measure of the depth of the entrenched values within
   society that even this group of women concentrating their attention on
   the issue of women’s development approached it from the perspective
   of the ‘centred male’.

   (Tanton, 1994: 9)

There are further limits to the possibilities of either feminist or feminine man-
agement. Colin Riches highlights the role of sponsorship and mentoring in any
individual’s propensity to rise through occupational ranks, pointing to extensive
evidence of the importance of sponsorship in managerial advancement (Riches,
1990). In education, no less than other occupational spheres, promotion is prob-
ably dependent on the sponsorship of more senior male colleagues (Davidson
and Cooper, 1992; Evetts, 1990; Woodd, 1997). Both men and women who
make it to the top of organizations have typically been sponsored along the way
and because of the gendered nature of institutional hierarchies their mentor has
invariably been a man. The result is that, for both men and women, role models
for exercising power are primarily male. But there are more subtle and perva-
sive consequences. Adjusting and adapting to what senior male colleagues want
can generate difficult contradictions for women: ‘Those women who accept the
rules of the promotion game are likely to experience personal stress as they
attempt to cultivate personal identities which are acceptable to their male col-
leagues’ (Evetts, 1990: 179–80). They are also not immune from acculturation
into ‘the way things are done here’ (Marshall and McLean, 1987), which means
increasingly operating with male frames of reference (Van Velsor and Hughes,
1990).

Conforming or challenging? Women and power

Anne Gold (1997) raises an important issue in relation to management, gender
and power. It is not simply a question of having previous experience of being
located as relatively unpowerful. Rather:
If those people who came from less powerful positions than those privileged by our society reflected on the effects of their lack of access to power they would work differently with power when they had it from those who have never had to engage in such arguments.

(Gold, 1997: 6–7)

Reflexive awareness of the potential damage of power imbalances then, just as much as gender, influences whether individuals conform to, or challenge, orthodox ‘masculinist’ ways of managing in the contemporary educational marketplace.

Concomitantly, there is the possibility that achieving a position of power as a woman is the end product of a process of conformity and collusion with, rather than challenge to, prevailing power dynamics. This is not the same as presenting male power as an unproblematic social positioning. Both female and male headteachers are far more likely to have assumed the role of ‘conformist’ rather than ‘subversive’ within organizational structures prior to promotion (Ganderton 1991). As Helen Gunter (1997) points out, invariably it is compliance and conformity that are rewarded by the powerful across different contexts. Women who challenge organizational views, including orthodoxies around the ‘best way to manage’, are unlikely to be promoted to the position of headteacher. Reinforcing such a thesis, Grace raises interesting issues around silences in both male and female headteachers’ accounts in his research. Women heads were relatively silent on gender relations of educational leadership and management, and both they and the male heads were relatively silent on issues such as racism and the political and ideological nature of government education policy.

We need new ways of reading leadership which move beyond simplistic notions of meritocracy and viewing promotion as a straightforwardly positive process in which merit and excellence are rewarded. It would be unsurprising if the promotion process for both males and females did not comprise a difficult balancing act in which conformity, collusion, acceptance of the status quo and self-promotion jostled with conflicting ethical stances, criticisms of the organization and the ways in which it operates, and desires to be part of a collectivity. As Grace (1995: 190) concludes: ‘Patriarchal domination of school leadership positions had not been seriously threatened by the promotion of these women headteachers. They had been accommodated in what remained a largely enduring culture of male leadership.’ In a similar vein, Patricia Hill Collins (1998) has written about mastering the distortions and her own struggles as a black woman to gain acceptance within a white patriarchal system. However, as her terminology implies, it is inevitably a process of assuming dominant male ways of working.

In the review symposium of her book Dancing on the Ceiling Valerie Hall highlights a continuing dilemma, not only for herself but for all feminist studies of female management. The desire to make women’s as well as men’s contributions to educational history visible can often conflict with a commitment to
critical perspectives which challenge the failure of those in power to question the status quo (Hall, 1999: 101). Hall’s women headteachers seldom questioned the prevailing educational status quo and although she writes in terms of ‘the possible transformations of formal power when it is held by women’ (Hall, 1996: 203), this has to be set against the discursive context of educational leadership in the late 1990s. The prevailing discursive status quo threatens to conscript both men and women into very particularistic models of headship in which strong leadership, individual competition, autocracy and manipulation are increasingly the prime characteristics (Grace, 1995). Thus Wilfred Carr and Anthony Hartnett describe the viewing of junior staff as ‘subjects’ to be manipulated and controlled rather than as autonomous moral agents as one of the main features of new managerialism (Carr and Hartnett, 1996: 180). New management translates into ‘fellow followers’ and ‘my people’, a humanistic subjectification. As compliance with institutional values is often a requisite for promotion, it is arguable whether many of the women or men who succeed in becoming headteachers are able to challenge and stand out against expectations that they manage according to contemporary orthodoxies. There are exceptions but rates and patterns of early retirement among headteachers suggest that, despite the rhetorics of teamwork and flat hierarchy, collegial methods of power sharing fit uneasily into the 1990s competitive, individualistic educational market-place. The question remains whether women who move into positions of power in the new context of disciplines and incentives and its ‘debased’ moral environment are able to resist its influences and maintain their existing values. It seems likely the powerful in society, regardless of their sex, share more in common with each other than they share with relatively powerless members of either sex.

Women’s ways of working: contextual influences

Context matters greatly in eliciting traits traditionally associated with women (Epstein, 1988; Rhodes, 1992). It has been suggested that women are more often able to behave in supportive, caring ways at work because they are locked into low-paid, low-power jobs (Hansot and Tyack, 1981). Such jobs, for example nursing and child care, rarely require competitive ways of operating. Studies of women in high-level management posts across the labour market report that they frequently adopted a career orientation more traditionally associated with men rather than women (Cox, 1996; Evetts, 1990; Fogarty, et al 1972; Schmuck, 1996). While we are not positing any uniformity in the femininities performed by women leaders, we do argue, on the basis of the research studies cited here, that on a continuum of femininity and masculinity the femininities they take up and play out as leaders have characteristics in common with those of male peers as well as female subordinates. The possibilities for the realization of particular femininities differ according to position, context and moral environment. Williams (1986) has written about the North American berdache, men who
assume the tasks and roles of a woman and thus come to be seen within their Native American culture as a third gender categorization, stressing how the performance of gender influences the ways in which it is symbolically constructed. The point is that, when women managers take up the tasks of the new role and bring gender identity and behaviour to bear, there is no simple, essential playing out of fixed gender behaviour and relations but rather a process of accommodation and mutual acceptance. However, the conventional position is rooted in binaries which militate against seeing how both changes in roles and performativity result in new evolving gender identities which transgress normative gender divisions.

Researchers like Hall tend to highlight the play of femininity within the performances of women teachers, but give less attention to the acquisition and display of male characteristics. Some feminist writers on gender and headship (Adler et al., 1993; Ozga, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987, 1993) do argue that female heads adopt a more caring, less hierarchical style of leadership than their male counterparts. However, we may be talking about a matter of degree here, being slightly less directive than a male counterpart does not constitute democratic, power-sharing ways of working. As Jenkin points out, Hall’s women headteachers’ discomfort with the language of power politics did not deter them from ‘politicking through bargaining, negotiating and moments of outright assertion of power (Jenkin, 1999: 108). Jirasinghe and Lyons’s (1996) study of 255 headteachers, 113 men and 142 women, found that there was no difference between male and female headteachers in their propensity for directive leadership. While women heads described themselves as less competitive, they also saw ‘themselves to be just as controlling in managing their schools as their male colleagues in directing and organising others, issuing instructions and in taking charge of situations’ (p. 60). Jirasinghe and Lyons point out that this is in direct contrast to the general population, where their research showed directive leadership was far more common among men than women.

There are clearly enormous difficulties in translating what are traditionally perceived to be ‘women’s ways of working’ into senior management contexts, especially when, as research demonstrates (Hansot and Tyack, 1981; Snodgrass, 1985, 1992), such qualities are highly context specific. They may be more realizable in certain schools, in certain locations and at certain points in time. More generally, we would also suggest that they are more likely to be supported in some historical periods rather than others. The late 1990s, when capitalism is reinventing itself and is beginning to generate workplace cultures characterized by competition, insecurity and rampant individualism, is not a period conducive to ‘caring, sharing’ ways of managing by either women or men (Gee et al., 1996). Although, in the new human organization, it may be that ‘feminine’ styles accomplish a more subtle, individual and totalizing form of control, continually conscripting their ‘followers’ to the survival needs of the organization and its corporate culture. Hall emphasizes the development of power-sharing teams as being a distinctive characteristic of her women headteachers’
management style, indicating their preference for ‘power for’ rather than ‘power
over’ more junior staff. However, Sally Power argues that:

The growth of these kinds of management teams is a widespread phe-
nomenon that has been observed in many educational organisations as
they are forced to respond to the increasingly diverse and often contra-
dictory demands of the state and the market.

(Power, 1999: 115)

As Jenkin asserts, power-sharing teams are an essential part of any head-
teacher’s repertoire in the late 1990s. While many staff perceive them as participa-
tive and empowering, for the headteacher they are also about gaining broader
support for an initiative and assistance in getting it developed (Jenkin, 1999:
109).

The primary role in which women occupy a powerful position in society is as
mother. It would be unsurprising either for female senior managers to assume a
maternal role or for their subordinates to treat them as a maternal figure. The
position of mother has often been idealized and is invested with mythical qual-
ities no less than that of the woman manager in feminist texts (Daly, 1979).
Mothering is routinely conflated with caring yet traditionally involves censor,
discipline and control alongside listening and comforting (James, 1989). Being a
mother involves training and guiding as the person ‘who knows best’. There are
insufficient analyses of the complexities of power for both men and women in the
existing literature, but, in particular, the extent to which assuming the role of
mother is a powerful subject position women senior managers can draw on in relation
to subordinates has been insufficiently analysed and discussed. It seems likely
that at least some of the women promoted to powerful positions would draw on
the symbolic power invested in one of the most powerful female roles in society.

Assuming a maternal role may help to mitigate the greater difficulties relative
to men that face women promoted to positions of power. The endemic sexism
which continues to permeate the labour market results in female senior man-
gers having to confront a complex mix of contradictory expectations from both
subordinates and male peers. Women managers have to juggle disparate con-
flictual subject positionings in order to survive in what are primarily male cul-
tures. In one sense they are subject to both harsher judgements and greater
expectations than male peers. As Hall’s woman head implies, they are expected
to lead and still remain an equal; to be tough and simultaneously kind and nurtu-
rant. Pragmatic adaptation inevitably follows. This brings us back to women
drawing on a subject positioning as ‘mother’ in order to be seen as ‘authenti-
cally, acceptably powerful’ and this may work to sift out women more clearly
displaying feminine styles or those committed to feminist ideologies.

Far from being intrinsic and fixed we have argued that a lot of so-called
‘female’ qualities vary according to differentials of power and that it is
extremely difficult to disentangle those qualities which develop specifically out
of women’s position of relative powerlessness in society and those which women retain regardless of how much power they acquire. While the oppression of women by men is still intrinsic to many contemporary feminisms, the issue of women oppressing other women still remains relatively marginal to feminist theory. The possibility that domination and instrumentalism can shape women’s relationships with other women has long been a silence in feminist writing and research.

However, recent work within black and ‘working class’ feminisms has begun to address this issue (see Brah, 1994; Mahony and Zmrocek, 1997; Mirza, 1997; Reay, 1998a). Yet, as we have argued, the contemporary educational market-place conscripts headteachers of both sexes into goal-orientated ways of working that position all subordinates as means to senior management ends.

More specifically, a market culture has brought with it identifiable shifts in values within the schooling sector (Gewirtz et al., 1995) in which subordinates are increasingly viewed as means to management ends (Reay 1998b). Within such a context working in feminist ways would appear to be extremely difficult to realize and female ways of managing may turn out to have more similarities to than differences from orthodox (male) ways of managing.

### Women headteachers: shifting femininities in play

In this section we draw on a set of case studies of schools, focusing upon a small group of female headteachers in order to exemplify some of the issues we have raised around gender and management. Using transcripts of interviews conducted in four London comprehensive schools we discuss the leadership styles and methods of their women headteachers. We argue that prevailing market conditions in the educational sector inhibit the development of innovative power-sharing forms of management, whether feminist or otherwise. Rather, on the basis of this material, it appears that female heads are conscripted into competitive ways of operating in a prevailing ethos that encourages schools to view themselves as in competition with each other. We begin with Mrs Carnegie:

I think she likes to think of herself as hawkish . . . she likes to get people competing against each other in different areas of the school and it works . . . certainly within the school I’d say that applied very strongly . . . and in the first few years it was idiotic really . . . some of the things people felt they had to get up to. . . . I think Mrs Carnegie would prefer a much harder sell on the school than actually happens. (deputy head of year)

Far from attempting to ameliorate the impact of market forces, Mrs Carnegie’s response to an increasingly competitive educational field has been to install hierarchically structured internal systems of accountability which ensure both the regulation of teachers’ work and the institutionalization of the values of a
performance-driven market (Gewirtz, 1997). But Mrs Carnegie’s enactment of leadership is not of a piece. Women managers are always drawing on a range of subjectivities, at times as a maternal figure, at times as stereotypically female, but at other times constructing an identity as a powerful person which cuts across and conflicts with other historically derived aspects of feminine subjectivity. These varied feminine positionings are assumed at different times in different contexts and in relation to different agendas by Mrs Carnegie. A senior teacher, describing Mrs Carnegie’s reward system of ‘tiger stickers’ for the senior management team, presents her as a powerful mother figure: ‘I mean Bill used to put them on his wall . . . I’ve got 6 and then somebody would get 7 . . . the proliferation has gone down but she still gives them . . . they’re more scarce so you actually do take . . . it’s she’s noticed, mummy noticed.’

Overtones of both ‘feminist’ and feminine styles of management can, on other occasions, be seen to ameliorate what is normally a hard management line:

She has kind of a split personality, one extremely businesslike and quite often very difficult to meet, will put you on the spot, will get very angry and so on which is juxtaposed with this personal thing where she suffers everything and will listen to you and is terribly interested about everybody.

Mrs Carnegie herself describes the quintessential ‘new manager’ when discussing her own practice. And her account has a generic quality, her management appears to have no specific educational characteristics:

He thought that my style is quite similar to that used by a top Civil Servant, and that . . . I hope he meant it in the best sense, he says that what he thinks that what I do a lot is to set targets and make sure people are coming up to those targets and that’s a rather formal way of doing it, but I think it is a hallmark of my style. . . . I have a very, if you like, I don’t think it’s fair to say hierarchical, but a very systems based management style. I like to be aware of where the boundaries are, that people are working within their boundaries, hitting their targets but not actually poaching on other people’s ground . . . and I think that’s necessary for a large institution.

The key words in Mrs Carnegie’s text are ‘targets’, ‘formal’ and ‘systems based’; hardly a lexicon for people-centred management. At different points in the same interview she also refers to ‘my institution’, ‘my team’, ‘my heads of cluster’. As Hargreaves points out, ‘my vision’, ‘my teachers’, ‘my school’ are proprietary claims and attitudes that suggest an ownership of the school and of change which is ‘individual rather than collective, imposed rather than earned, hierarchical rather than democratic’ (Hargreaves, 1994: 250). Hargreaves goes on to comment that this ownership is more often male ownership in which
power is exercised over women. However, such proprietary attitudes are clearly evident in Mrs Carnegie’s text.

Mrs Carnegie, like the two female headteachers quoted below, manages through a model of pragmatic adaptation to the marketization of education rather than out of any feminine or feminist principles. Also in line with our contention earlier that female managers adopt ‘masculine’ alongside ‘feminine’ traits, in the excerpt below, she places herself on a continuum of femininity and masculinity at the point at which ‘the feminine and the masculine dovetail’. But, crucially, she defines the feminine perspectives of her junior colleagues as ‘unprofessional’:

We advertised one head of year, we didn’t advertise two, because the second one came up a week later, and colleagues were saying here well . . . if we’d known there were two we wouldn’t mind applying, cos we wouldn’t then have to apply against another colleague . . . and my reply was that I thought that that was a very feminine way of thinking and really an unprofessional way . . . if a job was there you should go for it and in a way I was doing down women and I think that perhaps . . . that’s the Margaret Thatcher side of me . . . that my management style is, I don’t know that you would differentiate it from a man . . . but it’s very focused on women’s achievement. I like to think it’s not so much feminine or male, I think I would like to think I was the feminine end of the male spectrum to be honest, which I do regard as a thinking, civilised, cultured end. I loathe extremes, I loathe the macho male or the woman who plays the feminine thing so somewhere in the middle and perhaps that is, as I say, where the feminine and the masculine dovetail.

The interviews with Mrs Baxter, head of Overbury display similar themes to those with Mrs Carnegie, in particular the prioritizing of market imperatives over democratic, collegial ways of managing: ‘I introduced a meeting for parents to meet their children’s form tutors and class teachers which was resisted . . . strongly resisted by the staff but I did it anyway.’ Talking of a previous culture of collaboration between heads in the same LEA, she commented:

My job is to keep the school full even if it flies in the face of what other colleagues want from me so I’m much less likely to adhere to a corporate decision of the heads now and much more likely to serve this school’s interests and if these interests fly in the face of what is corporately judged to be best then I shall pursue what’s best for the school.

Market and institutional imperatives are reshaping both male and female headteachers’ management styles emphasizing accelerated decision-making and the prioritizing of parental rather than teachers’ interests. Democratic forms of man-
agement are at risk of becoming associated with inefficiency and inertia in the
developing market culture if they appear to stand against, and work in opposition to, market imperatives.

Mrs Anderson, the headteacher of Trumpton, also describes a hard-hitting, interventionist style of management:

When I arrived part of my analysis was that the school was complacent and it was . . . and that needed shaking . . . and actually having to stand up for yourself is incredibly good for staff . . . and I hit them hard with it that year I have to say and that year everybody worked quite hard. I intervened on every front you can think of and some you couldn’t. I ran this school like some sort of demented gnat. Then the following autumn for the open evening I pulled out all the stops with the staff, I really ginned them up and by god they worked for that and I think the combination of that and other various odds and sods that we had done during the year was what made the difference . . . and it was I think discipline which I altered substantially. I upped it hugely, uniform then the curriculum and we hammered those things.

Mrs Anderson’s account of her first year as head at Trumpton combines themes of strong directive leadership, accelerated decision-making and a conception of staff as means to management ends with traces of coerciveness; few signs of soft nurturant management here.

When I came here I discovered that money was being spent like water, and not any of it in the right place I thought . . . so I put them on a strict diet immediately. So it was all rather harsh. But the biggest joke was we provide teas for parents’ evenings for the staff cos they work right through so it’s actually not totally unreasonable to give them a crumb or two and I stopped the sausage rolls so they just had a sandwich and a cake and I only did it for fun actually . . . I was actually pulling their legs and it caused absolute riotous fun.

Although Mrs Anderson does not specify, it caused ‘absolute riotous fun’ for herself and the senior management team, not the staff who are the objects of their derision. Underlying this ‘harmless joke’ are traditionally masculinist ways of operating which permeate her text. The market becomes a means by which she can ‘hammer’ reluctant staff, ‘shaking’ them out of their complacent dependency. However, at other times, like Mrs Carnegie and Mrs Baxter, she mobilizes a softer approach to management more in line with conventional views of feminine practice. The methods and lexicon of feminine management are part of an extended repertoire, a bilingualism (Clarke and Newman, 1992), which may be deployed at ‘appropriate’ or ‘useful’ moments but they do not appear to be the defining characteristics of these women managers.
The fourth female head, Ms English, is the only one quoted here to openly espouse the label ‘feminist’. In her text she struggles with the conflict between feminine modes of management and the prevailing new managerialist ethos:

I think LMS has changed how people can manage schools and I think that links directly to the gender thing. I’m not saying all women managers have a—what I would call a more feminine style of management—they don’t obviously—but it’s much more difficult under LMS, and if you are a woman, to be open and consultative and less hierarchical. It’s much more difficult than it used to be. And all those important decisions about money and people’s jobs and so on—it’s really hard. And it’s the kind of thing a lot of women don’t want to go into management to deal with.

Yet, rhetorical distancing from the practices of new managerialism does not translate into either feminine or feminist ways of working. The prevailing staff view in Ms English’s school was that she was both autocratic and unsupportive of staff. Despite her stated opposition to authoritarian management she still talks in terms of having to act in an authoritarian manner. This returns us to an earlier theme: the pervasive sexism surrounding female managers results in them having to confront a complex mix of contradictory expectations from both subordinates and male peers.

Conclusion

These examples of female management in practice have been included to underpin and illustrate some of the themes we discussed in the first part of the paper. An important focus of many of the feminist texts on gender and management is on the agency of the individual. In this emphasis on how women heads shape the job of being a headteacher, the extent to which context shapes individuals’ actions and perspectives is downplayed. One consequence is that ‘any discussion of how women headteachers may act as tools of the state in terms of their practices, knowingly or unconsciously, becomes muted’ (Reynolds, 1999: 112). Instead, such accounts rip the headteacher out of the context of politics and policy and present their practices as though it were the simple realization of a set of idealistic aspirations. The power of women to change structures is emphasized at the cost of failing to understand how structures change women. As Jill Blackmore (1999, 156) points out: ‘One cannot talk about “women’s ways of leading” therefore, without being aware of the structural constraints and discourses shaped elsewhere that undermine leadership committed to such notions of feminist practice’.

The notion of a continuity and inevitability of a ‘female’ self across time and space which is embedded in much of the writing on women and management is difficult to sustain in the light of empirical evidence. Kenway and Epstein (1996) have highlighted the impact of marketization on the formation of identities and
relationships within the sphere of education. Complacencies about feminine or feminist ways of working ignore the masculinist mode of the market with its technicist emphasis on systems and outcomes at their peril. We would not want to argue for a simple determinism in understanding the realization of leadership styles, as there clearly is always some room for manoeuvre for most heads in most schools. At the same time we are going to need something more than women in positions of power to change prevailing market orthodoxies.

References


378


EMOTIONS AND GENDER

Part 3

POLITICS AND MICROPOLITICS
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THE CHALLENGE TO PROFESSIONALS FROM THE NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

Implications for the teaching profession

Mike Bottery


Abstract

Many teachers, like professionals in other state bureaucracies in the UK and elsewhere, realise that they have common interests and challenges through casual conversation, or through coverage in the media. Yet even then, they may fail to realise how similar their dilemmas are. This paper suggests that part of the similarity of the issues which teachers and other professionals face stems from the nature and effects of their management and supervision, which has changed radically over the past 15 years; but part of the similarity also stems from the similar nature of the debate on the role and function of the professional. Using examples and practice from the work of teachers, doctors and police in the UK, this paper will examine both of these issues, and suggest that a successful negotiation of the future by the professional will be by an acknowledgement and debate about them both.

Introduction

It should not be too surprising if many professionals in the UK see government legislation, and their own functions, in rather selective terms. This can be explained partly in terms of time, partly in terms of interest, and partly in terms of culture. In a society highly (and necessarily) differentiated occupationally, backed up by a value system which prizes specialisation, there is little encouragement to move beyond one’s own field. In a world of such differentiation, only when people are occupationally or personally affected are the full implications of such changes likely to be appreciated.
Nevertheless, if teachers, like those in other occupations, fail to see the professional forest for their individual trees, they fail to realise that the same issues affect them all. Professionals, and particularly those in the public sector in the UK, have much to learn from examining the experiences of each other [1]. This is true in two areas in particular at the present time. The first has to do with the way in which they are managed and its attendant effects; the second has to do with their conceptions of themselves. Each will be dealt with in turn.

**Definitions**

One of the problems with attempting to write about ‘professionals’ is that at least 17 different criteria have been claimed at one time or another as describing their behaviour (Bottery, 1994). However, much of the debate has centred around three concepts: those of expertise (the possession by an occupational group of exclusive knowledge and practice); of altruism (an ethical concern by this group for its clients); and, finally, autonomy (the professional’s need and right to exercise control over entry into, and subsequent practice within, that particular occupation). More recently, writers like Collins (1990) have suggested that one needs to look beyond such characteristics and instead concentrate upon how the power exercised by occupations enables them to exercise ‘occupational closure’, thereby increasing their ability to influence matters in society with regard to their practice, and, not unimportantly, to increase their financial remuneration. There is, of course, no reason why the two orientations should be incompatible, but it seems significant that the advent of a more sceptical literature occurs at much the same time as the advent of the ‘new public management’ (NPM), (Hood, 1991).

It is of further interest to note that within the former literature, occupations like teaching and the police have only been accorded the role of ‘semi’-professionals (Etzioni, 1969), for they failed to meet a number of criteria derived from an examination of the ‘accepted’ professions, such as lawyers, and doctors. Yet, as Torstendahl (1990) points out, there is a considerable degree of undeclared presupposition here, for on what basis are lawyers and doctors accorded such a title, and others excluded, save that this is how one chooses to define ‘professionalism’. It is probably this arbitrariness of designation which has led many writers on professionalism (e.g. Freidson, 1984; Lawson, 1990) to declare the soil increasingly exhausted.

Within this article the term will be used fairly liberally, firstly because of the different views regarding the characteristics which are needed for an occupation to qualify as a ‘profession’, and secondly because of the variety of opinions as to whether specific occupations qualify for the characteristics proposed. Nevertheless, in making particular reference to three occupations within the public sector in the UK—teachers, police and doctors—the possible objections which their use may raise are recognised. They do, however, illustrate the range of jobs which may claim professional status. Moreover, if as this paper argues, changes
in what constitutes professional practice need to occur, and are occurring, such occupations may be at the vanguard of such redefinitions.

The management of professionals

Teachers and doctors have liked in the past to think of themselves as what Handy (1985) calls ‘Dionysians’—professionals working within organisations built to facilitate the display of individual expertise, rather than as team members working towards some corporate goal. The police are much less easily classified individually as such, but have still attempted as a group to cultivate an independence from government corporatism. In all three cases, however, one can see the classic antagonism between bureaucracy and the professional; and within it one might locate what Lawn & Ozga (1987, p. 52) call the ‘proletarianisation’ of occupations, a process rooted in the scientific management of Frederick Taylor, within which a formerly skilled occupation is analysed, systematised, and routinised such that the autonomous and non-standard application of expertise comes to be seen as neither necessary nor, indeed, desirable.

This antagonism continues today with what Hood (1991) describes as one of the most striking trends in public administration over the past 15 to 20 years, the rise of NPM [2]. He suggests (pp. 4–5) that this has seven elements:

- ‘hands-on’ professional management in the public sector;
- explicit standards and measures of performance;
- greater emphasis on output controls;
- the break-up of monolithic into smaller manageable units;
- shifts to greater competition in the public sector;
- the stress on private-sector styles of management practice;
- the stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource use.

Hood (1991) points out that not all seven elements will be equally present in each area of practice. One should perhaps also add that NPM will exhibit different forms in different sectors: teachers and police will be managed differently from doctors in hospitals because they do not have the same management/doctor cultural divide with which hospitals operate. Further, there is general agreement that NPM does not have one single intellectual underpinning. Hood (1991, pp. 5–6) suggests that in fact NPM has two different sources. One source is underpinned by the key word ‘choice’, and is built upon ideas of contestability, user choice, transparency and the greater use of incentive structures. The other is underpinned by the key word ‘manage’, and is built upon a transference of business managerialism into the public sector, undergirded by ideas of the elevated status of ‘professional managers’ over the technicians/professionals within the organisation, managers with wide discretionary powers, free to manage and to build distinct organisational cultures. Both of these trends are reflected in education. Devolved financial management, open enrolment, the emasculation of
Local Education Authority power, and the creation of grant-maintained schools and City Technology Colleges, can all be seen as issuing from a commitment to a more market-driven system. Further, the hugely increased powers of the Secretary of State since 1988, governmental approval of the use of managerial perspectives from the private sector in education, financial inducements to increase the management component of in-service provision, and the flood of books on educational management throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, all bear testimony to the belief that strong hands-on management is a vital component for delivering educational quality.

However, as Hood points out, there is nothing necessarily compatible between these two ideas: being free to choose is not the same as being free to manage. The former relates more to the consumer, the latter more to the manager; and if criticisms of professionals in the past, and teachers in particular (e.g. Friedman & Friedman, 1980; Green, 1987) have been that public services like education have tended to serve the producer rather than the consumer, necessitating a move to a ‘free to choose’ culture, an emphasis upon being ‘free to manage’ does not necessarily move a service any further in the direction of choice.

Hood is right to draw out the managerial and competitive aspects of NPM. However, he might have drawn out as an equal influence and third major source, that of economic considerations, rather than reducing it merely to one of seven elements. Indeed, there is good reason to believe that considerations of costs may have been the dominant influence in the rise of NPM. Rhodes (1994, p. 44) suggests that the major thrust of this managerial change is precisely in terms of the ‘3Es’: economy, efficiency and effectiveness. This should not be too surprising: much of the history of the UK welfare state, for instance, has been a story of limited resources having to try to match accelerating demand.

The UK welfare state as a whole also suffered from a factor common and current in most western economies, that of long-term recession and diminished growth. In such circumstances, questions of cost-savings come very high on the agenda of any government of whatever political persuasion. Both other sources for the development of the NPM fit well with this economic imperative. The first source, a hands-on managerial imperative, is in tune with a need to know how much is spent, and what can be saved where. It may then appear as an essential arm of delivering a high-quality, effective, and efficient service. The second source, a free-market philosophy, not only has the (apparent) virtue of choice; it also argues that it is the most efficient means of delivery as well. The three sources may then cohere into a very aggressive management philosophy. Teachers, and indeed virtually any occupational group within the UK welfare state, will recognise all three in their day-to-day practice.

**Implementing the NPM philosophy**

The strategies of NPM are described in Figures 1, 2 and 3. Each takes the case of a particular professional occupational group in a state bureaucracy: teachers,
Figure 1 Teachers’ autonomy in the New Public Management philosophy.
Figure 2 Doctors’ autonomy in the New Public Management philosophy.
Figure 3 Police autonomy in the New Public Management philosophy.
police, doctors. Each takes as its specific focus the issue of that professional body’s autonomy, even if, as argued above, concern about that professional body’s autonomy may not have been the major reason for the legislation. What is clear from all three is that, despite differing cultures, differing values and differing practices, the same three strategies are applicable to each—in terms of management styles, in terms of proposals for competition, and in terms of scrutinies on costs. Perhaps even more interestingly, it is also possible to see the same basic policies in use with each of the three kinds of institutions within which the three professions work.

Thus, in terms of cost scrutinies, all three areas of the welfare state within which these professional groups practise have been the subject of retrenchment, in which reduced budgets have meant that cost-savings have had to be made at the unit level; all three have been subject to cost improvement programmes, in which those activities defined as ‘non-core’ (such as laundry, catering, cleaning, grounds maintenance, etc.) have been contracted out or made subject to tender; all three have been the subject of resource management, in which those not previously involved in the planning of budgets are now given such responsibilities. Finally, external audits, either by the Audit Commission, the National Audit Office, HMIC, or by local authorities and OFSTED, have all generated increased scrutiny on costs in education, health, and policing, whilst at the same time generating comparative information on their efficiency.

In terms of management approaches, attempts at the imposition of new contracts in all three areas can be seen as policies aimed at redefining the power relationship between professionals and managers in favour of managers. In terms of content control, all three professions have seen an increased attempt at the usurpation by management either at institutional level, or civil servants or politicians at national level, of the definition of what is to count as areas of work. These are most clearly seen with respect to the imposition of a National Curriculum on teachers; with respect to the setting of key policing objectives by the Home Office; with respect to the specification of areas of treatment by District Health Authorities, and by GPs to hospital doctors in terms of referral, and by government in terms of priorities. Finally, individual appraisal, whilst varying in the degree to which it is conducted though peer review in all three areas, still has the potential in all areas to act as a stick with which to beat the practitioner.

Other specific policies tend to be generated by a combination of management concerns and issues of competition. The policies invariably are concerned with the generation of facts, essential to both closer managerial control and more informed competition. Managers/politicians cannot control without reference to figures comparing professional performance, and consumers (including managers or other professionals in purchasing institutions) cannot choose without access to figures which provide them with comparative information on the content and quality of the service being offered. Thus, for example, the drive for performance indicators is common across all public ser-
services, whether it be in terms of examination results and truancy rates in schools, the percentage of files proceeded with by the Crown Prosecution Service, or the numerous clinical, financial and staffing indicators in hospitals. Similarly, diagnosis related groups (DRGs)—the classification of groups of patients by diagnostic characteristic—is a health exercise designed to provide comparative information on clinical costs and charging, and therefore greater accountability. The same kind of exercises, driven by needs for greater information and accountability, are seen with the police, whereby 85 key functions have been categorised for examination as to who should be doing them, and in education with the classification of groups of students by such things as Standard Attainment Tests (SATs). Finally, increased interest in matters of quality assurance, through such initiatives as Total Quality Management, is in actuality another pressure on professionals both to listen to what customers want, and to make their own practice more accessible to both ‘internal’ and ‘external’ customers, and to managerial scrutiny. In so doing, they provide information on which comparisons can be made between their and other professionals’ practice.

A common response

If teachers are not alone in facing a lack of trust, and an attack upon their professional autonomy, it would seem to make sense to look at what kind of common response can be made with other professionals. This is possible by a number of different strategies, of which I shall mention six.

(a) Quasi-markets and central control

Firstly, an awareness of the common ethos, in terms of cost-cutting, competitiveness, and managerialism, such as has been demonstrated in this paper, must be a necessary beginning, and should lead to a joint evaluation of quasi-markets and centralised control. As Rhodes (1994) suggests, it is not possible to argue completely for either: the question is rather where the one makes better sense than the other. However, if quasi-markets have been given their head over the last few years, the problems which ensue with the fragmentation of services need to be pointed up, and the question asked whether such fragmentation is compensated for by the merits of competition. Fragmentation can after all cause inefficiencies (through the necessary duplication of services and materials between competing bodies); it can cause poor coordination (which can result in poor provision, as well as further inefficiencies); and it can produce a reduced central capability, which will be necessary to some degree in any system which believes in the requirements of strategy. LeGrand & Bartlett (1993) have begun this process well, setting up as they do the concepts of efficiency, responsiveness, choice and equity as the four criteria by which to assess such quasi-markets. From them stem such questions as:
• do markets increase competition?
• does competition improve efficiency?
• do markets improve quality?
• do markets depress labour costs?
• do markets maintain equity of provision?

Much of the information on quasi-markets is restricted to the US, and consequently has to be treated with great caution. Nevertheless, the findings do suggest that quasi-markets are not an unqualified benefit, indicating as they do that competition has a tendency to decrease as time goes on, that transaction costs can be hugely inflated, that all forms of contracting have some kind of irresolvable problem attached to them, that salaries tend to inflate and increase in degree of variation, and that equity is very hard to maintain (see Culyer et al., 1990; Propper, 1993, on health; Moore, 1990, on education).

However, it should be noted that even if these findings are generalisable, in themselves such criticisms will not necessarily provide sufficient ammunition for greater trust and autonomy for professionals. As noted above, ‘free to choose’ and ‘free to manage’ are neither necessarily compatible nor dependent upon one another: the market-driven aspects of educational policy, for instance, could be replaced by more monopolistic ones, and managers could still be left to manage aggressively. Such evaluations may weaken part of the claims of NPM: they do not necessarily indicate that the alternative should be greater professional power and freedom.

(b) From ‘defy’ to ‘embrace’

If one kind of response by professionals is an examination of the intellectual underpinnings and pragmatic application of quasi-markets in the public sector, another kind is at the other end of a theory-practice continuum. Teachers, like all other professionals, need to consider their attitude to new legislation, the manner in which they will initially approach it, the way and degree to which it will be implemented. This needs to be flexible rather than doctrinaire, yet principled rather than opportunistic, and may run all the way from ‘defy’ through ‘subvert’ to ‘ignore’, on to ‘ridicule’, then to ‘wait and see’, to ‘test’, and in some (exceptional) cases to ‘embrace’, but needs to be underpinned by a clear sense of institutional purpose and professional ethics. In this regard, Fullan’s (1991) work on managing change in education has huge implications for other sectors as well—perhaps most notably in the assertion that if change is to work, then it has to be altered by, and tailored to, practitioners’ values and needs. If it does not, it will fall still-born.

What seems certain, though, is that long-term outcomes are not predictable. It is still quite possible that the kind of situation described four decades ago by Gouldner (1954) will re-occur, where a ‘punishment-centred bureaucracy’ is instituted. With this, those charged with improved ‘production’ resort to increased supervision and bureaucratisation through more detailed rules and regulations, but which only has an ‘apathy-preserving function’ on the ‘workers’,
which locks the organisation into a vicious circle of repression, subversion, and further repression. Nobody wins; neither managers, nor professionals, nor clients. So the modification of legislation, in one form or another is essential either to make it implementable, or at least to neutralise it if poorly conceived; subversion should not be the only means considered by professionals.

(c) The human costs

A third possible defence is the well-publicised evidence of their early retirements, of extra days off sick, of depressive illnesses and suicides by professionals. [3] Undoubtedly this adds to the sympathy felt by the general public for them, but it is doubtful if it adds substantially to the arguments for revision of such lack of trust and reduction in professional autonomy. Indeed, it might well do little more than suggest that whichever strategy were to replace NPM, it should be more considerate of professional work overload.

An effective defence will only come about by directly addressing the assumptions upon which NPM rests. It will be recalled that three major assumptions were suggested:

1 The economic assumption: that the economic situation of Western economies demands that the best is made of the finances available.
2 The choice assumption: that state bureaucracies have been characterised by a self-regarding, rather than other-regarding attitude by the professionals working within them.
3 The management assumption: that an aggressively hands-on management is needed to dictate strategy to those professionals working within them.

The economic assumption would appear to be, at one level at least, uncontestable. Even if it were not the case that economies like those of the UK were facing prolonged economic difficulties, this would still not be an argument for financial profligacy. After all, as Culyer (1989) points out, to squander resources in areas of public benefit is ethically as well as economically unsound, for it prevents the provision of the best possible services to those in need. On this basis, then, teachers and other professionals may be better directing their attention at the other two assumptions. If they do so, the crucial questions become ones of:

- What is the effect on clients and society of this kind of managerial approach?
- How do professionals like teachers acquire a better reputation for being other-regarding?

(d) The missions of the public and private sectors

Thus, a fourth line of defence might be to suggest that the transfer of private sector management into the public sector is inappropriate because of the very
different natures and missions of the two arenas; and that in so doing, the nature and mission of public sector management is distorted or even destroyed. This is one of the lines which Rhodes takes when he argues that another problem with fragmentation in management is the lack of accountability. His own example of the all-purpose local authority being bypassed by non-departmental public bodies and other kinds of special purpose agencies illustrates this well. As he says:

Under the Greater London Council (GLC), ratepayers paid their rates to four bodies. After abolition of the GLC, they pay taxes to 17 bodies, two-thirds of them unelected.

(1994, p. 148)

The same kinds of comments have also been made in education, of grant-maintained schools (Bush et al., 1993) with the non-representative nature of their governing bodies, as well as in the National Health Service, of Trust Hospitals (Baggott, 1994), with the essentially political nature of the nomination of their boards.

The argument, however, can be extended further, and be made to make a much wider point. Ranson & Stewart (1989), for instance, argue that private and public sector institutions differ from each other in terms of the nature of their work, which has far-reaching implications for society as a whole. Their orientation is summed up when they say (p. 5) that ‘a concept of organisation that encompasses citizens differs from an organisation that knows only customers.’ This means that the public sector organisation and its management have activities and concerns

implicitly defined as outside the concern of (private sector) management: protest, politics, public accountability, citizenship, party conflict, elections, public debate, inter-authority co-operation, and civil rights.

(Ranson & Stewart, 1989, p. 5)

Grace (1989, 1994) provides this argument with a distinctively educational context when he argues that a private, free-market approach to education necessarily encourages the pursuit of individualistic, selfish motives, precisely because this is what the market is set up to do (with, of course, the belief that it will lead to a better outcome overall). Such an approach, however, cannot appreciate that there are some areas of human activity which need to be seen as public goods, and not merely as private activities. A public good is one where a society acknowledges the need for provision of a service for all, even for those who cannot afford it, because its provision is seen as essential for the well-being of that society as a whole. As Grace argues:

Might not education be regarded as a public good because it seeks to develop in all citizens a moral sense, a sense of social and fraternal
responsibility for others and a disposition to act in rational and co-operative ways? The ultimate foundation for democracy ... and for a truly participative and intelligent political process ... depends upon the education of its people and the extent to which they can articulate and feel confident about the rights of citizenship. Insofar as education provides the basic conditions for making democracy possible, it has an immediate claim to the status of being a public good ...  

(Grace, 1989, p. 214)

Bridges (1994) makes a similar point when he distinguishes between positional and non-positional benefits in education. The former are provided for a child when a school provides a child with a better opportunity for university entrance or the job market, which does not benefit the wider population at all; non-positional benefits, on the other hand, such as 'insight, understanding, stimulus to interest, imagination, reflection and creativity (p. 76) are, Bridges argues, the hallmark of an educated culture and which all ultimately benefit. The end result is that

... the more a system of schooling offers the opportunity ... to secure positional advantage, the more [parents] will (quite rationally) exercise their custodial responsibility to secure that advantage for their children and the less they will concern themselves with ensuring that the system provides non-positional benefits to all.

(p. 77)

His prognosis for society is pointed:

The richer, educative and universally beneficial purposes of schooling will become subordinate to the narrower, self-interested function which can benefit some only at the expense of others.

(p. 77)

The arguments by Grace, Ranson & Stewart, and Bridges, that the public domain is a necessary focus for the promotion of collective life, as opposed to merely individual interests, is a striking difference, which suggests that its reduction to the personal and private could do untold damage to the fabric which holds the garment of society together. The effects upon managers’ perspectives, and the development of citizens would then be clear to all:

Managers in the public domain who assume a role based on a private sector model can easily perceive comment, challenge and the search to participate as interference with their real work of management. If, however, managers perceive their real task as working within and enabling a political institution, then, the many perspectives of active
citizenship are part of that institution and essential to the enabling task of management.

(Ranson & Stewart, 1989, p. 20)

Moreover, I have argued elsewhere (Bottery, 1994) with particular reference to education, that there is an increased isomorphism of the public and private sectors, particularly with regard to their management, and that it is not as clear as it once was that many of the demands of public sector management can still be considered as beyond the concerns of private sector management. For example, the concept of stakeholder management (Schein, 1966; Carroll, 1989) suggests an increasing acceptance by writers and practitioners in the private sector that what they do affects other people, who should then have some say in the running of private sector organisations. If this is the case, then there may be much that the private sector can learn from the public sector.

The difference in perception of managerial role may then be crucial to the orientation of the institution. It should, of course, not be too surprising to reflect that the NPM movement came to fruition under a prime minister who is on record as saying that ‘there is no such thing as society’. But it should be vital to the kind and quality of institutions a society wants and needs, that a professional’s orientation is considered, valued, and protected. Within such a picture of participatory citizenship, the professional, in both the public and private sectors, rather than being the instrument of managerial strategy, becomes much more one of several stakeholders in a societal exercise. In education, teachers, at all levels of a school’s hierarchy, assert that education for citizenship really means something, because it forms part of the very fabric of the way in which their institution is run. By promoting this kind of picture, then, teachers not only assert the value of professional opinion and judgement, they place it within a shared context.

(e) A sociological appreciation of practice

Much of what has been written in the previous section can be summed up here: that professionals, and teachers in particular, to be able to defend themselves better, have to understand themselves better. Part of this comes from an understanding of their practice, and what would make it more successful; this will be dealt with in the next section. But part of this also comes from an understanding of themselves vis-à-vis the society in which they live. For teachers specifically, it involves such questions as:

- What were perceived to be their original purposes upon inception?
- Do these inheritances affect their practice, and others’ reaction to that practice?
- Which aspects of occupational closure are defined and justified (a) historically and (b) in terms of expertise?
• What relationship have they had/do they have with the state?
• What have been the primary motivations of their representative bodies vis-à-vis legislation?
• In what major respects does their situation differ/is their situation the same, as other occupational groups in the welfare state?
• How does the situation of teachers differ from that of teachers in other countries? Why does it differ?

Such self-knowledge allows professionals to assess their weaknesses and strengths that much better. It allows them to appreciate that some justifications are valid; others are little more than rationalisations for historical accident. It allows them to place themselves within a wider picture, and see that sometimes (perhaps often) legislative change may not be aimed at them specifically, but has a wider or different target, and that they happen to be in the way. It gives them the opportunity to see that they do not necessarily occupy the centre of any occupational universe, but are part of a much more complex ecology of occupations. Professional action can only be enriched by such understandings.

(f) Redefining the role of the professional

If one aspect of knowing oneself better is the ability to reflect upon one’s place and function in society, another aspect is the ability to reflect upon and come to a better understanding of the implementation of that function. A sixth and final response by the professional can therefore be made by stepping up present debates upon the conception of professional practice.

This debate is driven by the realisation that because professionals live in changing times, the nature of their work must change with it. Three (simplified) examples will illustrate the point. Doctors, in an age when problems of health stem much less from disease as much as from life-style, poverty and social grouping, must increasingly change their perceived role from one of simple biomedical intervention to considering issues of educative prevention and health pressure group involvement. Police, in an age of diminished resources but increased demand, must move the understanding of their role from that of crime detection to emphasising that of crime prevention and community policing, of teaching the public how to make themselves more secure. Teachers in a rapidly changing world cannot be content with teaching a fixed body of knowledge, but must be rather more concerned with teaching pupils to learn how to learn, to ask rather than to accept.

This means a change of role in a number of ways. Firstly, it means in all cases a move to the pre-arming of the client: rather than being the expert in solving the problem, the professional increasingly must move to the role of being the expert in empowering the client to solve the problem themselves when it arises. The teacher cannot predict precisely what the pupil will need to know in 20 years, so the skills of acquisition are more important than any one body of
knowledge. The doctor (and the nurse, for that matter) cannot afford to wait until the patient develops a health problem: he or she must have helped the client to implement a healthier lifestyle beforehand. The police cannot be expected to detect all crime: far better if the individual can institute changes and adopt practices, the consequence of which is that the criminal is deterred before he or she even begins. Such a move coheres well with the argument above for the professional role being one of individual to individual, for there is a personal exchange in the educative role which cannot be reduced to a set of pedagogic formulae.

If a first change in role is in a move from solver to educator, a second move must come from the reflection upon what an educator does. An educator of the kind described above cannot act as the disseminator of unchallengeable information, and this for two main reasons. The first is because in most situations which the professional encounters, the solution is not readily apparent, but must be constructed. Bittner (1974, p. 35) describes the central police role of order maintenance as ‘a solution to an unknown problem arrived at by unknown means’. In the medical world, there is ample evidence that many ‘conditions’ are constructed by the medical profession, rather than waiting to be simply seen, recognised and treated (see Helman, 1990, on this). In education, many learning problems are socially or culturally constructed by teachers and society rather than simply recognised and ameliorated. This was the principle insight of M. F. D. Young’s seminal book (1971), and has underpinned most of the subsequent writing on the hidden curriculum of schools (for example, Whitty & Young, 1976). This is why writers like Schon (1982) and Svennson (1990) suggest that the activity of the professional is fundamentally misconstrued if such a disseminatory approach is adopted. What professionals are normally faced with is the initial problem of deciding what the problem is, as presented by the client. This will involve the professional in the framing and re-framing of the situation until a ‘fit’ occurs which does justice to the situation. In such situations, the education of the client to articulate the problem, and thus contribute to its solution, is going to be in most cases essential.

The second and equally important reason in the re-definition of professional practice is that the professional cannot be certain, even now, what is fact and what is still opinion in their spheres of expertise. The teacher need look only to the question of what is an historical fact (Carr, 1982) or what is a scientific fact (Chalmers, 1982) to realise that his or her teaching should be underpinned by the contestability of materials, not by an attempt to transmit their unchallengeability. The professional in the health service is only too well aware of the doubt surrounding the efficacy of most treatments. The police officer should similarly be aware of debates surrounding the research evidence on the effectiveness of techniques like fingerprinting and DNA profiling. For professionals, to then attempt to portray themselves as experts above and beyond challenge is to invite censure and cynicism from a public becoming increasingly aware of professional frailties. As noted above, the academic literature has anticipated this by at least three decades, and since the 1960s has moved from a study of professional-
ism based upon a hagiography of élite practitioners, to an increasing interest in
the manner by which occupational groups maintain their status and income by
occupational closure. The result is an increasing distrust of professionals, which
has to some extent been invited by a self-imposed status of unchallenged expertise
which by any epistemological standards is unjustified.

If professionals attempt to remain upon this pedestal, they may find they have
denied themselves their best defence against an unthinking managerialism.
Thus, for example, the most effective reply by health professionals to the insensitive application of protocols is to argue that to opt for a protocol or the costing of a Diagnostic Related Group assumes that the best treatment is obvious. The same applies to teachers with respect to judgements over the value of different teaching methods, to the police with respect to methods of detection. The truth is, of course, that in many cases such things are by no means so obvious, and a considerable degree of caution is advisable. Yet an insistence on professional infallibility inhibits such claims, and may well result in rigidified practice and the discouragement of experimentation. In such circumstances, and with such practice, it should not be too surprising to find that professional autonomy is restricted, and trust is not forthcoming.

Yet an acknowledgement of epistemological uncertainty does not suggest a lack of technical expertise; the professional is much further down this road than the client. But he or she must also recognise that there are other roads to be travelled in the framing of the problem, and that the client may have gone further down these. What such a change in conceptions of ‘professionalism’ suggests is that professional practice is enhanced by exchanging information with the client; that the expert, as well as the client, benefits from such exchanges. The client will learn through this educative relationship how better to cope with the presenting problem, and how to cope better in the future. The professional will, as Schon (1982) suggested, through inviting the opinion of the client, gain a wider frame of reference by which to understand what the problem is. Increased communication and education are essential if clients are to learn to help themselves; in terms of the defence of professional practice they are also essential, but only if professionals can accept the change in their conception of themselves and of their function. Undergirding their practice, then, will be five essential ethics:

1. An **ethic of truth disclosure**: which must override personal advantage.
2. An **ethic of subjectivity**: for each individual must recognise the limits of his or her perceptions, the individuality of his or her values.
3. An **ethic of reflective integrity**: as each professional recognises the limits of personal perception, of the need to incorporate many understandings of a situation.
4. An **ethic of humility**: as each professional recognises that such subjectivity means that personal fallibility is not a failing but a condition of being human.
An ethic of humanistic education: of the duty of the professional to help the client help themselves.

A final change is one which must suffuse these ethics, and relates back to the need for a sociological appreciation of practice. Public sector professionals need to consider the nature of their role not only within their organisation, but within a societal context as well, precisely because the public domain is a necessary focus for the promotion of collective life, as opposed to the prosecution of individual interest. Teachers need to be aware that the character of their practice has crucial implications for the development of citizens, in that the manner of teaching and school organisation has long-term effects upon pupils’ belief in their capabilities and rights to decision-making (see Bottery, 1992). Doctors need to appreciate the implications for health of poverty and social class, and be prepared to speak out on such inequalities. Police need to feel able to speak out on the efficacy and appropriateness of particular crime control measures without being tied to any particular political party’s skirts. Professions, then, are part of a wider societal occupational ecology, and the manner of their function has extensive implications for the welfare of society as a whole. The public sector professional must have an acute understanding of the political, social and ethical implications of the impact of their practice, and of changes to it: and this must be built into both their practice and their training.

Conclusions

As noted above, an immediate response by professionals to the legislation over the past decade or so has been an attempt to mould it to their own particular culture, to emphasise some aspects, and to delay, or subvert others. In institutions where there has always been a distinct administrative or managerial population, such as in hospitals, one is seeing an increasing number of management positions taken by senior clinicians. In institutions like schools where the professionals have traditionally run the institutions themselves, an increasing number of those promoted have begun to develop, or have been selected because they possess the characteristics of NPM managers. Such adaptations may be helpful in the short to medium term, as they at least provide a bridgehead between managerial and professional cultures.

However, the long-term prospects of a profession such as teaching are more likely to be improved by an ongoing process of reflection upon practice, the replacement of exclusivity with one of communication, client education and empowerment. If the professional image of infallibility and unchallengeability continues to be replaced by one of an expert much more prepared to communicate, educate and to learn from the client, the likelihood is that professionals will secure a firmer foundation for their practice and for the trust of the public. Such a change in role will be threatening to many, used as they may be to not having to explain or to justify, to not having to admit the need for the client’s perspect-
ive. Such a change will be similarly threatening for many clients, used as they may be to a role of dependency.

Nevertheless, such movement would ultimately generate public trust and provide accountability for professionals like teachers, doctors and the police, addressing and counteracting as it does the three sources of the NPM movement. For, firstly, economic considerations will be seen to be addressed by professionals, as clients (however these are defined) are educated through a more open display of professional practice. At the same time, teachers and other professionals, through their educative practice of these clients, can assemble powerful arguments to show that requirements of efficiency need to be carefully balanced against questions of quality and equity. Secondly, clients will be able to see that an ultimate aim of choice—the improvement of quality—is better achieved through the development and maintenance of long-term relationships between themselves and the practitioner, rather than through the use of legislative mechanisms which, rather than enhancing choice, may actually do little more than facilitate the movement of disgruntled clients between practitioners. Finally, practitioners of the NPM will find it much harder to pursue an aggressive style of management, as professionals increase public confidence in their practice through their openness, their efficiency, and their greater trustworthiness. Professionals such as teachers, who work in state bureaucracies, may have to change their spots to survive, but it will be a much healthier and more productive existence.

Notes
1 One example is that of professionals and public opinion. Teachers have for some time been one of the least successful groups in bringing public opinion on to their side. This is in part due to their inability to form into one body, and to prevent creating in the public’s mind an image of squabbling unions (see special edition of Journal of Education for Teaching, 1995). Both the police and the medical profession have lessons here from which teachers could learn. Thus, Reiner (1992) describes how the police force in the UK, through strong opposition to its inception, has, throughout its history, developed an approach which involves forging an identification between the public and the police force. It is interesting to note that the ‘law and order’ policy of the late 1970s and early 1980s, in line with the confrontationist politics of the prime minister of that time, Margaret Thatcher, but completely counter to the 150 year-old philosophy of policing, has now been tempered by chief constables who have stressed the ‘service’ nature of the job rather than the ‘force’ element (see Stephens & Becker, 1994). In like manner, the medical profession has always been adept at generating public commitment to the cause of the doctor. Part of this is without doubt a genuine ethical commitment to saving lives; but part is certainly down to the good fortune of having such an occupation to promote, which the medical profession has done assiduously.
2 Laughlin & Broadbent (1994) go so far as to date the first clear and definitive depiction in the UK to September 1982, when the White Paper ‘Efficiency and Effectiveness in the Civil Service’ (Cmnd 8616) was published. However, this would seem to be too short-sighted, but rather the beginning of another campaign in a much longer war.
3 For example, The Guardian, 24 April 1994 reported that the number of teachers in the UK who retired on grounds of ill health was 4897 in 1992–93, as compared with 2551
in 1987–88, during which time teaching numbers had hardly altered. A BBC 2 docu-
mentary on 21 April 1994 suggested that many GPs were working 70–80 hour weeks,
and at least three in the previous year had committed suicide. The gruelling work
schedules of junior doctors in hospitals is also well documented, and individual cases
suggest real stress arising from this. Finally, in one police authority (Humberside) days
off through illness increased from 16,418 in 1980 to 28,149 in 1993, with little dif-
ference in force numbers.

4 ‘There is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women and there
are families.’ Margaret Thatcher in Women’s Own, 31 October 1987.

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CHALLENGE TO PROFESSIONALS FROM PUBLIC MANAGEMENT


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403


Both practitioners and theorists regard administration as an essentially rational process. Although the current emphasis on contingency theory recognises that effective patterns of administration are relative to the contexts in which they are to operate, there remains the fundamental assumption that if plans are well-conceived, clearly set out, and adequately communicated, then systems can be improved. Yet everyone working in organisations is all too well aware of their often idiosyncratic, adventitious, unpredictable and intractable nature when every day brings a new organisational “pathology” to disrupt well laid plans. This uncertainty occurs at the highest levels of policy-making and implementation. In his much cited work on the Cuban missile crisis Allison (1971) showed that what had been interpreted as the outcome of carefully-considered and rationally-enacted policies could be viewed as the result of actors within a highly uncertain situation bargaining within their own camps as well as across national boundaries. In an interview, Zbegniew Brzezinski, President Carter’s adviser on national security stated: “My overwhelming observation from the experience of the last four years is that history is neither the product of design nor of conspiracy, but is rather the reflection of continuing chaos. Seen from the outside, decisions may often seem clear and consciously formulated . . . but one learns that so much of what happens . . . is the product of chaotic conditions and a great deal of personal struggle and ambiguity” (Urban, 1981). Policy-makers and administrators in the less lethal field of education will recognise the aleatory dimension of the institution – described by Kogan (1975) as “pluralistic, incremental, unsystematic and reactive” – as they attempt to improve the service in conditions which appear to be perennially turbulent.

Evidence of the quirky and idiosyncratic nature of social institutions could lead one into a consideration of fundamental questions about the nature of the social sciences. However, this path will not be taken in this paper. The question to be considered is whether social scientists have explored sufficiently all dimensions of institutions as a source of explanation of what, within the prevail-
ing paradigms of social science research, appears to be irrational, adventitious and peculiar to a unique setting at one point in time. It is the purpose of this paper to suggest that there is one dimension of organisations which has been largely ignored in administration and organisation theory. We can refer to this as the “micropolitics of organisations”. It is an organisational underworld which we all recognise and in which we all participate. We acknowledge it when we speak of “organisational mafias”, “hidden agendas”, “playing politics” and “Machiavellism”. It is a dark side of organisational life which provides the source of much staff gossip. Ironically, micropolitical activity is engaged in by the very administrators who profess a rational theory of administration. Yet it is very rarely made the focus of academic study. For enlightenment on micropolitics and for enjoyable confirmation of what we know of this dimension of organisations, we got to television serials, films, plays and novels:

“Wilt” does more than Weber can
To reveal the FE world to man.

There may be good reason for the academic neglect of micropolitics. It is perhaps considered slightly unrespectable, or too self-indulgent (“the cute school of organisation theory”, Ouchi, 1981), or a threat to conventional administrative theory – which it is, or as having no practical application – which it may not. Or it may be that it simply is not a single dimension of organisations at all but a range of different processes each best handled separately through existing bodies of theory and research.

The purpose of this paper is simply to put the issue of micropolitics on the agenda. The sections which follow deal with the hypothesized domain of micropolitics, reasons for its omission from the major approaches to the study of organisations and their administration, the approaches to organisation and administrative theory which deal to some degree with micropolitics, and implications of micropolitics for the training of administrators.

The domain of micropolitics
Micropolitics embraces those strategies by which individuals and groups in organisational contexts seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests. The cynic might well say that this is simply a definition of administration. It is true that the relationship between administration and micropolitics is symbiotic in that in practice they are inextricably linked, but it can at least be hypothesized that there is some measure of independence. Administrative theory focuses on structures and the associated processes of power, decision-making, communication, etc. But the space between structures is occupied by something other than individuals and their motives. This “other” consists of micropolitical structures and processes. It is characterised more by coalitions than by departments, by strategies rather than by enacted rules, by
Politics is inevitably concerned with interests. Administrative theory often underestimates the plurality of interests in organisations because it tends to be attuned to organisational goals as determined by the leadership. That there are interests other than those of organisational effectiveness has of course long been taken into account by most administrative theories, but they nevertheless tend to be treated as recalcitrant, a suitable case for leadership, or socialisation or coercion. It is beyond the scope of this paper to offer a taxonomy of interests, but any classification would at least include personal, professional and political interests. Personal interests would include autonomy, status, territory and rewards. Professional interests involve commitments to particular forms of practice: curriculum, pedagogy, organisation and so forth. Political interests involve a commitment to certain macro or party-political policies. It is easily seen that, taking these three areas of interest alone, it is difficult to disentangle the personal, the professional and the political at a substantive level. The tendency is perhaps for personal or political interests to be presented in terms of the professional, since normatively this is the most “respectable” form of interest in education. Thus a proposed innovation which threatened the territorial interests of a teacher might well be resisted by mobilising “professional” arguments against it. Similarly, political interests can be presented as professional interests. However, it can be seen that here even the conceptual distinction is very difficult to sustain. In institutions other than education the distinction between personal and political interests is blurred. The conceptual difficulties are particularly acute when one considers “the micropolitics of macropolitics”, where the question is whether X is espousing a political interest per se or as a means of pursuing a personal interest in a political career. A large part of the fascination of Crossman’s Cabinet diaries (Crossman, 1975, 1977) is his revelations about micropolitics within the Cabinet and the ambiguous relationship between personal and political interests.

Interests constitute the content of micropolitics but it can be seen that the area is fraught with conceptual and methodological difficulties. It is perhaps for this reason that those who have addressed themselves to micropolitics have tended to focus on strategies rather than content.

Interests are pursued by individuals but frequently they are most effectively pursued in collaboration with others who share a common concern. Some of these may have the qualities of a group in that they are relatively enduring and have a degree of cohesion, but others – which are perhaps best referred to as
interest sets – will be looser associations of individuals who collaborate only infrequently when a common interest comes to the fore. Some interest groups will be coterminous with formal organisational groupings, e.g. departments or teams. These will be particularly strong. Others will transcend formal boundaries and will form when a common interest has to be pursued. The basis of group or set association may be age, sex, professional interests, politics, union activity, etc. Burns (1955) distinguished between cliques which are committed to sustaining the status quo and cabals which are committed to organisational change.

Coalitions have been the focus of attention of a number of writers. Selznick (1957) has made a sociological contribution to their study. Bacharach and Lawler (1980) review the major socio-psychological theories of coalitions before offering their own theory which is essentially a sociopsychological approach to the political dimension of organisations. They define a coalition as “a grouping of interest groups who [sic] are committed to achieving a common goal”. In turn, interest groups are defined as “groups of actors who are aware of the commonality of their goals, and the commonality of their fate beyond simply their interdependence with regard to the conduct of work”.

Some interest groups will be permanently mobilised; interest sets will mobilise as and when their interest becomes salient. Components of the formal structure will remain the most powerful set of groupings in an organisation, but there is at least a case for viewing an organisation in terms of the alternative structure of shifting interest sets which, in fact, interpenetrate with the formal organisation at many points.

Power is one of those social science concepts which refer to an important social phenomenon but about which there are theoretical and empirical disputes which are likely to remain unresolved. Given the libraries of works on power produced by political scientists, philosophers, sociologists and social psychologists, it would be impossible to review the complex theoretical and methodological issues involved in this short paper. Thus the remarks made will be those of particular relevance to micropolitics.

The distinction between two major aspects of power are important. Authority is the legally supported form of power which involves the right to make decisions and is supported by a set of sanctions which is ultimately coercive. Influence is the capacity to affect the actions of others without legal sanctions. The distinction is conceptually important but difficult to sustain empirically because, since authority can be latent, it is difficult to establish when control is exercised through influence or through latent power. However, the distinction between authority and influence remains potentially useful since the power deployed in micropolitics frequently takes the form of influence since interest sets will draw on resources other than those of authority to achieve their ends.

Administrative theory tends to focus on authority which has its source in the hierarchical structure of the organisation. Micropolitical theory would give greater prominence to influence. Influence is derived from a number of sources,
e.g. personality (charisma), expertise, access (especially to information) and resources (material or symbolic). Influence differs from authority in having a number of sources in the organisation, in being embedded in the actual relationships between groups rather than located in an abstract legal source, and is not “fixed” but is variable and operates through bargaining, manipulation, exchange and so forth.

The headteacher in Britain has a high degree of authority; but his exercise of this authority is increasingly modified as teachers’ sources of influence through expertise, access to symbolic resources, etc., increases and thus involves the head in a greater degree of exchange and bargaining behaviour (Hoyle, 1981). These are the aspects of power which are the appropriate focus of micropolitics.

Micropolitics takes account of the strategies used by interest sets to attain their ends and gives these greater attention than formal procedures. Organisational politics has been insufficiently studied to yield a systematic taxonomy of such strategies although there are good individual studies. For example, Pettigrew (1973) identified four strategies used by a group of programmers to protect their interests: norms which denied the outsider’s competence, protective myths, secrecy, and control over recruitment and training. Handy (1976) discusses a number of protective strategies such as the distortion of information, the imposition of rules and procedures, the control of rewards, etc. There is so little discussion of micropolitical strategies in educational organisations that it is perhaps appropriate to invent some examples: an FE college may have a “collegial” structure, but the principal, caught in the dilemma of all who would manage pluralistic organisations, i.e. the reconciliation of legal authority and the expectation of participation, may indulge in micropolitics in order to cope with this dilemma. Thus he may attempt to handle situations by: “losing” recommendations from working parties by referring them to other groups in the hope that they will disappear or become transformed, “rigging” agendas, “massaging” the minutes of meetings, “nobbling” individuals before meetings (“I’m glad you see it my way. I hope you’ll make your views known at the meeting”), “inventing” consensus (“Well, we all seem to be agreed on that”) when consensus has not been tested, “interpreting” the opinions of outside groups (“The governors would never accept it”. “The LEA wouldn’t finance it”) and so forth. As Noble and Pym (1964) discovered, “collegial” organisations are characterised by a “receding locus of power”. The course of power is difficult to identify in a collegial organisation. The principal can draw on his resources of legal power, but other members of staff have their own resources.

Thus micropolitics involves a study of interests, interest sets, power and strategies. These are intimately related to the more formal aspects of an organisation which is the main focus of much administrative theory, but the political dimension of an organisation constitutes an alternative focus for understanding organisational processes. However, from the brief discussions of these four components in this section it can be seen that it is likely to be a conceptually and methodologically complex area of enquiry.
The neglect of micropolitics

Theories of organisations and administration are relative, i.e. products of their place and time, partial, i.e. in adopting one theoretical perspective others are inevitably excluded since a total perspective is not a possibility, and normative, i.e. to a greater or lesser degree they are infused with values.

The dominant paradigm in organisational and administrative theory is one in which political aspects do not easily fit. Although it is a great over-simplification to group all prevailing theories within one paradigm, and although it is impossible to do justice to the diversity of existing theories, some broad points can be made in order to illustrate the reason for the neglect of micropolitics.

Current organisation theory has two origins: Weber’s theory of bureaucracy and early theories of management. These two strands converge and diverge at many points in the development of theory. Sociological theory in the Weberian tradition is potentially concerned with understanding organisations; management theory is potentially concerned with improving them. However, theories of management need to be based on understanding if they are not to be merely recipe theories, and organisation theory has not retained a detached purity since its protagonists have also been concerned with improving organisations in various ways: their efficiency, the quality of life of participants, and, hopefully, both. Hence they share a common paradigm which can be termed the maintenance paradigm.

It is impossible to give a detailed account of this paradigm let alone the variations within. Nevertheless, the following are its major lineaments: its metatheory assumes that the social world is to a greater or lesser degree, rational, amenable to scientific study and predictable. Its perspective on organisations follows from this in emphasising the centrality of structure, the legal authority inherent in that structure, a relatively high degree of integration and systemness, participants who will continue to be committed given an appropriate mix of rewards, and conflicts which are either “creative” or arise from some malfunction of the structure or leadership. The associated management theory is concerned with the effective use of resources, maximising the fit between organisational goals and personal needs, and an organisational responsiveness to contingent conditions in the environment. The theory of change inherent in the model is essentially that of planned change whereby adaptation to a changing environment is handled by structural changes and the retraining and re-socialisation of participants. Overall the paradigm views organisations in a top-down manner.

The operation of the maintenance paradigm in education can be – again in a gross over-simplification – summarised as follows: Educational organisations – schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities – have to cope with changes in their environment: cultural, technological, economic and political changes of various kinds. Political changes are initiated at the macropolitical level and tend to focus on the allocation of resources, legal enactments and overall structure with rather less focus on matters of curriculum and pedagogy. It is assumed that
practitioners will interpret these external changes in an attempt to keep in balance the interests of society and the interests of clients. Hence the expectation is that innovation will be professionalised rather than politicised. In order to equip institutions and practitioners to cope with the professional demands of innovation, programmes of professional development, organisational development and the development of inter-personal skills have emerged. The appropriate strategy of change, within the coercive strategies of national and local government, is considered to be a mixture of rational and re-educative approaches.

A major alternative is the *action* paradigm which again has a complex history and embraces a wide range of perspectives so that to bring them together under one heading is to oversimplify. Nevertheless the lineaments of the action paradigm are as follows: its metatheory holds that the social world is nothing other than the construction of the minds of men and hence has no objective reality “out there”. Social life is sustained because men, through their daily interaction and their language, create intersubjectively shared meanings. These meanings may be relatively persistent and perhaps come to have the appearance of objectivity but, in fact, as men continue to solve the problems of their daily lives, they can voluntarily construct new meanings. It follows then in strict terms there can be no action theory of organisations since organisations are not “objects” but social constructs, and the meanings attached to them, will differ according to one’s perspective. The action theorist is interested in activities within what are conventionally termed organisations because he is interested in how participants construe organisations and their processes. He treats as “problematic” the organisational structure and administrative processes which organisational theorists take for granted. As there can strictly be no organisation theory, there can likewise be no theory of management since management is only a constructed label for a group of organisational processes dominated by those who have resources of power which tend to become problematic only if treated phenomenologically. It should follow that an action perspective is neutral in relation to change since it is a paradigm more concerned with understanding the world – or, more precisely, understanding others’ understanding of the world, than with initiating change. Its active contribution to the change process is the assumption that social theorists of this persuasion should work with practitioners at any level of the organisation helping them to clarify their own perspectives, helping them to question what had previously been taken for granted which then becomes potentially amenable to change. Thus it generally encourages an “active” stance on the part of participants. This sounds rather like the process consultant operating within the maintenance paradigm but whoever the process consultant is, however independent of management he may profess to be, ultimately he is concerned with improving organisational functioning in relation to the goals of management. The action theorist tends to be orientated towards enabling the lower participants to perceive the possibility of reconstructing the organisation in
ways alternative to that perceived as “effective” by management. In short, action theory, like maintenance theory is relative, partial and normative. Yet there is more potential within the action perspective for focusing on micropolitical activities since these are actions which can be made the strict focus of enquiries and not treated as pathological or deviant activities.¹

What can be termed the radical change paradigm has political activity at its centre. It is concerned with understanding the social world in order to change it in accordance with a set of political beliefs. This perspective is strongly Marxist in orientation. Again, at the risk of great over-simplification the following are some of the main characteristics of this approach: the metatheory may, according to the particular view of Marx taken, share the same view of the world as the maintenance theorists, in that it is taken that there is an objective world out there which is amenable to scientific understanding and control via the manipulation of structures and the socialisation of individuals, or of the action theorists. Essentially it is not an organisation theory but a broad socio-political theory in which organisations are seen as arenas in which occur the clashes between the prevailing ideology and the alternative radical ideology. Thus the political transformation of organisations is a necessary step towards transforming society. This is captured in the phrase about “the long march through the institutions” which became prevalent in the late 1960s. Thus there is no management theory as such, only a theory-in-waiting. Current theories of management are held to be simply theories supportive of the capitalist hegemony. There are theories about using “the organisational weapon” in the period of transformation but only when the transformation occurs can a radical, egalitarian and democratic theory of organisation – “management” is perhaps a tainted word – emerge. Although this perspective certainly has political concerns, organisational politics are subsumed within macropolitics, with micro-political activities which do not obviously contribute to the political transformation of the organisation being regarded as pathological.

Approaches to micropolitics

The chief elements of micropolitics: power, coalitions, strategies and interests have been the focus of studies in a number of social science disciplines. In social psychology there has been considerable study of interpersonal power particularly in group settings. However, the socio-psychological study of organisations has been largely concerned with problems of leadership and communication and is clearly located within the maintenance model. Weick (1979) is an exception to this trend in that he has concerned himself with the “negotiation” of organisational order, but the focus has not been directly upon the micropolitical. The concern of political theorists has been games, choice and coalitions (Brams, 1975; Laver, 1980). They have tended to be concerned with establishing formal theories rather than with understanding political activity in vivo.² There are a number of sociological approaches which, though not focusing directly on
micropolitics, are nevertheless concerned with relevant issues. Of particular significance there is exchange theory which is predicated on the assumption that many aspects of social life are explained in terms of the implicit and explicit bargains struck between groups which, though they may be different in relation to the degree of relative power which each has, necessarily needs to reach an accommodation with the other in order to serve their mutual interests (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964). Other sociological theorists of organisation, particularly Selznick (1951, 1966) and Gouldner (1954a, 1954b) attended to the “dysfunctional” elements in organisations which were often the outcome of the pursuits of group interests rather than organisational interests via what we are here terming micropolitics. However, neither has pursued the implications of this in the direction of making micropolitics central to his analysis. Selznick resorted to classical functionalism and although Gouldner was to come to adopt a radical view of social institutions, this was developed within a Marxist rather than a micropolitical framework.

In decision-making approaches to organisation, Simon’s (1964) notion of “bounded rationality” is concerned with the boundary between rational and non-rational aspects of social behaviour. The “non-rational” – which we would now, in these post-phenomenological days, refer to as “alternative rationality” – relates to the activities which we have referred to as micropolitical. However, in the theories of March and Simon (1958) organisational analysis remains well within the maintenance framework in noting these aberrant behaviours as evidence that organisations do not in fact function according to the rational model.

Three organisational theories which are more directly concerned with micropolitics can be noted.

The first is the later work of March who now appears to have brought what was earlier considered to be “non-rational behaviour” in the decision process, i.e. micropolitics, to the centre of the stage. In *Ambiguity and Choice in Organisations* (March and Olsen, 1974) he and his colleagues concentrate less on how decisions ought to be made if they are to conform to canons of rationality, than on how in fact they are made. What is described is how decisions, which are rarely the clear cut events usually described, emerge out of a complexity of micropolitical activities. They advance what is now their well-known “garbage can” model of decision making:

“Although choice opportunities may lead first to the generation of decision alternatives, then to an examination of the consequences of those alternatives, then to an examination of the consequences in terms of objectives, and finally to a decision, such a model is often a poor description of what actually happens. In a garbage can situation, a decision is an outcome or an interpretation of several relatively independent ‘streams’ within an organisation.”

They consider four streams which might go into the “garbage can”: 
Problems: These are the personal problems of participants as they relate to such matters as pay, status, promotion, personal relationships, families and even the problems of mankind.

Solutions: They reverse the normal view of solutions and see them as sometimes preceding problems. They cite the installation of a computer in an organisation which may represent a solution to problems not yet conceived. In the educational context one could conceive a new curriculum or a plan for school-focused in-service training generating new problems rather than solving existing ones.

Choice opportunities: These are occasions such as those when a new member of staff is to be appointed or where a responsibility allowance is to be allocated which generate behaviour which can be called a decision.

Participants: Individuals come and go and their different attributes will shape the outcomes which are termed “decisions”.

The rates, patterns of flow and confluence between these four streams shape certain organisational events which come to be labelled as “decisions”. March and Olsen write of organisations “running backwards” in the sense that organisational events are the outcome of bargaining, negotiating and exchange and only after they have occurred is their history “re-written” by managers to give them the appearance of having been the outcome of a rational decision-making process.

Michel Crozier (1964) has long been interested in how power and influence operate in organisations and has developed the view that organisational processes are best understood by focusing not on formal organisation and power as a commodity but on the games which individuals and groups play in order to solve problems, and in which power is treated as a bargaining relationship. He argues for a change in paradigm. Thus the research problem is to explore how different systems of games can solve the problems which organisations face. He believes that the way forward is to learn more about current games in all forms of organisation and the forms of regulation inherent in these games. This will be best approached by case and comparative studies at the present time with the prospect of formalisation and measurement left until the future. He has written (Crozier, 1975):

“The dominant paradigm revolved around the basic question concerning the structure: how contextual variables determine the basic structural features of an organisation and how these features command the behaviour of the members and the performances of the organisation. The new paradigm emerges first around the idea that the contextual features of the organisation should not be considered as variables determining the structure of the organisation, but as problems to be solved,
and second around the idea that structure is not the necessary nodal point of the organisation, but that the games with their rational mathematical features as well as their human parameters will be a much more concrete and rich focal point.”

Bacharach and Lawler (1980) set out their concerns as follows:

“An understanding of organisational politics requires an analysis of power, coalitions and bargaining. The power relationship is the context for political action and encompasses the most basic issues underlying organisational politics. As the primary mechanism through which individuals and subgroups acquire, maintain, and use power, coalitions crystallise and bring to the foreground the conflicting interests of organisational subgroups. Through bargaining, distinct coalitions attempt to achieve their political objectives and protect themselves from encroachments by opposing coalitions. Power, coalitions, and bargaining, therefore, constitute the three basic themes in our theoretical treatise on organisational politics.”

They review the existing literature and argue that in sociological studies there has been too great an emphasis on formal structure and power and that the traditional social psychology of organisations has tended to focus on motivation, leadership and so forth and have thus ignored the political nature of organisations. They therefore focus on the activities of work groups, e.g. departments, interest groups, i.e. groups of actors with common goals which are not necessarily coterminous with work groups, and coalitions, i.e. groups of interest groups who engage in joint actions against other interest groups. On the basis of a detailed analysis of power, authority, group formation, and bargaining, they develop a formal theory incorporating over 100 hypotheses.

In sum, there have been a number of approaches to the study of micropolitics, but at the present time they cannot be said to constitute a coherent body of theory. The question is whether such a coherence is likely to be achieved and, if so, what its contribution to the study of educational administration might be.

Empirical studies of micropolitics are extremely rare. Some exceptions are Thompson (1967) in the US and in this country Pettigrew (1973) and Mangham (1979) but none of these studies was conducted in educational organisations.

The prospects for micropolitical studies

This paper is based on the assumption that a considerable gap exists between the organisational world which is presented in theory and research and the organisational world which we all experience. This gap is acknowledged by administrators who perhaps gain little help from administrative theory because it is not of their world, or at least it relates to a rather sanitised version of the world in
which they function. The gap is also increasingly recognised by theoreticians and researchers who have become somewhat disenchanted with the prevailing paradigm but are not wholly happy with the action and radical change alternatives. Thus the importance of the micropolitical world is existentially acknowledged.

The question is: can it be captured by the theories and methods of the social sciences and, if so, will what is learnt be of value to practising administrators?

The answer to the first of these questions must remain tentative. There are two basic levels of answer. One relates to the fundamental problem of the social sciences of whether in principle a knowledge of the social world can be attained by the methods of objective enquiry. This is no place to rehearse the arguments yet again, except to note that of the three broad positions: a knowledge of the social world is in principle impossible, that it is possible only through an understanding of the meanings which actors ascribe to situations, and that the social world is in fact, knowable by the procedures of the natural sciences. If we make the assumption that it is, in principle, knowable, then we have to ask how it might be knowable. It could be argued that the micropolitical world is so ideographic, idiosyncratic, contingent and volatile that in practice it cannot be grasped. It could be further argued that it is indeed of this character but it can be grasped in its particular concrete setting via a detailed case study, but that generalisations are very difficult to achieve in practice. Or it can be argued that the micropolitical world is amenable to study by the methods of the social sciences which permit generalisation.

If one takes the latter position, then two things have to be said. One is that “the real stuff” of micropolitics is particularly elusive. As we have seen, different approaches focus on different components of micropolitics, so the interactive nature of power, coalitions, interests, and strategies is unclear. However, if studies to concentrate on one or other aspects in an effort to clear the way towards formal, testable theory, then the configuration disintegrates. Thus we are left, as we often are in the social sciences, with a choice between case studies providing rich data and formal studies providing – hopefully – generalisable findings. And one inevitably comes to the familiar conclusion that both approaches should proceed, if, indeed, it is worthwhile pursuing at all the study of micropolitics in education. It may be that it is not a viable area of study as a whole and that its components are better pursued independently.

If one concludes that it is worthwhile getting to grips with the micropolitics of educational organisations, by whatever method, one has to ask whether the outcome is likely to improve the practice of educational administration. Would it, in fact, provide theory-for-understanding or theory-for-improving? It would appear more likely to provide theory-for-understanding. Studies of micropolitics could well bring the area much more into the arena of open discussion, but it isn’t easy to see in what ways this might improve the quality of administration or the quality of life in educational organisations for participants. It is even more difficult to see how the outcome of the study of micropolitics would feature in
courses for practising administrators other than as a general mirror-raising component and as theory-for-understanding. In what sense could it contribute to improvement of skills? It could form the basis of various forms of simulation and games, but the degree of transfer from gaming to practical decision-making contexts must be somewhat dubious. And even if it were possible to teach micropolitical skills to practising administrators, this would – to say the least – generate some obvious moral issues.

It is clearly the case that micropolitics is difficult to embrace within the conventional theory, research and training patterns of educational administration since administrative theory is normatively oriented to rationalising order and control and eliminating the alternative world of micropolitics. This paper offers no solutions. As stated at the outset, its purpose has been to put micropolitics on the agenda.

Notes
1 Perhaps the best known protagonist of an action or phenomenological approach to educational administration is Greenfield (1975). For a recent interesting exchange between the relative merits of a phenomenological and a flexible system approach see Greenfield (1981), and Willower (1981). More generally on the potential of one action approach see Silverman (1970) and the same writer’s more thoroughgoing phenomenological approach (Silverman and Jones, 1976). For a good review of current organisation theories see Burrell and Morgan (1979).

2 The dramaturgical approach of Goffman (e.g. 1969, 1971, 1974) is difficult to classify but the personal strategies which he identifies are those of the micropolitical actor.

References
POLITICS AND MICROPOLITICS


Reappraisal

The problems and prospects of studying the micropolitics in reforming schools

Hanne B. Mawhinney


Abstract

This analytical paper examines the themes and issues of current research and literature on the study of micropolitics in the context of leadership in educational reform. The implications of a dissociation of research and policy making on systemic reform from research on micropolitics are discussed. In particular the problems arising when macro directions meet micro realities are described as a rationale for reexamining what can be learned from the study of micropolitics. I make a case for reexamining some of the conceptual orientations that have been taken including organizational theorizing from control, natural and interpretive systems perspectives. The predominance of an emphasis on conflict rather than consensus in micropolitical studies is noted. I describe the similarity of concerns of micropolitical research with the conceptual challenges confronting those who are rethinking organizational theory who examine problems associated with macro-micro links, and those related to notions of agency and interest. I argue that the conceptual pluralism evident in the range of orientations taken in research has both enriched and limited our understanding of micropolitical effects. As a point of departure for this collection of reflections from academics and school leaders from around the world, I conclude that there is a need to both clarify the conceptual dimensions of micropolitical analyses of schools, and to examine what school leaders involved in reforming schools can tell us about micropolitics.

Introduction

Among the dialogues running through current research on the organization of schooling, are two focused on the problems and prospects of changing schools
that cross and occasionally bump into each other. One dialogue dominates educational research on the systemic requirements of reform. Themes in this dialogue are captured by the titles of recent articles on North American educational reform such as ‘What is the system in systemic reform?’ (Cohen 1995), ‘Structural reform in educational practice’ (Elmore 1995), and ‘Turning systemic thinking on its head’ (Fullan 1996). The dialogue has been variously labeled: restructuring, re-invention, and more recently, ‘systemic reform’. This most recent version of the dialogue has been preoccupied with orchestrating systemic coherence through: developing unifying visions and goals for all students, creating coherent instructional policies aligned to support common goals, and restructuring the systemic of governance and resource allocation so that the greatest authority and discretion for instructional decisions rest at the school site (O’Day & Smith 1993).

The second dialogue focuses on the micropolitics which swirl in and around schools, often constraining the systemic efforts at changes which challenge taken-for-granted practices. Micropolitics, whether or not addressed explicitly in the dialogue on educational reform, pervade the organizational lives of those involved with schools: students, parents, teachers, administrators and support staff, who must act jointly to respond to the uncertainty and controversy generated. Micropolitics are inevitable where disagreements emerge over the direction of such action. That is not to say that reformers have explicitly recognized the micropolitical conundrums posed by systemic change efforts. Indeed, although the influence of a systemic vision of reform is evident in current educational policymaking, observers like Fullan (1996) and Sykes (1996) remind us of the need for continued dialogue on associated problems. They include those micropolitical effects which are associated with the ‘implementation dip’ that occurs when reforms attempt to guide practice. Fullan (1996: 421) argues that ‘there is no reason to assume that the debate about systemic reform has added one iota of clarity to the confusing picture faced by the majority of teachers’ who are overloaded by the continuous stream of planned and unplanned changes which often work at cross purposes in schools. Teachers, students, parents and administrators confront the problem of overcoming the disagreements which inevitably arise over the direction of reform. If the goals of systemic reform are to be achieved, members of the school community must find ways of resolving conflicts which ensure that decisions made command enough respect that they are widely accepted.

Resolution of controversy is not the only challenge confronting reformers. Restructuring the organization of schools is not a simple task when reforms generate uncertainty as well as controversy. Structural alignments will only occur, according to Fullan (1996: 421) ‘when greater clarity and coherence are achieved in the minds of the majority of teachers’ who experience reforms as fragmented, disjointed and incoherent changes. Sykes (1996: 467) similarly observes that ‘schools and classrooms are the vessels into which a torrent of new ideas pour ... [and] teachers must shift through and select among the many
competing ideas for change’. Ideas about systemic reform comprised of an amalgam of critiques of current practice and implication drawn from research on school change efforts, may work well ‘in the ongoing rhetorical battle over American education’, however, they may be of little help as guides to practice for teachers.

In recent years research into the micropolitics of life in schools confronting change, has provided some insight into the forces at play when macro initiatives are buffeted by micro realities. Unlike the reformers of schooling currently engaged in direct and often public dialogue on the merits of different avenues to promote systemic change, those who have sought to speak truth to the power of organizational micropolitics have done so largely in monologues. As a result the distillation of conceptual problems and prospects we see in the debates over the merits of systemic reform has not occurred in micropolitical analyses of schooling. Sticky problems such as the organizational tensions generated in schools as macro-micro forces collide, have not been adequately addressed. The conceptual boundaries set out by those who have undertaken micropolitical analyses of schools are not clear, rather they have encompassed almost any phenomenon which could be construed as political. In her review of the state of micropolitics of education research, Malen (1995: 159) was prompted to observe: ‘if micropolitics is about much ado about everything, is it much ado about anything?’

**Conceptual diversity: embedding frameworks of micropolitical lenses**

Micropolitical research has emerged as one of the new thrusts in understanding the complexities of organizational life in schools. During the past decade researchers in the UK (Hoyle 1986; Ball 1987), Canada (Townsend 1990), and the US (Blase 1991; Iannaccone 1991; Marshall & Scribner 1991; Willower 1991; Anderson & Herr 1993; Bacharach & Mundell 1993; Lindle 1994; Blase & Anderson 1995; Malen 1995) have explored the conceptual dimensions of a micropolitical lens for analyzing school administration. The micropolitical perspective was first applied to educational organizations by Iannaccone (1975) who examined the interactions of administrators, teachers and students in California schools in the early 1970s. Iannaccone defined micropolitics as being concerned with the interaction and political ideologies of social systems of teachers, administrators and pupils within school buildings. These may be viewed as internal organizational subsystems. Micropolitical analysis is also concerned with external system issues such as those arising in the interaction between professional and lay subsystems.

Like others who have followed a micropolitical line of analysis of schools in the two decades since he first called attention to this thrust, Iannaccone was influenced by developments in organizational thinking. We find in current research on micropolitics in education traces of at least four different models that have captured the attention of theorists. Although various metaphors have been
attributed to them, they are widely recognized as depicting organizations as control systems, natural systems, political systems or interpretive systems. For example, the view of organizations as political systems implied in Iannaccone’s definition of micropolitics emerged in the 1960s in studies of public administration and management. At that time theorists began to rethink the robustness of the models of organizations as control systems, or as natural systems which dominated thinking about organizational questions (Hault & Walcott 1990). The control systems model which we can find traces of in current micropolitical analyses of schooling, emphasizes authority but neglects power in organizations. Organizations, are seen as rational tools for achieving maximum predictability of actions and outcomes.

Challenges to this view of organizations as largely self-reliant, closed and ‘mechanistic’ systems has come from those who attribute ‘organic’ features similar to those characterizing natural systems. The natural systems model which underscores the imperative of organizational survival in a larger environment can be found framing current micropolitical research on the responsiveness of schools to imperatives to reform. It depicts environmental forces as shaping goals, structures and activities in a way which stresses the functional inter-relatedness and harmony within organizations.

Both control and natural systems models posit a highly integrated view of organizations where questions of human purpose, and of conflicting goals arising from the exercise of that purpose are largely ignored. In recent years both models have been criticized as being biased toward technical rationality and failing to account for complexity, instability and conflict within organizations. Critics conclude that rational control and natural systems models tend to ignore the values, ideologies, choices, goals, interests, expertise, history and motivation of individuals in organizations.

In previous decades these limitations led organizational theorists like Burns (1961) to call for a new focus on organizations as political systems. Burns was one of the first organizational theorists to argue against consensus models of organizations and to propose examining both co-operative and conflictual behaviour. He viewed political behaviour as a central impetus for social change in organizations. Other theorists like Cyert and March (1963) examined decision-making in organizations and found that it occurred within a framework of disparate goals where coalitions may emerge to achieve political ends. Similarly Pettigrew (1973) suggested that decision making can’t be explained without understanding political power and the strategies used by individuals and groups to gain such power. The tension between individual and collective strategies were examined by Mangham (1979), who concluded that opportunities for individuals to exercise strategic choice will inevitably create conditions of goal conflict within organizations. Although negotiation among individuals to reach goal consensus will call forth techniques of politics, such as persuasion and bargaining, Mangham argued that these strategies could ultimately be the impetus for the creation of shared meaning among individuals and groups within organizations.
In recent years other organizational theorists have acknowledged the role of dialogue, debate, and coalition formation in forging a sense of collective meaning among organizational members. These notions have been elaborated by Bacharach and Lawler (1980) who have argued that victory in debates generally goes to the strongest coalition. This line of micropolitical organizational theorizing has had an important influence on educational researchers. The approach taken by Bacharach and Lawler is distinguished by an emphasis on group-level coalition politics over individual action, and particularly by the ‘tactical use of power to retain or obtain control of real or symbolic resources’ (1980: 1). Their structural perspective focuses on systems of authority and control carried in various organizational roles, which influence the outcome of bargaining. They conceptualize organizations as political bargaining systems dominated by networks of coalitions of stakeholders all seeking to further their partisan interests. Furthermore, Bacharach and Lawler suggest that the tactical use of power by coalitions to retain or gain control of real or symbolic resources is fundamental to the politics that occurs in organizations. Similarly Pfeffer (1981: 31) argues that organizations can be seen as political arenas where ‘shifting coalitions and interest groups’ become winners and losers in their struggle for power and come into conflict.

Bacharach and Mundell (1993) extended this pluralist perspective into their analysis of organizational politics of school life. Their explicitly pluralist orientation seeks to explain the conditions which provoke interest groups to mobilize, to act separately, or to form coalitions in order to achieve a desired organizational outcome. Power, from this pluralist perspective is manifest through the overt actions of coalitions seeking to influence decisions. Political action involves the acquisition and exercise of influence, authority, control and power.

Other researchers have taken a less pluralist orientation in their use of the political arenas model to analyze the micropolitics of life in schools. These analysts question whether all organizations reflect a plurality of interests. They argue instead that the expectation of pluralism common in many North American efforts to apply a political model of organizations to the study of school micropolitics obscures larger truths, such as the fundamental class cleavage between management and labor. Ball (1987), for example, views schools as arenas for struggle rife with conflicts because they are poorly coordinated and ideologically diverse arenas of conflicting interests.

This more critical perspective to organizational analysis is found in the interpretive approaches to organizational analysis. Although several interpretive approaches found in micropolitical research in education have in common a focus on an actor’s perspective, they have taken different orientations toward the nature of cultural systems in organizations. Some interpretive approaches view organizational cultures as integrated entities. These approaches emphasize processes of gaining organization-wide consensus through developing shared values and cognitions. The assumption that members of an organization can share the same taken-for-granted interpretations has typically been adopted by
those focusing on the role of leaders and managers in typifying policy, inducing commitment to it, building organizational community and, thus, coherence.

Other interpretative orientations acknowledge the lack of consensus that commonly exists across organization’s sectors. Their focus is on the conflicting cultural understandings of different subsystems of actors within organizations. Discrepancies among these understandings leads researchers taking this orientation to use a critical-conflict perspective to analyze their findings. They share this tendency with those who adopt a third interpretive orientation, one which embraces ambiguity as the endemic condition in all organizational cultures. Whereas the unity view of interpretive systems assumes consensus is the fundamental order in organizations, the ambiguity view sees consensus as fluctuating across issues. This negotiated order view assumes that organizational actors perceive structures as defining their lived experiences. Anderson and Herr (1992) take this perspective in arguing that the theme of student invisibility:

... has become a popular metaphor in educational writing as more researchers are viewing schools as consisting of multiple realities in which some realities are ‘defined out’ of the dominant social construction.

(59)

While Anderson and Herr (1992) are correct in observing that educational research has taken an interpretive turn in recent years, it is also the case that micropolitical analyses have been particularly eclectic in their conceptual borrowings. Organizational theorizing from control, natural and interpretive systems perspectives and cross-perspective dialogue and debate has enriched the body of literature from which educational analysts interested in the organizational dynamics of schools are now able to draw. Educational analysts have taken advantage of the diversity offered by these conceptual perspectives to such an extent that those who have examined the state of micropolitical research conclude that it is currently best described as a ‘disparate field of inquiry’ where ‘conceptual boundaries and distinctive features await definition’ (Malen 1995: 159). Indeed, the accumulated micropolitical research, best characterized by a conceptual pluralism framed from diverse perspectives, offers insights on inter-relationships among dimensions of organizational structures, decisions, sources of power, goals, values, purposes and strategies. Marshall and Scribner (1991: 350–353) capture this diversity in their analysis of themes found in current research on dimensions of micropolitics of school administration. They identify seven focuses in micropolitical research. One common focus of research is on the ideologies and values of subsystems of teachers and administrators in schools. Other micropolitical studies examine the negotiations of boundaries and turf between administrators and teachers. A third theme in micropolitical studies is that school site actors often assert bureaucratic rationality for political ends. A fourth theme in micropolitical studies is that street-level bureaucrats such as
teachers often revise and remake policy during implementation to fit their site. Studies also document the mobilization of bias in organizational life. Bias is often taken for granted or ignored. Often the dilemmas arising from conflicts among the common goals of education—equity, choice, efficiency and quality are subverted by micropolitical processes. Perhaps the most powerful form of mobilization of bias occurs through reality creation in organizations. Those who have the power to determine which issues and questions are seen as relevant and critical and which will be viewed as irrelevant and illogical play the most powerful micropolitical games. Finally, micropolitical studies document the privatization of conflict within the school walls, or within one subgroup on the site.

Research on these dimensions of the micropolitics of school life have given us a new understanding of organizational dynamics. The problem is that these insights are weakened by their dissociation from each other and from the developments in the broader field of organizational theorizing. The result is an accumulation of ad hoc analyses of individual cases of micropolitics from unique perspectives that do not generate much overall theoretical insight into organizations or tell us a great deal about how to inform policy-related thinking about systemic reform. In order to address these limitations, micropolitical analysts must, at the very least, lay out the model of organizations and the associated assumptions which frame their research. This will not in itself do a great deal to inform problems of systemic reform unless researchers also cut to the core of the organizational dilemmas posed by restructuring proposals and efforts. In the interest of responding to these challenges I turn now to discuss two of the problems bedeviling systemic reformers which could be informed by micropolitical analyses: the problem of macro intents and micro realities, and the problem of agency and interest.

**Revisiting the problem of macro perspectives and micro realities**

Putting aside the issue of perspective diversity, micropolitical research has been largely framed outside the dialogue on reform which dominates educational discourse in academic and policymaking arenas. The problem of reforming the organization of schools taken up in these arenas has taken a decidedly systemic orientation (see O’Day & Smith 1993; Cohen 1995; Elmore 1995; Fullan 1996) which has been largely set aside by current micropolitical research in education.

The general abstraction of micropolitical analyses from the larger and more dominant dialogue on educational reform in North America has not gone unnoticed by critics. Townsend (1990), for example, challenged the robustness of a micro analysis of political phenomena divorced from the macro forces which frame demands for far-reaching reforms of schooling. Viewed from the systemic perspective which has dominated politics of education scholarship in North America, Townsend’s criticism applies to much of the micropolitical research that has been published in recent years.
Similar issues are raised by Malen (1995) in her review of the state of micropolitical research. Malen captures the extent of the unresolved conceptual problems this poses. She concludes that questions about macro-micro political tensions remain unanswered. She asks of micropolitics:

How does it differ from macropolitics?
Or does it? Is ‘micropolitics’ defined by the size of the arena? The level of the system?

(159)

Malen’s question deserves our attention, because we know from the past decades of research that micropolitics is not wholly concerned with internal politiking that occurs within organizations. It also focuses on the interaction of organizations with their environments. Micropolitical analyses have not always assumed a deterministic stance, rather many depict organizations as manipulating and influencing their environments. At the same time, as Townsend (1990) points out, micropolitical research has tended to focus on the local level, sometimes emphasizing teachers’ conflicts to the exclusion of the political tradeoffs among larger political and societal purposes.

Other studies confirm that macro level factors (or factors external to schools), significantly influence the micropolitical character of schools (Blase 1991). The impact of formal legislation on school-based structures, the impact of district-level policy mandates on the relationships among teachers, the impact of community values and beliefs expressed through parental demands on the school, the influence of school district ideology on principal behaviours, and the impact of community demographics on the interactions between administrators and teachers documented in many studies show the how external influences impinge on school micropolitics.

The problem of agency and interest
Despite the recognition of macro forces, the nature of macro-micro links are not well understood. These links pose a conceptual challenge for researchers seeking to understand the micropolitics of organizational life in schools. Educational analysts are not alone in examining this problem. The concern forms the basis of the notions of agency and interest that cut across conceptual perspectives as diverse as those taken by organizational ecologists like Aldrich (1992), and those who follow Foucault’s (1979) post-structural frame of analysis of governmentality and the problem of the micro dimensions of power. These approaches set quite different directions for analysts of the micropolitics of educational reform.

Macro-micro links pose a problem for organizational theorists like Aldrich (1992) who are struggling to define the levels of analysis of organizational change. Aldrich posits a nested system where the units of analysis are the constituent components and the agents of change. He suggests that:
The types of relations between units that are relevant to social change differ across levels: at the group level, we examine relations between individuals; at the organizational level, relations between groups; at the population level, interorganizational relations; and at the community level, relations between populations . . . Agency, then arises from the collective actions of interested parties (individuals, groups, organizations, populations) at each level.

Those who have taken up Foucault’s (1980) direction offer a contrasting view of collective action, one that depicts power as shifting, inherently unstable expressions of relations evident in networks and alliances. This view is captured by the notion of governmentality, and implies that there is no discontinuity between the macro and the micro practices of power. In this context the concept of governmentality, means ‘something like a form of activity designed to guide, or to shape or to affect, or to change the conduct of some person or persons’ (Marshall 1995: 373). The dissolution of macro-micro discontinuities suggested by Foucault offers a view of power operating through a set of technologies and mechanisms rather than through levels: ‘it is diffused throughout society’ (Fiske 1993: 11). Conceptions of micropolitics focus more directly on strategic dimensions of power when people are viewed as social forces, as consisting of ‘varied and changing social allegiances’ (11). Of course this notion is not new. Machiavelli has a great deal of offer those who take this view of social interactions.

Problems in studying the micropolitics of organization of schools

The various perspectives on the link between macro-micro forces raise some of the emerging problems defining the nature of school organization. The models of organization which have informed our understanding of micropolitical phenomenon reflect two basic orientations. One sees organizations as 'social systems sustained by the roles allocated to their participants', and the second views organizations as 'associations of self interested parties, sustained by the reward the participants derive from their association with the organization' (Aldrich 1992: 27). These views are not mutually exclusive, but they do reflect some of the themes we find in reform proposals, and in micropolitical analyses.

Current dialogues on systemic reform illustrate the embedded assumptions about the nature of organizations. We can find them in the challenges I noted at the beginning of this article to creating coherence faced by systemic reformers who call for structural alignments to enhance the capacity for school change. The problematic issue of this macro reform perspective encountering micro realities has been a preoccupation of educational policy analysts at least since the Rand Change Agent study first concluded that local implementation choices dominate outcomes, and that what matters most to macro policy outcomes are local capacity and will of
teachers. In a retrospective analysis of the Rand Change Agent study which anticipated the themes in current dialogue on systemic reform, McLaughlin (1990: 13) affirms the earlier finding that the presence of teacher motivation to embrace policy objectives ‘is essential in the generation of the effort and energy necessary for a successful project’. McLaughlin concludes, however, that the motivation and will of individual teachers is significantly constrained by local level capacity and variability and by organizational micropolitics.

Nevertheless, like reformers relying on a more systemic than associative model, she views school organizations as relatively coherent, stable entities. Like others sharing this orientation, she emphasizes socialization and other processes that make the transmission of shared meaning easier. For example, McLaughlin argues that factors which enable changing teaching practices are engendered through decidedly micro-level systemic conditions:

\[\ldots\text{productive collegial relations, organizational structures that promote open communication and feedback, and leadership that ‘manages’ opportunities for professional growth and nurtures norms of individual development.}\]

(15)

Many of those who have taken up the analysis of micropolitics of schools in recent years would find the assumption of stability and coherence problematic. Their concern lies more with issues of agency and interest, and with questions such as: Who or what is responsible, and who benefits? These are concerns not only of researchers like Bacharach and Mundell (1993), who adopt a pluralist orientation to micropolitics, but also of those who have taken an interpretive approach. Interpretive analyses, based on conceptions of organizations as associations of self-interested parties, recognize that different, and conflicting views on what constitutes legitimate action often coexist. Micropolitics reflects the organizational dynamics that occur in schools where conflicting views exist for the legitimate direction of change.

Blase (1991) suggests, for example, that micropolitics is concerned with power and how people use it to influence others and to protect themselves. Power relationships are established by individuals and groups to manage potential or real conflict and to enforce a dominant agenda of action, and to maintain order and regulate behaviour both formally and informally through influence and authority. Defined from an associative view of organizations, micropolitics is about conflict, and how people compete to get what they want in the face of scarce resources. Conflict arises when groups and individuals seek social domination. Some theorists have examined the darker side of organizational life, by studying the non-sanctioned means used to gain power. Others like Hoyle (1988) emphasized the strategies adopted by individuals and groups to use authority and influence to fulfill their interests. In many studies micropolitics focuses on competition for support of a coalition’s position through strategies
such as persuasion, compromise, bargaining, and destabilization. In Townsend’s (1990: 208) words micropolitics is ultimately about the ‘conflictive interests that swirl around schools’.

This view of organizations as associations of self-interested parties does not deny the potential to attain a more integrative state. Many agree that there is also a need to broaden the focus of inquiry into the micropolitics of school life from the current extensive emphasis on conflict to the exclusion of consensus. Blase (1991) observes, for example, that micropolitics is also about cooperation, and how people build support to achieve their ends. Townsend (1990) calls for a new micropolitical research agenda that recognizes that cooperation is as important as conflict. This research agenda would focus on the nature of both in the context of choice and control, state and class. It would examine both power for coordinating collective purposes, and power as individual coercion. Others support this research agenda by reminding us that it is really a refocus on the traditional thrusts taken in micropolitical research on school administration which examine power, control, ideologies, interests, conflicts, consensus and negotiation (Willower 1991).

**Conclusion: organizational theory in the postmodern era**

Problems of agency and interest and macro-micro links are among the bundle of conceptual challenges faced by those who are rethinking organizational theory. In a postmodern era marked by a move away from orthodox consensus on the definition of an organization, and on the nature of the practice of organizational analysis, this thinking is characterized by the pluralistic diversity we see in research on the micropolitics of schools. Its diversity carries the potential for diffusing the kind of focused dialogue among researchers needed to enhance our understanding of the effects of current initiatives to reform the deep structures of schooling. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that we can return to the unitary construction of organizational problems of earlier eras.

The challenges to the rational/systems orthodoxy are part of a broader recognition that the wide range of organizational forms emerging cannot be accommodated within this model. The turn to micropolitical analysis can be seen as part of a growing interest in social rationalities and the power struggles through which they are formulated, implemented and contested. This interest further signals a shift in emphasis from the earlier study of organizational forms towards a concern with ‘the dynamics of change and the “logics” through which it proceeds’ (Reed 1992: 7). The challenge cannot be met by only refining Weberian conceptions of a logic of action as Bacharach and Mundell (1993) have done. Researchers of micropolitical phenomenon must grapple with the discontinuities between organizational perspectives which stress the logic of institutional change and those which emphasize the centrality of social construction and action. As Gergen (1992) points out in his exploration of organizational theory in the postmodern context of diversity, plurality, uncertainty and fragmentation, micropolitics can only have conceptual meaning for the organi-
zational analysis of schools if it allows us to simultaneously challenge the taken-for-granted and open new departures for action.

It remains to be seen whether or not the path of micropolitical analysis of school life first set out in the 1970s by students of politics within organizations like Iannaccone (1975) allows us to do either. Despite current educational research activity there is little consensus about what defines phenomena as uniquely micropolitical and distinct from those which are ‘macropolitical’. The unit of analysis used in much micropolitical research is underspecified and conceptually weak. Much that is now defined as specifically ‘micropolitical’ is hardly distinguishable as uniquely ‘political’ human interaction.

These observations suggest that although the study of micropolitics is an emergent enterprise, it is also one that draws from some of the familiar concerns of educational leadership and management. What remains unclear are the implications of micropolitical analyses of schools for proposal to reform schools. In order to inform policymaking to restructure schools, we need to clarify the conceptual dimensions of a micropolitical inquiry. As Townsend (1990: 220) concludes such a goal is also grounded in the clarification of a normative framework ‘that takes a stand on basic issues about how schools should work—both within themselves and in relation to the larger and increasingly politicized environment in which they exist’.

At the same time, we also need to examine what the study of micropolitics contributes to the practice of leadership in reforming schools. In the following sections we do so from the perspectives of academics and school leaders in Canada, UK, Australia and the US. The themes and issues raised by these contributors are discussed in a concluding section by Eric Hoyle, whose important work in the 1980s has helped set the direction for the research on micropolitics that I have reviewed in this introduction. We hope that our reflections on the study micropolitics will contribute to the practice of leadership in reforming schools.

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REAPPRAISAL


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EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
CONTENTS

VOLUME II  EDUCATIONAL THEORY

Acknowledgements

PART 4
Theory

21 Towards a critical practice of educational administration
RICHARD J. BATES

22 Educational administration, leadership and management: towards a research agenda
RAY BOLAM

23 The changing context of management in education
TONY BUSH

24 Restructuring Hong Kong’s schools: the applicability of western theories, policies and practices to an Asian culture
CLIVE DIMMOCK

25 Educational administration as science: a post-positivist proposal
COLIN EVERE AND GABRIELE LAKOMSKI

26 From struggling to juggling: towards a redefinition of the field of educational leadership and management
RON GLATTER
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The field of educational leadership: studying maps and mapping studies</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HELEN GUNTER AND PETER RIBBINS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Theory and practice in educational management</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEREDYDD HUGHES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The discourses of educational management</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALTER HUMES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>‘Really good ideas’? Developing evidence-informed policy and practice in educational leadership and management</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROSALIND LEVAČIĆ AND RON GLATTER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Realizing the potential of educational management in India</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADMAKAR SAPRE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART 5

School effectiveness and school improvement | 213 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PHILIP HALLINGER AND RONALD H. HECK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Linking school effectiveness knowledge and school improvement practice: towards a synergy</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAVID REYNOLDS, DAVID HOPKINS AND LOUISE STOLL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>The change equation: capacity for improvement</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUISE STOLL, JOHN MACBEATH, IAIN SMITH AND PAMELA ROBERTSON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PART 6

Financial management and local management of schools | 293 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Monetary incentives and the reform of teacher compensation: a persistent organizational dilemma</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEPHEN L. JACOBSON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This page intentionally left blank
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Part 4

THEORY
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Though misconceived and misdirected, the quest for a behavioral science of educational administration continues. Despite the revolution brought about in natural science by Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle and by relativity and quantum theory, the scientific model propagated by mainstream theorists of educational administration is still firmly rooted in Newtonian physics. Despite the acknowledgement of philosophers of the impossibility of eliminating evaluative judgments from the interpretative frameworks within which facts are both sought and understood, mainstream theorists of educational administration continue to declare the incommensurability of fact and value. Despite the social theorists’ large-scale abandonment of the quest for a value-free science of society, the mainstream theorists of educational administration still pursue positivistic attempts to develop generalizable laws and principles which will explain the structure and dynamics of organizations.

Perhaps the most outstanding example of this conservative and anachronistic approach to educational administration is the highly developed view of educational administration as rooted in the “theory moment” of the 1960s. Those who persist in this view remain blissfully unaware of the widely acknowledged revolutions in science, philosophy, and social theory mentioned above. The literature of this era, for example, is noticeably lacking in its attention to unique characteristics of educational organizations and to other contextual matters such as contemporary educational issues. The tendency of educational administrators to separate administrative issues from educational issues and to ignore the latter has been noted previously by Callahan (1962) in his discussion of the cult of efficiency. It is as though the administration of schools and school systems consists entirely of processes of motivation, leadership, decision-making, and communication conducted by professional bureaucrats who are responsible for organizational climate, effectiveness, and change. Readers may search in vain
for reference to a single educational idea. There is, for instance, deafening silence concerning the fundamental message systems of schools: curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation (Bernstein, 1975).

The pathology of such an approach to educational administration is surely indicated both by its neglect of contemporary science (Bates 1980a), philosophy (Hodgkinson 1978), and social theory (Tipton 1977), and by its exclusion of educational concerns (cf. Boyd and Crowson 1981). A theory of educational administration that divorces fact from value, theory from practice, rationality from common sense, and education from administration is unlikely to be capable of guiding the administrator’s hand (Greenfield 1981).

**Organization, culture and praxis**

Greenfield, among others, has argued for some time now for an essentially phenomenological view of organizations. This view sees organizations as accomplishments, as consequences of human action directed by individual will, intention, and value which provide contexts for the negotiation and construction of meaning, moral order, and power. As such, organizations are essentially arbitrary definitions of reality “woven in symbols and expressed in language” (1980, 44).

Such a perspective does not deny the facts of organizational reality but interprets them within a wider context which sees them as “structures of consciousness as well as features of face-to-face settings” (Brown 1978, 365). Thus rationality, for instance, is seen not as a property of organizations or as an abstract standard by which behavior may be judged but as an achievement: “... rationality neither instructs us as to what action to take, nor is it a property inherent in the social system as such. Instead, rationality emerges in interaction and is then used retrospectively to legitimize what has already taken place or is being enacted” (Brown 1978, 369).

From such a perspective, rather than organizations being entities whose internal and external interactions are determined by the causal laws of behavioral and social science, “formal organizations are essentially processes of organizing enacted by persons” (Brown 1978, 371). Thus, “the study of reality creation in organizations is a study of power, in that definitions of reality, normalcy, rationality and so on serve as paradigms that in some sense govern the conduct permissible within them (1978, 371).

Moreover, as with scientific paradigms, organizational paradigms are not only formal structures of thought but are also constituted by the language, rhetoric, and practices of the organizational community. The power of such paradigms lies in their ability to define what shall be included or excluded from discussion, practice, and therefore consciousness (Brown 1978; Giroux 1981).

Paradigms, however, are both constructed and contested. They are subject to periodic overthrow or supercession. As with scientific communities, formal organizations construct defenses and mechanisms of suppression in order to
protect and sustain dominant paradigms. These mechanisms are essentially sym-
bolic, communicated through the language, rituals, and metaphors that define the
nature and meaning of the organization and celebrate the purposive intentions of
organizational life. In short, organizations are cultures rather than structures and
it is the maintenance and contestation of what is to constitute the culture of
organizational life that provides the dynamic of rationality, legitimation, and
motivation in organizations. This dynamic is the praxis of administration.

The cultural analysis of educational administration

have all argued the necessity of constructing a cultural analysis of educational
administration as an alternative to the inherently sterile pursuit of a deterministic
behavioral science. This is not solely because the dynamics of organizations can
better be understood through such a perspective but also because educational
organizations, above all, are committed to the maintenance, transmission, and
re-creation of culture. Culture is, in fact, the prime resource of educational prac-
tice (Bates 1981b). Thus a theory of educational administration that ignores this
central preoccupation can hardly be counted as a theory of educational adminis-
tration in any very serious sense.

It is culture that gives meaning to life. The beliefs, languages, rituals, know-
ledge, conventions, courtesies, and artifacts – in short the cultural baggage of any
group, are the resources from which the individual and social identities are con-
structed. They provide the framework upon which individuals construct their
understanding of the world and of themselves. Part of this cultural baggage is
factual. It is empirical, descriptive, and objective. Another part of this cultural
baggage, perhaps the greater part, is mythical. It is concerned not with facts but
with meaning, that is, the interpretative and prescriptive rules which provide the
basis for understanding and action.

Malinowski, for instance, argued that “myth fulfills in primitive culture an
indispensable function: it expresses, enhances and codifies belief; it safeguards
and enforces morality; it vouches for the efficiency of ritual and contains the
practical rules for the guidance of man” (1948, 79).

At the other extreme, as Bailey points out, Sorel’s definition is equally
acceptable: “... men who are participating in a great social movement always
picture their coming action as a battle in which their cause is certain to triumph.
These constructions ... I propose to call myths” (Sorel 1908, in Bailey 1977, 16).

While it is unlikely that many of the myths that give meaning and purpose to
schools’ activities approach the apocalyptic vision of a second coming or
Marx’s revolution, it can readily be seen that myths are not confined to great
social movements but are a fundamental feature of everyday life in schools as
elsewhere. Consequently schools, alongside other public institutions, are battle-
grounds in which contending mythologies compete for the holy grail – control of
the future.
Myths are, then, an important cultural resource in schools – they alone can give meaning and purpose to schools’ activities. They are intimately built into the day-to-day life of schools and in an important sense they constitute the groundwork of belief, morality, ritual, and rules within which social and personal identity are managed. Any adequate theory or effective practice of educational administration must necessarily, therefore, be concerned with the nature of the myths that guide the organizational life of schools and with the characteristics of interpersonal life through which such myths are perpetuated and negotiated.

Three key aspects of the cultural myths of schools are particularly important: metaphors, rituals, and negotiations. These are the aspects of life in schools that provide the means through which individuals and groups attempt to manage the cultural reality of the school and shape it to fit their vision of the future. Administrators need to be sensitive to this process and aware of its importance in the processes of rationalization, legitimation, and motivation involved in schooling.

**Metaphors and the management of meaning**

It was Wittgenstein (1953) who spoke of the bewitchment of our intelligence by the means of language. He also spoke of the need for liberation from such bewitchment – the need for the fly to find his way out of the fly bottle. The directions for escape, he insisted, were not to be found in the dictionary but in the world of real experience where the meaning of words is revealed in their use. The language we use and the way in which we use it are the keys to our particular bewitchment.

We are often unaware of the associations that crowd in on us in our use of particular phrases. The images they conjure up may be common-place; alternatively, the metaphors we employ may be, or may once have been, vivid. Nietzsche (1968) argued that the use of metaphor is basic to the intellectual processes we use to establish truth and meaning. Moreover, this impulse toward the formation of metaphor, linked as it is with the processes of categorization, classification, and association is identified with the “will to power” (Nietzsche 1968; Bowers 1980). Metaphors allow us to structure and create meaning out of experience. They may also act like fly bottles, to keep us trapped in invisible prisons. They can, moreover, mislead us when we apply inappropriate metaphors to situations better understood in other ways.

Shifts in the use of metaphor are not always trivial. They may, as Kuhn (1962) suggests, be basic to the nature of scientific revolutions and involve a major shift in world view. For instance, the shift from an animistic view of the universe to a mechanistic one brought about by Newton and his philosophical colleagues, Bacon and Locke, involves a major shift in attitude toward nature which became for the first time viewed as accessible, knowable, and controllable. The metaphor involved, that of the machine, allowed not only a transformation of production but also a transformation of society which could now be viewed as a mechanical system.
As Hamilton (1980) has shown, the metaphor of the machine or the mechanical system was rapidly applied to education. In this process the work of Adam Smith and his harmonization of the ideas of individual and collective self-interest through the metaphor of the invisible hand was crucial in the development and legitimization of simultaneous instruction. Such instruction was a key practice in the development of mass education.

Shifts in the fundamental metaphors which we use to explore and interpret the world of nature and the nature of society have far-reaching repercussions. The metaphor of the machine is frequently used in education and forms the basis of much of the language of systems engineers who use the metaphor in much the same way as Adam Smith. “Systems in many respects resemble machines. . . . A system is an imaginary machine, invented to connect together in fancy those different movements and effects which are already in reality performed” (in Hamilton 1980, 4).

Smith’s legacy is still with us in the contemporary language of cybernetics. “Today the spokesmen for cybernetic systems theory argue that formal organizations are (or are like) a giant computer with its input and output, its feedback loops, and its programs. This machine – the organization – is in turn guided by a servomechanism – the techo-administrative elite” (Brown 1978, 375).

Such metaphors profoundly, and often unconsciously, determine our attitudes toward the world, people, events, and action. Teachers and administrators and their pupils use metaphors continually to represent relationships and to define the power structures which organize behavior. Metaphor is a major weapon in the presentation of self and the management of situations. Such metaphors not infrequently obscure the interests of dominating elites and present particular partisan views of the world as uncontestable descriptions of the way things are. Positivistic and mechanical accounts of social structure and process are frequently of this kind. Phenomenological or critical analysis however allows us to see this (cybernetic) imagery as a thing made, as a symbolic artifact rather than as the fact. (It allows us) to reject it as a literal description of how the organization “really” is and to unmask it as a legitimating ideology. By doing a close textual analysis, we can make it clear that in the paradigm of cybernetics the vocabularies of personal agency, ethical accountability, and political community have atrophied. In their place, the organization, initially conceived as serving human values, becomes a closed system directed by elites and generating its own self-maintaining ends.

(Brown 1978, 375)

A critical analysis of the metaphors that articulate (if indeed they do not constitute) our beliefs and actions is, therefore, one powerful way of ensuring that we do not remain trapped within the evidently transparent prison of the fly bottle.
Metaphors not only intrude on the processes of educational administration in a grand fashion as in the language of cybernetics, they also directly affect our negotiations and relations with each other at the most personal level. In the common, everyday language of schools metaphors about children and metaphors about schools exist and compete. They are frequently varied, contradictory, and powerful. Metaphors of the child as flower, enemy, cog, machine, chameleon, miniature adult, psychopath, gentleman, lady, or reasoner, are common currency in staffrooms as are our metaphors of the school as factory, clinic, or bureaucracy. The nature, occurrence, and emphases of such metaphors are vitally important to administrators for the “tone” or “climate” of the school has a lot to do with the metaphors employed and the relationships they bear to the reality of interpersonal relations. Parents and pupils are, for instance, particularly scathing in their evaluations of schools which use one metaphor (community) in their rhetoric and another metaphor (factory) to guide their activity.

Such conflicts of metaphor are sources of great debate and tension within educational systems and schools. But the tension is not simply a semantic one. The metaphors which people use are often representative of the kind of future – the social movement – to which they are consciously or unconsciously committed. Such cultural commitment is frequently passionate and contains views of man, society, and education which are closely related to the meaning and identity of the individual.

Metaphors carry both personal identity and social commitment. Schools are instrumental in the support or denial of such identity. They are, therefore, important cultural artifacts and the struggle to shape them is closely related, as Greenfield reminds us, to the values that are central and meaningful in people’s lives.

The relationship between educational metaphors and individual and social identity is clearly and powerfully illustrated in the work and ideas of Paulo Friere. His work relies on a series of opposing metaphors: cultural domination versus freedom; the culture of silence versus cultural action; education as banking versus education as praxis. In each of the metaphors education is related to social organization. On the one side education as banking, the conspiracy of silence, and cultural domination are related to forms of social oppression of militarist, sexist, racist, class kinds. On the other side education is praxis, liberation, autonomy, cultural action for freedom. The form that education takes in schools is, he argues, intimately bound up with the personal and social identity of individuals (Friere 1972).

Friere’s view is clearly developed within the context of Third World countries. The relationships between views of man, society, education, and the organization of learning do, however, apply to our contemporary society, for any systematic organization of learning incorporates into its structure not only content but also forms of relationship built on the metaphors which encapsulate our view of society and people.

Education systems are then, in a sense, a physical working out of the cultural
metaphors and myths held by educators and administrators. Many of the metaphors we employ are, for instance, ritualized in the forms of organization, ceremony, and interaction which are typical of schools. Jackson (1968), for instance, shows how the organizational structure of schools emphasizes and demands certain kinds of relationships between teachers and pupils. The facts of crowdedness, praise, and power provide an essentially coercive environment in which relationships between teachers and pupils are ritualized. The metaphors of child as cog, machine, are translated into cultural reality through the rituals of classroom interaction.

Again Dreeben (1968), following Parsons (1959), argues that the organization of the school is devoted to creating social and psychological situations that encourage, when compared with the family, activities leading to the development of independence, achievement, universalism, and specificity in children. These metaphors or norms are constructed by the social organization of the school. The organization of time, place, and relationships shapes the consciousness of individuals through their structure and the treatment accorded to particular groups.

Jean Anyon (1980) has argued this position in more detail showing how the ways in which pupils’ “work” is treated in schools – in terms of the content of their work, their relationships with teachers, the products of their activity – can be differentiated according to social class. The nature of the metaphors which are interpreted and enforced through the school’s organization are different for different children. Moreover these differences apparently relate to the kinds of work relationships found in different occupational groups. Thus, for working-class children, conflictual relationships are predominant – child as inferior, child as enemy. This form of relationship in school is also borne out by the work of Willis (1977) and Birkstead (1976) among others. Middle-class children tend, however, to meet bureaucratiﬁed relationships in the school – child as cog, child as machine – and be subjected to rituals of evaluation, classiﬁcation, and certification (Cicourel and Kitsuse 1963). Upper-class schools, Anyon argues, tend to deﬁne work relationships in terms of negotiation and symbolic capital where the dominant metaphors are those of manipulability, adaptability, and effectiveness – child as reasoner, child as adult. Thus, the metaphors we use to classify and interpret the world are translated into work structures which relate to wider social relations and to structures outside the school.

It would seem therefore that a critical practice of educational administration would necessarily involve observation, analysis, and reﬂection on the metaphorical currency negotiated and exchanged within the school. It might also on occasion involve the negotiation of a different currency.

Administration, ritualization, and control

Along with metaphors, rituals are a potent mechanism of control. Although the meaning of rituals may be redundant (i.e., no longer explicit) the relationships...
represented in those rituals are frequently both metaphorical and practical specifications of intergroup power. Ritualistic acts revivify the relationships which constitute particular forms of order in social situations. Schools are saturated with rituals. The management of ritual in schools is an important element in the maintenance of order for rituals celebrate both unifying and differentiating features in the social structure of the school (Bernstein 1975).

Rituals can often be so powerful as to take on a life of their own. Conformity to rituals may be so complete as to govern movement, place, time, language, sequences of activity, participant’s response, and the use of artifacts. Their shape, the metaphors they utilize, and the symbols that guide responses are powerful means of control. These ritual structures of communication are rather obvious in churches, rallies, television interviews, cafeterias, and football games. They are also obvious to outsiders describing what goes on in schools. They are not always obvious to those who participate more or less permanently in the rituals of schools. Because the form and meaning of the rituals are so well known, their impact can be underestimated. Even the effect of new forms of social organization or innovation in curriculum structures and communication structures can be constrained by the habits derived from ritual.

For example, there are numerous instances of curriculum innovations being “turned” to fit the preexisting structures of schools’ activities (Whiteside 1976). Even when not only curriculum but the whole organizational structure of the school is reformed through the introduction of an alternative technology, the capacity of schools to maintain their own ritual structures is very strong (Popkewitz 1981; Popkewitz, Tabachnik, and Whelage 1980).

This seems to happen despite the intentions of individual teachers or school administrators (Shipman 1974). Part of the reason for this is the threat to those ritualized forms of action and meaning which form a background to learning. As Shipman puts it, “Every change in routine is a threat to teacher-pupil relations and standard of work” (1974, 176). Routines as ritualized relations are both redundant and powerful. Redundant, because they are not consciously thought about, because they are accepted without examination or question. Powerful, because they are unconsciously followed and unquestionably accepted. Rituals and routines in fact facilitate the direct focusing of attention on learning. They are the major constituents of the hidden curriculum of schools.

This hidden curriculum and the metaphors it ritualizes in everyday, commonsense activity and understanding is in essence an administrative curriculum. The links between language, metaphor, and ritual and their celebration of particular social ideals or myths form the essential administrative culture of the school. The culture is a translation of myths into action and relationships.

A critical practice of educational administration would involve a reflective analysis and an active intervention and reconstruction of such ritual structures so that they celebrate the intended educational purposes of the school community rather than the redundant purposes of a previous administration.
Educational administration and the language of negotiation

Administrative intervention in the metaphorical and ritual performances which form the texture of school life must, therefore, be conducted through the means of language. Language is not only a tool of critical reflection through which we may demystify our world but also the medium of action through which we shape it. As Gron suggests, “The administrative setting is a speech milieu which organization members enact in their talk with one another.” Thus talk is “an instrument for accomplishing administrative control” (1982, 1). But, as Gron points out in his analysis of a school principal’s administrative talk with his staff; this talk is by no means simply directive on the part of the administrator nor automatically compliant on the part of the staff. Indeed as Gron reports, “Contrary . . . to the image of the administrator in much of the management literature as ‘directing,’ ‘commanding,’ ‘planning,’ etc., as if administering is a unilateral and unidirectional action performed on a set of anonymous employees, here is an administrator seemingly caught in a mesh not of his own making. Prior to the staff meeting he is being controlled rather than being in control” (p. 15).

What emerges in the course of the administrative performance is a negotiation in which language, territory, and status are employed by the principal to gain advantage and shape agreement and consent over decision. Gron’s analysis presents us with a picture of administration far removed from the tidy conceptual schemes of positivistic, behavioral, and managerial science. Indeed neither place, nor time, nor metaphor, nor language seems predictable.

Administration can take place anywhere. It is timeconsuming and it observes no set time schedule. It follows no set order or format for it can arise out of a chance meeting and can include all kinds of matters that might be routine, spontaneous, trivial or highly eventful in character. The school principal free-wheels. He is a classic drifter moving in and out of different locations and areas, in and out of relationships and encounters . . . the dynamics of this activity show it to be antithetical to the obsession with order and precision evident in (writings on) scientific management.

(1982, 21)

The dependence of administrators on the use of language to shape and determine action is the third major aspect of administrative culture. It is a dynamic process that bears some relationship to the organizational structure of the school but also has a degree of autonomy from it. This autonomy is a result of the necessary processes of negotiation that occur between groups or individuals who proclaim differing mythologies and who represent contending interests. One common example of such negotiation results from the widespread conflict between those holding representative and participatory views of democracy.
The representative view is readily compatible with forms of bureaucratic, centralized control. It is also compatible with banking education and with certain forms of social control. The participative view is often opposed to centralized, bureaucratic control and decision-making and embraces a liberationist, activist, constructivist view of learning and the learner. It is a view which argues, as Greenfield does, that only through participation in the struggle to shape institutions in their own image can people find purpose and meaning in their lives.

These ideas are both “large” ideas in that their opposed myths form the ideological structure of much contemporary political and economic debate and “small” ideas in that the myths are incorporated one way or another in the structure of our daily lives. An interesting illustration of the conflict and negotiation of these competing views is found in Hunter’s (1980) discussion of the administrative culture of a secondary school and its conflict with the politics of participation. In particular Hunter’s discussion is interesting because of its analysis of the headmaster’s role in the negotiations which shows the way in which the power to determine the forms of negotiation, the rituals that will be adopted, allows the incorporation or exclusion of the myths held by other groups in the school. The backstage culture and the up-front culture of teachers are markedly different. Why? Because of the administrative ritualization of the negotiations and the acceptance of particular forms of power and authority as “natural.”

Hunter’s paper is an attempt to show how various differing definitions of participation and democracy operate alongside each other in schools and how partial negotiations of the conflicts between these definitions occur. It is also an attempt to show how administrative power affects such negotiations by excluding various groups from effective participation, and defining alternative proposals as technically impossible. This example is a paradigm case of the use of a technical definition of administration to exclude debate and discussion over normative issues. The power to define situations in particular ways is, then, not the least important attribute of administrative control. In particular, the power to define the ways in which culture is presented and structured in the school is of paramount importance.

These illustrations indicate that the third major component of a critical practice of educational administration revolves around the use of language as a mechanism of control in negotiations over action. The comparison of the use of language in the discourse of negotiations in the administrative context of the school with the conditions of ideal discourse outlined by Habermas (1971, 1973) may well prove very revealing of the ways in which certain forms of domination are imposed via the language of administering. A critical educational administration would be in part directed toward the clarification, examination, and redirection of such discourse.

Conclusion

Culture, as Bourdieu suggests, is the most important resource available to the school. The interiorization of cultural patterns is the most profound effect that
the school has on both teachers and pupils. But culture is not a static set of values, beliefs, and understandings; rather, “it is a common set of previously assimilated master patterns from which, by an ‘art of invention’ similar to that involved in the writing of music, an infinite number of individual patterns directly applicable to specific situations is generated” (1971, 192). Thus the myths, metaphors and rituals of the school contribute to the reproduction of ways of thought in the individual. “Every individual owes to the type of schooling he has received a set of basic, deeply interiorized master patterns on the basis of which he subsequently acquires other patterns, so that the system of patterns by which his thought is organized owes the specific character not only to the nature of the patterns constituting it, but also to the frequency with which these are used and to the level of consciousness at which they operate” (1971, 193).

The fact that differing definitions of culture – competing myths and ideologies – exist in the school makes the determination of what is to count as culture in the school problematic. Which mythology is to prevail is not altogether a matter of reason but also a matter of social, moral, and political commitment and, most importantly for administrators, a matter of power and control.

Very little work has been done which explains the impact of administrative processes on the culture of schools. But the impact of administrative processes on the master patterns which are reproduced through schooling is obviously an area of great importance. As Bantock argues, “The basic educational dilemma of our time is a cultural one and affects the nature of the meanings to be transmitted by the school” (1973, 166). Moreover, administrative control of the central message systems of the school – curriculum, pedagogy, and evaluation (Bernstein 1975) – as well as processes of training and professionalization (Smith 1979) and the allocation of physical resources (Young and Whitty 1977, Grace 1978) ensure that constraints exist on the definitions of culture which are able to be reproduced through schools. These constraints, as Waller argued in 1932 (1967), ensure that schools act as conservative agencies of social control through their control of the cultural definitions of situations.

The schools may be viewed as an agency for imposing preformed definitions of the situation. Education, as has been truly said, is the art of imposing on the young the definitions of situations current and accepted in the group which maintains the schools. The school is thus a gigantic agency of social control. It is part of its function to transmit to the young the attitudes of the elders, which it does by presenting to them social situations as the elders have defined them . . . From a fact that situations may be defined in different ways and by different groups arises a conflict of definitions of situations and we may see the whole process of personal and group conflict which centers about the school as a conflict of contradictory definitions of situations. The fundamental
problem of school discipline may be stated as the struggle of students and teachers to establish their own definitions of situations in the life of the school.

(Waller 1967, 296)

The culture of the school is therefore the product of conflict and negotiation over definitions of situations. The administrative influence on school language, metaphors, myths, and ritual is a major factor in the determination of the culture which is reproduced in the consciousness of teachers and pupils. Whether that culture is largely based on metaphors of participatory democracy, equity, and cultural liberation or on metaphors of capital accumulation, hierarchy, and domination is at least partly attributable to the exercise of administrative authority during the negotiation of what is to count as culture in the school. A critical practice of educational administration would, necessarily, be reflective concerning such negotiations, placing them within the context of a critique of domination and a commitment to struggle in the interest of a better world.

Note

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References

CRITICAL PRACTICE OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION


EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
Towards a research agenda

Ray Bolam


1. Introduction
The tasks of re-thinking and reviewing research in this field from a British perspective have been carried out at roughly ten year intervals since the 1960s when Baron and Taylor (1969) edited what proved to be a seminal text on educational administration and the social sciences. Subsequently, Baron (1980) produced a major survey of research for the first BEMAS research conference and Saran and Trafford (1990) edited the first book on British research in education management and policy following the 1988 BEMAS research conference. Now, ten years on, the papers from the 1997–98 ESRC Seminar Series, many of which are in the present book or the special issue of the journal Educational Management and Administration, confirmed that, although we have undoubtedly moved on a great deal, we continue to wrestle with several important issues which have been of concern from the outset.

The next part of this chapter attempts to deal with, if not resolve, some of these apparently intractable dilemmas by offering a series of propositions about the broad field of educational administration together with some proposals for the theoretical part of a research agenda. It should also be read as an attempt at ground-clearing for the third part which proposes a thematic framework for a research agenda and priorities on school leadership with particular reference to teaching and learning. The conclusion outlines some strategic ideas about how this agenda should be carried forward. Contributions to the ESRC Seminar Series are used to illustrate the argument.

2. Towards a conceptual map
The tasks of building a research agenda and identifying priorities would be greatly facilitated by easy access to a conceptual map. Unfortunately no such
map exists at present, in part because its potential scope is so broad. What follows is a contribution to the important meta-task of developing this map, a task which will have to be ongoing to take account of contextual changes.

**i What’s in a name?**

First, we should recognise and act upon the fact that three terms – educational management, leadership and administration – are in common usage and that the differences between them are far from clear, still less agreed. My own view is that the case for defining administration as the superordinate category continues to have considerable pragmatic force: it is consistent with the conceptualisation and terminology which are widely accepted internationally; it enables us to adopt a broader concept of the field, and thus to embrace policy studies as well as institutional management; and it enables us to be inclusive rather than exclusive in building a research agenda. In adopting this approach, however, we ought always to make clear which aspect of the field is under scrutiny at any one time by offering a stipulative definition from the outset.

So, in this paper I use ‘educational administration’ in a broad, generic sense to cover educational policy, leadership and management activities at all levels; I take ‘educational leadership’ to have at its core the responsibility for policy formulation and, where appropriate, organisational transformation; I take ‘educational management’ to refer to an executive function for carrying out agreed policy; finally, I assume that leaders normally also have some management responsibilities and that both leaders and managers must take due account of their governing body and wider context.

**ii What is it?**

Second, I regard educational administration as a field of study and not a discipline. Like teaching and teacher education, it is essentially a practical activity and, in deciding how it should be studied and researched, we may profitably adapt the approach used by Hirst (1966) who argued convincingly that education does not have the logical characteristics of a discipline; rather, it is a field of study which draws upon several forms of knowledge and a range of disciplines. Thus, I take educational administration to be a field of study which draws upon several disciplines, mainly but not exclusively in the social sciences (e.g. sociology, political science, philosophy, history, law and psychology), and forms of knowledge (e.g. economics, general management studies, education and training and andragogy).

A second ongoing meta-task is to evaluate the usefulness of each of these disciplines and forms of knowledge for researching and understanding specific problems in educational administration.
Third, we need to address some of the dilemmas and tensions around the question: what are the fundamental purposes of study and research in educational administration? Some of these have arisen because, in discussion, we often conflate and confuse our own roles and activities as members of a scholarly community whose purposes include, but are not confined to, research. I suggest that we engage in four separate projects, each with its distinctive rationale, mode of working and target audiences.

a. The knowledge for understanding’ project

The immediate aim of this project is to understand the nature and processes of educational administration, via theory building and basic research. Researchers, and lecturers, in this tradition use mainly social science-based, theory and research methodology to describe, analyse, explain and criticise. Researchers are usually funded by a research council or their own university. Typical questions are: what happens and why; and what are the most appropriate theories and methodologies for answering such questions? The outcomes are targeted mainly at peers, i.e. other theoretical researchers, applied researchers and lecturers, and outcomes are communicated mainly in reports for the funding agency and via articles in international, refereed journals, academic books and also, to a lesser extent, in professional journals and books. Although the ultimate aim may be to improve educational administration, this aim is not always ‘up front’ and, in any case could only be achieved indirectly by working through other people via the other projects. Lecturers engaged in this project design and teach on ‘traditional’, social science-based Masters and Doctoral programmes. The aim of a distinctive sub-group is to offer a critique of practice and policy:

The point of theory and of intellectual endeavour in the social sciences should be, in Foucault’s words, ‘to sap power’, to engage in struggle, to reveal and undermine what is most invisible and insidious in prevailing practices.

(Ball, 1995, p. 267)

b. The knowledge for action’ project

The immediate aim here is to inform policy-makers and practitioners about the nature, processes and effectiveness of educational administration in order to promote its improvement. Researchers in this tradition are often funded by a government agency, may be based in a university and pursue various forms of applied research including survey, development, and evaluation research. They, too, describe, analyse and explain for understanding but, in addition, make evaluative judgements and
recommendations for action. Typical questions are: how effective are various interventions and which one is most appropriate to the problem in hand?. Their proximate aim is usually to improve educational administration by working through others. Hence, the outcomes are targeted mainly at policy-makers and educational administrators, at other ‘knowledge for action’ researchers and lecturers and at ‘instrumentalists’. Lecturers engaged in this project design and teach on ‘traditional’ and ‘new’ Masters and Doctoral programmes and on some continuing professional development (CPD) courses. Written outcomes are communicated in technical and evaluation reports and via articles in professional journals and books.

c. The Instrumentalist’ project

The immediate aim of this project is to improve the practice and effectiveness of education managers via training and consultancy, often by providing structured schemes and practical instruments or methods. Examples include preparatory and training schemes for headteachers, often competency-based; individual-focused methods like mentoring and coaching; organisation-focused consultancies (e.g. Total Quality Management and Investors in People); and some ‘new’ Masters programmes, especially those with a work-based component. These training and consultancy activities are usually funded by the participants or clients themselves or by their employers. They are directly aimed at change for improvement, often utilise practitioners’ experience, possibly supplemented by, but not usually rooted in, theory and research which is selected from a range of sources (e.g. social science, industrial management training, occupational psychology, adult learning), and concentrate on activities for the development and enhancement of participants’ skills. A typical question is: how can this be improved? But, equally typically, it is often implicitly assumed that the trainers and consultants already have an acceptable answer to this question and so they offer prescriptive solutions, instruments or methods from the outset. The activities are targeted directly at practitioners although some outcomes, including ‘training trainers’ courses and published accounts in professional journals and books, may be targeted at other trainers and consultants.

d. The reflexive action’ project

The immediate aim of those engaged in this project is to improve their own, their team’s or their organisation’s, performance and effectiveness via action research, survey feedback, self-evaluation for school improvement, team building and other variants on experiential learning, reflective practice, organisation development and evidence-based practice. It is, in many ways, similar to the ‘instrumentalist’ project with which it shares several characteristics. Its distinctive status derives from the fact that it is self-directed and that it has now developed its own body of theories and procedures, not always entirely compatible one with another (e.g. Kolb, 1975; Schon, 1987; Schmuck and Runkel, 1985; Argyris et al., 1985;
Elliott, 1991), although many of its exponents operate atheoretically and without incorporating systematic research in their action processes. Moreover, it is seen as being consistent with current initiatives to promote evidence-based practice in classroom teaching and, by extension, in school management (Cordingley, Chapter 17) although not by everyone (vide Eraut, Chapter 9).

These distinctions and labels are unavoidably arbitrary but the four ideal-typical projects and the typology should be judged on the basis of their utility as a heuristic. Most members of the educational administration academic community probably engage in more than one of the projects. However, each project has its own rationale and involves different activities and role requirements. The first two projects clearly involve basic and applied research, mainly social science-based, whereas the third does not. The fourth project is more problematic. Where it is implemented in an instrumentalist fashion, then it does not constitute a research activity; where it is theory-based, rigorous and open to peer scrutiny, then it does. Moreover, it also offers considerable potential for innovative research.

I suggest that research in educational administration is mainly located within the ‘knowledge for understanding’ (or basic) and ‘knowledge for action’ (or applied) projects. I propose, further, that we should continue to work on critical studies of a policy sociology kind but that, in addition, greater emphasis should be given to ‘knowledge for action’ research which focuses on activities within the instrumentalist and reflexive action projects and that we should explore the potential of research within the reflexive action project itself. These proposed priorities are unexceptionable if, as researchers, we are content to seek funding from a range of agencies. However, a great deal of work will be needed if proposals in the ‘knowledge for action’ and the ‘reflexive action’ projects are to be funded by the, hitherto unreceptive, Economic and Social Research Council, and thus to carry weight in the Research Assessment Exercise as it is currently structured.

iv Theory for practice or theory for research?

We ought also to be clearer about the different purposes of theory in the practice of educational administration on the one hand, and in research into educational administration on the other. Following Aristotle, Hodgkinson (1991) distinguished between three modes of action: theoria, theory which abstracts and generalises by induction, deduction and hypothesis; techne, technique or technology which applies and interacts with theory; praxis, purposeful, ethical action in a political context. He went on:

Praxis . . . clearly applies to all administration . . . [and] . . . suggests the conscious, reflective intentional action of man as opposed to mere reflex or mechanical responses to stimuli.

(p. 43)

and concluded that praxis is at the core of educational administration.
Researchers engaged in the first two ‘projects’ are clearly concerned with *theoria*. They see theory as an essential foundation for, and as integral to, the research process. Those engaged in the instrumentalist project are concerned with *techne* and so, too, are practitioners like heads, inspectors and key decision-makers. They take an essentially pragmatic view of theory: they want it to inform, and preferably to underpin, practice and, by extension, they want research findings to fulfil the same purposes. Those engaged in the reflexive action project are involved in *praxis* and, like the instrumentalists, take a pragmatic view of theory.

Thus, it is unsurprising that, although organisation and leadership theories designed for *theoria* or research purposes have deepened our understanding, they have provided little practical help either for school managers or their trainers (*vide* Hoyle, 1986). A research agenda should, therefore, address these two parallel problems regarding the role of theory by:

- dealing with the continuing fall-out from the presumed failure of the so-called ‘New Movement’ which sought to use positivist social science as the basis for research and practice in educational administration (*vide* Griffiths, 1988; Strain, 1998). This would require more explicit consideration of the appropriateness for research in educational administration of particular paradigms (e.g. positivist or interpretive) and their implications for research design and methodology, using, I suggest, ‘fitness for purpose’ as the main criterion;
- exploring the role of different types of theory in the instrumentalist and reflexive action projects, particularly in relation to evidence-based practice.

### Levels and topics

A conceptual map of educational administration would also explicate two further components:

- Potential levels or units of analysis, for example: individual roles (e.g. teacher/lecturer, head of department, headteacher/principal/vice-chancellor); organisations (e.g. pre-school, nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, independent schools, adult and community education, youth and careers services, tertiary and FE colleges, universities); organisational sub-units (e.g. departments and teams); local education authorities and agencies; unions and professional associations; consultants and private agencies; national agencies (e.g. DiEE/WO/DENI, OFSTED/ OHMCI/NII); political parties and politicians; international organisations and agencies (e.g. OECD; World Bank, EU).
- Major topics, topic areas and research questions, for example: the impact on educational leadership and management of personal factors (e.g. values;
gender; training); major policy changes (e.g. the national curriculum, assessment, inspection, LMS, centralisation and ‘new managerialism’); contextual developments (e.g. work and labour markets; governance and accountability within a democratic context; social exclusion, inclusion and justice); changing strategic tasks (e.g. the management of induction, CPD, performance management and the use of value-added data).

vi Comparative studies and alternative futures

Finally, the map would highlight the possibilities for informing research and practice in educational administration via comparative studies across countries, sectors and alternative futures. Thus, McEwen (1997) reported that because of administrative tasks generated by marketisation and other Northern Ireland reforms, secondary headteachers had difficulty in exercising their professional knowledge and skills, were often reluctant to delegate major leadership tasks and concentrated on low and middle order priority tasks. Crowther et al. (1997) reviewed research on educational leadership and site-based management in Australia, concluding that efforts to re-conceptualise leadership must take account of the complexity of site-based management and the maturity of the teaching profession in any one country. Karstanje (see Chapter 3) pointed to increasing decentralisation in many European countries, especially those in the former Soviet bloc, as the major influence on the role and training needs of school leaders and outlined a comparative analytic framework, based on three degrees of centralisation and regulation, for researching the national and local contexts within which school headteachers in various European countries operate. Hart (1999) reviewed changes in the USA in the nature of the knowledge base and the preparation of educational leaders, concluding that we could learn from each other in clarifying and re-defining theory and re-assessing its utility for research and practice. The Seminars also included contributions focused on experience in other sectors, notably further education (FE) colleges, higher education institutions (HEIs) and private sector business which, albeit incidentally, illuminated issues in school management. Wallace (see Chapter 10) combined two theoretical perspectives – cultural and political – to analyse and explain the management strategies used by an LEA in a major reorganisation of its schools, together with the associated staff re-deployment, across the authority. Bottery (1999) argued that research should aim to help us understand and deal with future global challenges to educational management.

3. A framework for research in educational leadership

It is against the background of this embryonic conceptual map that the following framework for a research agenda is proposed. It deals with only one part of the field, focusing exclusively on educational leadership and management in
primary and secondary schools and, more specifically, on the management of teaching and learning, or pedagogy. It is organised under three thematic headings.

   i The management of teaching and learning

The management of school improvement and, more directly, of teaching and learning, emerged as key themes in the Seminars. Ouston (1999) was doubtful as to whether the emphasis on the role of the headteacher in school effectiveness and school improvement was warranted whereas Hallinger and Heck (see Chapter 14) argued that principals do contribute to student achievement, that the effect is indirect and small, though statistically significant, concluding that future research should concentrate on explaining the means whereby principals exert such influence.

   Turner and Bolam (1998) used a provisional model, based on contingency theory, to analyse the role of heads of subject departments in improving teaching and learning in secondary schools, together with the factors which influence them. Cordingley (see Chapter 17) used her central concept of ‘teaching as evidence-based practice’ to pose a series of research questions about the role of education managers in promoting it, and proposed that education managers, too, ought to engage in evidence-based practice. She summarised her arguments thus:

   current priorities for the education management research agenda should be shaped by and accede priority to work which takes pedagogy as the starting point and which explores the capacity of education management and leadership to contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning.

   (p. 228)

As a priority, the research agenda should focus on the distinctive core processes of educational leadership, i.e. its linkages with, and its effects on, teaching and learning, and should explore directly the extent to which research in educational leadership can and should be carried out by practitioners and have evidence-based leadership as a desirable goal. In so doing, account should be taken of the ESRC’s ‘Teaching and Learning’ programme (BERA, 1999) and the policy outcomes of the Green Paper proposals (Secretary of State for Education and Employment, 1998) on performance management.

   ii Individual characteristics and contextual pressures

Several papers dealt with the influence of individual characteristics and contextual pressures on heads’ tasks and performance. Hall (see Chapter 12) argued that we should recognise the centrality of gender. Levačić et al. (see Chapter 2) analysed the impact of external requirements that heads should
adopt a rational-technicist style. Four common themes emerged from Southworth’s study of the impact of recent policy and legislation on primary headteachers: intensification of work; increased accountability; an emphasis on school development; a range of feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (see Chapter 4). Bell (see Chapter 5) concluded that, in spite of the pressures, an educational market has not fully evolved in primary schools. McMahon found that much CPD now took the form of short workshops and courses aimed at the national agenda and that, as a result, it was now extremely difficult for headteachers to use CPD to promote sustained professional learning and growth (see Chapter 8). Simkins (1999) argued that the impact of recent and current policy changes on educational management should be researched using managerialist and bureau-professional models of organisations.

It is essential that the biographies and characteristics of individual heads should continue to be researched. In a dynamic and changing national context, it is also essential that the impact of policy changes on educational management tasks and roles should be studied and that such research should recognise the interdependence of policy and practice in the provision of a public, democratically accountable service. As an illustration, strategic research questions are generated from the ways in which four sets of external change processes – the increasing centralisation of power to government and its appointed agencies, the redistribution of power amongst organisations which influence schools, the widespread adoption of ‘new managerialism’ style techniques and a quasi-market model of schools – impact on, for example:

- the values, vision and behaviours of educational leaders;
- organisation design, structures and procedures;
- professionalism, teachers’ work and how these are managed;
- accountability and boundary management;
- leadership and management strategies and methods.

In addressing these questions, account should be taken of Glatter’s (1999) arguments against the selective and uncritical adoption from industry of certain ‘new managerialist’ methods (e.g. performance management) and rejection of others (e.g. human resource development).

### iii Training and development for educational leadership

A third priority theme relates to questions about how school leaders and managers learn and how they are and might be trained and developed in general and, specifically, to promote evidence-based practice. Bolam (1997) presented an analytic and semi-historical account of recent developments in the organisation of school management training, its content and teaching methods, its underlying theory and its use of research into the professional knowledge base. Weindling (see Chapter 7) re-examined data from a series of studies of secondary head-
teachers over a ten year period using socialisation theory while Ribbins (see Chapter 6) explored the concept of ‘leadership as a career’, applying it to the development of headteachers via the NPQH. Hall (see Chapter 12) argued that adult learning theory should be central to management development. Eraut (see Chapter 9) analysed the nature of headteachers’ knowledge, learning, cognition and practice, presented a critique of the national standards approach, exemplified in the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and posed fundamental questions about the feasibility of the evidence-based practice model. Glatter (1999) proposed that CPD for educational leadership should focus on the whole job, warning against the atomisation implicit in the standards approach, that a national strategy should be pluralist not centralist, that HEIs should be given a bigger role in leadership training and that the complex issues raised by Eraut (see Chapter 9) about the learning and use of propositional and procedural knowledge are of central importance.

The research issues generated by these ideas should be pursued. In addition:

- the implications of evidence-based leadership for training and development, including studies, should be explored;
- so, too, should the potential of cognitive and problem-based approaches (Hart, 1999);
- finally, the contributions of the NPQH and related TTA programmes, including the projected National Leadership Centre and the implications of the projected introduction of performance management, should be studied and evaluated as a high priority.

4. Conclusion

This chapter presents a preliminary conceptual map of educational administration and an outline research agenda for educational leadership in the light of the ESRC Seminar Series and other related literature. The underlying rationale for the research agenda and priorities is, in summary, that they should:

- be both reactive and proactive and, therefore, be responsive to funding initiatives as well as pursuing carefully argued priorities based on a refined conceptual map;
- aim to improve the quality and relevance of research by building on earlier work through the accumulation and replication of empirical findings and by aiming to promote school improvement, thus taking account of the issues (vide Hargreaves, 1997; Hammersley, 1997; Tooley and Darby, 1998; Hillage et al., 1998) and policy initiatives (Sebba, 1999) generated by the wider debate on educational research;
- aim to inform policy and practice by publishing evidence-based critiques, for instance on the nature, scope and impact of ‘new managerialism’ and by developing and testing middle range theories;
• be grounded in a strategy based on greater collaboration and consultation with practitioners when planning and undertaking research, in improved collaboration, coordination and communication between ourselves as researchers, and in more systematic dissemination to targeted audiences, for example by using commissioned reviews of an aspect of the field.

Three caveats are offered by way of conclusion. First, it was beyond the scope of this paper to consider issues of design and methodology which, of course, are of critical importance and should be seen as integral to the development of a conceptual map. Second, the proposals are illustrative, not exhaustive and the thematic framework aims to assist researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in setting specific operational priorities in the context of available funding opportunities. Third, I have deliberately adopted a limited, even restricted, definition of educational leadership and management, locating it firmly as a sub-set of educational administration. This is essentially a technical distinction adopted primarily as a necessary, sensible step towards the production of a conceptual map of the wider field. Yet even this limited definition generates a host of important and difficult research topics and questions. Moreover, it enables us to be critical, to be explicit about our value positions and to collaborate with policy sociologists and others in the ‘knowledge for understanding’ project in order to ‘speak truth to power’ (Fitz, 1999). Equally important, as we collectively seek to improve education within the ‘knowledge for action’, ‘instrumentalist’ and ‘reflexive action’ projects, it also enables, and arguably requires, us to offer truthful empowerment to practitioners and policy-makers.

References


Introduction: the changing context of work

As we approach the new millennium there are few certainties in the world of work. The global nature of the economy, and the rapid pace of technological development, force changes in the workplace that would have been unimaginable just a few decades ago. ‘Jobs for life’ are as rare now as they were commonplace in the 1950s and this means a radical reappraisal of the nature of work and its place in people’s lives.

Handy (1994) draws attention to the contrast between those who have ‘proper’ jobs and those who are on the fringe, with poorly paid, often part-time, employment; ‘bits and pieces of pocket-money work’. He points to the dilemma of economic growth being increasingly underpinned by this low-wage philosophy: ‘America, in the years from 1973 to 1989, managed to create 32 million net new jobs . . . but it was mostly hamburger work for hamburger pay’ (Handy, 1994, p. 8). In contrast with this economic underclass is the remaining group of people in full-time employment who continue to enjoy good pay and conditions but in a climate of high pressure to perform. The ‘shakeout’ of employees means that those remaining must work harder, to sustain output and to demonstrate the commitment necessary to provide a (partial) guarantee that their heads will not be the next on the block.

Handy (1994) points out that such ‘totally consuming’ jobs are not for everyone. They tend to exclude other aspects of life, including family and hobbies, and may create other problems for society. There is also the very real risk of ‘burnout’ as the stress of the long hours, high pressure and insecurity begin to affect performance. Megan Crawford examines some of the dysfunctional consequences of stress in Chapter 8 but the wider issue is the problem of society fragmenting into the ‘haves’ with good, well paid but insecure jobs, and the ‘have-nots’ who are unemployed, underemployed or working for low wages.

The impact of these changes on education have been limited but seem certain
to become more profound in the future. Preparation for the world of work is a powerful imperative for education, with a significant impact on both the aims and content of the curriculum. Lofthouse (1994, p. 144) refers to this vocational approach with its emphasis placed on instrumental values where the needs of the individual are subordinated to the requirements of society. Employment and enterprise are perceived as vital to the growth of a free-enterprise society. With over-riding weight placed on individual survival through employment, vocational definitions of the curriculum stress the transmission of useful knowledge.

A fundamental problem with this approach is that the precise nature of a work-related curriculum is difficult to define in the context of such rapidly changing work patterns. Flexibility and transferable skills may be more important than specific knowledge focused on a single industry. This has particular salience for further education but is relevant for all sectors. The decline of the coal, shipbuilding and textile industries, for example, exposes graphically the limitations of a specific vocational curriculum and the human consequences of non-transferable skills.

Schools have been relatively sheltered from the impact of employee ‘shakeout’ and unemployment. In the 1990s, however, there are signs of growing insecurity and of increasing stress and ‘burnout’ with stress-related retirements at a record level (Williams, 1996). The research by Campbell and Neill (1994a; 1994b) shows that there is significant overload in schools in England and Wales arising from what they describe as ‘teacher conscientious’.

Staff in further education colleges have been expected to adjust to rapid, and often painful, change since incorporation in 1993. Funding is increasingly linked to recruitment of students and successful completion of courses. Business values have become prominent, conditions of service have been ‘eroded’, more part-time staff have been employed and senior managers are increasingly drawn from the business sector. Elliott and Hall (1994, p. 9) point to the dysfunctional consequences of ‘the cultural transformation from education to business’ in further education:

While such foundations may prove adequate for the survival of colleges as financially viable institutions, they are inadequate for their survival as providers of high quality post-school educational experiences . . . The danger is an obvious one. Starved of adequate staffing, courses are reduced to minimum contact time, staff are overworked, overstressed and overtired, conflict between teaching and management staff becomes systemic, morale falls, staff goodwill is withdrawn.

O’Neill (1994) refers to the potential for self-managing schools and colleges to determine the precise nature of their staffing on the basis of their specific needs rather than have a staffing structure imposed by the LEA. He argues that educa-
tional institutions need to be able to exercise maximum discretion in three aspects of staffing:

- The type and length of employment contract offered.
- The linkage between pay and market forces.
- The range of additional benefits which form part of a complete retention and development package.

This increasing flexibility is already evident in further education where almost half the total staff are part time and 52 per cent of teaching staff are on part-time contracts (FEDA, 1995, p. 11). It is also beginning to impact on schools where local management of schools (LMS) forces senior managers and governors to prepare a cost-benefit analysis, explicitly or implicitly, when selecting new teachers or associate staff. The perceived quality of current and potential staff, once the decisive factor, has to be considered alongside the budgetary implications of recruitment or retention. This change in stance has led to an increase in the early retirements of experienced, and more expensive, staff, and the replacement of departing staff with newly qualified teachers. There is also evidence of greater use of part-time staff, a significant increase in temporary contracts to provide flexibility and the employment of classroom assistants as an inexpensive alternative to teachers (Levacic, 1995).

**Self-managing schools and colleges**

The pressure for developed and developing economies to become more efficient in order to compete effectively on the world stage has led to a heightened awareness of the links between educational capability and economic performance (Dearing, 1996). A skilled workforce depends largely on the achievements and outputs of schools, colleges and universities. This has led to a plethora of legislation as governments have sought to raise educational standards.

A major thrust in the legislation has been the development of self-managing schools and colleges in many countries. The Australian writers Caldwell and Spinks (1992, p. 4) define this concept:

> A self-managing school is a school in a system of education where there has been significant and consistent decentralisation to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources . . . The school remains accountable to a central authority for the manner in which resources are allocated.

Self-management in England and Wales takes one of three forms:

- **LMS** which devolves funding and resource management to governing bodies and limits the powers of LEAs. This is the dominant mode of
self-management which applies to some 23,000 primary, secondary and special schools.

- **Grant-maintained status** which applies when schools choose to ‘opt out’ of LEA control and receive their budgets direct from the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS). This applies to about 1,100 schools.
- **Incorporation** of further education colleges, independent of LEAs, which receive their budgets mainly from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

The shift to self-management is underpinned by the assumption that management is likely to be more effective if it happens ‘close to the action’ rather than at a distance from the institution. School and college managers are able to determine their own priorities on the basis of an assessment of their specific needs rather than simply responding to priorities set by national or local governments. Caldwell and Spinks (1992, p. 14) argue the case for self-management:

> It is simply more efficient and effective in the late twentieth century to restructure systems of education so that central bureaucracies are relatively small and schools are empowered to manage their own affairs within a centrally determined framework of direction and support. Two arguments have usually been offered, one is concerned with responsiveness, the other with priorities for resource allocation in times of economic restraint or budgetary crisis.

The emphasis on self-management has been welcomed by many principals in schools and colleges (Bush *et al.*, 1993) because it facilitates greater institutional control of policies and resources. However, it poses problems for small primary schools whose heads often have a full-time class teaching role. The extra management demands have to be accommodated during evenings and weekends, adding to the stress referred to earlier.

The shift to self-management has been accompanied by a new accent on accountability to parents as surrogate ‘consumers’ rather than to teachers, the ‘producers’ of education. The concept of ‘open enrolment’ in England and Wales allows parents to express a preference for the school their children will attend, although that preference may not be met if the school is oversubscribed. This limitation diminishes parental choice but the concept remains a powerful component of government ideology in the UK and elsewhere.

The emphasis on consumer power also applies in further education where responsiveness is to the needs of employers as well as to those of students. These developments in both sectors mean that managers have to give heightened attention to the attitudes and preferences of those who ‘consume’ educational services, directly or indirectly. Inevitably, this means that market accountability has become more significant: ‘The notion of market accountability has been reinforced by the legislation and this model is probably the most relevant for
schools and colleges in the 1990s. Satisfying customers and potential customers is now the most important indicator of success’ (Bush, 1994, p. 323). The pressure for schools to compete for clients is sharpened by the publication of ‘league tables’ of performance in public examinations and tests. A low placing in these lists is likely to lead to a fall in demand for places with knock-on effects for pupil numbers, budgets, staff levels and the quality of teaching and learning. Adherence to national educational norms is sought through the imposition of a National Curriculum for schools and through a national inspection regime for both schools and further education.

The shift to self-management, and the inspection regime, are intended to raise standards. In further education, funding is linked closely to student retention and completion rates. For schools, there is intense pressure on headteachers and staff to improve their position in the league tables. The weakness of such a powerful competitive environment is that it is bound to lead to ‘winners’ and ‘losers’. Only one school can top the table but this does not mean that children and staff in the other schools should be valued less.

The presence of a National Curriculum, and state-sponsored inspection, means that self-managing schools have limited scope to develop on an individual basis. All schools offer a standard ‘product’ and competition is confined to the perceived quality of the educational process, as evidenced by inspection reports and examination and test results, and to the ‘image’ presented to prospective clients.

Managing people in a new climate

The shift to self-management, and the pressure on resources, have led to two major developments in the management of people:

- traditional staffing structures and historical divisions between professional and non-professional work are increasingly being called into question;
- organisations are less tolerant of ‘organisational slack’ or of suboptimal performance by teachers and other staff. Schools and colleges are under pressure to ensure competent performance from all staff (O’Neill et al., 1994, p. 29).

The change to self-management means that governors and senior managers need to take full responsibility for the management of staff. It is no longer possible to hide behind national or local government officers and inspectors or to blame them for shortcomings. Human resource management, in all its aspects, has to be handled within the organisation. In particular, schools and colleges have to operate in accordance with both legislation and changing societal expectations.

Equal opportunities

One significant area influenced by the law and by changing attitudes is that of equal opportunities. As David Middlewood indicates in Chapter 10, recruitment
and selection procedures must have regard to legislation on equal opportunities. Applicants should not be disadvantaged because of race, religion, disability or gender but, in practice, it can be difficult to ensure equality of opportunity.

In Chapter 9, Marianne Coleman points out that there are several barriers to career progress for women despite the legislation enshrining equal opportunities. These obstacles may be summarised as

- women make fewer applications for promoted posts;
- women are more likely to experience conflict between their professional and family roles;
- women are more likely to take career breaks;
- educational culture is male-centred;
- there is overt and covert discrimination against women; and
- there is a limited number of suitable female role models.

Some of these barriers also apply to other areas of disadvantage, including race. There is a dearth of black teachers in British schools despite the legislation outlawing discrimination. As long ago as 1986, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE, 1986) drew attention to the shortage of black teachers and the need for strategies to increase their numbers. Research in eight LEAs with a significant proportion of people from ethnic minorities found that only 2 per cent of teachers were black. The proportion of black teachers in promoted posts was even lower. There was little improvement by the end of the 1980s. Clay et al. (1995) report that in 1989 only 2.4 per cent of students on BEd courses were from black ethnic groups.

It appears logical to assume that the following barriers, adapted from the Coleman analysis, operate to limit the appointment and advancement of black people in education:

- Black people make fewer applications for promoted posts.
- Educational culture is Eurocentric.
- There is overt and covert discrimination against black people.
- There are few suitable black role models.

The CRE (1986) research presents evidence of perceived discrimination and also implies that cultural factors and the absence of suitable role models may apply to black teachers and aspirants. Singh’s (1988) survey of Asian sixth-formers indicates that well qualified pupils were deterred from becoming teachers because of their personal experiences of racism from other pupils and staff. McLaughlin (1993) also refers to racism as a disincentive for prospective teachers: ‘Bigotry is probably another factor reducing the number of black and Asian teachers . . . Many [people] believe minority teachers get a raw deal – and that pupils know it’ (quoted in Clay et al., 1995, p. 22). There may be a double disadvantage for black women seeking to enter, or advance within, the teaching
profession. The stereotype of the white male manager in education is a significant barrier for aspiring black women, as one headteacher suggests: ‘I had to work hard – doubly hard to prove I was a good head, a good black headteacher, a good, black, female headteacher. I felt I was in a glass cage. I felt very lonely’ (Mortimore and Mortimore, 1991, p. 81). The under-representation of women and black people in senior posts in education is unfair. An even more significant consequence may be the underutilisation of human capital and the lost potential for more effective teaching and leadership in schools and colleges. If women and black students are deterred from pursuing careers in education because of the lack of suitable role models, and/or through perceived discrimination, the effect is to limit the overall quality of the teaching force with inevitable implications for the quality of teaching and learning.

**Associate staff**

Another potential area of disadvantage in education relates to associate staff. Teachers are invariably regarded as the prime resource in schools and colleges because of their central role in the teaching and learning process. They are also usually paid significantly more than associate staff, although the differential has narrowed to some extent since the introduction of LMS. There may be a double disadvantage for the high proportion of associate staff who are women.

The increasing emphasis on managerial effectiveness in education has led to a reappraisal of the role of associate staff. Mortimore et al.’s (1992, p. 19) research shows that flexible deployment of associate staff can enhance the cost-effectiveness of schools:

> If two schools which are comparable in every respect are equally effective in terms of performance, the one that uses the smaller amount of resources is the more cost-effective . . . Cost-effectiveness, in this sense of the term, is highly desirable. A school that uses its resources more cost-effectively releases resources which it can use to promote further development.

There is increasing evidence of schools using the flexibility provided by LMS to deploy associate staff in imaginative ways. Wallace and Hall’s (1994) research shows that some schools now include a bursar in their senior management teams. In many schools, associate staff are undertaking administrative tasks formerly performed by highly paid senior staff (Mortimore et al., 1992). Research by Levacic (1995) shows that many schools have increased the use of classroom assistants, technicians and librarians during the 1990s. ‘Local management has stimulated the growth of a para-teaching force in schools’ (Levacic, 1995, p. 155).

There are similar trends in further education. Kedney and Brownlow (1994) refer to the introduction of new para-professional roles such as workshop supervision, student guidance and support, and course design which would have been
regarded as lecturers’ work until the early 1990s. There has also been an increase in the number of senior managers appointed from the business sector (Elliott and Hall, 1994). There has been a reduction in the proportion of time spent by students in formal classroom programmes and an increase in learning supervised by associate staff. Kedney and Brownlow (1994, pp. 11–12) spell out the financial pressures driving these changes:

The imperatives to reduce unit costs in the drive for efficiency set by the funding mechanisms will mean more than reducing taught hours for students and expecting lecturers to teach longer and more flexibly . . . The future points to the potential removal of the institutionalised distinction between academic and support staff and the development of a new and more flexible model.

Schools and colleges make their own judgements about the balance of staffing in the light of their specific requirements but making the best use of the talents of all staff makes good sense. The effective management of associate and teaching staff is an essential element in education as O’Neill et al. (1994, p. 7) suggest:

A broader definition of the term people is inclusive rather than exclusive. It suggests that each adult employed within the school or college plays a critical role in its success. Acknowledging the unique contribution of individuals engenders their commitment.

**People and performance**

The management of staff in self-managing schools and colleges is located with governing bodies, principals and senior staff. The link between the leading professionals and lay governors is vital for the health of the organisation and requires ‘managing’ just as much as other relationships. Where governors and staff work together constructively and harmoniously, it provides a powerful basis for success (Bush et al., 1993) but conflict, or separation, between professionals and lay governors, may serve to inhibit development.

People are the most significant resource available to school and college managers. Their selection, induction, deployment, development and appraisal are the responsibility of principals and senior managers, reporting to the governing body. The quality of their work, and their motivation to perform well, are related directly to the nature of the human resource management process. Where staff management is skilled and sympathetic, a successful organisation is likely to result. Where it is clumsy and inadequate, poor performance may occur. The fundamental issue of managing for people or performance is examined by Colin Riches in Chapter 2.

The pressure for schools and colleges to compete for clients reinforces the
need for high performance which is necessarily related to the quality and commitment of all staff. Teachers and associate staff often work significantly more than their contracted hours in order to deliver the performance needed to meet the requirements of internal managers and external assessors.

The contract of employment introduced in 1987 requires school teachers in England and Wales to work for 1,265 hours of ‘directed time’. This time includes five days of compulsory in-service training. During these hours, head-teachers are able to specify the activities of teachers:

Under the contract teachers have to perform such duties as may be reasonably assigned to them by their head teacher. For example, head teachers could ensure, by the allocation of directed time, that teachers attend parents’ evenings, curriculum planning sessions, and other school meetings.

(Busher and Saran, 1992, p. 23)

Teachers are also required to work beyond their contracted hours to perform their duties satisfactorily. Preparation for teaching and marking pupils’ work, for example, are expected to be undertaken during this additional time. As a result, the 1,265 hours constitute a minimum rather than a maximum figure, as research by Busher and Saran (ibid., p. 39) demonstrates:

Some heads pointed out that teachers in their schools . . . worked far more than 1265 hours . . . By 1990 most heads commented that their staff were working incredibly long hours, that there was sickness and work-related stress, that they were having to protect their staff and in some cases ‘tell them to work less’.

The problem of ‘overcommitment’ also emerges from the research of Campbell and Neill (1994a; 1994b) in primary and secondary schools. Teachers were working for 54 hours a week, well beyond their contractual commitments. The researchers explain this ‘overcommitment’ and point to some of its dysfunctional consequences:

The teachers were primarily motivated by a sense of vocation or obligation to their pupils . . . The occupational culture of the school remained stubbornly at odds with the assumptions of central government’s legislation on working conditions . . . It is unlikely . . . that anyone other than the teachers themselves will take steps to reduce work overload, since most of the overload is in the teachers’ own time.

(Campbell and Neill, 1994a, pp. 223–4)

The partly self-induced heavy workload of teachers suggests that most staff fulfil O’Neill et al.’s (1994) assumption that commitment is an essential
component of successful organisations. However, long working hours may serve to diminish effectiveness and reduce the quality of work performance. In this context, senior managers have a responsibility to limit overload in order to promote the quality of teaching and learning:

A major function for heads and other managers in the post-ERA period might be to find ways to limit teacher workloads by identifying priorities for their schools, and filtering out demands which make the most conscientious teachers’ workloads unreasonable . . . There is no evidence that very long hours lead to better quality of teaching.

(Campbell and Neill, 1994a, p. 224)

The evidence of overcommitment suggests that teachers and associate staff are highly motivated but may be risking ‘burnout’ through working long hours over extended periods. In this context, managers need refined motivational skills to build high morale, sustain good performance and avoid dysfunctional overload. Riches (1994, p. 239) refers to the link between motivation and the ‘high performance cycle’:

- There should be high expectations of staff. Low expectations are demotivating.
- Managers should ensure a sense of satisfaction in return for effort.
- Satisfaction will derive from personally meaningful work which members are capable of and in part from managers taking pains to reward performance.
- Managers should encourage staff to set specific, challenging but realistic goals for high performance.
- Feedback on performance helps staff to effective task strategies and to be motivated.

This approach is reinforced by Torrington and Weightman (1989, p. 52) who stress the importance of valuing staff. They identify four types of esteem on the basis of their research in secondary schools:

- Consideration and praise.
- Feedback.
- Delegation.
- Consultation and participation.

Another dimension of motivation relates to staff development. Taking a proactive stance towards individual professional development provides tangible evidence of managers’ appreciation of staff commitment. Elliott and Hall (1994, p. 8), however, caution that staff development in further education may be directed towards organisational rather than personal objectives and form part of a response to changes imposed by external bodies:
Staff development is likely to be highlighted to greater prominence, but as a means of widening staff competence in order better to meet institutional needs. It is further likely that multiskilling will be privileged in order to maximise ‘output’. Retraining and redeploying staff provides one alternative to declaring staff redundant.

While individual staff development may serve to increase motivation, there is an emerging view that high performance may also be linked to pay. In England and Wales, this is specifically encouraged by the formal pay and conditions policies and in rhetoric from ministers (Tomlinson, 1992a). Performance related pay (PRP) is discussed in detail by Keith Foreman in Chapter 14.

The rationale for PRP is that people work more effectively with financial incentives (Tomlinson, 1992b), but the evidence of Campbell and Neill (1994a; 1994b) shows that teacher conscientiousness is widespread and arises from commitment to pupils rather than financial reward. The argument that financial incentives promote improved performance in vocational employment remains unproven.

Conclusion: managing the context

The context for human resource management in education provides a searching text of management capability. High unemployment, and an increase in short-term, low-paid jobs, raise important questions about the purpose of education. While governments urge schools and colleges to prepare young people for the world of work, specific skills are subject to obsolescence as a consequence of industrial change.

The international trend towards local management means that senior managers, and lay governors, are increasingly responsible for handling the human consequences of multiple change. The emphasis on consumers rather than producers, by governments in the UK and elsewhere, requires responsiveness to the needs of students, parents and employers. However, effective education can be achieved only by motivating teachers and associate staff to ‘deliver’ high quality.

Campbell and Neill’s research, discussed in Chapter 7, shows that teachers demonstrate their commitment to their students by working long hours. As Riches (1994) and Torrington and Weightman (1989) stress, praise for teachers and associate staff is essential if this overcommitment is not to lead to dysfunctional stress or ‘burnout’. A genuine concern for staff welfare should not be subordinated to the need for organisational efficiency.

References

THEORY


Hong Kong, like many societies, is undertaking major restructuring of its school system. A close examination of the three policies forming the backbone of the reform reveals a remarkable similarity to those introduced in the United States, Britain and Australia over the past ten years. Indeed, in one of the three Hong Kong policies, explicit mention is made of its origins in reforms emanating from Australia, with additional influence from research in the USA. In addition, consultants from both of these countries and Britain are frequently called on for advice. The blueprint for school restructuring initiatives has been exported from the West, and imported into the Asian culture of Hong Kong. In this respect, Hong Kong is no different from many other Asian and Western countries in ‘cloning’ reform policies initiated elsewhere. This is part of the ‘globalization’ of education currently taking place.

Importation of policy raises important questions about its appropriateness for indigenous cultures. Researchers working in the field of educational management and policy have, to date, paid relatively little attention to detailed analyses of the cultural matching of educational policy. Undergirding this paper is the assumption that successful take-up of an innovation depends heavily on the extent to which there is cultural fit between policy imperatives on the one hand and the beliefs, values and behaviours of those charged with implementation, on the other. The central purpose of this paper is to explore the appropriateness and synchrony between the policy reforms imported into Hong Kong and central features of its host culture. A process of deductive reasoning is followed by juxtaposing the policy reform with cultural characteristics, in order to clarify the likelihood of adoption and implementation of the intended policies. The conclusion is that some aspects of the reforms appear to harmonize well with the indigenous culture, while others may require rather greater degrees of autochtony and adaptation at the implementation stage.
The paper first outlines the major features of Hong Kong’s current school restructuring. It then attempts to conceptualize and to map key aspects of societal-level culture by describing and applying Hofstede’s (1980, 1991) cultural dimensions to provide a framework for identifying and gauging the culture of Hong Kong in juxtaposition with other cultures. The final part of the paper is constructed around a dialectic between the policy imperatives of school restructuring and the characteristics of Hong Kong’s culture, as reflected by Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. Tentative conclusions are drawn about the extent of fit between the restructuring policy and Hong Kong’s culture, and the possible need for adaptation.

**School restructuring in Hong Kong: theory, policy and practice imported from the West**

Attempts to restructure Hong Kong’s schools began in the early 1990s and, to date, centre on three major policy initiatives, namely, the School Management Initiative (SMI), the Target-Oriented Curriculum (TOC), and Quality Schools (ECR7). In common with the restructuring of school systems elsewhere, these initiatives can be conceived as two-pronged, one aimed at reforming the administrative, managerial and governmental aspects of schools, the other targeting the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment. A summary of each policy follows.

**The school management initiative**

After several decades of education policy focused on quantitative and logistical concerns, especially coping with growing student numbers, the Hong Kong Government, in 1991, turned its attention to improving the quality of education, a theme which has dominated policy throughout much of the Western world for most of the final decade of the 20th century. In its policy document, the School Management Initiative (SMI), the Hong Kong Government (Education and Manpower Branch (EMB) and Education Department, 1991) set out the background prompting, and the proposals for, the reform of the school system. The SMI is to be seen within the context of public sector reform, with its emphasis on accountability for performance and within the context of the school effectiveness movement, with its characteristic features of devolution and delegation of decision making in support of the principle of subsidiarity.

The policy aimed to define more clearly the roles of those responsible for administering schools, particularly sponsors, managers and principals; to provide for greater participation by teachers, parents and former students in school decision making and management; to encourage more systematic planning and evaluation of school activities; and finally, to give schools more flexibility over the use of resources. The recommendations included, first, that the Education Department (ED) change its role from a controlling to a supportive,
advisory function. Second, new more effective management roles for school management committees (SMCs) and principals were recommended. Accordingly, every SMC should produce a constitution setting out the aims and objectives of the school and the procedures and practices by which it will be managed. Third, greater flexibility in school finance was advocated and schools would be given a block grant to decide their own spending patterns within the policy framework set by the ED. They were to be given the discretion to use their savings and to seek non-government sources of funding. Fourth, the participation of teachers, the principal, the SMC, and to appropriate degrees, parents and students in decision making was to be encouraged. SMI specifically singled out teachers and parents as excluded from decision making. Few schools had parent–teacher associations and closer contact between schools and parents was urged as a means of fostering more effective learning. Fifth, a framework for accountability was to be established, involving a staff appraisal system. In addition, each school should produce an annual school plan, setting out its goals and activities for the coming year, against which it could be held accountable. Such a plan would allow the school to assign priorities, allocate its budget, and provide the community with information about school direction. It also proposed that each school prepare an annual school profile covering its activities in the previous year and detailing its performance by developing indicators in a number of key areas.

By 1995–6, only a minority of schools (approximately one-quarter) had chosen membership, an outcome regarded as somewhat disappointing. A survey of SMI progress (Education Department, 1994a) found that member schools had constituted their SMCs with extensive involvement of principals, and to a lesser extent teachers, but with minimal involvement of parents and alumni. Most schools were successfully managing their decentralized block grants. There was evidence of more systematic planning, with all schools having an annual plan, including statements of mission and goals. Such planning, however, may be illusory since involvement appeared to be confined to the senior levels of staff, especially the principal. The implementation of staff appraisal schemes also appeared to be causing difficulties. Respondents indicated an increased workload, with especially heavy demands falling on middle managers. The reform had not penetrated to affect the work of teachers at the classroom level. School personnel felt a lack of support at system level and some complained of time constraints (Y.C. Cheng, 1992). These latter findings are in line with restructuring experiences elsewhere (Dimmock, 1995).

**Quality school education (ECR7)**

Five years after the introduction of the SMI policy, the Education Commission published its Seventh Report in the form of a consultative document called *Quality School Education* (Education Commission, 1996). There is a significant shift between SMI and ECR7 from ‘effective’ schools and schooling to ‘quality’
schools and schooling, in line with changes of policy nomenclature in the West. The following recommendations were made. First, a framework should be established for developing and monitoring quality school education. A Quality Development Commission should advise the Director of Education on quality school education. In addition, a new whole-school approach to school inspections is advocated. The present inspection divisions should be reorganized into a Quality Assurance Inspectorate to coordinate resources for periodic comprehensive assessment of the performance of each school.

At school level, school development plans, annual budgets and staff appraisal schemes should be institutionalized. Teachers should contribute to the improvement of quality education through active participation in the SMC and the School Executive Committee (SEC), the latter being a second-tier executive arm of school management, chaired by the principal and responsible to the SMC. School management should pay greater attention to the needs of students according to their abilities and aptitudes and to identifying meaningful input, process and output indicators by which to judge school quality in line with a value-added approach. Second, key stakeholders should receive appropriate training and professional development, especially in financial and human resources management. Third, performance indicators and the concept of value-added achievement should be introduced in order to assess school performance. This would provide an equitable base for school self-evaluation and external quality assurance. Schools should also develop as soon as possible a proper appraisal system for assessing the performance of teachers and principals. Fourth, in order to build a quality culture, the government should provide incentives for schools to strive for continuous improvement. Consequently, a ‘Quality Development Grant’ should be introduced to fund worthwhile innovative projects on a competitive basis. Cash awards might also be available to a small number of schools demonstrating the most impressive value-added performance. This should raise the morale of teachers. It would be up to the principal to decide, after having consulted with the SMC, teachers and parents, how the money should be used. Fifth, all schools by the year 2000 should practise school-based management in the spirit of SMI.

The Target-Oriented Curriculum

Restructuring of the Hong Kong school curriculum follows trends evident in Britain, Australia and the United States. Noteworthy in this regard is the introduction of the Target-Oriented Curriculum (TOC) (Education Department, 1994b).

The TOC policy centres on notions of improved practices of teaching and learning based around more learner-centred approaches, the division of the curriculum into progressive learning targets and objectives for four key stages of learning, and the development of content, teaching methods and assessment strategies geared to the learning targets. Emphasis is placed on setting learning
targets and on close assessment of individual children in terms of target achievement. In accordance with the introduction of the TOC, a framework of learning targets and related support materials is being developed for the three core subjects of Chinese, English and mathematics. A pilot scheme began in 20 primary schools in 1993. Despite some teething problems, it was decided that the TOC should be introduced to Primary 1 classes in 70 primary schools in 1995.

In summary, observers of Hong Kong’s school restructuring policy framework would not be able to differentiate it from similar initiatives taking place in Australia, the USA and in Britain. Even the changes of terminology and of policy emphasis which have characterized school restructuring during the 1990s in English-speaking Western countries are replicated in the Asian cultural setting of Hong Kong. Having outlined salient aspects of policy reforms in Hong Kong, the question arises as to their suitability for, and degree of fit with, the culture. It is therefore to aspects of Hong Kong’s culture that the paper now turns. First, however, it is necessary to clarify the concept of culture and its possible measurement.

Hofstede’s cultural dimensions and their application to Hong Kong

Education, as an essentially human activity, is culture-bound. Policy makers and school leaders, therefore, need to be mindful of societal and organizational cultural characteristics when formulating, adopting and implementing policies. The prospect of successful implementation is enhanced when policy makers and school administrators adopt policies consonant with the characteristics of the prevailing societal culture.

Agreement on a definition of a complex concept like culture is not easy. Hofstede, one of the leading advocates of cultural comparative research in international management, defines culture as, ‘patterns of thinking, feeling and acting’ underpinning ‘the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another’ (1991: 4–5). The ‘collective programming of the mind’ refers to shared beliefs, values, and practices of a group of people, whether that group be a society, nation state, or organization. He goes on to argue that culture is learned, not inherited, and that societal and organizational cultures are qualitatively different concepts.

Since culture centres on shared values, beliefs and practices, the expressions of which are both visible and intangible, it can be a difficult phenomenon to measure, gauge or even describe. The identification of cultural dimensions, defined as ‘core axes around which significant sets of values, beliefs and practices cluster’ (Dimmock and Walker, 1998), not only facilitates their description and measurement, but promotes comparison between different cultures. In short, dimensions provide common benchmarks against which cultural characteristics at both societal and organizational level can be described, gauged and compared. Despite their usefulness, however, Hofstede’s cautionary remarks about
dimensions are correct, when he claims that the same limitations apply to them as to culture itself: ‘They are also constructs that should not be reified. They do not “exist”: they are tools for analysis which may or may not clarify a situation’ (1994: 40).

Minimal research on cultural dimensions has taken place in educational administration. We therefore have to rely on Hofstede’s work in the international management field (Redding, 1994). While the need for further refinement of Hofstede’s dimensions should be acknowledged (indeed, Hofstede himself admits that the dimensions are not necessarily exhaustive), his work remains definitive for the time being.

Five generic cultural dimensions underpin Hofstede’s framework (1980, 1991). All five, he claims, are empirically verifiable and are applicable universally across all societies or nations. Presented as choices between pairs of alternatives the dimensions allow the emergence and identification of patterns within and between cultures, and facilitate their meaningful ordering (Hofstede, 1980: Hofstede and Bond, 1984). The five dimensions are outlined below. Each is applied to Hong Kong in order to present an exposition of its distinctive cultural characteristics.

**Power Distance**

This (PD) refers to the distribution of power within society and its organizations. It is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. In societies with large PD values, greater inequalities of power distribution are expected and accepted in the family, in school and in the workplace. Many Asian societies are high PD cultures, while many Western societies have low PD values. The more Westernized is the Asian society, the more likely it is to change from a high to low PD.

Hong Kong, like Singapore, displays a high Power-Distance Index (PDI), being ranked 15th out of 50 countries. By contrast, the USA is ranked 38th, Australia 41st, and Britain 44th. Not only do most Asian societies traditionally exhibit high PD, but in the case of Hong Kong, the British colonial government has further enhanced PD.

**Individualism versus collectivism**

This dimension (IC) is the degree to which individuals are integrated into groups and to which there is closeness between persons in a relationship. Vecchio (1995) describes it as the extent to which a person is ‘inner-directed’ or ‘other-directed’. In individualist societies, individuals place their personal goals above those of their in-group, the ties between individuals are loose, people are expected to look after themselves and their immediate families. In collectivist societies, people place group goals above their personal goals, they are brought
up to be loyal to, and integrate in, strong cohesive groups, which often include extended families.

On this dimension, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand are ranked towards the collectivist end, Hong Kong being placed 37th out of 53 countries. At the individualist end of the spectrum, the USA, Australia and Britain occupy the first three places. Large power distance societies, like Hong Kong, tend to be more collectivist, while small power distance societies tend to be more individualist.

**Masculinity versus femininity**

This dimension (MF) is concerned with the ways in which ‘biological differences between sexes become perpetuated in differences in social and organizational roles played by men and women’ (Harrison et al., 1994: 246). The assertive pole is termed masculine and the modest, caring pole, feminine.

Hong Kong ranks 18th out of 53 countries and regions, compared with Britain, USA and Australia, which are 9th, 15th and 16th, respectively. All of these societies tend towards the more masculine end, indicating much less of a Western/Asian divide on this dimension.

**Uncertainty avoidance**

This dimension (UA) relates to how people react to, manage, cope with, and tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity in their lives. Uncertainty-avoiding cultures tend to proliferate laws, rules, safety and security measures and, on a philosophical and religious level, tend to believe in absolute truth. Conversely, people in uncertainty-accepting cultures are more tolerant of a range of different opinions, they prefer fewer rather than more rules and, on the philosophical and religious level, are more relativist and tolerant of different faiths and creeds.

Most Asian societies rank low on uncertainty avoidance. Hong Kong, for example, is ranked 50th out of 53 countries and regions. Singapore is 53rd. Britain is 48th, USA is 43rd, and Australia 37th. People in these societies do not feel sufficiently insecure and threatened by the unknown, unfamiliar or uncertain that they take measures to regulate their lives.

**Long-term versus short-term orientation**

This fifth dimension (LS) was added to Hofstede’s original schema after research by Chinese scholars (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987) and is less validated than the other dimensions. Values associated with long-term orientation, such as thrift, perseverance and willingness to make short-term sacrifices for long-term gains, are counterbalanced by values associated with short-term orientation, such as respect for tradition, fulfilment of social obligations and protection of one’s face. Although many of these values are associated
with Chinese (Confucian) values, they also seem to apply to other societies without a Confucian heritage.

China, Hong Kong and Taiwan rank first, second and third out of 23 countries and regions on this dimension. Australia, the USA and Britain rank 15th, 17th and 18th, respectively. Hong Kong, like its East Asian neighbours, ranks very high on long-term orientation.

**Assessing the compatibility between Hong Kong’s school restructuring and its culture**

In common with most policy documents, SMI, ECR7 and TOC emphasize objectives, goals and directions more than the processes and practices necessary for operationalizing and institutionalizing reform. Yet, the importance of the latter in successful reform is undeniable. The points at which policy is transformed into practice are critical, too, from a cultural perspective, since culture is deeply embedded and manifested in the beliefs, values, practices and behaviours of actors at the school site. While it is argued that policy should be tailored where necessary to harmonize with culture, it is not assumed that culture is a fixed, immutable and unchanging phenomenon. Rather, it is assumed that societal culture does change, if only slowly, and that policy and culture need to be juxtaposed. Even in situations where restructuring policies are aimed at changing the culture, the relationship between policy and host culture is iterative.

In the following section six key aspects of Hong Kong’s school restructuring agenda (reflected in the SMI, ECR7 and TOC), all based on policies imported from Australia, Britain and the USA, are matched for appropriateness of fit with features of Hong Kong’s culture, as characterized by Hofstede’s dimensions. The six aspects of restructuring are: planned reforms to teaching and learning; changes demanded in principals’ leadership style towards collaborative and participative decision making; decentralization; school development planning; staff appraisal; and professional development and training.

**Planned reforms to teaching and learning**

Although the SMI and ECR7 policies are primarily concerned with management issues, there is a strong tacit understanding that the ultimate objective is improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and curricula. Two recommendations of the ECR7 address issues of direct concern to teaching and learning. The first refers to the need for a pluralistic school system ‘to cater for the needs of students according to their abilities and aptitudes’, and the second to the aim of developing fully ‘students of different abilities in the spirit of equal opportunities’ (Education Commission, 1996: 39).

Each of these citations suggests major reforms in the way students and teachers are to be grouped for learning and in the teaching methods to be used. It is implied that teachers must change their teaching methods and approaches.
towards more student-centred strategies. The TOC policy also endorses this aim as indicated in the Programme of Study for English Language (Curriculum Development Council, 1995), which advocates ‘learner-centred methods and strategies for teaching’ (p. 43) and ‘learning should be experiential rather than instructional since students learn best through activities that demand involvement’ (p. 41). The same document goes on to advocate how teachers can cater for individual differences by being ‘sensitive to each student’s needs, by evaluating each student’s development of cognitive ability, judging the materials to challenge each student, arousing each student’s interest, responding to and helping the student who needs extra attention, and appraising each student’s capacity to learn and improve’ (p. 44). How well adapted are current teaching-learning methods in Hong Kong’s schools to meet these expectations? And what influence might culture have?

These questions are best addressed by referring to the prevailing cultural characteristics of Hong Kong’s classrooms, to recent research showing significant differences between how Chinese and British and American teachers teach and students learn, and to current classroom conditions. According to Hofstede, in large PD societies such as Hong Kong, teachers are traditionally expected to take all the initiatives in class and they tend to be seen as gurus transferring their personal wisdom. Students are not expected to speak up unless invited by the teacher, and are more comfortable speaking in small groups than large. Formal harmony and preservation of relationships is important at all times (Hofstede, 1986: 312). The attainment of those student-centred learning methods which are dependent on assertive expression, persuasion and argument between group members, may thus be more difficult to attain. Moreover, because Hong Kong is more collectivist, children learn to think more in terms of ‘we’ than ‘I’, and this may run counter to more individualized instruction. Students in collectivist societies, for example, may not feel comfortable or motivated to compete with one another in class. By the same token, however, the collectivist values of Chinese students appear to be receptive to more cooperative methods of learning.

Hong Kong’s students and parents place high value on examination results. Thus new teaching-learning methods which emphasize processes of learning rather than results may find some disfavour. Although Hong Kong society in general is classed as a low uncertainty avoidance culture, its schools display many characteristics of a high uncertainty avoidance culture. School life, including the teaching syllabus, is regulated by an abundance of prescriptive rules and regulations. This degree of prescription may work against the fostering of more exploratory forms of teaching and learning. In addition, Hong Kong students tend to feel more comfortable in tightly structured learning situations. Finally, the long-term orientation of Hong Kong educators is characterized by an innate conservatism and by values such as perseverance and observing the ordering of relationships by status, all of which tend to militate against the easy acceptance of new relationships between teachers and students.

The prevailing ethos in East Asian societies values effort rather than ability
and competition is seen as a way of improving results and as a means of socialization in order to prepare the young for tougher competition in society (Cheng and Wong, 1996). Students are ranked according to their academic scores and in Hong Kong this ranking is important in allocating primary students to secondary school. This leads Cheng and Wong to conclude:

In this context, individualized teaching, where students work towards diverse targets at different paces, is almost inconceivable in East Asian societies. Therefore, the emphasis on the administration of teaching is more on how students of different abilities could learn to adapt themselves to the common curriculum and common examination, rather than adapting the curriculum and teaching to the diverse needs of the students.

(1996: 44–5)

Recent research findings on differences between Asian and Western students in how they learn (Watkins and Biggs, 1996) are also instructive in throwing light on the question of the cultural appropriateness of recent educational policy directions in Hong Kong. These authors claim that Hong Kong students are representative of students in other Chinese cultures, namely, Singapore, Taiwan and Mainland China, in that they all share a Confucian-heritage culture (Watkins and Biggs, 1996: 269). They argue that many of the views typically held by Westerners in relation to Chinese (and other Asian) learners, are in fact, myths. The first misconception centres on the contribution made by repetition and rote learning to memorization and understanding. All agree that Chinese and Asian students have a tendency to rote learn. Western interpretation of rote learning is derogatory, implying that little understanding or reflection takes place. Marton, Dall’Alba and Tse (1996) claim that memorization can lead to understanding, although whether it deepens understanding, or is a precondition for it, is not clear. For some Asian students, the relationship between memorization and understanding is a two-way cause-effect phenomenon. That is, while memorization is sometimes used to deepen understanding, at other times it is simply used for passing exams. The Asian student appears sufficiently sophisticated to vary the process to suit the objective. Westerners often fail to see the advantages of rote learning in enhancing understanding.

A second myth relates to motivation. On this matter, Watkins and Biggs assert, ‘Western ways of categorizing motivation do not travel well, at least not to the Orient’ (1996: 273). Westerners tend to see intrinsic motivation as the precursor to meaningful deep understanding. The Chinese student, however, taking a more pragmatic view, may be motivated by a mixed set of forces, including ‘personal ambition, family face, peer support, material reward, and yes, possibly even interest’ (1996: 273).

Collectivist notions also affect the teacher-student relationship, which although hierarchical, can also be warm, caring and supportive (Chan, 1993).
Tang (1996) found Chinese students collaborated much more outside the classroom in helping each other to obtain material useful for the completion of, and entering discussion on, assignments, than did their Western counterparts. In addition, although it is seldom attempted, Winter (1996) found that organized peer learning can work very well in Hong Kong schools. Watkins and Biggs (1996: 275) conclude, ‘Hong Kong secondary school students would in fact prefer a more collaborative learning environment which they consider would promote the deeper, more achievement-oriented approach to learning’. In these ways, some of the new directions for core technology espoused in TOC and ECR7 might well be supported by prevailing cultural characteristics.

If there are at least some cultural characteristics which appear supportive of policy changes in core technology, current classroom conditions in Hong Kong’s schools do not favour the student-centred and individualized methods. Most Hong Kong classrooms are cramped and crowded. It is commonplace to find 40 students in a class. Desks are formally arranged in rows. Classrooms are typically small, so that both students and teachers work in confined spaces. Opportunities for mobility and flexible classroom layouts are therefore severely restricted. Most classrooms are not well equipped by Western standards, having no more than the bare essentials of a blackboard, desks and chairs. These conditions dictate that few alternatives exist to direct teaching methods supplemented by discussion in pairs or small groups. Opportunities for catering to the variability of student needs and abilities as well as introducing more flexible student-centred learning approaches seem to be severely curtailed.

Given the prevailing cultural characteristics of Hong Kong, are reforms to teaching and learning recommended in Hong Kong’s restructuring policies appropriate? Evidence suggests that the collectivist dimension of the Chinese culture seems well suited to cooperative learning and peer tutoring, both of which are consistent with the reform policy. Present classroom conditions of large class sizes and confined spaces will, however, present major difficulties to teachers when implementing these methods. However, peer tutoring and cross-age tutoring are convenient and appropriate teaching methods for overcoming large student:teacher ratios and would seem to fit well with the culture. While the current over-reliance on didactic teaching needs to be reduced, it could serve as a useful base from which to develop best practices of direct teaching, itself a highly effective teaching method.

**Decentralization**

Decentralization of much of the responsibility for school management is at the heart of the SMI policy in Hong Kong. According to Hofstede (1991), large PD societies such as Hong Kong traditionally prefer centralization. Centralization, however, can take place at different levels. Power and responsibility may be decentralized from the central bureaucracy to individual schools, only to be centralized again at school level in the person of the principal, who captures and
monopolizes them, aided by staff who are only too willing to display subordination. This seems to have already happened in Hong Kong. Problems ensue in high PD societies where administrative responsibility is decentralized, while the traditional hierarchical pattern of social relations remains intact.

**Principals’ leadership style: collaborative and participative decision making**

A strongly advocated feature in both the SMI and ECR7 is the change required in principals’ leadership, from an authoritarian to a more collaborative, participative style. SMI, for example, states that ‘because proper management structures and processes are lacking, some principals are insufficiently accountable for their actions and see their post as an opportunity to become ‘little emperors’ with dictatorial powers in the school’ (EMB and ED, 1991: 14). It goes on to refer to a lack of educational and managerial leadership in schools. Effective leaders, by contrast, ‘would provide strong support for school-based management and collaborative decision making within a framework of school objectives, and provide the link between the school and the SMC’ (EMB and ED, 1991: Annex 2). This belief is reinforced in ECR7 where the recommendation is made to set up a two-tier management structure in schools: an SMC and a School Executive Committee (SEC). The SEC would be the executive arm of the SMC and be headed by the principal. This is a clear attempt to disperse some of the present power and authority exercised by principals. Elsewhere in ECR7 the statement is made that the teachers’ role should be more than just classroom teaching: ‘Teachers should participate in school management to help develop the various school activities in a professional way’ (Education Commission, 1996: 30). Teacher participation is thus advocated in both the SMC and the SEC.

Collaborative leadership styles are currently advocated in school restructuring policies in Britain, Australia and the USA. The assumption is that collaborative leadership brings multiple benefits, including better quality decisions, sharing of workloads, and greater staff commitment to implementing decisions. However, even in Western societies, where it is strongly advocated, some of these supposed benefits appear more rhetorical than real. Collaboration may, in fact, have negative effects, such as slowing down the decision-making process. It can be difficult to achieve: the concept itself is capable of many interpretations and may operate at different organizational levels; it is also inextricably intertwined with power, authority and responsibility. In sum, leaders are often reluctant to collaborate when they fear loss of personal power and control, especially in situations where they are ultimately held accountable.

In Hong Kong, as elsewhere in Asia, the collectivist culture would seem to favour collaboration. However, high PD seems to predispose them to following and respecting the authority and power of a strong leader to whom they look for direction and structure. Hui, for example, arguing that participative leadership is counterproductive in Chinese societies, states, ‘a participative superior is seen as
indecisive and, therefore, not worthy of respect’ (1990: 203–4). Cheng and Wong (1996) remark that teacher participation in schools is hierarchical, that is, teachers at different levels of the administrative ladder hold different expectations of participation. They claim that rank-and-file teachers often see participation as a privilege granted from above rather than as a right. Hence, in East Asian schools, ‘participation is often seen as a matter of pragmatic needs rather than a matter of democracy’ (Cheng and Wong, 1996: 44).

Taking cognizance of these characteristics, the conclusion is that collaboration fits well with the prevailing culture of Hong Kong when it takes place at levels of school organizational life which preserve the vertical hierarchy or authority gap between the principal and staff. In other words, collaboration is well suited to departmental and faculty levels of school organization, but concepts of senior team management may be more difficult to reconcile. In advocating the SEC, ECR7 appears to be in conflict with the high PD culture of Hong Kong.

**School development planning**

Planning is generally favoured in low PD, high UA societies. When PD is high, there is too little trust to make planning effective (Triandis, 1982–3: 156). Planning is also promoted in cultures with an orientation towards the future rather than the past. In terms of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, societies with high UA have a predisposition for structure and direction. Although Hong Kong’s ranking on the UA scale is not high, in respect of its school life, it displays typical characteristics of a high UA society. On the other hand, Hong Kong’s ranking on long-term orientation is high, suggesting a preference among its people for planning and thinking about the future. A further cultural characteristic which seems to favour planning is what might be called a gestalt capacity, an ability to see the whole picture. Cheng (1995: 96), citing Liu (1988) summarizes this characteristic as follows:

> I would not hesitate to say that Westerners have ingrained in their culture and milieu, a very strong analytic ability. As if created by God for a contrast, the Asians, and in particular the Chinese, seem to have a high sense of synthesis.

This seems to be an ability which the Chinese possess in abundance.

In addition, according to Cheng and Wong (1996: 44), Chinese societies have a general belief in collective aims and objectives. In relation to Hong Kong, these authors state:

> . . . successful schools are often led by objectives beyond individualistic aims such as ‘full development of personal potential’. Even in schools where the school objective is not explicit, there is a general ethos that teachers who work in a school belong to the school. There is some
subtle bonding among teachers in a school, that members of the same school unite and work towards the common goal of the school. . . . However, submission to the common goal is not the result of rational consensus building, or anything emerging from any device of the system. It is a traditional value where individuals are expected to submit to organizational goals.

This cultural trait might thus favour teacher submission rather than commitment to the school plan.

Staff appraisal

Both the SMI and ECR7 are unequivocal about introducing a staff appraisal system. The importance of appraisal, as set out in the SMI, is its assessment of staff strengths and weaknesses, clarification of staff development needs, and its contribution to ensuring a meritocratic basis for promotion. The same arguments are repeated again in the ECR7, only this time appraisal is seen as part of a quality assurance process. By 1997, few schools, even those which were part of the SMI scheme, had introduced appraisal. In the absence of strong teachers’ unions in Hong Kong, difficulties associated with the introduction of appraisal seem more attributable to practical problems of implementation at the school site.

Part of the problem is that Advisory Committee documents (Education Department, 1992, 1993) on appraisal do not detail clear procedures for operationalizing an appraisal system. This situation typifies a key dilemma of school reforms elsewhere: the ED is either unwilling or unable to provide schools with detailed guidance and direction on implementation, thereby leaving it to each school to work out its own response: schools rarely seem to possess the technical knowledge, expertise, initiative and resources to make such reforms happen.

Is Hong Kong’s culture suited to appraisal? Hofstede (1995) has addressed this issue in the context of the business world, noting that performance appraisal systems, strongly advocated in Western management literature, suggest that employees’ performance will improve when they receive direct feedback, usually from a superordinate. This may be true, he says, for individualist cultures. Western models of appraisal not only assume direct feedback, open communication and more equal relationships between the superordinate and subordinate, but also that organizational members see themselves as individuals rather than as team or group members. In collectivist societies, however, these assumptions may not hold, and the giving of direct feedback can destroy the harmony which is considered so important in governing interpersonal relationships. The employee may lose ‘face’ and, with it, personal loyalty to the organization.

The implication of Hofstede’s remarks for introducing appraisal into the collectivist societies of East Asia, is that feedback should be given indirectly,
'through the withdrawing of a favour, or via an intermediary person trusted by both supervisor and employee' (Hofstede, 1995: 157). In other words, appraisal in Hong Kong’s schools may need to be adapted from Western approaches relying on direct face-to-face feedback between appraiser and appraisee. It would also probably need to place greater emphasis on peer appraisal. The significance of culture is particularly highlighted in the management of interpersonal relationships.

**Professional development and training**

High priority is accorded in SMI and ECR7 to the professional development of principals, teachers and other key participants. This is rightly seen as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of restructuring policies. Both reports, however, are extremely cursory in detailing the form and delivery such training should take, or the standards or quality to be met. In fact, despite the acknowledgment that the successful implementation of all three reforms rests heavily on professional development, it is noteworthy that in none of the three policy documents is there an account of the quality and type of professional development required.

According to Cheng and Wong (1996: 45), schools in Chinese societies are judged by their ‘atmosphere’ (xiaofeng) or culture/climate. This means that:

Management skills are seldom a concern among Chinese school principals, because they do not believe that schools are managed by skills. They believe that petty skills and techniques in management are no replacement for a good principal who is respected by all the teachers, students and parents as a comprehensive leader-gentleman.

Moral leadership is therefore very important. As Hallinger and Leithwood (1996: 112) state,

Traits such as dedication, discipline, strong will and persistence are considered highly important as are age, seniority and experience. This reflects a different sense of administrative priorities from the performance-oriented normative descriptions of administrative practice that characterize Western nations.

This view of school principalship has clear implications for the knowledge base of programmes for administrator preparation and for understanding how Chinese principals might approach professional development activities based on imparting skills.

It is not only Western educational policies but also professional development programmes that are imported into Asian societies. In this regard, Hallinger and Leithwood (1996: 110) state:
Both the content and methods used in the administrative training programmes of developing countries have generally been borrowed more or less directly from Western societies. Although exceptions do exist . . . this has been the case even when there is neither conceptual nor empirical validation of the knowledge base in the receiving culture.

They go on to argue that it is imperative for Asian and other non-Western countries to localize the knowledge base underlying administrator preparation. There is a need ‘to explore the empirical basis for the application of theoretical knowledge, craft knowledge and school/system policies’, since ‘learning is a culturally-mediated activity’ (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996: 111). There is also a real danger that even where Asian principals understand and correctly apply Western knowledge they do so in a context of different assumptions, relationships and expected behaviours, the outcome of which may be unpredictable.

If it is reasonable to assume that the restructuring of Hong Kong’s school system is predicated on professional development, then more thought needs to be invested in the quality and type required, especially with respect to the knowledge, skills and attitudes of its school leaders. As Muller and Watts (1993: 361) caution, ‘organisations often adopt first-rate strategies that are implemented by managers with second-rate education and training. When these managers work in out-of-date work environments, the result is that the organisations become third-rate.’

Conclusion

The contemporary culture of Hong Kong consists of Western culture grafted on to an otherwise historically ingrained Chinese culture. The Western elements in Hong Kong’s culture are attributable to its exposure to education, religion, law and government associated with a long period of British colonization, and to commerce, trade and tourism, all promoted by Hong Kong’s strategic geographical position. Despite these powerful Western influences operating over a long period of time, the majority of Hong Kong people have maintained their inherent Chineseness.

School system restructuring and the globalization and internationalization of educational policy will predictably continue. The phenomenon of policy cloning, seen as part of the globalization of education, enables the process of policy formulation to be hastily completed, with the consequence that minimal attention is paid to the receptivity of the host culture to the imported policy. The present analysis finds this to be the case with Hong Kong’s reform initiatives. Autochtony and adaptation will fall on the shoulders of principals and teachers working at school level, where cultural dimensions find expression in the processes of teaching and learning and of leadership and management. As Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) note when citing Hofstede (1976), how people approach space, time, information and communication are shaped by the cul-
tural context and appear broadly to differentiate Eastern (high context) and Western (low context) cultures. They go on to claim, ‘we view culture as having an impact on schools at the institutional level, on the community context, on the beliefs and experiences of administrators, on administrative practice, and on a school’s particular culture’ (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996: 108).

Cultures are changing, especially in East Asia, where rapid economic growth, the opening up of economies and societies to world markets and competition, international tourism and the media are all tending to graft Western influences on to indigenous cultures. This is clearly the case in Hong Kong, and is becoming so in China. Younger generations hold different cultural values from their more traditional parents and grandparents. As Cheng and Wong (1996) note, with the spread of education in East Asian societies involving entire populations rather than just a selected few, the present emphasis on conformity and effort may change. Will the present faith in work effort as a means of achievement be undermined by Western philosophies geared to catering for individual needs and adaptive teaching? Will a tension develop in Asian school systems between progressive teachers who advocate change on the one side and traditional teachers and conservative-minded parents on the other? How much attention will be paid to special needs and heterogeneous abilities? Will schools be expected to adapt to the diversity of their clientele rather than expect the clientele to adapt to schools, as at present? Will the traditional hierarchical structures give way under capitalist market reforms? How will societies like Hong Kong reconcile Eastern and Western values and trends in their education systems? Paradoxically, with the convergence of educational policies and school systems around the world, the importance of cultural divergence increases.

References


EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION 
AS SCIENCE

A post-positivist proposal

Colin Evers and Gabriele Lakomski

Introduction

Recent debates in educational administration have often focussed on purported limits to scientific views of administration and on the provision of alternatives. For example, scientific approaches are said to be incapable of dealing with ethical issues; yet the practice of administrators, managers and policy analysts is irreducibly value-laden, being routinely concerned with questions of what ought to be done or what is the right course of action to advise or follow. Or, since organisational behaviour involves vast networks of intentional human activity, no adequate understanding of organisations seems possible without some appeal to human subjectivity, to the interpretations people place on their own actions and those of others. Yet scientific models of administrative behaviour in the name of objectivity, seek to eschew interpretations, intentions and the inner life of agents in general. In the realm of research too, case studies, cultural studies and ethnographic methods seem able to deliver important detailed knowledge about administrative processes. But again, these are methodologies that are hard to place within a scientific tradition of controlled experiment or statistically significant reproducible results.

Such major differences between the orientation of traditional scientific approaches to educational administration on the one hand and the focus and direction of often quite systematic rivals or alternatives on the other, clearly lie behind much of the perceived intellectual turmoil in the field. Educational administration, in common with most of the applied social sciences, has experienced a growing appreciation of the methodological weaknesses inherent in positivist construals of science and its methods. Ironically, however, the natural sciences go from strength to strength and hardly any part of modern life remains untouched by the application or use of some aspect of natural science: for
example, medicine, transport and communications, to name just a few. So at a
time when natural science has never been more successful in explaining and pre-
dicting phenomena and in enhancing our understanding of the world, paradoxi-
cally its methods and content are increasingly being questioned or even denied
in the social sciences.

We suggest a resolution of this paradox as it arises in educational administra-
tion. In our view, the paradox is generated principally by the still widespread but
mistaken belief that positivism, in its many varieties, can be equated with
science. But in philosophy positivism, in all its main forms, is now regarded as
false, its key tenets clearly refutable. The most plausible current developments
in philosophy of science and theory of knowledge reflect post-positivist views.
Our point, therefore, is that while many of the criticisms of administrative
science in educational administration are sound, they are directed at a narrow
target. They discredit only positivist versions of administrative science. An
alternative post-positivist science of educational administration, we believe, is
not only possible but theoretically and practically desirable. The argument we
employ for this conclusion has the following broad structure. First, we acknow-
ledge the importance theoretical writers have attached to epistemology or theory
of knowledge, by arguing that the weaknesses critics have identified in tradi-
tional administrative science flow from foundationalist epistemological assump-
tions embedded in traditional views. Instead, we claim that the proper
justification of knowledge is structured by coherentist considerations such as
theoretical simplicity, consistency, comprehensiveness, conservativeness and
fecundity. If the justification of scientific claims, including administrative
claims, proceeds according to the coherentist canons of our holistic epis-
temology, then the scope of science is very much broader than is usually con-
ceived and will fail to sustain significant distinctions between fact and value, the
subjective and the objective, and the alleged ‘paradigms’ of educational
research.

Second, we note that major recent criticisms of traditional administrative
theory assume theories that in turn share foundationalist epistemological struc-
ture. Critics tend to argue for more or different foundations for knowledge to
supplement the deficiencies of positivist science. We advance our case here by
offering some coherentist epistemological criticism of the Theory Movement,
critical theory, and administrative decision-making.

**Educational administration and the theory of knowledge**

Since the mid 1970s, educational administration, as an area of study has under-
gone a fundamental transformation. Although traditional views of science still
dominate understandings of theory, research and administrative practice, there
are now systematic alternatives to this approach. As a result, educational admin-
istration is now theoretically much richer, more diverse and complex than at any
other time in its short history.
The developments have not occurred without controversy. For example, following a relatively brief period of intense, indeed unprecedented, academic debate in journals, books and conferences, Daniel Griffiths (1979, p43) remarked, in 1979, that, ‘if educational administration is not in a state of intellectual turmoil, it should be, because its parent, the field of organisational theory, certainly is’.

Griffiths could well have added a number of related areas of applied social science to make his point such as policy analysis (Garson 1986), educational studies and educational research methodology, (Phillips 1987) and social theory (Giddens 1982). These areas, too, were in turmoil, and for much the same reason. The traditional scientific view of knowledge was increasingly perceived to be inadequate as a basis for social science because it ignored values, human subjectivity, and the social and political context in which organisations exist and in which administrative practices occur.

It is unlikely that objections such as these would have been so effective in reshaping the agenda of educational administration were it not for the existence of alternative philosophical perspectives on the nature of knowledge which could function as frameworks for rival systematic conceptions of administration. And in our view, what has made the alternatives seem credible is the work done in the 1960s by Thomas Kuhn (especially his 1962), Paul Feyerabend (1981) and other philosophers of science which showed, successfully, that traditional views of scientific knowledge are inadequate even for the physical sciences.

The importance for administrative theory of philosophy in general and theories of knowledge, or epistemologies, in particular has been widely acknowledged by writers such as Greenfield (1975), Griffiths (1979) and Willower (1981). In a recent analysis of the state of educational administration conducted as part of a review of contributions to the Handbook of Research on Educational Administration, Willower (1988, pp730–1) identifies six trends representing ‘. . . directions in which educational administration as field of inquiry appears to be moving’, and he completes the list by remarking: ‘The sixth trend is a turn towards philosophy, and especially towards epistemological questions’. In our view, Willower is perfectly correct. The only caveat we would want to enter – and one with which we expect he would entirely agree – is that philosophy, especially epistemology, has always been significant, though perhaps not widely recognised as such until of late.

Epistemology and administrative knowledge

We argue that all major developments in educational administration, from the rise of the Theory Movement (see Culbertson 1981) in the late 1940s onward, have been driven by philosophical considerations. Although the reasons for this are complex and vary with the particular developments in question, the general pattern is clear enough. For any set of organised interrelated claims that purports to be knowledge, such as a theory of administration, is subject to constraints that
apply to all knowledge claims. However, within philosophy it is epistemology that deals with questions concerning the nature of knowledge, what makes claims knowable, and how they may be justified. Our central argument is that what epistemology counts as a satisfactory justification imposes powerful constraints on the content and structure of administrative theory. Or, in other words, the structure of justification, as specified by epistemology, determines much of the overall framework in which theorising in administration is conducted.

Three major developments in epistemology may be cited to illustrate this point. Logical empiricism, which developed out of, and partly in opposition to, the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle provided the first systematic philosophical influence. (For an overview, see Achinstein and Barker 1969.) In particular, it is Herbert Feigl’s version of logical empiricism which has been critical in the development of the Theory Movement (Feigl 1974) which in turn has shaped much of mainstream educational administration throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and the 1980s. In it may be found the bases for separating fact from value and observation from theory, for employing the methodological constraint of operational definitions, and for seeing administration theory as a classical hypothetico-deductive structure with laws at the top and facts at the bottom. (See Feigl 1953.)

The second development is the paradigms approach associated with the work of Kuhn and Feyerabend. Originally formulated as a systematic critique of logical empiricist views of scientific knowledge, their work – and especially Kuhn’s since it is written in non-technical language – has functioned increasingly to underwrite attacks on objectivity in the social sciences, and to promote varieties of relativism and subjectivism. It has been able to do this because, crucially, a paradigm is supposed to contain within itself the standards for its own assessment. (See Kuhn 1962, pp109–110.) In this intellectual climate, if alternative views of administration are construed as either different paradigms, or as developing within different paradigms, then they are presumed to enjoy some methodological immunity from objections arising from one particular paradigm, say a systems scientific view. At the extreme, different paradigms are said to be incommensurable, or unable to be compared or adjudicated (Kuhn 1962, p150).

Two important results of the Kuhn-Feyerabend critique of logical empiricism are alleged to support this extreme view as well as a number of other familiar subjectivist conclusions. The first result is that empirical adequacy is not a sufficient criterion for deciding the merits of competing theories: the same empirical foundation may adequately confirm any number of different theories. The second is that what counts as empirical evidence is partly determined by theory. Observations are said to be theory laden, mainly because the vocabulary used to describe observations is also part of a wider theoretical vocabulary.

Consistent with the paradigms approach, a further conclusion drawn from these results is that science is significantly non-empirical, that considerations of empirical adequacy place no essential constraints on the construction of scientific theories. Thomas Greenfield (1978, p8), whose writings have been largely responsible for
the subjectivist turn in educational administration, needs to presume something as strong as this in order to say:

The process of truth making in the academic world . . . does not differ materially from what goes into truth making in the world at large. Truth is what scientists agree on or what the right scientists agree on. It is also what they can get others to believe in.

And this, in turn, yields talk of reality being mind-dependent, of us inhabiting different worlds or their being multiple realities all of which outrun any empirical evidence for distinguishing them. It also suggests a certain methodological infirmity when it comes to the question of evidence for adjudicating the merits of different interpretations of human behaviour, the stuff of hermeneutics, ethnographies and cultural studies of organisational life. (See Evers 1988.)

The third, most recent approach, and the one we prefer, acknowledges the soundness of certain key results arising out of the 1960s critiques of logical empiricism; notably the underdetermination of theory by observation and the theory ladenness of observation. However, the correct conclusion to be drawn from these results is not a flight from objectivity and realism. Rather, it is the admission that there is more to evidence than observation or the establishing of mere empirical adequacy (Churchland 1985). After all, any theory can be made to square with empirical findings if we are prepared just to go on adding statements to it. What is more, a contradictory theory will square with any finding whatsoever. On this third approach, which we endorse, theory choice needs to be guided by a consideration of the extra-empirical virtues possessed by theories. These virtues of system include simplicity, consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness, conservativeness and fecundity, though they are often referred to collectively as coherence considerations or as the elements in a coherentist account of epistemic justification (Quine and Ullian 1978; Williams 1977).

In the following, we want to demonstrate briefly, how the constraints on justification imposed by our preferred coherentist or holistic epistemology can be used to reshape and redefine the substantive content of educational administration in the direction of a new science of administration.

**Foundational epistemologies and coherence justification**

Since coherentist epistemologies are best seen as responses to the problems of foundational theories of justification it will be useful to begin by sketching a classical solution to the problem of knowledge. How do we know anything at all?? What is knowledge and what makes it possible?

Within the classical empiricist tradition the candidates for immediate knowledge – the foundations – have been, in decreasing order of strictness, sense data, first person sensory reports, and observation statements (Hooker 1975). However, as the history of philosophy readily attests, the hope of justifying all
knowledge in this way is fraught with difficulty, especially in view of some of its consequence for science. For example, many of the objects posited by physics are unobservable, at least directly – such things as time, curved space, electrons and quanta – and are known only through economical theorising about more gross observable consequences. Worse still, the law-like universal generalisations characteristic of our best theories, seem to require as evidence an infinite number of observations. Yet only a finite range of observations is ever available for justifying claims of the form ‘all X are Y’. It would be nice if we had some sound principle of induction that would enable us reliably to infer from a finite set of observations to an infinite set of past, present and future events of the sort that scientific laws can delimit; but no such principle has ever been forthcoming (Popper 1963, especially Ch 1). Because so little of what ordinarily passes for reliable knowledge can be deduced from empirical foundations, classical empiricism functioned more as an attack on knowledge, with scepticism the end result, rather than a rational reconstruction.

The crucial methodological worry here is that the knowledge claims ruled out appear more reliable than the epistemology that rules them out. This is because an epistemology, in specifying conditions for claims to count as knowledge, also embodies a theory of the powers of the mind (Churchland 1987). For what we can know will depend, to some extent, on our cognitive capacities, our skills for learning and, in general, what sort of creature we are. One weakness of classical empiricism is that it embodies a singularly implausible empirical psychology of learning. For example, the process of learning from perception is not one in which a passive mind more or less faithfully records copies of sensory images, permuting them (or their decomposable components) according only to the laws of logic. Our current most sophisticated neurological theories of sensory information processing tell a vastly more complex story of human knowledge acquisition (Churchland 1986).

A further methodological worry with the classical view is that it appears to be unknowable on its own account of itself. To see this recall that the epistemology makes general or universal claims concerning all (human) knowing. On its own terms, either these are known directly or indirectly. But classical empiricist epistemology in all its generality cannot itself be a sensory experience, that is, part of the foundations, if for no other reasons that only a limited number of relevant observations are ever possible. Nor can it count as derived knowledge because of the problem of induction, the problem of using finite observational evidence to infer a general claim. On our view, these methodological problems suggest that the epistemology is incoherent.

In response, logical empiricism, in common with twentieth century varieties of positivism, reversed the earlier classical relationship between theory and foundational evidence. For logical empiricists like Hempel (1965) or Feigl (1974) observation statements are deduced from theories rather than the other way around. That is, logically, theories imply observations. The relationship between theory and observation is therefore one of testability.
Roughly speaking, theories, as networks of general and particular empirical statements, are supported by evidence to the degree that the observation statements they imply are confirmed or the tests are successful. As a method for testing hypotheses by matching deduced observation statements against actual observations, logical empiricism is sometimes identified with the hypothetico-deductive method.

For present purposes, two clear difficulties which lead to revisions along coherentist lines, may be briefly noted. The first, mentioned earlier, is that the same finite observational base may equally confirm different theories, as pointed out by Karl Popper (1959, p266). Piling up more and more confirming instances, he argued, is of little value when it takes only one disconfirming observation to falsify a theory. It is falsification that is crucial for promoting the growth of knowledge, for improving our theories, not confirmation. Theory change is driven by counter-examples, unexpected observations and predictions that are shown to be false. And our best theories are those that have been subject to the most severe testing but have not been falsified.

However, more is required for excellence of theory than just passing severe tests, for it is never individual hypotheses that are tested but, rather, whole networks of statements (Hesse 1970). And if networks or conjunctions of statements are needed to deduce observation statements for testing, a counter-example, or unexpected observation, shows at most only that one or more statements in the network are faulty. It does not, by itself, show which particular statements are in need of revision, as Quine (1951, p43) has argued. We can even adjust the troublesome observation statement if we feel that those parts of our theory under threat are more reliable than the theory implicit in making the observation.

How then are we to choose the best theory from among an infinite number of empirically adequate alternatives, all equally supported by whatever they deem to be a foundation for knowledge? Our suggestion is to choose the most coherent theory, that is, the one that enjoys more than any other the extra-empirical virtues of system. (See Lycan 1988; Bonjour 1985.) To see how a coherence approach can work over the question of choosing theories of knowledge, consider again the two methodological weaknesses we noted in classical empiricism. One was that the epistemology could not explain how it could ever be known. It failed to be comprehensive over the matter of self-reference. In seeking to adjudicate on the status of all knowledge claims it assumed an external vantage point which it could never know to be true. Other things being equal, therefore, we would prefer an epistemology that was truly comprehensive; one whose embodied psychology of knowledge acquisition renders it knowable.

Once we see an epistemology as itself a set of knowledge claims, we can ask whether the claims it rules out as knowledge are more reasonable or plausible than the epistemology that rules them out. For classical empiricism this is an acute methodological issue since it attempts to disqualify all of the most characteristic features of good science on the strength of a very modest empirical psy-
chology used to select foundations for knowledge. It renders this particular programme of foundational justification incoherent by robbing it of its point. The way to avoid the problem is to require an epistemology to embody our most powerful and sophisticated theories of knowledge acquisition. But if we are appealing to our best natural science of human learning to justify knowledge there is no need to bother with foundations. We just appeal to science outright to justify and explain how scientific knowledge is possible. In our view, there is no knowable epistemically secure and privileged vantage point from which the whole of knowledge can be adjudicated. There is just our most coherent scientific practice. Epistemology becomes naturalised, as Quine (1969) suggests, and falls into place as a part of psychology.

How then can we apply coherence criteria to theories of educational administration? In general we require consistency; we would aim for more comprehensive theories – those able to explain more phenomena rather than fewer, and with fewer anomalies, counter-examples and falsifying instances rather than more. We would prefer simplicity to complexity in the sense of using the least amount of explanatory apparatus to account for the largest range of phenomena. We prefer theories that do not outrun their own explanatory resources, that do not posit distinctions for which there is, on their own terms, no evidence. Finally, we require that administrative theories be learnable in the sense that they meet the following two demands that were applied specifically to epistemologies: first, that they cohere with the broad demands of our best naturalistic accounts of human learning and second, that they are not inconsistent with more reliable bodies of knowledge elsewhere in our total or global world view. The net effect of these demands is to require administrative theory to be a part of the most coherent global theory we can construct. We end up with a science of administration to the extent that this global theory also includes our most reliable scientific knowledge (Evers 1988).

Applying these general considerations is always a matter of detailed critique of particular issues. Coherence justification, because of its global character, is just a more intricate and difficult business than foundational justification. However, since foundationalism is mistaken, there is really no serious alternative. The following applications, because of their brevity, are only methodological guides. Nevertheless, they do go some way towards illustrating the use of a coherentist methodology.

The theory movement

In the late 1940s an increasing number of scholars doing research in educational administration, sought to develop a more systematic and rigorous basis for their work and findings. (For a historical overview, see Moore 1964.) As an antidote to the so-called ‘naked empiricism’ (Halpin 1958, p1) of fact finding and anecdote collection assumed typical of the field, a number of attempts were made to establish a theoretical structure for administrative theory as it was then being
applied in educational studies. The notion of theory that found favour, as we
toted earlier, was Herbert Feigl’s logical empiricist account of scientific theory,
and so what became characteristic of the Theory Movement was the attempt to
structure administrative theory and research according to the strictures of Feigl’s
vision of science and its methods. The results, always energetically pursued, met
with varying degrees of success. We here consider one.

Of the many ways in which the epistemological doctrines of logical empiri-
cism shaped the early development of the movement, none is perhaps so
counter-intuitive and unrepresentative of ordinary administrative thought and
practice as the removal of values from the scope of administrative theory.
Administrative theories that disqualify themselves from addressing the value
question have, however, a theory/practice problem: theory fails to be relevant
for a large part of administrative practice.

This methodological infirmity arises if it is believed that every empirically
significant term in a theory is meaningful because it corresponds to some spe-
cific range of sensory experience. Terms like ‘chair’ and ‘table’ readily satisfy
this condition; terms like ‘good’ or ‘just’ appear problematic. Similarly, we have
a fair idea of what counts as favourable or unfavourable evidence for testing the
claim ‘there is a chair in my office’; for a claim like ‘that person was treated
unjustly’ there is a difficulty. Essentially the difficulty is this. All the sensory
evidence we may ever gather for the claim will merely describe how the person
was in fact treated, the facts of the matter, as it were. But the injustice is not a
fact there to be observed. It is not some kind of object that produces sensations
of injustice. Rather, so the story goes, the basis for our judgment of injustice
resides in our subjective response to the observational evidence. So if cognitive
significance resides in term by term correspondence with specific sensory
experiences, or even in testability then, as Hooker (1975, p191) remarks in his
critique of empiricism’s theory of language, ‘... empiricists, like positivists,
offer no cognitive content to ethics, aesthetics, religion, metaphysics, or indeed
to philosophy ...’ Stripped of its cognitive content, moral deliberation and
judgement collapse down into mere affective preference.

We will outline here just one line of response to this argument. We can begin
by noting that if the argument is sound our knowledge of scientific concepts like
electron or quantum is as problematic as our knowledge of moral concepts since
neither many of the theoretical terms of science nor the sentences in which they
figure correspond to any definite range of observations. The demand that all con-
cepts be operationally defined – that is, defined as the operations to be per-
formed in some test – is the traditional way of meeting this difficulty (Hempel
1966, pp88–97). Hence the common practice of attempting to give operational
definitions in traditional science of administration. (See Griffiths 1959, pp75–91,
for examples.) However, strictly speaking, every purported definition admits of
an infinite number of alternative possible operations, which would make a
scientific vocabulary potentially limitless, and hence unlearnable. To be sure,
many of the differences would seem trivial; for example distinguishing ‘length’.
as measurement with a wood rule from ‘length’ as measurement with a plastic
rule. But the distinction between trivial and non-trivial differences is a theo-
retical distinction, drawn with the aid of an antecedent grasp of the concept to
be operationally defined. This is an instance of a logical empiricist epistemo-
logical procedure outrunning its posited resources.

The source of this difficulty is the belief that a specific range of sensory
experience exhausts the meaning of a term. Once we need to use theory (as turns
out to be the case in foundational justification) to select the relevant sensory
experiences, we end up blurring the distinction between observation and theory.
Since the portions of theory being used are assumed to be cognitively signifi-
cant, in our view it is more reasonable to suppose that the significance of more
theoretical terms like ‘electron’ or ‘quantum’ resides in their conceptual role
within the theory rather than in any immediate connections with experience.

The view we wish to defend is that moral terms like ‘good’ or ‘right’ are
significant in the same way that the most theoretical terms of science are. In
realist fashion, we assume the unobservables of science exist because they are
posited by the most coherent global account we can give of our interpreted
experience (Quine 1960). Similarly, we suppose a moral theory and its associ-
ated judgments to be warranted to the extent that they also are part of the same
global theory. On a coherentist approach to scientific knowledge there is there-
fore no sharp epistemological boundary to be drawn between administrative
theory on the one hand and a large class of naturalistic moral theories and their
normative claims on the other.

Critical theory and administration

Among the many critics of traditional science of administration are those who
have been influenced by the writings of Jürgens Habermas. There is now a con-
siderable body of literature in educational administration that might be regarded
as falling within the critical theory perspective. (See Foster 1986, for an
overview.) Although critical theory approaches to administration are complex
and multi-faceted, covering ethical, political, social, linguistic and personal
dimensions, at least one strand of Habermas’s thought that has been developed
and applied to administrative contexts is uncompromisingly epistemological and
lends itself readily to some brief coherentist remarks here.

We have in mind Richard Bates’s thesis that a science of administration is
essentially manipulative and concerned with social control (Bates 1980, 1983).
In developing this claim Bates draws on a reading of the early work of Haber-
mas for an understanding of science; particularly the epistemological theses of
Knowledge and Human Interests and the ‘General Perspective’ lecture published
as the Appendix to the English translation (Habermas 1972). In this work,
Habermas (1972, p308) identifies three ‘knowledge-constitutive’ interests: the
technical presumed by the empirical analytic sciences; the practical underlying
the historical-hermeneutic sciences, and the emancipatory represented by critical
social science. Traditional (so called positivist) science which Bates, following Habermas, identifies with empirical-analytic science, is seen as hypothetico-deductive after the Nagel/Hempel empiricist model, with predictive success a measure of technical exploitability. For Habermas (1972, p309)

... theories of the empirical sciences disclose reality subject to the constitutive interest in the possible securing and expansion, through information, of feedback-monitored action. This is the cognitive interest in technical control over objectified processes.

In Bates’s view, the technical scientific definitions of knowledge and rationality are far too narrow for social science and need to be supplemented by critical discourse. A suitable broadening, he suggests,

... is argued at length by Habermas, who contends that the annexation of rationality by dominant scientific, technical, manipulative interests has prevented the continuation of an historical discourse directed towards a rational administration of the world...

(Bates 1980, p68)

He goes further, asserting that: ‘as currently conceived by professor and professional alike, educational administration is a technology of controls’ (Bates 1983, p46).

And finally, in summarising a robust and systematic indictment of poor philosophy for this state of affairs, he declares:

The inadequacies of the hypothetico-deductive model of positivist science and the positivist, apolitical model of society were argued to be intellectual products that provided the illusions necessary for the continued employment of techniques of hierarchical administrative control that perpetuate the injustices of an unequal society.

(Bates 1983, p30)

There are a number of things that are puzzling about this account of science and administration, especially in view of the fact that Bates thinks traditional empiricist accounts of the practice and conduct of science are mistaken. For if the traditional view of science is wrong, and we know that it is thanks to the work of Quine, Kuhn, Feyerabend, Hesse and others, then the story Habermas tells of empirical science being constituted by technical interests of control and manipulation is also wrong. This is because Habermas’s account of empirical-analytic science is as much dependent on traditional empiricist theories of science as the traditional science of administration that Bates is using Habermas’s machinery to criticise. In more recent work Habermas recognises some of these difficulties. (See Hesse 1982.)
One attempt at avoiding the major incoherence threatening knowledge constitutive interests is worth briefly noting. The key move would involve distinguishing between traditional accounts of science being wrong on the one hand and people acting as though these wrong accounts are true on the other. A revised Habermasian argument might then run as follows:

If traditional views of science (positivism, logical empiricism and the like) were true then technical control and manipulation would occur. Therefore, if everyone (professor and practitioner alike) acted as though they were true then technical control and manipulation would occur.

The missing premise in this argument is a subjectivist claim to the effect that my having a particular theory of the world somehow makes the world that way, or brings it into line with my theory. This is perhaps an extravagant extension of the reasonable epistemological thesis that all observation is theory laden. To see the limits of the thesis, however, consider another example. Suppose, for the moment, that the dominant orthodoxy concerning water says that it flows uphill. We know that the orthodoxy is wrong but we also know that if water did flow uphill it would require a special form of technical handling. It does not follow that if everyone acted as though water flowed uphill it would require a special form of technical handling. Presumably, water would continue to defy orthodoxy in a range of ways.

Critical theorists may be sympathetic to certain subjectivist theses since bad theory may influence humans more than it influences water. But they cannot be too sympathetic to this one without undermining the reality of human suffering and injustice, or the objectivity of the class and political analyses that underwrite their approaches to human emancipation.

**Administrative decision making**

The last two examples of epistemological critique were directed mainly at views of the content and structure of administrative theorising. Our final example will draw attention to the importance of epistemological views for organisational design.

The classic work in the field of administration is undoubtedly Herbert Simon’s *Administrative Behavior*, first published in 1945. In that work Simon identifies rational decision-making as the locus of administrative theory. As against the prescription to make optimal decisions, the cornerstone of Simon’s theory of decision-making is the bounded or limited nature of human rationality. We satisfice rather than optimise. He identifies three sources of limitation that organisational structures would need to address to enhance decision-making. First, an individual is limited in skills: dexterity, reaction times, powers of computation, thought and understanding. A second limitation concerns individual values and the understanding of organisational values and goals. Finally, there are limits to relevant knowledge, both knowledge of theory and knowledge of all
the conditions that must obtain for a sound application of theory (Simon 1976, pp.34–41).

Simon is reluctant to endorse any ‘principles of administration’, for enhancing administrative efficiency in advance of specific analyses of case by case administrative arrangements for reducing these limitations. Nevertheless, a particular approach to administrative reform is suggested by his theory. For example, if the growth of knowledge is a matter of accumulating more and more information, as the empiricism behind Administrative Behavior implies, a satisficing strategy will have a characteristic emphasis. For if optimal decision-making requires optimal initial information inputs to best theory, a less than optimal or second best approach will involve not a difference in kind but a difference in degree of ambition. Resulting administrative arrangements will place a premium on ensuring the highest practicable quality of initial input into the actual point of decision-making. Depending on cases, reforms may focus on ensuring suitable concentrations of expertise, communications structures aimed at enhancing the availability of that expertise, and so on.

But on a coherentist epistemology, very large changes in knowledge are seen to occur through the promotion of a systematic virtue like simplicity in a theory network that includes among its statements a number of theory laden contrary observations. For the big gains in knowledge appear to flow more from the theoretical resolution of error than the incremental accumulation of data. Given that the existence of limitations to our knowledge is likely to promote the occurrence of error, a case by case analysis of decision making may show greater gains to be had by the promotion of error correction at the expense — given only finite resources — of extensive attention to error prevention. Of course, in any administrative design for sound long term decision making there is always some trade-off, in the allocation of resources, between error prevention and error correction. But a theory of learning, the core of which conceives knowledge as growing through a process of conjecture and refutation, is more sensitive to the possibility of learning through mistakes. The option of securing efficiencies in decision making through the rapid correction of error becomes, on this approach, a more explicit methodological guide to defining a suitable prevention/correction trade-off. Empirical studies by Chris Argyris and co-workers (Argyris 1982; Argyris and Schon 1978) show some of the conditions under which error correction by administrative feedback loop structures is more valuable. Not surprisingly, these are where the organisational environment is unstable or undergoing rapid change; where organisational knowledge and expectations are most likely to be falsified, and where there is a greater premium on more rapid acquisition or growth of knowledge.

This epistemological consideration suggests that theories of organisational learning can impose important constraints on the administrative structures of decision-making. Simon’s position in Administrative Behavior does not deny this. However, in noting the relevance of epistemology for administrative theory it is sufficient to observe, for our purposes, that significant differences in organisational consequences can flow from adopting divergent theories of human knowledge acquisition.
Summing up, in applying coherentist considerations very briefly to some issues concerning the Theory Movement, critical theory, and a view of decision making, we suggested a number of conclusions. Since our holistic epistemology places severe limits on attempts to partition knowledge into different compartments, we challenged both the fact/value distinction posited by logical empiricism and the three-fold division in knowledge posited by Bates’s use of the earlier work of Habermas. Both challenges have extensive consequences for the administrative theories that employ these partitions in knowledge. Finally, we explored some organisational consequences of different views of the growth of knowledge on the question of enhancing structures for decision making.

Note

1 This chapter is based on parts of the Preface and Chapter One of CW Evers and G Lakomski 1991 Knowing Educational Administration, Oxford: Pergamon Press.

References


In this article I will discuss and attempt to draw connections between four of the major current preoccupations within our field of study:

- the framework for educational policy-making;
- the technical-rational approach to leadership and management;
- ‘best practice’ in management outside education;
- professional development, research and the contribution of higher education.

In each of these areas there are currently major challenges, particularly for those of us working in academic settings within the UK context. I will indicate those which I find most salient, and where relevant will suggest what responses we might make to them and what shifts in our own focus and practice might be appropriate.

**The framework for policy-making**

The emphasis in much research following the 1988 Education Reform Act has been on the effects of devolution (e.g. Bullock and Thomas, 1997; Levačić, 1998a) and marketization (e.g. Whitty, 1997; Woods et al., 1998). This is not surprising and is understandable, given our focus on leadership and management and our consequent major research objective of discovering the impact of policy on practice at institutional and community level.

Arguably, however, the growing power and influence of the central state has been a more significant trend of the past decade than either devolution or marketization, yet scholarly work in our field has rarely focused on it directly (Bottery, 1998; Riley, 1998a). Maclure (1993: 7) charted the rise of state centralism in education since 1944 and predicted the loss of any meaningful political contri-
bution by locally elected members in a system ‘directed by an authoritarian central government’. Raab’s (1994: 16) analysis of the changing governance of education led him to conclude that

The uprooting of old ‘partnership’ understandings in favour of newer ones operating at several levels . . . can be seen as government’s attempt to restructure networks within the education system that will be more reliable instruments of policy implementation, or at least less resistant to central initiatives.

Jenkins’s (1995) excoriating but well-researched critique chronicled the advance of the central state in numerous fields including education. The change within a single generation has been remarkable. In 1970, a prominent local authority education officer described the fragmentation and diffusion of the English system and lamented that there appeared to be no clear sources of power from which changes could spring (Birley, 1970: 114). The system was until the 1980s widely regarded as one of the most decentralized in the world. Today it is among the most centralized of the advanced industrial countries.

The trend appears if anything to have intensified since the coming to office of the Labour government in May 1997. At a press conference to launch the School Standards and Framework Bill in December 1997, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment, David Blunkett, was reportedly asked why the government was imposing unprecedented central government control over local authority schools. His quoted response indicated that it was

. . . because our experience led us to understand that central government carried responsibility without power. It would be to delude the electorate to suggest the Government could deliver change without the mechanisms to deliver it. We are taking the necessary structural powers to ensure the people on the ground do their job.

(Carvel, 1998)

This quote presents an argument for further centralization in terms of securing the mechanisms to achieve strategic objectives and promote the effective implementation of national policy. Most people would regard the achievement of greater coherence, clearer outcomes and fulfilled promises as desirable. Problems, however, may be thought to attach to the extent of central control now being established.

The history of national policy-making has been erratic and often short-termist. The public profile of education has risen sharply since the early 1980s, with the result that successive waves of ‘reform’ have been introduced in apparently shortening cycles, often before the previous reform has been properly evaluated and without the intention of building upon the knowledge and expertise
gained from it. Stronach and Morris (1994), who proposed the label ‘policy hysteria’ for this process on the basis of their experience with projects such as the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) and Compact, argued that reform initiatives tended to be ignored as their political significance waned and that ‘the speed and overlap of reform waves meant that few of these initiatives could succeed’ (p. 7). It remains to be seen whether a still more powerful central government can now operate a more consistent, evolutionary policy process.

Such ‘policy hysteria’ is clearly not a UK prerogative. Fullan, writing from a North American perspective, considered the impact of this phenomenon on school principals: ‘Not only are the demands fragmented and incoherent, but even good ideas have a short shelf life as initiatives are dropped in favour of the latest new policy. Overload in the form of a barrage of disjointed demands fosters dependency’ (Fullan, 1998: 6). He argues that such dependency is debilitating, and that successful renewal in modern conditions demands that the bonds of dependency be broken. We will return to this argument later.

Many of the policy developments are justified by reference to the assumed connection between educational attainments in basic subjects and our national economic performance. However, a careful study of the available international data concluded that there was no evidence to support such a link and that ‘any generalisations about the assumed inadequacies of English education are unfounded’, adding that ‘what could be a sober and informed debate about English education is in danger of being drowned out by the simplistic and often shrill rhetoric which seems to dominate policy making in education’ (Robinson, 1998: 9 and 10).

This ‘simplistic and shrill rhetoric’, which contributes to what I have elsewhere called the ‘rather monolithic ideas context’ faced by educational managers (Glatter, 1997: 186), includes key slogans which are frequently repeated and amplified through the media. One example is the contention that ‘standards matter more than structures’ (DfEE, 1997: 12). Such a dichotomy surely needs to be questioned, not least by people working in the management field, given our understandings of the ways in which performance is powerfully affected by organization. ‘Flaws in the structure . . . have consequences for education, and if they are not tackled and improvements made, the learning opportunities and experiences of children will be adversely affected’ (Woods et al., 1998: 213). Another is the claim that a context of social and economic deprivation is no excuse for poor school standards. The complex relationship between social disadvantage, educational opportunity and school improvement has been reviewed by Mortimore and Whitty (1997) among others.

The signs at present are that the dominance of central government in education and elsewhere will grow further. The position of local authorities, for example, given their lack of constitutional protection, appears entirely conditional on the government’s assessment of their performance, defined in its own terms: ‘If you are unwilling or unable to work to the modern agenda then the government will have to look to other partners to take on your role’ (Blair, 1998: 22). The significance of this appears far-reaching. There may be substantial
devolution to individual educational institutions, but even the largest of these is too small to provide a credible source of countervailing power. In this scenario, fears that local authorities and school leaders are becoming simply agents or instruments of national policy (Riley, 1998b) have substance.

Yet there appears to be a paradox at the heart of government policy regarding governance, as Marquand (1998: 21) has pointed out: on the one hand the style of policy-making is centralist and authoritarian, resting on the premise ‘that government at the centre not only can, but should remake society to fit an a priori grand design’, while on the other there exists a radical constitutional agenda pointing the way ‘towards a profound transformation of the British state’. There appear to be acute tensions in the reform of governance between a centralist and a more pluralist conception, and these tensions are clearly reflected in the proposals for the development of local government (DETR, 1998).

Numerous issues relevant to educational management surround this set of developments, but perhaps two stand out. One is philosophical and normative: to whom should the schools (and other educational institutions) belong in an advanced modern democracy (Riley, 1998a)? I will not seek to tackle this here, while fully recognizing its significance. The second is much more pragmatic. How well suited is such a system of educational governance to respond to the current and forthcoming challenges of educational leadership and management? This issue is touched on at various points in what follows.

The technical-rational approach

The perspective underlying much of the current approach to government of the public services is that of performance management (Grayson, 1997), an attempt to deal with the problem neatly encapsulated by Drucker, when he wrote about managing non-profit organizations, in his question: ‘What is the bottom line when there is no “bottom line”?’ (Drucker, 1992: 81). Target setting, performance indicators, standards, performance reviews, audit and inspection are key concepts within the approach, which was well exemplified in the White Paper Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People (DETR, 1998). The well-publicized requirement of the Treasury to be given evidence of outputs in return for the allocation of additional resources is undoubtedly an important current driver of this movement.

One phenomenon which has emerged from this development is what Power (1997) called the ‘audit explosion’, which has left very few people in the public sector untouched by the need to give more and better accounts and which has led to many new career opportunities in the audit and inspection fields. He argued that what is involved is ‘ritualized processes of verification’ (p. 14) with image management and legitimation as key purposes. ‘Worse still, audits may turn organisations on their heads and generate excessive preoccupations with, often costly, auditable process. At the extreme, performance and quality are in danger of being defined largely in terms of conformity to such process’ (p. 143).
These processes are, of course, essentially technical-rational, and our field has long been concerned with the significance and limitations of rational models (for example, Bush, 1996; Wise 1977). Moreover, the symbolic importance of rational models as a basis for policy-making ‘in a secular industrial society which believes in technology and rationality’ (Colebatch, 1998: 108) is hardly surprising. Two relatively recent developments are, on the one hand, the very substantial growth of technical-rational approaches and, on the other, the much greater awareness of turbulence and complexity in the macro-environment. In this context, Samier’s analysis of the bureaucratic language of technical-rationality is interesting. She refers to the expression of ideologies or myths ‘elevated to inviolability’ such as ‘teamwork’ and ‘high standards’, and also to the use of such language in ‘helping to maintain a belief that order still prevails in a world in which chaos threatens to break through’ (1997: 420).

It is very important to stress that I am not implying here that rational-technical approaches are without value nor that their public use is always only for purposes of legitimation. Indeed, I have referred elsewhere (The Open University, 1996: 85) to the potential value of work such as that of the National Audit Office on strategic planning in schools. There is evidence that OFSTED’s ‘rational’ resource planning model may have beneficial effects on curriculum and assessment planning in primary schools (Glover et al., 1997). The issue is rather how far the tightly coupled, performance-based system which the present government (like its predecessor) has been pursuing is likely to be viable, and for how long.

In her review of a range of models of managing change, Ouston (1998) argues that those which make ‘rational’ and ‘linear’ assumptions are most suitable for stable environments and conditions in which the outcomes of management action are regarded as predictable (see also Bell, 1998). In the coming years it will be extremely difficult to meet the first of these conditions even if some of us still retain a degree of faith in the second. Hargreaves goes considerably further. He comments (in terms similar to Samier’s quoted above) that ‘Politicians play to people’s fears and dreams, and in particular their fears of social disintegration and dreams of stability and cohesion’ (Hargreaves, 1997: 11), and argues that the discontinuity and pluralism endemic in (post)modern society will render the notion of a distinctive and coherent state-managed system meaningless within a relatively short time, to be replaced by polymorphic or much more variegated educational provision, loosely coordinated and monitored from the centre.

Such a set of developments appears to be partly foreshadowed within current policy. Alongside the attempt to apply a ‘tight’ control over much of the school system, the arrangements for Education Action Zones, EAZs (DfEE, 1998: 3) to operate a set of licensed experiments, or ‘testbeds for innovation’, may emerge as the start of a response to one of the major weaknesses of the system as it has developed over the past decade—the tendency to discourage and marginalize innovation. This trend, ironic in view of the explicit policy goal of promoting
choice and diversity, was clearly evident from our work on the Parental and School Choice Interaction (PASCI) study at The Open University as well as from other work on choice and competition (Glatter et al., 1997).

A more competitive system does not of itself increase diversity between schools or encourage innovative approaches to education . . . Innovation is and has been undertaken by schools, but it is increasingly running counter to the centralising trends of educational policy. With the encouragement of innovation there need also to be structures that facilitate their critical evaluation and dissemination.

(Woods et al., 1998: 209, 213)

The strategy on Education Action Zones is in alignment with prescriptions from chaos and complexity theory to tolerate parallel developments, permit experimentation and provide organizational ‘slack’ to develop future frameworks and processes alongside existing ones (Turner, 1996).

In general, little attention has been given to broader macro-environmental developments and their potential implications for educational leadership and management (Caldwell, 1997; Davies, 1997). We have tended to stay close to the action in the here-and-now. The uncertainties which are associated with ‘futures thinking’ and the danger of being trapped in highly speculative activities gives substance to this approach. However, some trends are now quite well established, for example, the significant changes in the nature of work and the rapidly growing impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on education. The report of the ‘Redefining Work’ initiative of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) (Bayliss, 1998) has shown how with careful analysis and strategy development it is possible to respond creatively to such major challenges. There are significant implications both for leadership and research which we need to pursue urgently. The report gives substance to the truisms about the constancy of change and about educators and learners facing a much more turbulent, complex and fluid future. Its conclusion about education—that ‘we are still preparing people for a world that is fast disappearing’ (p. 68)—and its call for a new educational philosophy and a radical reappraisal of the system ‘covering structures, standards, processes and outcomes’ (p. 50) are clearly not the last word, but they are surely topics that need to be addressed.

The RSA report’s prescriptions for recasting the curriculum and assessment as well as school organization and the role of teachers in initial education would, if accepted, pose a considerable challenge to both the prevailing technical-rational model of performance management and to the social conservative, traditionalist ideology which has underlain policy on state schooling for most of its history (Edwards and Whitty, 1997). Whether such a transformation would be politically feasible, especially given the attachment of many politicians, professional interest groups, parents and voters to perceptions of education based firmly on their own schooldays (Levin and Riffel, 1997), must remain in consid-
erable doubt. Nevertheless I hope it is evident that this is a key area of work for
the future, and that there is a contribution to be made by those with expertise in
educational leadership and management.

Best practice outside education

The connection between leadership and management (both in theory and prac-
tice) outside and within education has been an issue for debate from the begin-
nning of educational management studies in the UK. I have previously discussed
the notion of ‘best practice outside education’ (Glatter, 1997) and it seemed
worth revisiting it here, both because of its relevance to the theme of this paper,
and also because of its continuing use by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in
connection with their training programmes for headteachers. Thus, for example,
one of the key principles of the national Leadership Programme for Serving
Headteachers (LPSH) is that ‘it draws on the best leadership and management

I drew attention previously to some of the difficulties surrounding the term. ‘As
in education itself, there are different approaches and contending schools of
thought’ (Glatter, 1997: 187). It is also important to be clear whether we are refer-
ing to the literature of general management or to actual practice outside education,
since these often diverge. Are we assessing best practice as portrayed by acade-
mics and other writers in the management field or by business (or other) practi-
tioners? Another distinction is that between best practice now and best practice
in the future—for example, the RSA report on redefining work makes sugges-
tions regarding the appropriate nature of management in virtual and near-virtual
organizations (Bayliss, 1998: 66).

Bearing these caveats in mind, it is striking that reports of or prescriptions for
good practice outside education do not generally relate to performance manage-
ment or other aspects of the dominant rationalistic paradigm within education.
Indeed, it is because of dissatisfaction with the results of elaborate corporate
planning that, according to Kay (1993: 356), the familiar idea that ‘successful
strategies are often opportunistic and adaptive rather than calculated and
planned’ has recovered ground.

Most of the reports focus on the key importance of the management of people
and of human relationships. For example, a study of a large sample of employees
by the Industrial Society emphasized the severe limitations of command-and-
control and centralized approaches to leadership in modern conditions, prescrib-
ing instead ‘liberating’ leadership, with a focus on trust, integrity, fairness and
belief in self and in other people (Turner, 1998). There are claims that some com-
panies have gone so far as to reject the job title ‘manager’ in favour of ‘coach’
(Baker, 1998)—as in professional football—raising the intriguing possibility that
the roles of ‘manager’ and ‘teacher’ may be merging in at least some parts of
industry. However, one research-based study suggests that the practice does not
generally match the rhetoric, that the claimed modernization of employment
relationships has not taken place and that there has instead been an intensification of authoritarian control systems in the UK (Gallie et al., 1998).

Of particular interest is a longitudinal study of 67 companies for the Institute of Personnel and Development by the London School of Economics and Sheffield University, which related company practices in various areas to ‘bottom line’ performance measures such as productivity and profits—apparently a pioneering study in the UK. The results indicated that effective human resource management (HRM) practices contribute far more, in statistical terms, to company performance than do strategy, quality, technology and research and development combined. Such practices were found in only a minority of organizations studied, but in these it was clear that

HRM and employee commitment, satisfaction and participation were the central elements in their business strategy. Our data suggest this latter orientation is the correct approach for most effectively promoting company profitability and productivity . . . Satisfied employees are more likely to co-operate with each other and to perform beyond stipulated job requirements in order to promote organisational effectiveness. (Patterson et al., 1997: 21)

Similar results have apparently been obtained in the USA by the Gallup organization, this time using hard measures of employee retention and customer satisfaction as well as of profitability and productivity (Caulkin, 1998).

The increasing emphasis on people management is reflected in the growing literature on the significance in modern conditions of the ‘intellectual capital’ of organizations (e.g. Allday, 1998; Stewart, 1998), with its implications for valuing, motivating and developing staff. A study of workplace learning with 120 managerial, professional and technical staff in engineering, business and health care drew attention to

the tension between performance management systems, which focus on short-term results and key activities which directly affect ‘the bottom line’, and a human resource development approach focused on the development of staff capability over a longer time scale.

(Eraut et al., 1998: 31; emphases in original)

Research on leadership in education mirrors that reported in the general management literature in pointing to the importance of the quality of relationships and communication processes (Hallinger and Heck, 1998) and this is supported by teachers’ perceptions of the features of effective leadership (Weindling and Earley, 1987). People working in education like to think, of course, that this emphasis on the human factor is a special characteristic of our service. Morrison (1998: 227), however, argues that commercial companies are often more person-centred than schools.
The swing in business towards human resource development as the key to productivity through the fulfilment and self-actualisation of employees has been taking place for decades. The business literature was seen to take with the utmost seriousness the twin notions of organizational development and human resource development in deliberate, planned and supported ways. The achievement of productivity was seen to reside in these rather than simply the development and use of new technologies.

This is Morrison’s conclusion from a survey of the applicability of ideas from business to educational settings. It may be more accurate in respect of the general management literature than of a wide spectrum of business practice. Nevertheless it appears likely that the notion of ‘best practice outside education’ in the minds of educational policy-makers relates more to technical-rational approaches such as performance-related measurement than to human resource and process issues. Despite the difficulties of defining ‘best practice’, the above suggests that this perception needs to be seriously questioned.

Professional development, research and the contribution of higher education

A key conclusion suggested by the previous analyses is that continuing professional development (CPD) for educational leadership should take ‘the whole job’ as its central focus (Eraut, 1998). In an earlier article prepared before the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) got under way (Glatter, 1996), I referred to the reaction of a very successful and experienced headteacher who, on seeing the first draft of the TTA’s standards for headteachers, said ‘Where’s juggling?’ It appeared to me then that the standards were in danger of fostering an excessively atomized and disaggregated approach which would not reflect the reality of the job and that insufficient attention was being given to the integration of the various leadership and management capabilities. Also, as experience of elaborately detailed approaches to CPD accreditation in other fields had shown, it ran the risk of producing ‘a system which is monolithic, mechanistic and expensive to operate, which makes the recognition of existing skills and achievements unnecessarily difficult and which can deter suitable candidates from coming forward’ (Glatter, 1996: 28).

The argument against close specification does not rest only on its cost and bureaucratic implications. As Bolman and Deal (1991: 16) maintain, such specification ignores the fact that “in a rapidly changing world . . . the behaviours that work today may be irrelevant tomorrow”. In a fluid world, emphasis needs to be placed on the more holistic meta-competences (such as judgement, analytical ability, self-management, self-evaluation, the ability to learn from experience and of course juggling!) as well as specific competences (Brown, 1994). Levin and Riffel studied the problematic link between environmental change and
organizational response in Canadian school districts, and concluded that part of the problem of low responsiveness in education lay in the training of educators which ‘tends to focus on technical skills of managing the system rather than on conceptual analysis of the system or discussion of alternatives to it’ (1997: 53).

So far as the evolving framework of national programmes of leadership development is concerned, some of the ‘lessons’ suggested in this article are being applied. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) has been designed and developed (by Hay McBer, The Open University and the National Association of Headteachers) on the basis of a model which is

- based on research undertaken over a considerable period in a variety of contexts,
- founded on the development of meta-competences rather than isolated skills, and
- centred on human resource development approaches.

This programme could well make a significant contribution to tackling the issue of achieving adequate integration that I raised in relation to the NPQH. Whether my concerns prove justified in relation to the latter must await detailed and hopefully genuinely independent evaluations.

A second issue that I mentioned prior to the start of the NPQH related to pluralism. ‘The framework needs to be sufficiently open and flexible to allow different routes to the qualification. No-one has a complete answer, and everyone involved can expect to be on a steep learning curve’ (Glatter, 1996: 28). This issue is closely bound up with the growing centralization across the system as a whole. It is given added point by the control which the TTA is now exercising, not just over national programmes like the NPQH and the LPSH, but also over funding for other programmes in educational leadership and management such as award-bearing courses provided by higher education institutions (HEIs). The latter, where they are receiving TTA funding, are to be subject to inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). This raises a major question: will debate about, and the critical analysis of, government policy be allowed within TTA-funded and OFSTED-inspected CPD programmes in educational leadership and management? This is particularly apposite in the light of the constancy of change and the importance in this scenario of having a critical edge in training programmes (see the quotation given from Levin and Riffel, 1997). The tacit, if not the overt, pressures in this situation are likely to be towards convergence rather than divergence (Lukes, 1974) with the consequent likelihood of limited and inadequate responses to the challenges presented by the macro-environment.

The issue of pluralism is also relevant to the nature of professionalism in education. The growing central control of CPD is differentiating education more sharply from other professional and occupational groups who are free to
choose from a more diverse range of offerings in universities supported by funding from the Higher Education Funding Councils. The trend for an increasing amount of CPD to be provided through contract arrangements against explicit, centrally determined criteria raises significant issues of accountability and responsibility (Mahony and Hextall, 1997). It also fosters among both providers and participants a relationship of dependency with the centre which, as Fullan (1998: 8) argued, is not well attuned to dealing with the present challenges.

Leaders for change get involved as learners in real reform situations. They craft their own theories of change, constantly testing them against new situations. They become critical consumers of management theories, able to sort out promising ideas from empty ones. They become less vulnerable to and less dependent on external answers.

I suspect that most providers in higher education would strongly assent to this quote and its implied critique of heavily directive forms of CPD for educational leadership. However, it also presents a significant set of issues for such providers, which are relevant to our increasing dependency and loss of control. Our expertise is strongly identified with what Eraut (1997: 552) has called ‘Type A’ or ‘propositional knowledge, codified and stored in publications, libraries, databases, etc., subject to quality control by editors and peer review’. Developments in the governance of research are aimed at strengthening this expertise and sharpening still further the focus upon it. We are not widely seen as being proficient in supporting learners to enhance their Type B knowledge or ‘personal knowledge—i.e. what people bring to practical situations that enables them to think and perform . . . It includes propositional knowledge along with procedural and process knowledge, tacit knowledge, and experiential knowledge in episodic memory’ (Eraut, 1997: 552). (Eraut views skills as part of knowledge rather than separate from it.) This Type B knowledge is closely related to the notion of meta-competences discussed earlier. If this formulation and my interpretation of its significance are accepted, a key issue arises: if our main focus is perceived as being upon the development of Type A knowledge, how do we ‘position’ ourselves in relation to Type B knowledge vis-a-vis our CPD programmes in educational leadership and management?

A further point concerns the transfer of learning. Eraut (1997) concludes from his work on knowledge use that learning to use propositional knowledge, and generic skills, in a work context presents a considerably greater challenge than learning to use them within a formal educational situation. Therefore the transfer process itself and how it can be supported or accelerated becomes a key issue for CPD providers if they are to be able to secure credibility, and it is arguably at least as significant as the selection of ‘content’ for programmes. Once again, this is not an area in which our expertise (to the extent to which it exists) is generally acknowledged.
It need hardly be said that these are not new issues, and there have been numerous attempts to wrestle with them, both practically through methods such as action learning, project work and problem-based education and, less often, conceptually (e.g. Hall, 1998; Levačič, 1998b). However, they seem to be becoming ever more salient as they are juxtaposed with other developments which themselves present notable challenges. Brown, for example, writing from a management education perspective, has suggested that both competences and meta-competences pose problems for management educators. In the case of competences, this is because of their technical-rational features, the sense of certainty and predictability on which they are based, implying (as with the NPQH) ‘that managerial skills can be rendered universal, standardized to explicit criteria, taught (or trained), and clearly and fairly measured and assessed’ (Brown, 1994: 297). The problem with meta-competences is precisely the opposite— their uncertainty and ambiguity: ‘Meta-competences are problematic because they are fluid, dynamic, often intuitive, aesthetic and innate. But they can be learned, they cannot be explicitly taught’ (ibid.). Neither of these key modern concepts appears strongly aligned with the production of propositional knowledge which is seen as the distinctive expertise of HEIs.

A number of strategic options suggest themselves for HEIs, including:

• seeking a ‘niche’ market composed purely of those practitioners and others who want to be exposed to the latest Type A knowledge;
• seeking to broaden the actuality and/or the perception of our expertise to cover, explicitly and unambiguously, Type B as well as Type A knowledge, and transfer processes as well as content (recognizing of course that many institutions would lay claim to possessing this breadth already!);
• developing partnerships with other, non-HE, organizations to attempt to secure such breadth.

Surprisingly little research has been undertaken on issues surrounding CPD in educational leadership and management, considering that this is one of the main preoccupations of staff concerned with this field in HEIs. There needs to be considerable development of work in this area. The TTA has identified the impact on professional practice in schools as one of the criteria to be addressed in bids for CPD funding. This appears to me an important development, since it offers an incentive to investigate the interactions involved in CPD and to assess its relationships with practice (Smith and Bennett, 1998). It is perhaps regrettable that more attention was not given to this area sooner.

The discussion so far has focused on tensions relating specifically to CPD. A wider tension is that between research and teaching, which is of course ever-present in universities, but is currently exacerbated within our field. On the one hand the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), as a centralist technical-rational procedure focused on the measurement and assessment of research performance, is pulling staff towards the increased production of outputs in the Type A know-
ledge domain. On the other hand, a different centralist trend is making CPD more instrumental, targeted and convergent, with a considerably reduced emphasis on Type A knowledge and scholarship. This diminishes the possibilities for creative inter-connections between research and teaching. It is an acute and growing tension. Somewhere along the continuum between these two activities are hybrid ventures such as the new Doctor of Education degrees, where the possibilities for synergy perhaps seem greater (Hall, 1998) but whose character still appears to need definition.

In an era of such strong centralization, it seems vital that critical and independent assessments of educational policy and governance (Raab, 1994) are conducted within our field. Such studies undertaken from a standpoint of educational management would imply greater engagement—with an intention of contributing to educational improvement rather than simply offering critical assessment—than when using the lens of 'educational policy sociology' (Ball, 1990) or 'policy scholarship' (Grace, 1995). The obstacles to pursuing such work, in an era when official attempts to circumscribe research agendas may be expected (Hillage et al., 1998; Tooley and Darby, 1998), are likely to be formidable.

Other aspects of macro-environmental change might also be given greater attention than they are at present. For example, the RSA report on redefining work to which I have referred proposed the establishment of a Learning Institute. Among other functions, this would promote and support research on the learning needed by individuals to enable them to function effectively in all aspects of their lives, in a world in which the boundaries between work and non-work are likely to become more fluid (Bayliss, 1998). There seems a need for contributions on the leadership and management aspects of the coming changes.

A somewhat related point was made in the 1997 White Paper which contained a section on the government’s intention to encourage ‘research and development into schools of the future’ (DfEE, 1997: 43). It contrasted what it saw as the remarkable stability of the teaching and learning process with the dramatic pace of innovation in many other sectors:

New thinking about leadership and management, operational research, new uses of ICT and the ever-increasing pressure for high quality have led to a transformation in many knowledge-based industries. Teaching and learning should not be exempt from this revolution.

(DfEE, 1997: para. 22)

As with EAZs, the government appears here to be breaking out of the technical-rational mould.

It is worth making particular mention here of research on the relationship between information and communication technologies (ICT) and educational leadership and management. Numerous issues and aspects of this relationship could be explored but there appears to be almost no literature at all in this area, at least in the UK.
In summary, I would argue for future research to be more strongly focused on:

- the changing context, broadly defined, within which educational leaders and managers work, and
- the connections between leadership and management on the one hand and curricula and methods of teaching and learning—which may be about to undergo radical change—on the other hand.

**Conclusion: towards a redefinition**

In an era of high centralization and a dominant rationalistic paradigm, the field of educational leadership and management is becoming increasingly resource-dependent and facing growing pressures to play a purely technical role in both teaching and research. Institutional leaders are seen as conduits of government policy and the content of the field is beginning to be defined by government agencies rather than within the field itself. The challenge of retaining academic integrity and an appropriate degree of independence in these circumstances is a formidable one, but it must be addressed if our contribution is to be more than transitory.

This set of conditions calls for reflection, redefinition and repositioning. A start might be made by redefining the field’s relationship with the educational enterprise. By focusing on how educational management differs from general management, we have tended to define the field in terms of what it is not rather than what it is. Perhaps we need to reconnect with education, in respect of both:

- the processes of human learning and development (as distinct from the specific and limited concept of ‘the classroom’), and
- the changes which formal educational provision will undergo in response to macro-environmental and social forces in the years ahead.

The question to be considered might be stated thus (Boyd, 1992): ‘What is educational about educational management?’

**References**


THEORY


THE FIELD OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Studying maps and mapping studies

_Helen Gunter and Peter Ribbins_


The field of educational leadership is multi-site, in which those who study and practice leadership are located within networks which connect across institutions and sectors. Charting the growth of this dynamic field is the central purpose of this paper and six interconnected typologies of knowledge production are presented: Producers, Positions, Provinces, Practices, Processes and Perspectives. We argue that these typologies enable those involved to generate descriptions and understandings of the interplay between researching, theorising and practising in educational settings. This focus on knowledge production enables us to be mappers, to undertake mapping and to produce maps. These, we would stress, are all political processes through which we challenge what is said to be known and make our own claims to know. As such our agency to make choices within our practice as researchers, theorists, and practitioners is exercised within a complex setting of organisational, cultural and social structures.

1. Introduction

Enquiry into knowledge production in the field of educational leadership is a challenging but necessary project. The approach we have taken is to develop ways that make it possible to describe and understand those who produce knowledge, what they produce, why they produce it and where they produce it. We label this as a study of _mappers_ (who), _mapping_ (how, why and where), and _maps_ (what) and will outline our thinking through six typologies: Producers, Positions, Provinces, Practices, Processes, and Perspectives. These typologies can be used to describe and explain knowledge production but they also have the potential to support professional practice across all sites of educational activity.
More specially, they can enable questions and activity surrounding research, theory, policy and practice to be scoped and the choices that are made, along with orientations towards them, to be opened to scrutiny.

2. Knowledge production within the field of educational leadership

Leadership, as a field for study and an arena of practice, is a territory where networks around improvement, effectiveness, management and policy are engaging in a dialogue about purposes, theory and research, and hence are creating and testing boundaries. This is done in two main ways: through the activity of research and publication; and, through reviews of this activity and attempts to conceptualise the purposes of the activity. If we pragmatically focus on the study and practice of headship we can see how the first aspect is illustrated through research activity seeking to describe, understand and theorise the meaning of headteachers’ work. This has been done by headteachers (Barker, 1999; Rae, 1993), by headteachers who became professors (Hughes, 1973; Southworth, 1995), by professional researchers (Fullan, 1992; Hall, 1996) or within partnerships (Rayner and Ribbins, 1999; Tomlinson et al., 1999). In reviewing this activity we can see where work has been done and where more work is needed (e.g. Hall and Southworth, 1997).

Clusters have developed and as such the positions that have been adopted have been clarified through the promotion of distinct purposes, and formalised through labels, networks and journals. The field of educational leadership is a territory where those labelling their work as policy sociology, educational management, school effectiveness, and school improvement locate their activity (see Gunter, 2001). For example, boundaries have been drawn between education policy sociology and educational management, both in how they have described themselves and also each other. Both share a common intellectual heritage in the importance of the social sciences (Ball, 1990, 1995; Baron and Taylor, 1969; Bush, 1995; Glatter, 1979), but have sought to distinguish their approach to educational leadership from the late 1980s (Grace, 1995). The field of educational management in the UK sees itself as practitioner orientated through the production of better ways of knowing within day-to-day practice, and the development of longer-term perspectives through the description of practice and an understanding of that practice. This has not always been true of educational administration in the USA. From the early 1950s the field there was dominated by claims that a science of organisation and a profession of administration based on that science were about to be realised. Labelled the ‘New Movement’ (Hughes, 1985) or ‘Theory Movement’, it sought a grand theory of human behaviour, within which the theory of administration in education would be a sub-set, with the natural sciences providing the model (Griffiths, 1957, p. 388). This, as Greenfield, a critic, put it, meant: ‘The professor supplanted the practitioner as the source of valid knowledge
about administration. If practitioners did not know or accept they were no longer masters of the basic knowledge that underlay their craft, it did not matter . . . in educational administration . . . we need the scientist and his theory to interpret for us’ (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993, p. 3). By the 1960s doubts were raised. Schwab (1964, p. 47) dismissed ‘the pursuit of one sufficing theory of administration’ as ‘a manifest impossibility in the foreseeable future, and an uncritical aping of the wrong model’. And Griffiths admitted that, ‘the search for one encompassing theory (if anyone is searching) should be abandoned. . . . We have learnt a modest approach to theory pays off’ (in Baron et al., 1969, p. 166).

Members of the field of educational administration in higher education in the UK have generally resisted the blandishments of such grand theorising. In part, this is because most have begun their careers as practitioners in schools rather than as researchers in universities. They then shifted the location of their work because they wished to know more about that practice through research (Gunter, 1999a). In this sense the field is largely made up of those having a ‘practitioner-academic’ habitus (Gunter, 2002a) or a disposition towards working within and understanding the interplay between theory and practice. Conversely, educational policy sociologists tend to have biographies that lead them to more of an academic habitus where the emphasis is on understanding practice as a site of contested power relations through which the state delivers its goals.

While there are arguments that these two positions have compatible purposes (Bolam, 1999; Glatter, 1979) disputes over knowledge claims between the two areas of activity have focused on: first, who produces knowledge regarding educational leadership? Is it those who are involved actively in its practice or, as claimed by the advocates of the Theory Movement, is it professors engaged in studying it? Or is it a combination of both? (Ribbins and Sherratt, 1992). Second, how is such knowledge produced? Is it through theorising from the practice of role incumbents or through the use of theories of power from within the social sciences to explain the practice of role incumbents? Third, what forms can such knowledge take? Is it, as Eraut (1999) defines, meaning in ‘professional discourse’ ‘public knowledge’ or ‘private knowledge’ (sub-divided into ‘professional knowledge’ and ‘management knowledge’)? Fourth, where is knowledge produced? Is it through every day practice regarding what Eraut (1993) describes as ‘knowing how’ within action or is it through access to theories and case studies or ‘knowing that’? Fifth, what types of knowing are regarded as constituting the truth regarding the human condition? Are claims regarding this based on an objective view of the world in which procedures can be designed in order to gather data or is it based on a subjective orientation in which the world is constructed through practice and attributing meaning to that practice? Sixth, what do we know about the practice of educational leadership when in the doing of it much goes unrecognised and unrecorded? Are attempts to change practice based on what we know or on what is regarded by particular interests as normatively good practice? Seventh, how do we know about educa-
tional leadership? Is it through informal dialogue and reflection or through systematised research or both? Eighth, how do we bring our own perspectives into the generation of knowledge about educational leadership? How much weight do we give to our experience, to our intellectual heritage, to the demands of the current policy context, to the predictions of what the school of the future will be like?

3. Developing and using typologies

Questions of the kind listed above can tell us a lot about knowledge production because they identify points of difference and similarity regarding purpose, and demonstrate the importance of dialogue on position. When we listen to a lecture or read an article we are engaging in knowledge production, we can see that it is contested and can live within the problematics of what is and is not regarded as the truth and truthful. While there have been attempts to describe knowledge production, they usually focus on a particular aspect. They categorise producers of knowledge, or the types of knowledge being used, or the contexts in which knowledge producers produce knowledge. The scope of the task and the positioning of the knowledge worker tends to shape the focus of the study, and so while aspects of knowledge production are illuminated much can remain in darkness.

For example, Fitz (1999) identifies three types of knowledge producer – the academic, practitioner and entrepreneur – but overlooks the learner and community in knowledge production (Fielding, 1999; Ranson, 2000). Harries-Jenkins (1984, p. 215) catalogues knowledge as a series of approaches: comparative, organisational, managerial and environmental, without a full recognition of the users and producers of this knowledge of the kind Ball (1995) offers in his categorisation of policy science, policy scholarship and policy entrepreneurship. Thus while there is a tradition of categorising different types of knowledge, of knowledge producer, and of knowledge use, no conceptual typology is available designed to facilitate a dynamic approach to describing and understanding knowledge production. We have taken up this challenge not with a view to settling the border disputes, but to provide a framework through which knowledge production within and between these borders can be conducted and problematised.

Before turning to this, we should problematise ‘types’ and ‘typologies’. There are ‘tight’ definitions. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1993) defines ‘Typology’ as a ‘system of groupings … usually called types, the members of which are identified by postulating specified attributes that are mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive, groupings set up to aid demonstration or inquiry by establishing a limited relationship among phenomena’ (p. 89, our italics). There are also ‘loose’ definitions. For Mitchell (1979) ‘A typology is no more than a classification. A classification may be an ad hoc … where the categories are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive’ (p. 232, our italics).
For Hodgkinson (1996), typing: ‘is a very basic human instinct. It is a first attempt at imposing order upon a welter of experience so as to derive meaning and form. We cope with an excess of information by arranging its disorder into . . . schemes of meaning . . .’ (p. 89). It makes complex social life possible. On this Mennell (1974) recalls Schutz’s claim ‘that we experience the external world of things, people and events as typifications. Typifications are classifications and categorisations . . . we have to classify and group in order to organise reality, and that most of these typifications are socially learned and handed down to us . . . Any unique qualities are seen against a background of typification’ (p. 47).

Given this, as Hodgkinson (1996) argues, it is not surprising that: ‘In the study of administration the typing instinct has not been inactive. It has ranged from the trivial to the profound . . . Perhaps the most influential scheme has been Max Weber’s formulation of charismatic, traditional and rational-legalistic administration with their corresponding modes of leadership . . . [His] ideal types . . . facilitate . . . inquiry, research, philosophy and policy’ (p. 89). Schutz goes beyond Weber. As Mennell (1974) puts it, ‘one consequence of Schutz’s view of knowledge is that ideal-types no longer appear to be a methodological device peculiar to social science, as Max Weber implied, but an inherent feature of everyday knowledge . . . Weber’s famous ideal-types . . . then appear merely as highly formalised and unusually coherent typifications consciously created for sociological purposes’ (p. 47). In applying such ideas to the study of leadership, Hodgkinson (1996) points to an ‘overload of information and a surfeit of data’ and asks, ‘How can we make sense of this plethora?’ (p. 89). For him ‘real understanding . . . must be grounded in qualitative aspects of the human condition and a depth of understanding of human nature. This intellectual territory is vast and much of it is terra incognita but a first mapping may be achieved by using the techniques perfected by Max Weber . . . That is, by seeking ideal types as a first patterning of administrative modes. Taxonomy is the beginning of science’ (p. 90).

This approach can be interpreted in more than one way. As Sanders and Phiney (1983) put it, ‘Typologies are simply classificatory schema composed of two or more ideal or constructed types. Ideal types provide abstract categories in terms of which individual or group phenomena can be analysed. The difference between ideal type categories can be conceptualised as a gradual continuum or as discrete’ (p. 284). The notion of locating types within a continuum has informed key aspects of our own approach to field mapping, particularly on the identification of knowledge provinces. Culbertson (1981) contends that organisational theory faced a serious epistemological crisis related ‘to questions about the nature and validity of knowledge’ and we have been influenced by his solution through identifying ‘three scholarly traditions . . . contending for the allegiance of social science scholars and professors of educational administration . . . logical positivism, hermeneutics, and critical theory’ (p. 1). The contrasting features of each of these traditions in terms of their disciplinary links, major
authors, central purposes, significant outcomes, modes of generalisation, assumptions about knowledge, and criteria of validity are discussed. In challenging this model, Burnett (1981) claims that, ‘epistemologies of the types which Culbertson cites are ‘school epistemologies’, the distillation of thinkers each of which is considerably more complex than the distilled, composite version of their views . . . [and] profound contradictions are often discovered when one analyses the thoughts of one as opposed to another, of the thinkers within a given, composite view’ (p. 16). He also asks, ‘why just these three epistemologies?’ (p. 17).

These are forceful criticisms, somewhat diminished insofar as they would seem to apply with equal force to any approach to types and typing. On this Greenfield takes a pragmatic view that we share. In commenting on a Culbertson style typology proposed by Ribbins (1985) he acknowledges that: ‘No doubt there are methodologies or enquiry and positions about the truths of social reality that do not fit within this typology. It is nevertheless a good working beginning for anyone trying to understand what characterises and distinguishes the modes of enquiry in the field and what watersheds of assumption and world-views divide them’ (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993, p. 179). With this in mind, what is involved in Burnett’s criticisms and the assumptions on which they are based? Two seem pertinent. First, that any acceptable typology needs to be able to offer a satisfactory explanation of why the types that it identifies are both the best available and fully sufficient. Second, that each of the types it includes must be wholly discrete from each other and from all other possible types. These may seem reasonable expectations, but they assume, rather than seek to justify, the supposed merits of a ‘tight’ definition of types and typologies. We have opted for a ‘loose’ definition; and in doing so are content to settle for the modest merits that Greenfield is prepared to accord to a choice that is otherwise so determinedly non-Cartesian.

Against this backdrop we propose six typologies that facilitate the production of maps (see Figure 1). In doing this we have sought to strike a balance between the need to respect the complexity and dynamism of the field while at the same time creating a framework that is useful without being too elaborate. These typologies have a heuristic purpose and as such their categories are meant to illuminate rather than stifle, and to open up rather than create barriers. The typologies are meant to aid thought rather than replace it.

We propose that these approaches to categorising the field can be used to produce maps in the form of books, lectures, research projects etc.; the process of doing this we identify as mapping, and those who undertake this work we identify as mappers. This metaphor enables us to capture what it means to use and produce knowledge, and it facilitates questions about the past, present and future, while issues of purposes and direction can be foregrounded. Nevertheless it is possible that this type of work can be seen to be another example of indulgence by ‘wacky theorists’ (Woodhead, 2000), or a contribution to unproductive ‘paradigm wars’ (Oakley, 2000). We would position ourselves
differently, and like Alvesson and Willmott (1996) do not see critical evaluation as necessarily taking an oppositional stance but as creating spaces for dialogue about what we know and why we know it. Consequently, we are mindful of how our own agency and the structures we inhabit shape how we read and use such typologies. We have a disposition to draw on a multiplicity of intellectual resources including the philosophical (Ribbins, 2003a,b), critical (Gunter, 1997, 2001) and humanistic (Pascal and Ribbins, 1998; Rayner and Ribbins, 1999; Ribbins and Marland, 1994) and the use of qualitative methods (Gunter, 1999a,b; Ribbins, 1997; Ribbins, 2003c). The philosophical tradition within the field and our work gives us permission to speak out loud about our thoughts and ideas, and to be inconclusive. In other words, what we propose does and does not need to lead to immediate action, but could lead to a better understanding of the actions that have happened or could happen. Locating ourselves here means a rejection of what Popkewitz et al. (2001), drawing on Walter Benjamin, depict as:

*an empty history*: the picturing of a universal, boundless human progress associated with ideas of an infinite perfectibility, an additive viewpoint whose illusions are of a seemingly continuous movement from the past to the present, and whose methods have no theoretical armature.

(p. 4, authors’ own emphasis)

Instead history, ‘is the critical engagement of the present, by making its production of collective memories available for scrutiny and revision’ (p. 4). Work on issues of social injustice such as gender (Blackmore, 1999; Hall, 1996) means the authoring process is more open to scrutiny and the values on
which choices are made can be displayed so readers can position themselves within the account.

4. Typologies of knowledge production in the field of educational leadership

(i) Provinces

We have identified six provinces, as illustrated in Figure 2.

The identification of these provinces is based on an analysis of the publication outputs of the field (Bush et al., 1999; Gunter, 2001), producing clusters around differentiated approaches to purpose. Knowledge provinces mean what is being asserted as constituting the truth underpinning the intention behind any leadership activity. These provinces have been placed along a continuum – with the conceptual at one end and the instrumental at the other – that symbolises praxis. All six are places where theory and practice are central to field activity but the emphasis and disclosure of purpose varies. For example, those to the left of the continuum put more emphasis on understanding doing, while those to the right are more concerned with particular types of doing. This paper is a map of the field and in producing it we have drawn on the knowledge claims underpinning the conceptual and critical provinces. We are both investigating issues of ontology and epistemology within the field and producing a dialogue regarding the contested nature of the issues. We are taking action through the production of typologies, and are commenting on action by identifying the dominance of the evaluative and instrumental knowledge claims in the field.

(ii) Practices

The experience and understanding of everyday practice and how that activity can be challenged and developed is a core purpose of the field. The question is how the six knowledge provinces interconnect with questions of what we know of practice. By juxtaposing Figure 2 with the practice of leaders, leading and leadership we can generate the questions which are central to our interrogation and understanding of current and possible practice. What is described as past, current and possible practice of educational leaders by themselves and/or by others is too vast to engage with fully in this paper. However, we are mindful that educational leadership should be located in an educational setting, be about educational practice, and be intrinsically educative. Therefore we have adopted the ‘components of the process’ of effective school leadership identified by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000, p. 144) in Figure 3 to produce a typology of leadership practice.

The knowledge worker can use Figure 3 to read authors, publications and key issues, and/or draw on it to view current practice through research. For example, we would expect to see recognition of research in the critical domain that
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<th>Conceptual</th>
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<th>Instrumental</th>
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<tr>
<td>Concerned with issues of ontology and epistemology, and with conceptual clarification.</td>
<td>Seeks to provide a factual report, often in some detail, of one or more aspects of, or factors, relating to leaders, leading and leadership.</td>
<td>Seeks to gather and theorise from the experiences and biographies of those who are leaders and managers and those who are managed and led.</td>
<td>Concerned to reveal and emancipate practitioners from injustice and oppression of established power structures.</td>
<td>Concerned to measure the impact of leadership and its effectiveness of micro, meso, and macro levels of interaction.</td>
<td>Seeks to provide leaders and others with effective strategies and tactics to deliver organisational and system level goals.</td>
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*Figure 2* Knowledge provinces in the field of educational leadership (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003).
focuses on evidence, descriptions and explanations of how and why gender has an impact on how and why leadership has been experienced as a power structure. This is in contrast with work in the evaluative domain that can show the emphasis on isolating and using organisational variables to measure impact on outcomes.

Using the knowledge provinces to interrogate what is presented as an effective model of school leadership enables a strategic overview of knowledge claims. Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) present evidence regarding the importance of leadership and in particular the primacy of the headteacher in effective school leadership. However, the conceptual, descriptive, humanistic and critical enables us to ask questions that generate understandings about whether effective school leadership is educational leadership. We can also ask whether a model generated from distilling the findings from work done at different times and in different nation states and cultures can be transferred to other settings. The language of instructional leadership could suggest that the headteacher is directly located in contextualised teaching and learning, and yet the research evidence that this approach draws on (Murphy, 1990) characterises it in organisational terms, and is North American. Instructional leadership is about goal setting, resource allocation, the creation and maintenance of a performance culture, and enabling participation by stake-holders. This is the type of generic organisational leadership that is rooted in business management rather than educational leadership.

(iii) Processes

Understanding the processes by which knowledge is produced is more than a methodological issue, and needs to take into account the use and production of knowledge within practice. Figure 4 juxtaposes the six knowledge provinces with the methods by which effective leadership is currently being researched.

Instrumental approaches are a synthesis of ‘interesting’ findings usually combined into a convincing strategy for enabling change to happen. In contrast, evaluative approaches put emphasis on quantitative measurement, while humanistic approaches seek to gather experiential accounts through qualitative methods. Increasingly, quantitative methods through randomised controlled trials are being favoured and the literature is being read and weighed in the form of systematic reviews. It is intended that this type of work will support evidence-informed practice where practitioners have access to what works, and so can make the right decisions regarding how to teach and facilitate learning. This positions practitioners as secular consumers of knowledge that they can efficiently and effectively purchase commercially to change their practice. We would argue for a wider understanding of consumption where the emphasis is on how the user of knowledge is knowledgeable and is a producer of new knowledge (Ribbins and Gunter, 2003). We raise these matters because work that is conceptual, critical and humanistic is in danger of being marginalised as supposedly lacking relevance, rigour and validity. This is so because knowledge
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<tr>
<th>Effective school leadership</th>
<th>Conceptual</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Humanistic</th>
<th>Critical</th>
<th>Evaluative</th>
<th>Instrumental</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being firm and purposeful</strong></td>
<td>What does it mean to be firm and purposeful?</td>
<td>What do we see when we witness being firm and purposeful?</td>
<td>What experiences have those in educational organisations had of being firm and purposeful or working with those who are being firm and purposeful?</td>
<td>In what ways is being firm and purposeful an exercise of power both by and of the person?</td>
<td>What impact does being firm and purposeful have on organisational outcomes?</td>
<td>What are the strategies needed to be firm and purposeful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Involving others in the Process</strong></td>
<td>What does it mean to involve others?</td>
<td>What do we see when others are being involved?</td>
<td>What experiences have those in educational organisations had of being involved and involving others?</td>
<td>In what ways is involving others a means of sustaining or challenging existing power structures? Can others be excluded by processes of involvement?</td>
<td>What impact does involving others have on organisational outcomes?</td>
<td>What are the strategies that determine the successful involvement of others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exhibiting Instructional Leadership</strong></td>
<td>What does it mean to know and show instructional leadership?</td>
<td>What are the characteristics of exhibiting instructional leadership?</td>
<td>What are the experiences of instructional leadership and how does it work out in practice?</td>
<td>What impact does instructional leadership have on organisational outcomes?</td>
<td>What are the strategies needed to implement instructional leadership, and how can compliance be secured?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequent Personal Monitoring</td>
<td>What is monitoring and how does the process and the data collected interplay with rights and duties?</td>
<td>What do those who do frequent and personal monitoring do, and what do those who are frequently and personally monitored do?</td>
<td>What are the experiences of monitoring, and how is frequently and personally understood and lived?</td>
<td>What are the social justice issues (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity) of frequent and personal monitoring?</td>
<td>How do we use data generated from monitoring to measure organisational outcomes, and how do we handle frequent and personal as variables?</td>
<td>What are the attributes and skills needed to practice frequent and personal monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selecting and Replacing staff</td>
<td>What are the moral issues in knowing how to select and replace staff?</td>
<td>What happens when staffing matters are dealt with?</td>
<td>What experiences have agents had in staffing issues in their own career and that of others?</td>
<td>What power structures and cultures are visible in selecting and replacing staff?</td>
<td>What are the most cost effective and organisationally rational selection processes?</td>
<td>What are the strategies for the organisationally effective and efficient selection and replacement of staff?</td>
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*Figure 3* Thinking about the practice of educational leadership.
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<tr>
<th>Effective leadership</th>
<th>Conceptual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being firm and purposeful</td>
<td>How do we know about the interplay between being firm and doing involvement?</td>
<td>How do we record the complexities of effective school leadership in practice?</td>
<td>How do we capture and describe experiences?</td>
<td>How do we use theories of power and engage in theorising to understand and explain effective leadership within the policy context?</td>
<td>How do we measure and predict the impact of variables on organisational outcomes?</td>
<td>How do we identify and distil published evidence to produce simple models and bullet points?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involving others in the process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exhibiting instructional leadership</td>
<td>What part does reading, thinking, and dialogue place in the creation of knowing about effective leadership?</td>
<td>How and why do we use case studies of individuals through observation and ethnographic approaches?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequent, personal monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selecting and replacing staff</td>
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*Figure 4* Researching effective leadership.
production that draws on these knowledge provinces is based on the complexities of what we know and is enriched by analysis of how and why we come to know it: the choices we make, what we accept and what we discount, what we store and what we forget. These knowledge provinces are more about conceptually informed practice where we can and cannot witness intellectual work, where practice is and is not immediate, where context does and does not shape outcomes (Gunter, 2001).

(iv) Positions

We identify five positions knowledge workers can inhabit: training, consultancy, expertise, intellectual work and citizenship. Training is a position where there is no direct association with an explicit ideology and the model of pedagogy is facilitation. Learners as knowers are given opportunities to display their knowledge rather than have knowledge transmitted to them. Nevertheless, the learning process is highly structured and controlled by the facilitator. In consultancy a particular belief system is usually adopted but this may not be made explicit because the emphasis is on enabling others to improve their work. Learning is about reflecting on current practice as a means of accepting the new strategies provided through consultancy. Research and theory are played down in the training and consultancy positions; if evidence and ideas are used they tend to be located in the instrumental and evaluative provinces. Expertise is a position where the emphasis is on providing evidence and argument promoting particular solutions; its pedagogic model is to inform others. Learning is through engaging with this knowledge and transferring it into practice. Research is amplified in this position with the use and production of empirical data from a range of methodologies, leading to theorising in the form of models of good practice. In the positions presented so far the stress is on presenting the self as politically neutral and so seeks to disconnect the individual and group from the political, and contrast with the two next positions which are overtly political and social.

Intellectual work is concerned with providing evidence and argument about fundamental questions in society. The emphasis is on praxis, and within this the self is politically committed. The pedagogic model is focused on mediating between theorising from practice and using theories developed by the social sciences. Learning is engaging with these ideas, and building a commitment to a political position. Research is a key aspect of this position through the use and production of empirical data combined with insights and argument based on judgement and discretion. Citizenship is a position with an explicit commitment to democratic practice. Pedagogy is a political commitment to develop citizenship and the identity of being a citizen. Learning is a social and socialising process through dialogue, listening, challenge and agreement. The skills associated with research and theorising are a prerequisite for effective citizenship so that evidence, argument, and knowledge can be described, understood and evaluated.
Figure 5 presents how we might begin to characterise the possible positions that have been, currently are, or could be taken up around the production and use of knowledge regarding the Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) model of effective school leadership.

The emphasis in Figure 5 is on doing the knowledge work rather than being a trainer, consultant, expert or intellectual, though it is the case that knowledge workers do seek to explain what they do by titling (or typing) the self or are titled (typed) by others. It is possible to inhabit all the positions within professional practice at once and/or over time. In asking questions about effective school leadership then we need to ask where those arguing for or against it locate their work, and for what purpose. The positions that are becoming very crowded are those of training and consultancy, and we need to recognise that there are other positions than that of training teachers to implement effective school leadership. In particular, if headteachers and others in schools need to develop effective educational leadership, how do we develop alternative models to that produced by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) if we are herded into particular positions (e.g. training and consultancy) and we are so over worked that the other positions remain out of our reach? If some positions are in the ascendancy and others in decline we need to ask why this is the case and what the implications are for knowledge production.

(v) Producers

Researching educational leadership needs to be understood through questions about who the knowers are, what they claim to know, why they know, how they claim to know, who legitimises their knowing. A central feature of the field is that it is multi-site and hence inclusive of a range of practitioners from schoolteacher to administrative officer, and from researcher to policy maker. We have argued elsewhere that there has been a tendency to downgrade knowledge producers in universities, and to focus on role incumbents (particularly heads) in schools as the authentic knowers (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003; Ribbins et al., 2003). Not only does this fracture the culture and practice of partnerships between schools/colleges and universities in professional development and research, but it also perpetuates exclusion as a strategy within knowledge production. By labelling one part of the field as irrelevant to practice does not help the case to be made for others in the field to be given more recognition. We would want to argue that parents, students and wider communities are a part of the field and are knowers about educational leadership.

Knower identities are a complex matter, and there are many identities an individual may inhabit that shape how s/he sees themselves as being and doing. An individual may be a school governor, a teacher, a parent, local councillor and church-goer to name but a few. In addition to these functional identities there are social, historical, cultural and economic ones such as class, race, age, sexual orientation and gender. We can best understand this through the interplay of
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>What does it mean to train role incumbents to be effective school leaders?</td>
<td>What do we see when training is taking place?</td>
<td>What are the experiences of those being trained and doing training? process?</td>
<td>How and why is power exercised in the training process?</td>
<td>How do we create a training package to guarantee effective school leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy</td>
<td>What is the relationship between the person as consultant and the person as client?</td>
<td>What do we see when consultancy is taking place?</td>
<td>What are the experiences of consultancy? How has practice been influenced and developed?</td>
<td>How and why is power exercised in the consultancy process?</td>
<td>How do we create a model of consultancy that guarantees client satisfaction and organisational improvement?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expertise</td>
<td>What does it mean for knowledge to be expertise?</td>
<td>What do we see when expertise is being shown?</td>
<td>What are the experiences of expertise? How has this impacted on practice?</td>
<td>How and why is power exercised within expertise?</td>
<td>How do we package expertise that enables efficient use of effective school leadership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual work</td>
<td>What, how and why do we come to know through doing intellectual work?</td>
<td>What do we see when intellectual work is taking place?</td>
<td>What are the experiences of intellectual work? How has this impacted on practice?</td>
<td>How and why is power exercised through intellectual work?</td>
<td>How can we use the outcomes of intellectual work to design models of effective school leadership?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>What, how and why do we come to know through citizenship?</td>
<td>What do we see when citizenship is taking place?</td>
<td>What are the experiences of citizenship? How has this impacted on practice?</td>
<td>How and why is power exercised through citizenship?</td>
<td>How can we identify the best model of citizenship that guarantees effective school leadership?</td>
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*Figure 5* Positions in knowledge production.
agency and structure. The agency of the person to engage in effective leadership depends on their dispositions to do so and how structures support or stifle this. If we view effective leadership from the vista of headteacher identity within a school then there is a direct interest in and more direct experience of practice compared with a parent who may not acknowledge their role in and contribution to effective school leadership. Furthermore, effective school leadership as defined by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) is organisational in relation to purposes and activity, while other approaches could characterise effective school leadership from the point of view of the wider community. Figure 6 presents a selection of possible identities and juxtaposes them with the knowledge provinces, and this enables issues regarding the dimensions involved in describing and understanding knowledge producers to be developed.

(vi) Perspectives

The development of maps is a road well travelled. We are building on an intellectual tradition of debating knowledge claims in the UK (Baron and Taylor, 1969; Bush et al., 1999; EMA, 1999; Gunter, 1997). As a field of study, educational leadership and management has drawn on various disciplines including philosophy and history, but it is the social sciences, especially sociology, that have dominated perspectives on knowledge and knowing. These perspectives are political and powerful constructs. In tracing the emergence of the field we can see how the validity of the social sciences is central to its legitimacy for professional researchers (Baron, 1979), and researching professionals (Hughes et al., 1985). We can conceptualise and argue that a thesis, or an article, or a book is a map or even make claims for it being the map. Certainly we need to give recognition to work over time that has captured field purposes at a particular time and made recommendations for future directions (for example, see Baron (1979) on research, and Hall (1999) on how gender needs to feature within research aims and practices). However, we also need to consider how maps of the field of educational leadership are not abstracted outcomes of knowledge production but are deeply embedded within it. This is not just an issue for how professional researchers and writers make transparent the published knowledge they are drawing from and building on, but also the position they take in making selections to include and exclude. What we are raising here is how we bring to our practice at one and the same time the pre-developed maps of practitioners and researchers that can be full or partial, or explored or unexplored. Therefore when we are in particular contexts such as a meeting, a research interview or a training session then maps are in use and are being drawn and redrawn through knowledge production. By juxtaposing producers, positions, provinces, practices and processes we can both enquire into the use and production of knowledge within real time, real life action, and into the published research that seeks to describe, explain and theorise action. In this way we can show the integration of theory and practice, and remove the dichotomy that not only fails us as
<table>
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<th>Selected identities</th>
<th>Conceptual</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Student</strong></td>
<td>What does it mean for a student to be involved in effective school leadership?</td>
<td>When students are in school, what do we see taking place?</td>
<td>What experiences have students had of effective school leadership?</td>
<td>Does effective school leadership discipline or emancipate students?</td>
<td>How do we measure the impact of effective school leadership on student outcomes?</td>
<td>How do we provide strategies to guarantee student compliance with effective school leadership?</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Is this educational leadership?</td>
<td>Is it effective school leadership?</td>
<td>Have they experienced other types of leadership and how has this affected their approach to effective school leadership?</td>
<td>How can research and theory help identify other models?</td>
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<td>Do we see other aspects of leadership not covered by the model?</td>
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<td><strong>Teacher</strong></td>
<td>What does it mean for a teacher who is not a role incumbent to be involved in effective school leadership?</td>
<td>When a teacher is engaged in professional practice, what do we see taking place that is effective school leadership?</td>
<td>What experiences have teachers had of effective school leadership?</td>
<td>Does effective leadership discipline or emancipate teachers?</td>
<td>How do we measure the impact of effective school leadership on teacher performance?</td>
<td>How do we provide strategies to guarantee teacher compliance with effective school leadership?</td>
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<td>Selected identities</td>
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<td><strong>Headteacher</strong></td>
<td>What does Teddlie and Reynolds model of effective school leadership mean for the headteacher?</td>
<td>When a headteacher is engaged in professional practice what do we see taking place that is effective school leadership?</td>
<td>What experiences have headteachers had of effective school leadership?</td>
<td>Is the headteacher as an effective school leader being disciplined or emancipated through the exercise of power?</td>
<td>How do we measure the impact of effective school leadership on headteacher performance and organisational outcomes?</td>
<td>How do we provide strategies to guarantee headteacher compliance with the model of effective school leadership?</td>
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<td>Does it enhance or limit educational leadership?</td>
<td>Do we see other aspects of leadership not covered by the model?</td>
<td>Have they experienced other types of leadership, and how has this affected their approach to effective school leadership?</td>
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<td><strong>Parent</strong></td>
<td>What does it mean for a parent to be involved in effective school leadership? Is this type of leadership supportive or contradictory to parenting as leadership?</td>
<td>When parents are going about their daily lives what do we see that is effective school leadership?</td>
<td>What experiences have parents had of effective school leadership?</td>
<td>Does effective school leadership discipline or emancipate parents?</td>
<td>How do we measure the impact of the headteacher’s effective school leadership on parental involvement in school?</td>
<td>How do we provide strategies to guarantee parent compliance with effective school leadership?</td>
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<td>How does their experience of their work place affect their interpretation of effective school leadership?</td>
<td>How can research and theory help identify other models?</td>
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<td>Professor</td>
<td>What does a professional researcher know about effective school leadership?</td>
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<td>What knowledge claims underpin their work and why?</td>
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<td>When a professional researcher observes professional practice what data is collected and what judgements are made about effective school leadership?</td>
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<td>What other research have they done on other models and how has this affected their work?</td>
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<td>What research have professional researchers done regarding the power structures underpinning effective school leadership?</td>
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<td>What research have professional researchers done on measuring the impact of effective school leadership?</td>
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<td>What research have professional researchers done to provide strategies to secure compliance to the model of effective school leadership?</td>
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*Figure 6* Knowledge producers.
knowledge workers, but also enables political positioning to privilege one type of knowing from another.

5. The onward journey

We have reached a stage in our work where some questions might usefully be generated to stimulate discussion:

**Provinces:** are the six knowledge provinces the only ones or might there be others? We would want to continue to challenge our reading of the published maps of the field and to interrogate the knowledge claims regarding how assumptions about praxis underpin them.

**Practices:** how do we engage with educational leaders, leading and leadership as distinct from leaders, leading and leadership in effective educational institutions? We are concerned here to continue to ask what is educational and educative about leadership in educational institutions because it enables us to challenge the politically motivated importation of generic models.

**Processes:** how might we use our typologies to enable the development of systematic reviews? We are concerned here with how our typologies can enable the identification and development of a review question to be more scholarly and hence systematic. Furthermore, we would argue that our typologies provide understandings of research methodologies and methods that generate alternative ways of knowing to those produced by systematic reviews.

**Positions:** how might we understand the movement between positions, and the choices that are made in professional practice? We are concerned here with the interplay between agency and structure, and how choices are made regarding what is and is not appropriate practice and how this links to the formation and development of identities.

**Producers:** how might we develop a more inclusive approach to knowledge production by embracing students, parents and wider communities? We are concerned here with the democratisation of knowledge production, and how we give recognition to and facilitate knowledge used and produced in these complex networks of interactions and processes.

**Perspectives:** how can we create spaces and places where pre-developed maps (in our minds, practices, disciplines, publications) can be accessed and critically analysed? We are concerned here to see maps as living and dynamic knowledge that are open to scrutiny and to development.

A fundamental issue underlying the thinking we have done is how power is conceptualised and informs our understandings of educational organisations. Much
more has to be done. In doing so educational leadership needs to be put into the context in which our attempt to exercise agency as practitioners and as researchers is being shaped and structured. There are preferred models, effective school leadership is a current example, and we should ask how they are being configured, who by and why, and which types of research and practice are being airbrushed out.

6. Notes
1 A fuller account of the development of the typologies is in Ribbins and Gunter (2002) and Gunter and Ribbins (2002).
2 See Gunter and Ribbins (2002, 2003) for a fuller account of the development and use of the maps, mapping and mapper metaphor.
3 In this paper we engage with a conceptual approach to the development of the typologies but do not directly address the theorising of the practice of field members and how we might explain knowledge production. For this see Gunter (1999b, 2000, 2001, 2002a).

7. References
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THEORY


THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Meredydd Hughes


Introduction

Theory and practice are uneasy, uncomfortable bedfellows, particularly when one is attempting to understand the complexities of human behaviour in organisational settings, and still more so if the purpose in seeking to achieve such insight is to influence and improve the practice.

Such issues have been faced for nearly a century in industrial management and public administration. The main traditions in these areas are considered in the first section of the chapter, ending with a brief review of their application in education.

A sustained attempt to develop an explicit theory of educational management or administration, which was initiated in the USA in the late 1950s, is then considered because of the challenging and innovative way in which it sought to tackle the relationship of theory and practice. Later development in the UK and in other parts of the world, both developed and developing, has inevitably been influenced, whether positively or negatively, by the US experience.

The third section of the chapter adopts a more catholic and flexible approach and seeks to show the kind of theorising within the social sciences on which contemporary students of educational management are able to draw. An attempt is made to examine in some depth the extent to which the ever-present challenge to lessen the gap between theory and practice has led to the development of new perspectives, which provide different kinds of insight, helpful to participants in appreciating the complexities of the diverse facets of organisational experience.

The final section briefly reviews the continuing tension between theory and practice, which is seen as an opportunity for further development rather than as a cause for despair.
The empirical roots of traditional management studies

It has often been noted that the pioneering works on the management and functioning of organisations were written by engineers, managers and industrial consultants who were very familiar with the practical problems encountered in operating large productive organisations. There were later developments on similar lines in business management and in public administration, but it was the managers of industry who first sought to derive management principles of general application from their personal experience in factories and foundries. Some of the milestones celebrated in traditional management texts will be briefly mentioned.

The scientific management movement of Frederick Taylor

The leading figure of the scientific management movement, which was influential in the early decades of the century, was Frederick Taylor. He trained as a mechanical engineer and rose from labourer to foreman, and then to chief engineer at a US steelworks, subsequently becoming a management consultant. In his definitive work Taylor (1911) called for a systematic study of working practices to discover the most efficient means of performing every task, and a corresponding study of management to determine the most efficient means of controlling the workers. Such ‘scientific’ management, resulting in low labour costs and high wages, would be in the interest of both employers and workers, and would lead, it was claimed, to the general elimination of all causes of dispute between them.

Taylor favoured time and motion studies, involving systematic observation and measurement of workers, coupled with incentive payment schemes. He applied similar ideas to management also, insisting on the advantages of maximum specialisation and separation of functions. All organisational members, in his view, could be regarded as essentially rational beings who, with appropriate instructions and agreed incentives, could be expected to operate like machines to increase productivity.

The scientific management movement had many supporters, and Taylor’s methods achieved wide currency on both sides of the Atlantic. They also gave rise to bitter resistance and controversy among those who regarded his analysis of human motivation as inadequate and crude, so that the pejorative overtones of the term ‘scientific management’ are still not entirely dispelled.

Classical management theory

A number of writers, also from a practitioner background, developed a more general analysis of organisations than is implied in scientific management. An early example was a French mining engineer, Henri Fayol, whose major work (Fayol 1916) was the outcome of thirty years’ experience as an industrial managing
director. He defined the fundamental elements of management as being ‘to forecast and plan, to organise, to command, to coordinate and to control’. Pugh, Hickson and Hinings (1971, p. 65) identify him as the earliest known proponent of a theoretical analysis of management activities. He formulated what have become known as Fayol’s general principles of management, which begin with an insistence on division of work and specialisation and end by proclaiming the desirability of management actively fostering the morale of employees.

Fayol’s writings on management may be described as classical both for their concern with form and structure and because of their emphasis on management principles of general application. He has been praised for his clarity and criticised for his apparent rigidity and authoritarianism. Baker (1980, p. 15) perceived him as a kind of Napoleon of industrial and general organisation theory: ‘immensely creative in opening up clear straight lines through hitherto not easily penetrable jungles; and hence, like Napoleon, stimulating the creativity of others’.

Among those others was Colonel Urwick in Britain, who drew substantially on Fayol’s work and on his own military experience in his treatment of principles of administration (Urwick 1947). In the USA James Mooney, a General Motors vice-president, and Luther Gulick, a prominent public administrator, were among the enthusiastic advocates of general management principles. Gulick (1937), in a volume which he edited jointly with Urwick, described the work of a top executive as consisting of seven distinct tasks: planning, organising, staffing, directing, co-ordinating, reporting, and budgeting. In countless management lecture rooms these have since been recalled by means of the well known acronym, POSDCORB.

It may be noted that the readiness with which the generalisations of Fayol and other classical writers were widely and uncritically accepted owed much to their impeccable practitioner credentials. Their robust and wide-ranging commonsense pronouncements, relying more on individual personal experience than on systematic study, were usually expressed clearly and authoritatively. They gave little attention, however, to constraints and qualifications, or to the conditions which would need to be satisfied for their propositions to be of value in predicting future performance. They were pioneers whose confident generalisations provided a basis for conceptual clarification and further refinement.

Organisations as bureaucracies

The word ‘bureaucracy’, which may be traced back to pre-revolutionary France of the mid-eighteenth century (Albrow 1970, p. 16 ff.), belongs to a different world, the world of government departments. It referred to the rule of officials in public administration, and was discussed in such terms by a succession of writers, including John Stuart Mill. Described as ‘the giant power wielded by pigmies’, bureaucracy was both popularised and castigated by Balzac (1836) in his novel, Les Employés.
In the late nineteenth century the German sociologist and jurist, Max Weber, offered a succinct and influential statement of the essentials of a bureaucracy which had a profound influence on later writers on organisation, and was in close accord with the ideas independently promulgated by the classical management writers. As conceived by Weber (1947), a bureaucracy has the following characteristics:

a. a clear-cut division of labour leading to specialisation;
b. a hierarchical authority structure, the scope of such authority being specified;
c. a comprehensive system of rules and regulations to ensure uniformity and continuity in organisational decisions;
d. impersonal relationships among officials and between officials and clients;
e. employment and advancement based on objective criteria.

Underlying Weber’s classic formulation is a concept of authority which is legal and rational, carefully distinguished by Weber from both charismatic authority, which is dependent on the personal quality of the leader, and from traditional authority, which is based on custom and precedent. In contrast to social groupings involving charismatic and traditional authority, a bureaucracy, according to Weber, can be relied upon to ensure rational decision-making which is neither arbitrary nor compromised by inappropriate and irrelevant considerations.

Silverman (1970, p. 74) has suggested that it was ‘in an uncharacteristic moment of dogmatism’ not typical of Weber’s general emphasis on understanding and interpreting the subjective meaning of situations to individuals, that Weber boldly asserted that bureaucracy is the most efficient form of administrative organisation. The claim was not based on empirical research, and it has been noted by several commentators (e.g. Blau and Scott 1963, p. 34) that Weber’s characterisation of bureaucracy was intended as a conceptual construct or ‘ideal type’ rather than as a composite description of actual organisations.

Whereas Weber was concerned to explain the contribution of formal structure to efficient organisational functioning (and may thus be regarded as adopting a ‘structural–functionalist’ viewpoint, as described by Ribbins in Chapter 9), subsequent research and theoretical analysis (Gouldner 1955; Merton 1957; Blau and Scott 1963) have focused attention in contrast on the dysfunctional consequences of bureaucracy, which are more apparent to the general public. Some later empirical studies, as will be noted, have questioned more basically the unitary assumptions of the ideal-type conceptualisation. These further developments, however, in no way diminish the intellectual power of Max Weber’s precise and perceptive characterisation of bureaucracy rooted in the world of European officialdom, or lessen the profound and far-reaching influence it has exerted indirectly on society in general and, more specifically, on the thinking of both practising administrators and organisational theorists.
Human relations perspectives

It could be argued that the tenets of scientific management, the general principles of the classical management writers and the impersonal structures of bureaucratic theory give only cursory recognition of the fact that organisations basically consist of people with varied personalities, purposes and perceptions. The Human Relations Movement, which developed and gained recognition within industrial management in the 1920s and 1930s, was a conscious attempt to redress the balance and modify the emphasis of the earlier theorists.

The research conducted by Elton Mayo and his associates from 1927 to 1932 at the Hawthorne Plant of the Western Electrical Company in Chicago has been frequently cited and is well documented (Mayo 1933; Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939). Mayo concluded that the relationship of workers with management and each other may be more significant in affecting productivity than the streamlined procedures and incentive schemes proposed by Taylor or the rational management principles advocated by the classical theorists. The potent influence of informal groups on motivation and behaviour came to be appreciated, so that organisational goals were modified in practice through the pressure on members of their peers’ expectations.

The concept of informal organisation, defined as ‘the aggregate of the personal contacts and interactions and associated groupings of people’, was introduced by Barnard (1938, p. 115) as a necessary concomitant of every formal organisation. In an influential text on the functions of the executive, based on his experience in commerce and government, Barnard’s emphasis was on teamwork and communication: ‘Authority depends upon a co-operative personal attitude of individuals on the one hand; and the system of communication in the organisation on the other’ (1938, p. 175). Paradoxically, he also referred to a need for managers to indoctrinate those at the lower levels with general purposes and major decisions (p. 233). In order to strengthen the influence of the formal organisation, he suggested, the informal organisation should be manipulated by management through friendship ties and deliberate leaks of information.

Not surprisingly Barnard has been criticised for the basic inconsistency in his approach (Perrow 1970; Greenfield 1975; Burrell and Morgan 1979). More broadly, his work provides an apt illustration of two general criticisms which can be made of the human relations approach: first, that because of a managerial bias human relations adherents tend to disregard genuine conflicts of interest between workers and their employers (Clegg and Dunkerley 1980, p. 134); and second, that human relations studies tend to ignore external factors such as mobility aspirations, market forces and union membership (Silverman 1970, p. 76).

On the other hand, human relations theory may be regarded in retrospect as an approach which directed attention to important personal variables in organisations, which had previously been neglected. As such the theory has been seen, particularly by practitioners, to provide a valuable corrective to views of
management which rely exclusively on the abstractions of organisational charts and bureaucratic structures.

Management ideas applied to education

In a subtle and pervasive way the management ideas briefly indicated in preceding sections have become part of the intellectual currency of our time. Most people will readily appreciate what is involved in time and motion studies, lines of command and faceless bureaucracy, and a good number will be familiar with the Hawthorne effect. Those with responsibilities in educational management during the last half-century or so are likely to have had a broad familiarity with the main issues involved, though probably few of them would have studied the texts of industrial management or public administration. It is of interest to note some examples of educational management practice which may be regarded as anticipating, or more frequently echoing, the management traditions which have been described.

The level of funding of the new elementary schools in England and Wales in the latter part of the nineteenth century depended directly on the performance of pupils in oral and written examinations administered by HM Inspectors. The resulting slogan, 'payment by results', was in common usage some thirty years before Frederick Taylor’s workers’ incentive schemes, but was very much in the spirit of scientific management. The mounting opposition to the scheme, which finally led to its abandonment by the turn of the century, may be compared to the resistance often engendered by scientific management crudely applied in industrial concerns.

In the USA, performance-based accountability in education came a little later, as Callahan (1962) has shown in fascinating detail. It was evidently as committed advocates both of scientific management, and of the wholesale application of general principles of management to education, that the early professors of educational administration, Bobbitt, Spaulding and Cubberley, gained nationwide recognition. According to Cubberley (1916, p. 338), education had to have its corps of efficiency experts like ‘every manufacturing establishment that turns out a standard product or series of products’, while ‘it is the business of the school to build its pupils according to the specifications laid down’.

Such ideas might nowadays be regarded as crude and simplistic. It is salutary to note, however, that some of the thining about assessing educational outcomes—which has led to competency-based training for educational administrators in North America (Lipham 1975; Project ASK 1980) and to the progressive development of objective testing techniques in Britain on lines already well established in the USA (Becher and Maclure 1978; Holt 1981)—is essentially similar to that of the scientific management advocates of the early years of the twentieth century.

An updated version of Taylorism is also (arguably) implicit in recent detailed studies of managerial activities in industry, as Hodgkinson (1978, p. 17) sug-
gested in commenting on Mintzberg’s (1973) influential study, which involved the intensive systematic observation of five chief executives. Similar studies in education, mainly relying for their data on diary entries (Webb and Lyons 1982), on structured interviews (Jenkins 1983) and on structured observation (Martin and Willower 1981; Duignan 1980; Willis 1980; Thomas, Willis and Phillips 1981) respectively, have all drawn to some extent on Mintzberg’s work. They provided support in an educational context for his conclusion that managers are not reflective planners, and that their activities ‘are characterised by brevity, variety and fragmentation . . . with the trivial interspersed with the consequential’ (Mintzberg 1973, p. 51). The observational studies, which followed Mintzberg in incorporating a time-study element, were among those criticised by Gronn (1982; 1984) for introducing ‘Neo-Taylorism’ into educational management, a charge rebutted by Willower (1983). From the lively interchange between the two writers it may at least be concluded that the ideas of Frederick Taylor are still meaningful in current controversy.

A similar conclusion may be reached concerning Max Weber’s ideas about bureaucracy. Over the years, the terms bureaucracy and bureaucratic, which are almost invariably used pejoratively by frustrated participants, have been found relevant in describing the functioning of educational systems and institutions. Schools and colleges, particularly if they are large, conform to a considerable degree to Weber’s specification of bureaucracy, as judged by their division of work, their hierarchical structures, their rules and regulations, their impersonal procedures and their employment practices based on technical criteria (Anderson 1968; Jones 1974).

Adopting a historical perspective, Musgrove (1971) has written of the advantages of bureaucracy in education, and has argued that the bureaucratisation of schools has given more dignity and power both to school heads and to assistant staff (p. 98). It has been shown that some aspects of bureaucracy, such as the precise definition of individual responsibilities, are not necessarily unwelcome to school staff (Hughes 1977). There is evidence that the heads of larger schools tend to be bureaucratic, in the sense that they lay greater emphasis on the application of rules and regulations to govern procedures (Cohen 1970), though the same study also indicated that they appeared no less concerned than the heads of smaller schools for the individual child, the individual teacher or the particular parental request.

Cohen’s study is thus an example of both a bureaucratic and a human relations viewpoint, and the strength of the latter emphasis is further illustrated in the work of Bates (1970) and Bernbaum (1976), both of whom show heads of schools giving priority to the traditional human relations aspect of their work. There have also been many studies of staff morale and satisfaction in educational institutions—sometimes explicitly drawing on similar work in industry—which have typically explored the relationship between satisfaction and staff participation in decision-making (Chase 1952; Sharma 1955; Belasco and Alutto 1972; Nias 1980).
The influence on education of the human relations movement of the 1930s, occasionally with specific reference to the Hawthorne studies, was soon evident in books advocating democracy in educational administration (Koopman 1943; National Society for the Study of Education 1946; Hughes 1951), and was reflected in texts on school management (Yauch 1949; Griffiths 1956; Bassett, Crane and Walker 1963). A generation later, staff development and involvement and participative leadership continue to receive close attention in texts on the management of educational institutions (Newell 1978; Bush et al. 1980; John 1980; Gray 1982).

It is also of interest that a model for higher education recently proposed by Becher and Kogan (1980) distinguishes at four levels (individual, basic unit, institution and central authority) between an operational and a normative mode, concerned respectively with what people actually do and what they count as important. Their normative mode at the individual level is specified in terms of job satisfaction, personal wants and expectations and subscription to group norms (Figure 2.1, p. 19), i.e. in terms of basic concepts which today are familiar and generally accepted, but which were new and unexpected when put forward by the human relations management consultants of the Hawthorne Studies era.

The extent to which general management theory can be applied to schools has been considered on a number of occasions, e.g. by Thomason (1974), Landers and Myers (1980), Paisley (1981) and Handy (1984), to name only a few. It has been maintained by Everard (1984) and in publications of the Industrial Society for heads of schools (Warwick 1984; Trethowan 1984) that school management has much to learn from industry, a view challenged by Fielding (1984) and White (1984). Research by Jenkins (1983) has identified a number of similarities, but also some significant differences in the ways in which managers in manufacturing industry and those in schools in England and Wales actually perceive their job.

In concluding this section it may thus be claimed that the various concerns and emphases of management writers, ranging from scientific management to human relations theory, have found expression in a variety of ways in the management of education and in the related literature. To begin with, this happened in a very piece-meal and haphazard manner. Even in the USA, where courses in educational administration had been mounted since early in the century (generally staffed by former administrators drawing anecdotally on their past experience), there was, for a long time, little attempt to integrate or reconcile the various disparate approaches available, or to consider how, if at all, the management of education differed from other kinds of management. From the mid-1950s the position changed significantly with the emergence in the USA and Canada of what came to be known as the ‘New Movement’ in educational administration. Its influence in Britain and other Commonwealth countries was somewhat indirect and came later.

This was a period, as Culbertson (1980, p. 326) later recalled, of ‘an intense romance with theory’. The New Movement sought to provide coherence in edu-
cational management by emphasising the importance of theory. Sceptical practitioners were assured, in the oft-quoted words of John Dewey (1929, p. 17), that ‘theory is in the end . . the most practical of all things’. It involved nothing less than a new paradigm and a new approach to the relationship of theory and practice in educational management. Its aspirations, achievements and limitations are considered in the next section.

The theoretical bias of educational management’s ‘New Movement’ paradigm

In this section the emergence and major achievements of the New Movement in US educational administration will be described, followed by an account of some of the doubts and challenges to its basic viewpoint which later developed. But first it will be helpful to clarify the meaning of the term ‘paradigm’ as used in the title of this section.

Paradigm: a term of multiple meanings

The word ‘paradigm’ is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as ‘example, pattern, especially of inflexion of noun, verb, etc.’, and thus has a very specific, concrete meaning as used by philologists. Nowadays the term is widely used with very different connotations, this being largely a result of the work of Thomas Kuhn, a historian and philosopher of science. As he later recalled in a volume of selected papers (Kuhn 1977, pp. XVII and 318), the concept of paradigm was first extended by him in 1959 to refer by analogy to shared examples of successful practice within a scientific community, as distinguished from agreed rules and definitions. Acquiring an arsenal of exemplars, according to Kuhn (1977, p. 307), is ‘integral to the process by which a student gains access to the cognitive achievements of his disciplinary group’.

In Kuhn’s influential book, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962), the concept of paradigm is progressively broadened from its original meaning, so that one commentator (Masterman, 1970) has identified at least 21 different usages of the term. As Kuhn later admitted, paradigms took on a life of their own:

they expanded their empire to include, first, the classic books in which these accepted examples initially appeared and, finally, the entire global set of commitments shared by members of a particular scientific community.

(1977, p. XIX)

The essential point which Kuhn made in his major work is that what is called normal science involves the solving of problems without questioning the assumptions, explicit or implicit, of the generally accepted frame of reference or
paradigm of the scientific community. There are, however, other periods of revolu-
tionary science in which the paradigm itself is called into question, because of
deep-seated anomalies which it cannot resolve. Such transitional periods, it
was suggested, lead in due course to the emergence and acceptance of a new
paradigm.

The concept has been broadened even further within the social sciences with
the recognition that alternative frames of reference may be available simultan-
eously. Thus Burrell and Morgan (1979, p. 36) argue that ‘social theory can be
conveniently understood in terms of the co-existence of four distinct and rival
paradigms defined by very basic meta-theoretical assumptions in relation to the
nature of science and society’.

The progressive extension in meaning of the term paradigm is thus itself a
potent reminder of the essential inter-penetration of theory and practice. ‘Para-
digm’ was originally introduced into scientific discourse to signify the specific
exemplars which provide the constituents of the shared understandings embedded in alternative views of
reality presented by paradigmatic theorists.

The emergence in US educational administration of a ‘New
Movement’

The mid-1950s may be identified as a period of intellectual ferment in relation to
educational management studies in the USA, as evidenced by a number of
significant publications (Coladarci and Getzels 1955; Campbell and Gregg 1957;
Griffiths 1959a, 1959b). There was a significant infusion of new ideas, propogated
by a new breed of able enthusiasts whose expertise in educational management was
derived more from study and research in the social sciences than from long practi-
tioner experience. Andrew Halpin, Ronald Campbell and Dan Griffiths were
among those who called for a more rigorous theoretical approach in the study of
educational administration.

In his contribution to the Campbell and Gregg volume, Halpin (1957 p. 197)
vigorously rejected ‘naked empiricism’ and rebuked those scholars who spent
their time on practical problems rather than doing the research on theoretical
issues, which he regarded as much more important. The term ‘theory’ itself had
to be rescued: it would not be used by Halpin ‘as a euphemistic synonym for any
speculation about administrator behaviour—no matter how vaguely formu-
lated—but in the restrictive sense employed by the social scientist’ (Halpin
1957, p. 156). He quoted with approval a rigorous definition of theory as ‘a set
of assumptions from which can be derived by purely logico-mathematical proce-
dures a larger set of empirical laws. The theory thereby furnishes an explanation
of these empirical laws . . . ’ (Feigl 1951, p. 182).

The ideal which Griffiths enthusiastically envisaged was the development of
a general theory of human behaviour, within which the theory of administrative
behaviour in education would be a sub-system. The natural sciences, and
particularly physics, would provide the model, Kepler’s Laws of Planetary Motion being the prototype of the yet undiscovered laws of educational administration (Griffiths 1957, p. 388). He added later that he agreed with Halpin’s suggestion that Feigl’s definition of theory be adopted, and observed that this ‘would mean that theoretical work would be more narrowly limited than previously’ (1959a, p. 28).

A necessary consequence of the new determination to rely exclusively on a natural science methodology was that, in accordance with the philosophical tenets of logical positivism which Feigl advocated, the concepts used were to be defined operationally, i.e. their meanings were to correspond, as Herbert Simon (1947, p. 37) had also insisted, ‘to empirically verifiable facts or situations’. Value judgements as to the desirability of policies and behaviours were therefore to be firmly resisted in the new studies being initiated, which would concentrate on determining what is rather than what ought to be (Culbertson 1965, p. 4). Similarly, Gregg (1965, p. 46), writing approvingly of a National Society for the Study of Education Year-Book (1964) which was an outcome of the New Movement, supported its emphasis on validated operational concepts within a theoretical context:

> Such concepts help to illuminate the nature of administration. They do not prescribe rules for administrative action, but they may enable the administrator to analyse administrative problems more penetratingly and accurately, to view events in different perspectives, and to reflect in ways which would not be possible without such concepts . . . The current scientific approach to administration is directed to identifying and describing the variables of administration and their relationships, so that an administrator can have a better understanding of them and thus control them in terms of whatever goals and policies he chooses.

The new ideas gained international currency in the 1960s, the initial impetus for Commonwealth development coming largely from William Walker, who founded The Journal of Educational Administration in Australia in 1963, two years before the US-based Educational Administration Quarterly was established. The first major UK involvement was in 1966 in Canada and the USA, at the first of what have become quadrennial International Intervisitation Programmes (IIP) in educational administration (Baron, Cooper and Walker 1969).

The early writings of the leaders of the New Movement paradigm were critical and perceptive papers which provided a welcome, astringent antidote to the unsupported generalisations—often based on dated and untypical experience—that had been customary in the educational administrative literature. What was actually achieved through this new style of research is more problematic. Three major areas of development will be briefly described: a framework for conceptualising organisations as social systems, some examples of role studies, and studies of organisational climate.
The Getzels-Guba social systems model

An example from the early days of the New Movement of an abstract formulation intended to generate hypotheses as a basis for empirical study, is provided by a model of educational administration as a social process, which was developed jointly by two social psychologists, J. W. Getzels and E. G. Guba (1957). Basically the model proposed that a social system be conceived in terms of two types of phenomena, involving respectively an organisational (or nomothetic) dimension and a personal (or ideographic) dimension. Observed behaviour is then regarded as the result of the interaction of elements located on each of the two axes.

The organisational dimension permits analysis successively in terms of the institution, its constituent roles, and the specific expectations attached to each role. Implicit is a structural view of organisation, such as Fayol or Weber might have proposed, with a clear division of tasks among official positions or roles. It is assumed that the obligations and responsibilities which these roles involve can be specified in terms of explicit expectations, which serve as an agreed prescription for the particular role. The various roles are interdependent and complementary, and it is to their interrelationship that the term ‘organisational structure’ applies.

The personal dimension takes account of the human aspect which the organisational dimension ignores, and thus accords with a human relations emphasis. It focuses on the individual members of the system, the analysis being successively in terms of the concepts of personality and need-disposition. Need-dispositions are described as a person’s ‘individual tendencies to orient and act with respect to objects in certain manners and to expect certain consequences from these actions’.

Though the justification for the use of the term ‘dimension’ is somewhat obscure, it may be granted that the model neatly accommodates the two main strands in traditional management theory, the classical and the human relations, and suggests three levels at which interaction can be considered: institution and individual, role and personality, role expectation and need-disposition.

An extension to the model (Getzels and Thelen 1960) took account of the fact that every social system is embedded in a wider environment. This was conceptualised in terms of a further anthropological dimension, of which the constituent elements are: culture, ethos and values.

In its original two-dimensional form the model generated a number of research studies of the correlates of role-personality conflict and of conflict within the organisational and personal dimensions, some of which are described by Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer (1966, pp. 189–216). Personal satisfaction was found to be positively related to the extent to which need-dispositions are congruent with role expectations. The extended model led to studies being undertaken of the influence of value conflicts on relationships between school administrators and their school boards. The sensitive position of the administra-
tor was thus highlighted, first as the mediator of intra-organisation conflict, and second as the organisational representative exposed to diverse external measures.

Commenting on the model, Trow (1959, p. 124) noted that Getzels used it to illuminate empirical problems. Trow saw it as being ‘likely to be useful to administrators both in their thinking and practice’, and suggested that its ‘simplicity and clarity’ derived from ‘its close connection with his (i.e. Getzels’) empirical research’. More recently it has been severely criticised for excessive simplicity, in that ‘it manages to reduce the puzzles, conflicts and pain of life in organisations to a few neatly-working regularities by applying some very special assumptions to the mysteries of existence’ (Greenfield 1979/80, p. 222). Such criticism is well-founded in terms of the perspectives now available, and can justifiably be extended to the methodological limitations of the associated research. Nevertheless, the Getzels-Guba model deserves to be recognised as a conceptual framework which generated a succession of hypotheses which were subject to empirical test. Within the parameters of the New Movement paradigm it thus contributed to developing a closer relationship between theory and practice.

**Role studies in educational management**

Apart from role studies conducted within the Getzels-Guba framework, numerous studies of the roles of the US superintendent (responsible, for education territorially, to a school board) and of the principal (responsible, for an individual school, to the superintendent) were undertaken in the early 1960s from the standpoint of role theory, i.e. that social behaviour is to a significant extent socially determined.

The most comprehensive of the role studies were those in which Neal Gross and his associates at Harvard University were involved. These included a study of the superintendency role (Gross, Mason and McEachern 1958) which explored differences in the expectations of superintendents and their board members. It was found, as hypothesised, that in defining the division of responsibilities between the two positions, each group assigned greater responsibility to their own position (p. 141). The study also explored the incidence and resolution of role conflict.

A study by Carlson (1962) of a sample of recently appointed school superintendents introduced an overt sociological perspective into a field which had hitherto been dominated by psychologists. Carlson showed that superintendents promoted from within the system (the ‘insiders’) and those brought in from other systems (the ‘outsiders’) tended to differ in their organisational behaviour. The outsiders were more likely to introduce major innovations and to accept the possible risk of community disapproval; the insiders, wishing to stay in the community, were more cautious and adapted themselves to survive. Though Carlson concluded that ‘there is no reason to expect that one type is more capable than the other type’ (p. 14), the study has been recognised as having implications for achieving organisational change.
A large-scale research project may also be mentioned, which Halpin and Hayes (1977, p. 269) later singled out as ‘perhaps the most monumental single study ever conducted within the field of educational administration’. Using sophisticated simulation techniques and a formidable battery of psychological tests and assessment procedures, Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredericksen (1962) studied intensively the personality characteristics of a sample of 232 elementary school principals. The final conclusions, arrived at by elaborate statistical treatment, were ambiguous and obscure. From the viewpoint of practical application the best that can be said is that the array of situational exercises developed in the research were resourcefully converted by the University Council for Educational Administration (1960) into the ‘Whitman School’ simulation, and used in the in-service training of thousands of US elementary school principals.

A general criticism which can be made of the educational role studies which appeared in the 1960s is that they did not take heed of misgivings already expressed concerning the basic assumptions of role theory. Levinson (1959) had vigorously challenged the ‘unitary’ assumption that there is necessarily a close correspondence between the expectations of ‘society’ for a given role and those of the role incumbents, and between such expectations and actual behaviour, these being assumptions which do not accord with empirical evidence. Likewise Gross, Mason and McEachern (1958, pp. 21–47) had clearly rejected ‘the postulate of role consensus’, i.e. the assumption that there is general agreement in society regarding expectations for different roles. It is paradoxical that, in their empirical studies, Gross and his colleagues seem not to have fully appreciated the potency of the explosive device, with slow-burning fuse attached, which they had unwittingly planted within the corpus of management studies (cf Chapters 9 and 13).

With the benefit of hindsight and the alternative perspectives now available, the host of meticulously undertaken role studies may be seen at best as providing static, statistical composite snapshots, which ignore many of the subtle differences which really matter, and which afford little insight into the dynamics of changing perceptions and relationships.

Organisational climate studies

The organisational climate of schools is an imprecise notion which falls well short of the rigorous conceptual standards to which Halpin and his colleagues originally aspired. It has been loosely defined as that set of internal characteristics which distinguishes one school from another, and which influences the behaviour of people in each school (Hoy and Miskel 1978, p. 137); the idea has received considerable attention from researchers in the USA and elsewhere working within the New Movement paradigm.

Foremost was Halpin and Croft’s pioneering study (1963) of 71 elementary schools, which was based on a simple comparison. As Halpin later recalled (1967, p. 6), ‘Croft and I began with the obvious analogy that personality is to
the human individual as ‘organisational climate’ is to the organisation’. He added that they might just as easily have chosen the term ‘organisational personality’ for what they had in mind. Their approach was to develop a questionnaire to explore various aspects of teacher–teacher and teacher–principal relationships. In its final form their definitive instrument, the ubiquitous Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ), contained 64 items. Addressed specifically to teachers, it invited them to indicate for each item, on a four point scale from ‘rarely occurs’ to ‘very frequently occurs’, their answer to the question, ‘To what extent is this true of your school?’

Using factor analytic techniques Halpin and Croft were able to arrange the OCDQ items so as to provide eight sub-tests measuring particular variables. Four of these scales related to perceptions of the principal’s behaviour, namely, production emphasis, aloofness, consideration and thrust; the other four related to perceptions of staff behaviour, namely, hindrance, intimacy, disengagement and esprit. It was thus possible to provide an eight-dimensional profile of the organisational climate of each school in terms of the mean perceptions of its teaching staff. The researchers found that these profiles clustered in six groups, and consequently ‘invented’ (the term is that of Halpin himself, 1967, p. 6) a typology of six climates, arranged along a continuum from an ‘open climate’ at one end to a ‘closed climate’ at the other. The open climate is characterised by ‘authenticity’ on the part of both principal and staff: the principal leading by example and the staff showing commitment and working well together, so that acts of leadership emerge naturally as needed. The closed climate is in stark contrast: the principal provides no effective leadership and is preoccupied with formalities and trivia, while the teachers are frustrated and apathetic, responding at a minimum level.

Later research has thrown doubt on the usefulness of the four intermediate categories which were identified, but the idea of assessing educational organisations on a climate continuum from open to closed has generated substantial research activity in many parts of the world. Such research should be treated with caution, however, for the OCDQ research instrument, originally developed and tested in a small sample of US elementary schools, has sometimes been used ‘with greater zeal than wisdom’, as Halpin (1977, p. 7) has sadly observed; i.e. in very different institutional and cultural contexts and without adaptation or further validation.

In spite of his caveats concerning misuse, Halpin (1977, p. 270) interestingly included the OCDQ research in his selection of the five studies which, in his view, best characterise research within the New Movement in its first decade. (It may be added in parentheses that his other nominations included the Getzels-Guba study, the Carlson insider/outsider study, and the large-scale Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredericksen study of elementary school heads, each of which has been noted above. His fifth nomination was his own earlier study of leadership styles, to which reference is made in Chapter 10).

The inclusion of the OCDQ in the top five may not be surprising in view of
its wide currency and obvious appeal, especially to those favourably disposed to
greater staff participation. Matched against the initial claims of the New Move-
ment, however, the theoretical basis of the study is slight, relying on the simple
analogy of personality, which is presumably a reflection of the fact that Halpin’s
specialist field was psychology. One may speculate that if Halpin’s training had
been in sociology, he would have linked the climate concept firmly to the liter-
ature on ‘culture’, allowing for the identification and inter-relating of the
equivalents of sub-cultures, rather than submerging all differences in a single
holistic concept of one organisational climate.

The post facto specification of six discrete organisational climates was soon
challenged on empirical grounds by Brown (1965) whose computer printout,
using a sample of schools in Minnesota, identified eight climates. Replication by
Andrews (1965), using Canadian schools, also raised fundamental questions
about the concept operationally defined by the OCDQ. He observed that an
instrument completed only by teachers, and concerned essentially with the inter-
action of teachers and principal, does not effectively recognise the contribution
to the distinctive culture of the school of relationships which involve the pupils
and the parents. It is of interest that a subsequent National Foundation for Edu-
cational Research (NFER) study of school climate in the UK (Finlayson, Banks
and Loughrans 1971) included the perceptions of pupils as well as of teachers.
This has been replicated in Australia (Deer 1980).

A further point, which relates to the shallow theoretical underpinning of
organisational climate research, is that it provides no insight as to how a particu-
lar organisational climate comes into existence or how a closed climate can be
made more open. As Halpin (1967, p. 11) himself frankly admitted, ‘The blunt
truth is that we do not yet know very much as to how to change a climate’. It is
thus tantalising that, though organisational climate can be seen by practitioners
as a useful rough and ready means of generalising about their organisations, it is
not a concept which theorists have been able to define with any precision.
Because of its lack of clarity it has failed to generate powerful hypotheses and
has done little to increase understanding. It appears that it is the inadequacy of
organisational climate as theory which has lessened its usefulness for practice.

A paradigm partly accepted, variously challenged

While a cursory reading of the literature might suggest that the rigorous, theo-
retical epistemology of the New Movement writers had quickly been accepted as
the new orthodoxy of the field, a survey by Jean Hills (1965), later confirmed by
a more extensive study (Campbell and Newell 1973), showed that even among
US academics the commitment was less than total. Professional associations of
administrators were supportive, but in somewhat general terms (American
Association of School Administrators (AASA) 1963).

Substantial discrepancy between theoretical aspirations and research achieve-
ment made the original optimistic forecast, that a comprehensive general theory
was about to emerge, less convincing. At the same time it could be argued that the
large-scale, statistically sophisticated research projects, and the more modest doc-
toral dissertations which were copiously produced, shared a hidden paradigmatic
assumption to which the New Movement implicitly subscribed. This was the
belief that social science research is essentially concerned with random samples
(the larger the better) with mean responses and standard deviations, and with the
statistical significance of differences. The varying perceptions and qualified
answers of particular respondents tended to be disregarded, scientific methodology
having no means readily available to handle unique individual cases.

A tendency to advocate, and to make some use of, general systems theory was
perhaps the nearest that the New Movement got to the adoption of a universal con-
ceptual framework. An extensive theoretical treatment, drawing on the work of
Talcott Parsons, was provided by Hills (1968), and made evident the underlying
reliance on the analogy of a living organism in the discussion of pattern mainte-
nance, integration, goal attainment and adaptation. Practical applications of consid-
erable sophistication were developed, notably at the University of Oregon. These
involved the adaptation to educational planning of system analytic techniques such
as planning, programming and budgeting systems (Piele, Eidell and Smith 1970;
Eidell and Nagle 1970), but they were not always successful in enlisting whole-
hearted practitioner co-operation, as Wolcott’s evaluative study (1977) makes clear.

The ideal of a science of educational administration, based on a single grand
theory, appeared to become less compelling by the mid-1960s. Schwab (1964, p.
47) cogently argued that ‘contrary to the burden of recent literature on adminis-
tration, the pursuit of one sufficing theory of administration is a manifest impos-
sibility in the foreseeable future, and an uncritical aping of the wrong model’
(emphasis added). He further observed that ‘a sophisticated and cynical grasp of
about a dozen separate and distinct bodies of “theory” are indispensable to delib-
erately good, intelligent administration’, a sentiment broadly in harmony with
the viewpoint adopted in the latter part of this chapter, though the epithet
‘cynical’ would not necessarily be endorsed.

At the 1966 International Intervisitation Programme, Griffiths counselled that
‘the search for one encompassing theory (if anyone is searching) should be
abandoned … We have learned that a modest approach to theory pays off’
(Baron, Cooper and Walker 1969, p. 166). Similarly Erickson (1967, p. 376)
reported that ‘the field is very much in flux. The erstwhile search for “adminis-
trative theory”, for example, seems virtually abandoned today …’.

Robin Farquhar (1977, p. 356), referring to ‘some disarray’ in administrator
preparatory programmes in the mid-1970s, called for more attention to be given to
‘grounded’ theory, and ended his survey ‘on a note of cautious optimism’. Donald
Willower (1975, p. 3), who continued to be a consistent upholder of the broad
principles of the New Movement paradigm when others were expressing doubts
and reservations, argued that highly abstract, large-scale theory had not been an
issue and that ‘in spite of its use as a straw man by some writers, there has been no
real effort to construct a “grand theory” of educational administration’. His own
A cautious defence of theory prudently excluded Feigl’s rigorous definition, previously mentioned, which ‘sets a standard that would exclude virtually everything done in educational administration to date’ (p. 3). He commended Merton’s more modest view that a large part of what is called theory ‘consists of general orientations toward data, suggesting types of variables which theories must somehow take into account rather than clearly formulated, verifiable statements of relationships between specified variables’ (Merton 1957, p. 52). The notion of theory as a general orientation towards data was, of course, a significant retreat from the position boldly proclaimed in the heyday of the New Movement (Griffiths 1959a), but it enabled Willower to maintain some optimism concerning future development.

In stark contrast was the bleak disillusion expressed by Halpin (1969, 1970, 1977) in papers drawing variously on the imagery of a foggy view from Olympus, a fumbled torch and a broken ikon. The papers were, regrettably, less convincing in their suggestions for the future.

More constructively Jean Hills (1980), while recognising that the field was in disarray, called for an appreciation that educational administration is an applied science which draws on many disciplines. ‘Any concrete, common sense object or event’, he observed, ‘is of such infinite diversity that its full richness cannot be grasped in terms of any system of abstract concepts’ (p. 226). He proposed arrangements to facilitate socialisation with regard to clinical values in administrator preparation, an emphasis at variance with the positivist separation of facts and values characteristic of the New Movement. Similarly Culbertson (1980), who – like Hills – was addressing the 1978 IIP in Canada, called for the development of a new ‘Theory for Practice’.

In concluding this section it is appropriate to recall Kuhn’s differentiation between a period of normal science, when the assumptions of the accepted paradigm of a scientific community are not questioned, and a transitional period when the paradigm itself is under attack. By the mid-1970s two US scholars, Oliver Gibson (1975; 1977) and Donald Erickson (1977), were, in fact, writing about the need for a ‘paradigm shift’ in educational administration. In neither case was the kind of change desired clearly indicated, while the basic assumptions of the prevailing paradigm were not fundamentally questioned.

At the 1974 IIP, held in the UK, Tom Greenfield (1975) made an assault on the accepted tenets of the New Movement in a paper which has come to be recognised by supporters and opponents as a landmark in theory development. He rejected ‘the apparent assumption that organisations are not only real but also distinct from the actions, feelings and purposes of people’ (p. 71), and that organisational structures are invariable while ‘people occupy organisations in somewhat the same way that they inhabit houses’ (p. 72). Organisations are not, he suggested, real entities with a life of their own or governed by a generally accepted set of values; they are invented social reality reflecting the values of people with access to power. The emphasis should therefore be on ‘discovering how different people interpret the world in which they live’ rather than on ‘dis-
covering the universal laws of society and human conduct within it’ which had been the ideal of the New Movement academics (p. 77).

The underlying assumptions of the pervasive social science paradigm associated with ‘structural-functionalism’ and ‘natural systems theory’, which Greenfield was directly challenging in his repudiation of the New Movement orthodoxy, will be considered further in Chapter 9, together with the various alternative viewpoints which have been proposed, and which are still emerging.

The new perspectives debate, conducted in the USA in *Educational Administration Quarterly* and in the UK in *Educational Administration*, in the wake of Greenfield’s paper, has been lively and generally constructive. The result to date, as well illustrated by Griffiths’ analysis (1979) of the intellectual turmoil within educational administration, has been a sharpened appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of competing perspectives and paradigms. For the student of educational management the current situation is as stimulating as it is demanding. As compared with the undisputed emergence and wide acceptance of a single new orthodoxy—which Kuhn appeared to envisage when a period of normal science is replaced by a transitional phase—a diverse, less predictable prospect is revealed, which may well presage a more productive, interactive and critical relationship between theory and practice.

The account, given in some detail, of the achievements and disappointments of what have been called ‘the developing decades’ (Cunningham, Hack and Nystrand 1977) in the study of educational management and administration, provides both an instructive case study in theory—practice relationships in an emerging field and some of the necessary background for appreciating the significance of more recent developments.

**The contemporary applied science, field of application, perspective**

A variety of potentially relevant modes and areas of knowledge is today available to all who are concerned to improve educational management through better understanding of its concepts, processes and structures. In the UK a cautiously pragmatic, multidisciplinary approach has characteristically been generally adopted. It is, incidentally, also an approach which is currently more widely favoured internationally, as the monodisciplinary aspirations of the North American New Movement appear less attainable (Griffiths 1982). In this section the implications of a multidisciplinary approach will be considered, followed by an inevitably selective survey of some of the models and constructs of possible relevance for application to educational systems and institutions.

**The multidisciplinary approach**

An important early landmark in the development of educational management and administration as a field of study in the United Kingdom was the publication
of Educational Administration and the Social Sciences, edited by George Baron and William Taylor (1969). The editors acknowledged ‘the influence of recent American, Canadian and Australian thinking’, but claimed that ‘the dominant note is that of English pragmatism; this is perhaps as it should be in a book emanating from a country in which the practice of administration has long been held in high esteem and in which its theory is only now receiving serious attention’ (p. vii).

Several chapters of the book drew substantially on the US literature, familiar names such as Halpin, Getzels and Guba and Griffiths being frequently cited. The theoretical bias of the New Movement, however, was not endorsed, Baron noting that ‘to the practitioner in England . . . writing of this kind can appear highly remote from his concerns’ (p. 12). Hoyle, in a chapter on organisational theory and the sociology of organisations, referred to shortcomings of the New Movement due to its ‘over-ambitious approaches to theory construction’ (p. 38), and was sceptical about the use of general systems theory as a source of hypotheses. He concluded that ‘a more limited approach to theory construction would enable us to handle the problems arising from the unique or limited characteristics of educational administration’ (p. 45).

The approach adopted in the Baron and Taylor volume was that educational management is a field of application and that its study should draw widely, but with discrimination, on the social science disciplines and on already recognised applied fields such as organisational theory. Multidisciplinary study, rather than interdisciplinary study, was the preferred descriptor, since the latter ‘could suggest an approach which, in its generality, falls between the interstices of the disciplines and adds nothing solid’ (Hoyle p. 47).

The multidisciplinary standpoint was further developed by Ron Glatter (1972) in a survey of approaches to management development in education, which endorsed Snyder’s warning to the 1966 IIP concerning the art of ‘squeezing disciplines’: ‘Only on the basis of rigorous specification of need and an equally rigorous grasp of how a particular discipline organises its knowledge can one establish relevance and borrow safely and productively’ (Snyder 1969, p. 297).

Both the priority given to substantive practical issues and the multidisciplinary emphasis in theoretical analysis have been much in evidence in the expansion of UK provision in educational management (Hughes, Carter and Fidler 1981), in the parallel growth of the British Educational Management and Administration Society as an association bringing together the practitioners and the academics, and in the increasing availability of relevant books and journals.

_A field of application_

As Hills (1980, p. 225) reminded his US colleagues at IIP 1978, an applied science is required to pay close attention to the special characteristics of its field of practice, which need to be thoroughly and sympathetically understood. One
cannot automatically assume, without further testing, that intellectual currency minted for other economies will be acceptable in the educational marketplace. Research and analysis has to be done in an educational context, which may reveal the need for substantial modification of concepts and methodologies developed elsewhere. The need for awareness and sensitivity in relation to the problems and concerns of practice as defined by practitioners makes it particularly appropriate that most of the contributors to this book regard themselves primarily as practitioners rather than as academics.

A multidisciplinary study

In the past, organisational studies in education have drawn mainly on social psychology, sociology and economics. The range of borrowings has broadened to include philosophy, political science, anthropology, a diversity of micro-social sciences, and the methods of qualitative, as well as quantitative, research. Also recognised as of interest are the many-sided contemporary studies of organisational structures and change processes, in schools of management studies which have long superseded the simplicities of the traditional management writers.

Indiscriminate borrowing, however, resulting in the accumulation of an undigested aggregation of discrete bits of incompatible theory, is likely to be unproductive in achieving understanding. In choosing an eclectic mode of proceeding, Snyder recognised that it is essential to be aware of the strengths and limitations of the concepts and methodologies of the particular discipline or sub-discipline one is using, and also of the underlying assumptions of the perspective adopted.

Given such understanding, a pragmatic approach which is prepared, circumspectly and critically, to make use of more than one perspective, is likely to provide greater insight into the complexities of an educational system than a methodology which confines attention to one kind of problem or one mode of inquiry. In similar vein Gareth Morgan (1980) has advocated ‘a theoretical and methodological pluralism which allows the development of new perspectives for organisational analysis’ (p. 605). He called for uncontested assumptions to be exposed to the challenge of alternative ways of seeing. A cosmopolitan outlook would enable the practitioner and the theorist to avoid being imprisoned by a single set of metaphors.

In the present volume various aspects of current interest in the management of educational systems and institutions will be described and considered using a variety of models and approaches, the models providing a framework for coherent analysis. In some cases alternative models might also be appropriate, and it would be a rewarding exercise for the reader to test out such possibilities. To give some indication of the vitality and rich diversity of the ideas available, selected areas of recent and continuing theory development, which may be of use as sources of concepts and models applicable to educational management, will now be briefly described.
A diversity of structural models

A considerable body of empirical research and theory development on organisational structure may be interpreted as a vigorous rejection by later structuralists of the classical doctrine, equally upheld by Fayol and Weber, that there is one right model of organisation. The universal acceptance of the ideal of a tight hierarchical structure has given way to the concept of structural relativism, which permits alternative, more differentiated, and more flexible structures.

Burns and Stalker (1961), on the basis of their pioneering study of innovation in Scottish electrical companies, had come to the conclusion that ‘the beginning of administrative wisdom is that there is no optimum type of management system’ (p. 125). They identified a pair of contrasting ideal-type management structures, a mechanistic form appropriate to stable conditions and an organic or organismic form to handle less predictable problems more flexibly. Litwak (1961) showed that different types of structure may be appropriate even within the same organisation, a human relations model being applicable in handling work of a non-uniform nature and a Weberian model in dealing with uniform work of a routine nature.

A comparative study by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) of ten varied industrial organisations led to the construction of a ‘contingency model’, which developed further the implications of the view that structures are contingent upon the problems with which they have to deal. They identified and produced measures of distinct organisational sub-environments, matching each sub-environment to an appropriate sub-unit structure. ‘Goodness of fit’ became the important issue. The more turbulent and uncertain the environment, the greater the tendency for a high level of performance to be associated with high differentiation among sub-units, coupled with effective integration achieved by means of shared information, flexible procedures and open decision-making.

Another approach also challenged the unitary concept of bureaucracy by seeking to identify and measure a number of independent dimensions of organisational structure. Work by Hall (1963) in the USA was followed by an impressive array of systematic empirical studies by the Aston group in England, which have been brought together in a series of volumes (Pugh and Hickson 1976; Pugh and Hinings 1976; Pugh and Payne 1977). The dimensions identified in these studies were: specialisation of activities, standardisation of procedure, formalisation of documentation, centralisation of authority, and configuration of role structure. They also developed measures of contextual and performance variables, and explored relationships between variables, using factor analysis and correlational induction. The studies originally used heterogeneous samples of commercial and governmental organisations to develop general propositions connecting structure and context, and the group’s exclusive preoccupation in such studies with variables involving objective quantifiable data at the expense of political and ideological factors has been severely criticised (Burrell and Morgan 1979; Clegg and Dunkerley 1980).
Interestingly, some later but loosely related cross-institutional studies of local authorities (Greenwood, Hinings and Ransom 1975) and of churches (Hinings 1979), using a contingency theory approach, have led to the conclusion that belief systems and ideologies, which had previously been regarded as irrelevant, deserved detailed study. A theoretical model has been proposed which includes the conceptual categories of provinces of meaning and power dependencies, as well as contextual constraints (Ransom, Hinings and Greenwood 1980). Whereas the more technical aspects of the research produced as a result of the original Aston studies may not be directly relevant to educational management, the methodological flexibility which their dimensional approach entailed is certainly of interest, as is the recent move to develop a framework to incorporate ‘ostensibly disparate perspectives’ with a view to ‘searching for the relations between cause and meaning, between what is determinant and what voluntary in the relation of structure and action’ (Ransom, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980, p. 14).

In selectively reviewing structural models, it is appropriate finally to refer to two theoretical contributions which substantially widen the meaning of the term ‘structural relativism’. The metaphor of a rigid invariant structure is fundamentally challenged both by Karl Weick’s (1976) perception of organisations as ‘loosely coupled systems’ and by the closely related ‘organised anarchies’ of Cohen, March and Olsen (1972), which appear to provide the ultimate antithesis to Weberian bureaucracy.

Loose coupling, a term previously used by March and Olsen (1975), is intended to signify that the parts of an organisation are in some relationship to each other, but that the linkage is limited, uncertain and weak, and certainly much looser than the tight hierarchical control of bureaucratic theory. Weick added that loose coupling also ‘carries connotations of impermanence, dissolvability and tacitness all of which are potentially crucial properties of the “glue” that holds organisations together’ (1976, p. 3). He argued specifically that educational organisations can be viewed as loosely coupled systems. In Chapter 4 of the present volume the applicability of the model is tested in relation to policymaking for the school curriculum.

Meyer and Rowan (1977), who used the concept in an empirical study of school structures, concluded that loose coupling helps to maintain the facade that formal structures are really working when they are not. In a later paper Weick (1980) accepted that loose coupling can be seen as having a stabilising function, in that the connection points of sub-systems act as shock absorbers which internalise pressures rather than transmitting them to other parts of the system. A further factor is that feedback is neutralised as a result of incomplete information being available concerning the effects of previous action. Because of such considerations Foster (1983) has argued that the flexibility claimed for loosely coupled systems is illusory, and that the concept is not essentially different from the ‘exception principle’ of Frederick Taylor’s Scientific Management, which allows for attention to be focused on exceptions to the smooth flow of work (Foster 1983, pp. 20–21).
Writing from an educational management viewpoint, Willower (1980, p. 6) repeated the suggestion in Weick’s original paper that the extent of coupling should be investigated as a dependent variable, subject to the influences of organisational and environmental factors. As Weick further observed, ‘If an organisation faces a scarcity of resources its pattern of couplings should differ from when it faces an expansion of resources . . .’ (1976, pp. 13–14). It may be noted that scarcity in the resources currently available to the maintained school system in the UK is likely to be one factor, among others, contributing to the tightening of curriculum control at national level which is noted by James Waddington in Chapter 4.

The term ‘organised anarchy’ is intended to signify structural looseness in an extreme form. It is a fair description of the ‘Garbage Can Model of Organisational Choice’ described by Cohen, March and Olsen (1972), and further developed by Cohen and March (1974), and by March and Olsen (1976). In such an organisation the goals are inconsistent and ill-defined, the technology for achieving them is unclear to the members, and those involved in decision-making vary unpredictably. Thus problems, solutions and decision-makers are not systematically related to each other. Problems may be created in order to provide opportunities for applying previously discovered solutions, and decision-making serves purposes other than the production of decisions. Organisational choice may be viewed as being achieved by various participants unpredictably throwing various kinds of problems and solutions into a ‘garbage can’. Such an organisation, in brief, is characterised by severe ambiguity and irrationality.

The creators of the model applied it in a university context. Colin Turner (1977, p. 8) has argued that it also applies to further education colleges and polytechnics operating within turbulent, unpredictable environments. The model has attracted wide interest because of its vivid portrayal of the fact that the completely rational organisation is no more likely to exist in real life than its antithesis. Padgett (1980) operationalised the theory to show how variable ambiguity impinges on decision-making at different levels in a traditional Weberian bureaucracy, and showed that the model is potentially applicable even when the system is not highly decoupled. Lutz (1982) argued that universities are differentially coupled, ‘tightly coupled in some aspects and uncoupled in others’. It is the informal system, he suggested, which can best be described as an organised anarchy. ‘Academe is not so fragile’, he concluded, ‘that it could not survive tighter coupling’ (1982, p. 668).

In this section a diversity of approaches to organisational structure have been described which may be regarded as portraying different ways of bringing the ideal rational structures of traditional management theory into closer touch with the ‘brute facts’ of real life. The different models can each provide significant insight in particular circumstances. Even the most sophisticated model, however, can only provide partial enlightenment. Structural approaches of themselves, as Ransom, Hinings and Greenwood (1980) came to appreciate, do not take account of the values, motivations and power relationships of organisational participants.
Policy-making models

Grant Harman (1980), in his study of the policy process in education, found it necessary to take account of twelve different models taken from political science and other disciplines. Here brief reference will be made to three different frameworks: Easton’s political systems model, Simon’s modified rational model, and Lindblom’s incremental model.

A political systems model was proposed by David Easton (1965) as a framework for political analysis. It was developed as a means of considering the process of policy-making at national level, Easton’s distinctive insight being that the political system can be conceptualised as the means for the authoritative allocation within society of valued things. The output of the system is thus the allocation of benefits and resources made through the enunciation of government policies, consequent decisions and the implementation of actions.

The system’s inputs are of two kinds. First, there are the demands which finally reach the political agenda as items for political decision. A sophisticated and often protracted process is involved, by which general wants are crystallised into specific demands, which are then progressively modified, combined, and reduced in the interest of ‘realism’ by interest groups, political parties and officials. The second type of input consists of the general support which the political system requires in order to function effectively. This involves the concept of a political community which is supportive of the political system generally, of the regime of rules and regulations by which decisions are made, and of those in authority who make the decisions. Feedback mechanisms, providing information concerning reactions within society to allocations made or proposed, enable the system in normal circumstances to adapt and regulate its processes as necessary to cope with disturbance and potential conflict. There is thus an assumption, which is a basic feature of the systems viewpoint, that there is sufficient stability and consensual agreement on values in the society for the allocative decisions of the authorities to be generally accepted.

Though developed in a national context, the model clearly has potential for more general application, such as to policy-making in the local education service (cf Chapter 5). In this context it is of interest that Easton himself has recently referred appreciatively, in a foreword to Howell and Brown’s (1983) twin studies of policy-making in education, to the conceptual novelty, daring, and genuine promise of regarding educational organisations as parapolitical systems, the scope of the term ‘political’ being thereby broadened.

While Easton’s model thus provides an appropriate framework for appreciating the essentially political nature of policy-making, it does not provide an analysis of the different stages involved in the decision-making process. A number of approaches to the process of decision-making are possible, ranging from the comprehensively rational to the modestly incremental.

The classical or rational approach, as described by March and Simon (1958), may be regarded as the ideal if time and resources are plentiful. Three phases are
involved, the first being that of problem recognition. This may be no simple matter in a complex situation, as Vickers (1967) has noted; it would require judgement based on experience and an alertness of mind. The second phase is the search for solutions, which may be a routine matter if the problem can be computer-programmed. If the problem is novel and unusual, creative solutions along completely new lines may have to be sought. The third and final phase is that of choosing a particular solution, having regard to the costs and benefits of alternative solutions. This requires not only a technical appraisal of feasibility but also a judgement of what is practical and politically expedient in the given circumstances, having regard to demands and supports.

A modification to the rational model, first proposed by Simon (1947), has been named the ‘satisficing’ model. This takes account of the constraints and pressures on those involved in decision-making by limiting the search for solutions to those considered most promising and ending the search as soon as a solution is found which is regarded as reasonably satisfactory in the circumstances. ‘Satisficing’ is the term introduced to indicate that the policy-maker accepts the first alternative regarded as satisfactory rather than continuing the search for an optimum solution. In this way Simon conceded that the splendid rationality of ‘economic man’ assumed in the classical theory has to give way in practice to the more modest notion of the bounded rationality of ‘administrative man’.

A hard-headed appreciation of what actually happens in many real life situations is even more evident in the ‘disjointed incrementalism’ model of Lindblom (1959; 1979). This accepts the idea that in practice it is often only a small step, rather than a radical change, which is likely to be acceptable to the diverse groups that the policy-maker has to satisfy. The policies considered are therefore only slightly, or incrementally, different from those previously followed, but a small move in the desired direction may be possible. As external conditions permit or internal changes take place, it becomes possible to make further small advances, so that improvement is achieved not by a continuous process but by a patient strategy of ‘disjointed incrementalism’. The process is also ‘exploratory in that goals of policy-making continue to change as new experience with policy throws new light on what is possible or desirable’ (Braybrooke and Lindblom 1963, p. 71).

Such a mode of proceeding, well known to experienced educational managers, has been dubbed ‘the science of muddling through’. It involves cultivating a political awareness of what can be achieved in the short term, but without necessarily compromising commitment to long-term objectives. In this respect it differs markedly from the random separation of problems and solutions which is a characteristic of Cohen, March and Olsen’s organisational anarchy.

The examples of policy-making models that have been given serve to illustrate some of the ways that theories are structured or are modified to take account of the specifics of practice. They also suggest that different approaches are not necessarily to be treated as exclusive alternatives, but may complement each other by illuminating different facets of complex reality.
Emerging perspectives in the economics of education

Though educational finances have always been a concern of educational administrators at the system level, it may be claimed that sustained academic study of economic aspects of education both in the UK and in the USA began in the late 1950s. An early UK outcome was John Vaizey’s (1958) *The Costs of Education*, while in the USA ‘Investment in Man’ was the significant title of Theodore Shultz’s presidential address to the American Economic Association in 1960. The rapid development of empirical studies which then took place in the USA, involving the analysis by computer of elaborate census returns, also inspired more modest studies in the UK (Woodhall, 1972).

That the new subject had implications for educational policy-making and educational management was soon appreciated. Mark Blaug (1983, p. 7) recently referred to the decade of the 1960s as the golden years ‘when no self-respecting Minister of Education would have dreamed of making educational decisions without an economist sitting at his right hand’. By the middle of the decade Innes, Jacobson and Pellegrin (1965) were already reporting to US educational administrators the human capital and economic growth findings of Schultz, Becker, Denison and others, which were endorsed as ‘highly significant research on the economic benefits accruing to the individual and to society from investment in education’ (p. v). Similarly Peston (1969, p. 63), in a chapter linking economics with the administration of education in the Baron and Taylor volume, argued that the economics of education is of value to the administrator in the way it formulates problems and in its methods of research, and because of its substantive empirical contributions.

The rapid worldwide growth of the subject owed much to the interest of international agencies and of governments in both developed and developing countries in the part played by education in economic growth. Interest was particularly focused on the key concept of human capital, the invention of which, according to Blaug (1976), could be regarded as a very significant paradigm change in the Kuhnian sense. Reviewing the field, Williams (1982, p. 98) concluded that to most authors ‘human capital theory is at the heart of the economics of education’.

According to human capital theory, education enhances productivity so that educational expenditure is as much a form of investment, for both the individual and the society, as capital investment in industrial installation and equipment. From this perspective the resource requirements of education and training (i.e. the capital outlay) are viewed exclusively in terms of the increased income to be derived from that outlay. The propositions underlying the theory were amenable to empirical investigation, which was undertaken on a massive scale in the United States. Some work was also done in the UK, mainly by special surveys to compare the average earnings of persons with different levels of education.

Peston (1969), while admitting that research in Britain was ‘still in a most primitive condition’ (p. 62), provided a summary of substantive findings as follows:
That having allowed for all the other variables which are likely to influence the distribution of income and having attributed the remaining income difference to education, the value of education in producing income differences may be calculated as a rate of return. This return is typically in the range 6–12 per cent per annum and compares favourably with returns to investment in the public and private sectors. From the point of view of the individual this formulation is adequate. From the national standpoint an additional assumption has to be made, namely, that incomes measure productivities (more strictly, that income differences measure differences in marginal productivities).

(p. 63)

Peston himself was prepared to make such an assumption, as is evident from a later passage:

Using work of this kind it is possible to calculate what share of a country’s growth is attributable to improvements in human capital as opposed simply to the quantity of labour, physical capital and technical progress. As much as fifty per cent of growth is attributable to human capital.

(p. 63)

Reviewing the situation over a decade later, Williams (1982, p. 99) was distinctly more cautious. He warned that, since relative earnings are to some extent dependent on supply and demand, which change with time, past experience was an unreliable guide to future development. He conceded, however, that ‘expenditure on education has in the past been, and is seen to be, a worthwhile private investment’ (p. 99). Whether it is also a worthwhile social investment was in his view a more debatable proposition.

Similar doubts have been expressed by Blaug (1983) in his exposition of what he called a second-generation economics of education, which developed the subject in new directions in the 1970s but did not ‘perhaps deliver the same firm pronouncements on matters of educational policy as did the first generation’ (p. 9). He singled out two new directions of particular relevance to human capital theory: first the recognition, stimulated by the neo-Marxian critique of Bowles and Gintis (1976), that schools have a significant socialising function, i.e. the transmitting of specific values and attitudes, which is overlooked by teachers and orthodox economists whose emphasis is on the imparting of cognitive knowledge; and second the challenge to human capital theory, as formulated in 1960s, which is presented by the so-called ‘screening hypothesis’. Each requires some elaboration.

If the second-generation view is accepted—that socialisation, rather than the acquisition of skills and knowledge, is the primary economic function of education—there are implications to be drawn for practice which differ significantly
from the standpoint traditionally expected of economists. First, it would appear that attempts, in the presumed interest of the labour market, to make secondary education more specifically vocational at the expense of general education may be misguided and irrelevant. Second, doubts are raised about the wisdom of educational planning, whether in developed or developing countries, which relies on precise forecasts of manpower requirements for different kinds of educational attainment.

The screening hypothesis adds another dimension to the conceptual framework, by proposing a further economic function for education. Education appears to assist employment agencies by separating out, at different stages, those regarded as less suitable for positions of responsibility and higher salary. A strong version of the hypothesis therefore claims that education is no more than a filtering device, conveniently regarded by all concerned as fair and appropriate, which identifies those with the attributes required in different positions but which does nothing to create or develop those attributes. Blaug concluded, after reviewing the empirical evidence, that this strong version of the hypothesis is untenable. If education were simply a screening mechanism, it would obviously be cheaper and simpler, as Blaug observed (1983, p. 15), to replace it by a battery of personality tests.

A weaker interpretation of the hypothesis, which recognises that educational qualifications (whatever their other functions and merits) are in fact used as predictors of future job performance, can hardly be disputed, as Blaug also admitted. He further suggested that, because promotions usually involve the operation of an ‘internal labour market’ rather than external competition, advantages at initial appointment tend to be perpetuated throughout working life.

The extent to which a modified human capital theory can accommodate the new insights of Blaug’s second-generation economists of education is a matter of continuing debate, which clearly has direct relevance for government policy and for the management of education. If, as advocates of stronger versions of the screening hypothesis claim, increased educational expenditure for further and higher education simply gives salary and employment advantages to the better qualified, it is difficult to justify continued total dependence on public funding which, as Williams (1982, p. 101) notes, ‘provides able individuals with additional lifetime benefits at the expense of their contemporaries’. On the other hand, if educational expenditure can be shown to be a significant factor in increasing national productivity, the case for relying in the main on public finance for the provision of further and higher education will continue to be strong.

Educational costs, resource utilisation and manpower forecasting and planning can be cited as further areas of theory development and research of relevance to both the study and the practice of educational management, the economist’s constant concern being to analyse the implications and explore the consequences of alternative uses of resources. The concepts and methodologies of economics are thus likely to have a contribution to make to the professional
development of educational managers. It may be instructive for the reader to consider, in view of the previous discussion, whether this would be as human capital investment or as part of a sophisticated occupational screening device.

**Micropolitics and other micro-perspectives**

New directions which have recently emerged in the social sciences, potentially of significance for educational management practice, have in common a concern with individual persons and their perceptions of the events in which they are involved, rather than a primary emphasis on collectivities and institutions. Such studies, which may collectively be called the micro-social sciences, vary in theoretical background, basic assumptions and areas of specific interest. Their methodologies differ to some extent, but broadly rely on ethnographic research methods, i.e. on qualitative research, including participant observation (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983).

In particular, the significance for educational management of *micropolitics* has been recognised in the UK (Pratt 1982), the term being used to embrace ‘those strategies by which individuals and groups in organisational contexts seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests’ (Hoyle 1982, p. 88). In responding to Hoyle’s paper, Bailey (1982 p. 101) suggested that ‘degree of legitimacy’ is a useful concept in considering the propriety of political strategies, while Glatter (1982 p. 162) warned against regarding micropolitical analysis as prescriptive as well as descriptive.

The concepts of micropolitics, significantly gaining currency in a period of worldwide resource constraint, throw into relief the limitations of theories which virtually ignore the issue of power, through their reliance on rational choice and bureaucratic models of organisation (Pfeffer 1978; Bacharach and Lawler 1980; Pfeffer 1981). It was proposed that more attention should be given to the micro-events of organisational politics, defined by Pfeffer (1981, p. 7) as ‘those activities taken within organisations to acquire, develop and use power and other resources to obtain one’s preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices’. A similar suggestion had been made by Zaleznik (1970), as noted by Handy (1976), and by Baldridge (1971).

The micropolitical model begins by recognising the diversity of perspectives and goals within organisations, which are pluralistic in terms of values and beliefs and are divided into various interests, sub-units and sub-cultures (Baldrige 1971, p. 25). In contrast to classical and human relations management models—which rely respectively on structural control devices and on normative influences to achieve consensus on organisational objectives and models of implementation—the political model accepts that, in practice, general agreement on goals and technology cannot be taken for granted. In this respect it is similar to the garbage can model previously discussed, but does not accept the anarchic view that decisions are the adventitious result of the interplay of opportunities, problems, persons and solutions. The randomness implied in the
garbage can model, according to Pfeffer (1981, p. 30), ‘is inconsistent with the observation that in organisational decision-making, some actors seem usually to get the garbage, while others manage to get the can’. At least some organisational participants, it appears, know what they want and have the power to get it.

The key themes, as identified by Bacharach and Lawler (1980), are power, coalitions and bargaining. Shifting coalitions promote the opposing interests of different organisational sub-groups. Decisions are the result of bargaining and compromise; they are unlikely to satisfy completely the preferences of any individual or sub-group, but will tend to favour the preferences of those with most power and influence. Attention has thus been given to the measurement of intra-organisational power within organisations, considered as bargaining and influence systems (Abell 1975).

Whereas power is, in part, structurally related, it is claimed that structures are themselves to some extent politically determined. ‘To understand organisational design, one must examine the distribution of power and the preferences of those in the organisation’s dominant coalition’ (Pfeffer 1981, p. 271). Similarly Child (1984) recommends a ‘political contingency approach’ to organisational design. Among the political skills which are then helpful in operating within the structure are an ability to assess the issues which can be won and those which are hopeless, and an ability, taking account of changes in power distribution, to form new coalitions and structures.

Several writers (Peters 1978; Mangham 1979; Pfeffer 1981) have given attention to the crucial role of political language and symbolic action, involving ceremonies, symbols and settings. This applies both in mobilising support and quieting opposition, and, as in Mangham’s action research, in encouraging, guiding and sustaining organisational change. Mangham draws on the symbolic interactionist viewpoint of Blumer (1969) to illuminate the self-reflective character of human relationships in organisations, involving interpretive interaction and tentative definitions of situations, in which non-verbal language may be as significant as what is actually said.

Blumer’s *symbolic interactionism* is one of a number of micro-sociologies which may now be briefly noted. Its relevance to Mangham’s work may be surmised from the following quotation:

> Symbolic interaction involves *interpretation*, or ascertaining the meaning of the actions or remarks of the other person, and *definition*, or conveying indications to another person as to how he is to act. Human association consists of a process of such interpretation and definition. Through this process the participants fit their own acts to the ongoing acts of one another and guide others in doing so.

(Blumer 1966, p. 538)

In its more subjective form symbolic interactionism claims that it is through the process of interacting, and only so, that participants create for themselves a
meaningful social world. The resulting research task is to discover how participants come to agree upon certain meanings and definitions for co-ordinated action (Denzin 1970).

*Ethnomethodology* switches the focus of enquiry from the interactive situation to the methods by which everyday life situations are organised, perceived and understood. It has sought, ‘by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded extraordinary events . . . to learn about them as phenomena in their own right’ (Garfinkel 1967, p. 1). The use of language has been studied, as has the fact that conversations convey meanings beyond what is actually said (Cicourel 1972). The way in which social contexts are negotiated has been examined, and organisational concepts such as structure and efficiency are taken as problematic, i.e. as topics to be investigated rather than terms to be taken for granted (Bittner 1965).

Other micro-social approaches of potential relevance include: *ethogenics* (Harré 1977) which analyses social episodes through the verbal accounts which people give to explain their actions; *hermeneutics* (Gadamer 1975), which seeks to understand situations by an iterative process—the hermeneutic circle—such as is used cumulatively in the interpretation of literary texts; and *critical theory*, which—as developed by Habermas (1974)—might be described as a radical version of hermeneutics. The relevance of critical theory for educational administration practice has been strongly advocated by Bates (1982) and challenged by Lane (1983).

There are thus a number of different approaches which overlap in their areas of interest, but differ in theoretical background and ideological assumptions. A common feature is that they seek to come to terms, as has happened in modern physics in the wake of Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle, with the inescapable fact that the investigators themselves and their methodologies are in integral part of the situation being investigated (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983). Though the philosophical debate will long continue, it appears that the customary sharp differentiation, between the assumed objectivity of a positivism based on an outmoded view of natural science and the admitted subjectivity of the micro-social sciences (some of which have been described above), may prove to have been an over-simplification.

An early integration of micro- and macro-perspectives does not seem to be at hand, in spite of Cicourel’s recent optimism and his injunction that ‘we must study the way human decision-making in complex micro-settings contributes to the creation of macro-structures by routine problem solving activities necessary for the simulation or realisation of basic organisational goals’ (1981, p. 67). It may be, however, that those involved in educational organisations, whether primarily as practitioners or as students, will be disposed to accept the validity of the seeming paradox enunciated in the same volume by Knorr-Cetina. She suggests that ‘it is through micro-social approaches that we will learn most about the macro-order, for it is these approaches which through their unashamed empiricism afford us a glimpse of the reality about which we speak’ (1981, pp. 41–2).
For Thomas Kuhn (1977) the essential tension was between tradition and innovation in scientific research—the tension that leads in time to paradigm change within a scientific community. There is a sense, however, in which Kuhn’s tension is subsumed within that more basic tension between theory and practice which has been the underlying theme of this chapter.

It has been customary for practitioners to state the dichotomy in robust terms: airy-fairy theory versus down-to-earth practice. Sir Edward Bridges (1956, p. 23), when he was Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, put his emphasis squarely on the value of ‘working with or working under people who have far more experience, far more wisdom in handling affairs and dealing with people than I had’. Similarly it has been suggested that understanding the pupils, having commonsense, and being able to profit by experience are the only essential requirements for school headship (Thomas 1927).

Lest it be thought that such views would be exceptional today, it is salutary to note, from a Birmingham University dissertation (Turner 1981), the results of a survey of 66 recently appointed first-time secondary school heads. Placing little reliance on ‘concepts, techniques, theories, perspectives’, the new head teachers stress operational problems and their practical solution strictly in terms of the educational context. Moreover they prefer to rely upon personal qualities and wide experience rather than the findings of observation and research to inform the decision-making process.

Such a viewpoint would presumably not preclude learning from the experience of others, as suggested by Bridges, or from common sense, as recommended by Thomas. It thus involves an acceptance of the distilled wisdom of past experience as concentrated in the precepts of common sense. Commonsense knowledge, however, inevitably carries with it unspoken assumptions and unrecognised limitations. Theorising is taking place without it being acknowledged as such.

In contrast, the theorising about management of Taylor, Fayol, Gulick and the rest, the engineers and captains of industry who produced the pioneer management texts, was quite explicit. It was essentially a commonsense extension of their own considerable and relevant practical experience. Generalisations were then often made with unwarranted assurance, and there was little appreciation, even by proponents of scientific management, that attention needs to be given to the critical conditions which have to be satisfied for propositions found to be tenable in one context to be relevant also in an entirely different situation. This last observation is particularly applicable, as Fielding (1984) has noted, when attempts are made to apply general principles of management developed in an industrial context to other areas, such as education.
Such strictures are less applicable to the human relations tradition, which drew on a number of carefully conducted research projects. Though these may be criticised with hindsight for methodological and conceptual defects, they were successful in drawing attention to human variables inadequately recognised in traditional management theory. As applied to education, human relations ideas found a ready response, as has been noted, because of the support they provided for more participative and democratic forms of management.

For both the classical and the human relations management writers, the immediacy of the claimed connection with practice was paramount. Theory consisted essentially of generalisations from past experience and field observation, whether by scientific management efficiency experts or human relations industrial psychologists.

The New Movement in educational administration and comparable developments in other management areas, such as those which resulted in the founding of the journal, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, in 1956, provided a very different kind of justification for theory and for its relationship to practice. Henceforth, as with the laws of motion of Newtonian dynamics, theory was to consist of assumed relationships between operationally defined concepts, from which empirical laws would be defined and tested. From this viewpoint it is theory which gives meaning to facts, rather than the reverse. The point was clearly made by Griffiths:

> Facts, to be of value, must bear a relationship to one another. The use of theory in the gathering of facts provides this relationship ... But over and above the search for new facts is the concept that theory gives meaning to the facts which are uncovered.

(1959a, p. 26)

It does this by providing practitioners with sets of concepts which enable them to organise the facts with which they have to deal in a systematic and orderly manner. According to Goldhammer (1963), social science concepts provide the tools ‘through which the administrator finds the meaning and the significance of events which confront him’ (p. 15), and hence provide the means necessary ‘for the development of an independent science of educational administration’ (p. 21).

Even in the early days of the New Movement, misgivings were expressed concerning the dangers of excessive abstraction. ‘There are scientists, and administrators too’, stated Halpin (1958), ‘who consistently soar in the clouds. They forget that theory must be rooted in the actual world of experience’. He later complained (Halpin 1960) that ‘the theoretical models are too rational, too tidy, too aseptic’ and that the school superintendent feels that they omit ‘much of the palpable stuff which quickens his pulse in his daily job’.

What the practitioners were in fact saying was that the theories they were being offered, far from providing new perspectives for ordering their experience, were ignoring aspects of that experience which they regarded as important. The rather modest success achieved within the New Movement paradigm has already
been described, research findings relying more on statistical techniques than on insightful conceptualisation. As Iannaconne (1973) observed, ‘We have rigorously tested a lot of poor ideas in educational administration’.

The latter part of the chapter has sought to show how the recognition of educational management as a field of application, rather than a unitary science, has enabled more productive relationships to be developed with the world of practice. This has taken place partly because of the diversity of perspectives in the social sciences and other disciplines, such as philosophy (Hodgkinson 1978), on which an applied field may nowadays draw, and partly because the theories and models currently available make it possible to come closer to the irreducible ‘brute facts’ of real life of which Whitehead (1926) wrote.

The trend to take closer account of the reality of practice has been demonstrated in a number of areas. Whereas the high abstraction of Weber’s ideal-type conceptualisation of bureaucracy contributed immensely to clarifying the concept of organisation as a structure, the various models introduced under the heading of structural relativism, from the binary construct of Burns and Stalker to the organised anarchy of March, Cohen and Olsen, provide examples of ways in which different aspects and assumptions of the classical model can be challenged from the viewpoint of practice. Contrasting models of policy-making for different kinds of situations have been similarly described. Human capital theory in the economics of education provides an example of the modification of a powerful concept of relevance in educational policy-making to take account of perspectives and mechanisms identified by second generation economists of education. Micropolitics has been shown to illuminate an aspect of organisational life, very familiar to practitioners, which is inadequately handled in mainstream theories mainly concerned with the rational achievement of agreed objectives. The related micro-social sciences, by careful analysis of events, language and behaviour, provide insights into how individuals perceive and create their own organisational life and contribute to that of others. The intensely human nature of organisational involvement is highlighted, its implications for understanding and for practice being matters of continuing debate. A further matter for debate is the extent to which reconciliation is possible between macro- and micro-approaches to educational management.

The tension between theory and practice in educational management and in cognate areas of applied social science shows little sign of abating. Such tension can be dissipated and wasted in uncomprehending, sterile debate, but this is not inevitable. Tension can also be dynamic and creative, leading to deeper understanding and to a consequent improvement in the practice of educational management. May it always be so.

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THEORY


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This paper attempts to apply the techniques of discourse analysis to some of the key concepts in educational management. It employs a conceptual framework which is informed by management theory and policy studies as well as by the literature on discourse. The central part of the paper considers examples of discursive forms which serve to disguise or conceal the power dimension in educational institutions: these include appeals to ‘learning communities’, ‘transformational leadership’ and ‘participation’. It also examines the significance of discursive shifts from ‘rational’ to ‘emotional’ language in education, drawing on the work of James (2000) and Hartley (1999). The dominant vocabulary of educational management is then related to wider issues of political power. Finally, the paper summarises the value of discourse analysis at three levels of critical interpretation – text, voice and narrative – and suggests that, despite the pervasiveness of managerial discourse, there remains scope for interrogation and challenge.

Starting points
Much has been written about the origins of discourse analysis in the work of Baudrillard, Derrida, Lyotard and, above all, Foucault, and its analytical and critical techniques are now widely employed in the humanities and social sciences. The present paper draws on this background but it does not attempt to enter the highly complex theoretical debates about competing definitions of discourse or to take sides amongst the various postmodernist schools of thought. Its aims are much more modest in scope and focus on the use of rhetorical devices by managers in educational settings and the purposes which they serve. One point of departure is a belief in ‘the significance of language in the production, maintenance, and change of social relations of power’ (Fairclough, 1989, p. 1).
It will be argued that the management of meaning is an important instrument of professional, institutional and ideological control. Peter Cookson states:

Decoding the power discourse requires a series of understandings about the nature of language as a verbal expression of social relations. Words do not exist in a disembodied form; they have meaning within a social context that is class bound, conflictual and power driven. Those who control this symbolic world are able to shape and manipulate the market-place of educational ideas.

(Cookson, 1994, p. 116)

The ‘social context’ that frames the prevailing rhetoric requires that attention is paid not just to verbal expressions but also to organisational structures and processes, social relations and taken-for-granted assumptions about institutional ‘reality’. Commenting on Foucault’s account of the relationship between knowledge, rhetoric and power, Harvey (1990) observes:

Close scrutiny of the micro-politics of power relations in different localities, contexts and social situations leads him to conclude that there is an intimate relation between the systems of knowledge (‘discourses’) which codify techniques and practices for the exercise of social control and domination within particular contexts.

(p.45)

Schools, colleges and universities are examples of particular sites where these micro-political processes can be seen at work (see Blase and Anderson, 1995). In these institutional settings the prevailing discourses (promoted by those who ‘manipulate the marketplace of educational ideas’) provide the concepts and assumptions which shape the ‘common sense’ view of the world held by teachers and students. The deconstruction of some examples of these prevailing discourses forms the central part of this paper.

In respect of methodology, discourses ‘can be analysed at various levels, from their basic constituents, statements, to accumulated discursive formations’: they are ‘associated with ‘games of truth’ working within fields such as science and government to authorise what can be judged as true or untrue’ (Dannaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000, p. 45). In the case of education, the task is to examine educational ‘texts’ of various kinds produced by those seeking to promote or explain policy initiatives and management practices. These ‘texts’ invite scrutiny not just in terms of their surface meaning but also in terms of their underlying purposes. Sensitivity to the nuances of language, to the relationship between speaker or writer and audience(s), and to the social and cultural dynamics of the institutions which generate and receive ‘texts’, is at the heart of the process.

Discourse analysis has been employed very effectively by Stephen Ball (1990; 1994) in the relation to UK (particularly English) educational policy and
its influence can be seen in policy studies in other countries (see, for example, Hargreaves, 1994; Smyth, 1995). Its application to management has been less fully developed though Anderson and Ginsberg (1998) have offered a subtle theoretical account of how Foucault's ideas on power can illuminate the field of educational administration. The deployment of a range of discursive techniques has been an essential element in the legitimation of educational policies and management practices in a period of rapid change. The policy context within which this process has occurred will be sketched in the next section. First, however, it is necessary to comment briefly on the changing character of management as a discipline.

Pollitt (1997) has drawn attention to different stages in the evolution of management theory and has identified the 1980s as a period when ‘culture management’ became fashionable. This was a reaction against over-rational mechanistic and ‘systems’ approaches to the management of organisations. By contrast, ‘culture management’ emphasised the importance of metaphor, symbolism and ritual in organisational life. The task of shaping the organisational culture was seen as the responsibility of senior management who were expected to motivate staff, not through traditional techniques of regulation but through a positive climate which encouraged the internalization of constructive attitudes among the workforce. Metaphorical and symbolic representations of the values of the organisation were a crucial part of this process. The place of metaphor in educational contexts will feature in later discussion.

There is usually a time lapse between the development of management ideas in the private sector and their appropriation by the public sector and recent debate within the field of educational management reflects this. A special edition of the journal Educational Management and Administration appeared in the summer of 1999 and sought to redefine the conceptual map of the field. Bush (1999) argued that while educational management was not in a state of ‘crisis’ it was at a ‘crossroads’ and needed to avoid the charge of merely serving to justify the agendas of bureaucratic bodies such as the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in England. Likewise, Ribbins (1999) drew attention to the danger of the field of educational management becoming ‘overly technicist and managerialist in its orientation’ and suggested that ‘one set of possible correctives is to refocus on policy, context and environment’ (p. 235). This leads back to particular institutional settings and the discursive strategies that are used to maintain their structural and managerial ‘integrity’. It also requires some understanding of the wider policy framework which sets limits to the way individual institutions can function.

The policy context

All advanced educational systems have experienced major reforms in the last two decades. Although the specific policy configurations have varied in different countries, certain general trends are identifiable. These include an emphasis on market forces and consumerism, choice and the rights of parents, school
effectiveness and school improvement, teacher competence and accountability, and raising standards of achievement. The role of central governments in promoting these policies has invited contrasting interpretations. From one perspective, government intervention can be viewed as a necessary step aimed at challenging the conservatism and self-interest of professionals and the inefficiency of intermediate layers of government (at state, district and local authority levels). From another perspective, it can be seen as a confused attempt to devolve responsibility to individual schools and colleges, leaving them without the collective support structures they need and, ironically, leading to an increase rather than a decrease in bureaucracy (as each institution has to deal with administrative matters formerly handled elsewhere in the system).

The effect of these trends on teachers and other education professionals has received a great deal of attention from commentators: for example, the reforms of the 1980s, particularly in England but also in other parts of the UK, have been subject to extended analysis by Knight (1990), Lawton (1992, 1994), Barber (1996), and Hartley (1997). More generally, the literature on the management of change has become increasingly international in character (Hargreaves 1994, 1997; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). One reading of these developments is that they have created educational systems that are so caught up in the implementation of reform that most teacher energies are directed towards ensuring that new systems, structures and processes are in place. There is little or no time to reflect on aims and principles. As far as teachers are concerned, it is permitted to ask ‘How?’ questions but not ‘Why?’ questions. Indeed, some politicians and bureaucrats would argue that it is not the business of teachers to spend time on these ‘first order’ questions: their job is to concentrate on operational matters within a framework that is ‘given’. Chris Woodhead, HM Chief Inspector of Schools in England and Wales, has been disarmingly frank on the subject. With reference to the training of headteachers, he has posed the question: ‘… should a headteacher qualification involve participants in ‘scrutinising’ (a weasel word if ever there was one) government policy?’ His answer is unambiguous: ‘Training for headteachers ought to be practical … To suggest that they should waste precious time sitting around pontificating on the rights and wrongs of the latest political announcement simply reveals how ludicrously out of touch and self-indulgent some academics, on occasion, can be’ (Woodhead, 1998, p. 55). The message is clear. Would-be headteachers who value questioning, reflection and critical thinking, and who believe that these skills can lead to better-informed practice, need not apply for a place in Woodhead’s Brave New World.

Another way of describing these trends would be to say that they can be interpreted as an attempt to decouple policy and management. A few years ago the present writer published an article reflecting on this in the Scottish context and argued that the effect of some of the reforms that were taking place was deskilling and de-professionalising, not just for teachers but also for managers. Staff were encouraged ‘to focus on the ‘efficient’ performance of the immediate task in hand, and to refrain from thinking too deeply about the constraints within
which they work, far less about the social function of institutionalised schooling’ (Humes, 1994, p. 182). The article called for greater courage on the part of managers and suggested that they have a moral obligation to challenge policy makers to live up to the ideals contained in policy documents – by, for example, providing adequate resources to ensure effective implementation (see also Fairley & Paterson, 1995).

The somewhat optimistic title of that paper was ‘Policy and management: mending the fracture’. In fact, the fracture has, if anything, got worse. New Labour’s reform programme continues the momentum of the New Right and ensures that a chronically tired and largely demoralised teaching force lacks the strength and the will to engage in any kind of sustained critical interrogation, let alone develop an effective strategy of resistance (see Docking, 2000). Their position is not eased by the fact that many of those who occupy leadership roles within the education service – and this includes some academics – have succumbed to the pressure to concentrate narrowly on matters of implementation, without any serious reflection on the justification for official policies. They simply wait for the directives from above and pass them down the line. They have found, in some cases from bitter experience, that compliance and conformity are rewarded while resistance is penalised. In England, Ofsted and the Teacher Training Agency can claim much of the credit for this compliance culture. In Scotland, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate has moved in a similar direction, though less crudely and with greater teacher resistance.

Sooner or later, however, a counter-movement to the regime of surveillance, policing and control will begin. On present policies there are likely to be more failing schools, more demoralised teachers seeking a way out, greater problems of recruitment, more ‘super-heads’ deciding to quit. The counter-movement is likely to have a number of origins, some of which cannot be predicted. An important element in preparing the ground for a counter-movement – in terms of increasing understanding of what has been happening – is the use of discourse analysis to deconstruct the rhetorical deceptions that have been an essential part of educational policy-making and management practice since the 1980s. As Fairclough (1989) remarks in his study of language and power, ‘consciousness is the first step towards emancipation’ (p. 1).

**Metaphor and the discourse of community**

There are Idols which we call Idols of the Market. For Men associate by Discourse, and a false and improper Imposition of Words strangely possesses the Understanding, for Words absolutely force the Understanding, and put all Things into Confusion.

(Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, 1620)

It was noted above that the application of discourse analysis to educational management (as distinct from policy) is somewhat under-developed. However,
the territory is not completely uncharted. Some writers in the field of educational management have been very aware of the importance of language. Davies (1994) has written that ‘Educational management is not a discipline, but a collection of languages, a collection of different ways of seeing . . . Before managing schools in particular directions, one has to manage meaning’. He adds that most schools are the scene of ‘a series of competing [management] discourses’ (pp. 4–5). Again, writers such as Beare, Caldwell and Milliken (1989), and Clark (1996) have drawn attention to the importance of metaphor in expressing the core beliefs and values of an institution (see also Bacharach & Mundell, 1995). Clark (1996) suggests that most schools ‘are governed by mixed metaphors’ (p. 118) and that such governing metaphors are largely taken for granted. A recent writer on Catholic education, Sullivan (2000), structures his analysis in terms of the competition between various metaphors for dominance in thinking and practical decision-making. He discusses five in particular – school as family, as business, as church, as political community, as academy. The general point is that metaphorical comparisons represent one attempt to ‘manage meaning’ and shape the perceptions of those who work in an institution. Such attempts can be perfectly well-intentioned and can be motivated by a desire to give unity of purpose to staff and a sense of belonging to pupils. However, they can also serve less benign purposes and can operate as barriers to thinking about ‘first order’ questions of aims and values. Morgan (1997), who has written extensively about the use of metaphor in organisations in general (not specifically educational organisations) has observed that ‘any given metaphor can be incredibly persuasive but it can also be blinding and block our ability to gain an overall view’ (p. 347). When this happens, the restriction serves to limit the parameters of legitimate debate about policy and management. In other words, discourse itself can be subject to management.

An emphasis on ethos, climate and culture is usually associated with a symbolic or metaphorical representation of the organisation. Such representations are invariably positive in character – David Hargreaves’s comparisons of schools with factories, prisons and asylums (in Mulgan, 1997) do not feature in official discourse. Beare, et al. (1989) suggest that one way of enhancing school culture is for principals or headteachers to ‘select deliberately a metaphor which affirms the way they image the school and repeatedly to use it . . . Keep it simple: one simple picture, constantly repeated which affirms ‘This is what our school is like’” (pp. 189–90).

Consider the concept of community, which has become a popular metaphorical representation – more especially the school as a learning community, one embodiment of the learning society which politicians are so fond of invoking. (‘Learning society’ is perhaps the soft, reassuring version of ‘knowledge economy’.) Community is clearly intended to be a praiseworthy concept. Communities are regarded as places which give identity and self-esteem to individuals and provide them with a network of support: they have rules and conventions which express a value system and which are intended to protect rights
and freedoms that serve the interests of the members. The achievements of educational communities are sometimes given formal public recognition in the shape of Investors in People status or Health at Work awards. However, it is not unknown for staff to express scepticism about the real value of such awards which they regard as designed for external consumption rather than as indicative of a genuine concern by management for the health and welfare of employees.

Communities are not invariably or inevitably positive. Some communities are negative and destructive in their effects. Any major city – and increasingly some rural areas – has communities that are rife with crime, vandalism, drugs and intimidation, where the quality of life is poor. For some pupils and some teachers, the school ‘communities’ which they inhabit will be rather like that – for example, pupils who are bullied or who experience repeated failure, teachers who are suffering from stress and overwork. Furthermore, in such institutions all kinds of negative learning will be taking place: how to suppress fears and emotions, how to conceal feelings of worthlessness, how to remain silent in the face of unfair treatment. In such circumstances, the positive concept of community is at best a myth, at worst a sham. Even Clark, who (in his 1996 book, Schools as Learning Communities) holds up the concept largely for approval, acknowledges that the power of community can be ‘corrupting’ and that a ‘vague and unctuous version of community [can be] used to cover a multitude of sins (and conflicts).’ (p. 164).

The discourse of leadership

The same kind of analysis can be applied to other areas of fashionable discourse. ‘Leadership’ is an example of a concept that is widely invoked but subject to very little in the way of critical scrutiny. Hargreaves and Goodson have written that the literature on leadership ‘is often strong on rhetoric but weak on evidence’ (in Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999, p. viii) and West-Burnham (1997) observes: ‘Leadership . . . is subject to normative writing where exhortation replaces research and where ethical stances are seen as overriding any empirical base’ (p. 4). Politicians find educational leadership an attractive concept because it places responsibility for success or failure largely in the hands of professionals: thus ‘failing’ schools are presented as the victims of poor leadership (rather than ill-conceived policies) and the belief that a new leader should be able to turn them round gains currency. The school effectiveness and school improvement movements have (no doubt unconsciously) helped to reinforce this attitude by attaching considerable weight to ‘in school’ factors in explaining differential results by apparently ‘similar’ schools and perhaps underestimating the extent to which external social factors influence pupil achievement. Add to this the current focus on the management of change in educational institutions and the scene is set for the elevation of leadership to revered status. Fullan (1993), for example, states that ‘... educational leaders must learn to influence and coordinate non-linear, dynamically complex, change processes’
(pp. 74–5). One exception to this pattern is MacBeath (1999) whose study of the ways in which schools can, through a process of self-evaluation, manage their own strategies of improvement, does not include leadership as one of its key categories.

Those writers who do give prominence to leadership recognise that it can take a variety of forms. Leithwood, et al., (1999) offer a classification of different types based on an extensive survey of the literature: instructional leadership; moral leadership; participative leadership; managerial leadership; contingent leadership; and transformative leadership. The last category is particularly interesting because of its compatibility with the emphasis on the management of change. Included under the term transformational leadership ‘are writings about charismatic, visionary, cultural and empowering concepts of leadership’. It should be noted here that all of the adjectives linked with the word ‘leadership’ serve to soften any authoritarian associations it might have on its own. ‘Charismatic’ and ‘visionary’ convey the sense of an inspirational quality which will energise colleagues. ‘Cultural’ and ‘empowering’ draw attention to the value system of the organisation as a whole and suggest that agency is distributed democratically. ‘Transformational’ implies that staff are engaged in the shared enterprise of initiating and responding to change, in which everyone has a stake in meeting the challenge successfully. Qualifying ‘leadership’ in these ways may serve to make it more palatable and deflect attention from its directive aspects. Similarly, writing on ‘leadership as spirituality, as artistry, as the creation of meaning’ (West-Burnham, 1997, p. 4) shifts the focus from the authority of the leader to the supposed benefits for the led. Such linguistic softening cannot, however, entirely conceal the realities of educational hierarchies. In the final analysis, ‘Leadership is realized in the process whereby one or more individuals succeed in attempting to frame and define the reality of others’ (Smircich & Morgan, 1982, p. 258).

Some teachers are not unaware of the control purposes of the rhetoric of leadership and learning communities, though most teachers are simply too busy to have time to reflect on the implications. Career-minded staff may pay lip service to the prevailing management culture without being committed to it at a personal level. Others are capable of thinking and acting ‘subversively’ with the new forms of discourse and using them to challenge perceived management failures. Over time this can lead to the discrediting and displacement of once fashionable terms. What may not change is the day-to-day reality of teachers’ lives as they struggle to cope with competing and sometimes conflicting demands for increased accountability, higher standards and curriculum reform. In these circumstances, is it any wonder that staffroom cynicism is widespread?

The discourse of participation

One of the paradoxes of the education policy agendas pursued by governments in advanced democracies is that the regulatory mechanisms which serve to
reduce teachers’ autonomy and increase their accountability are often accompanied by a discourse of participation (Hargreaves, 1994). Teachers are ‘consulted’ about curricular reform programmes and are encouraged to become involved in research studies, community projects and development groups. Writing in an American context, Anderson (1998) argues that ‘the current discourse of participation is part of a historical concern of school administrators with public relations and – particularly when schools are viewed as in crisis – the creation of greater institutional legitimacy’ (p. 573). He cites studies which suggest that teachers increasingly complain that participation is often bogus and, far from increasing job satisfaction, adds to their workload and reduces the amount of time they can devote to what they see as their primary task, namely interactions with students. Anderson refers to ‘the linguistic slippage that occurs with regard to the meaning of participation and the diverse agendas that are promoted within its discursive umbrella’ (p. 574). In effect, he suggests that most appeals to participation should be regarded as strategies of containment designed to disguise the power nexus within educational systems.

Presented more positively, the manager who encourages participation might be seen as a ‘human resource developer’ (see Usher & Edwards, 1994, 111–116) allowing junior colleagues to enjoy staff development opportunities. However, those selected to participate are often more appropriately regarded as beneficiaries of senior management patronage: they are being identified as people who will operate constructively within existing conventions and who may merit further advancement. Where a more open form of participation is allowed, the process is usually carefully managed. In Scotland, the discourse of participation is closely allied to notions of consultation, partnership and consensus (see Humes, 1986, 1997; McPherson & Raab, 1988). It is part of the received wisdom about how the Scottish educational system functions that it is open and democratic in character, inviting widespread consultation on policy initiatives, involving all the major stakeholders and seeking a consensus wherever possible. In practice, the consultation process is skilfully orchestrated by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate, the ‘partners’ are certainly not equal and the consensus is often more apparent than real (see Humes 1999). The preferred outcome is invariably a single cost-effective ‘solution’ to complex educational problems.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that participation offers no scope for what Anderson (1998) calls ‘authentic’ involvement. He asks a series of important questions which open up the territory for debate:

- Participation toward what end?
- Who participates?
- What are the relevant spheres of participation?
- What conditions and processes need to be present locally for participation to be authentic?
- What conditions and processes must be present at broader institutional and societal levels to make participation authentic? (586–594)
It is by responding to these questions that educators may find some discursive space in which to challenge the limited participation that officially-managed processes normally allow.

**Rational and emotional management**

Managerial language is typically upbeat, even evangelical, in character, expressing a ‘can do’ philosophy of positive action and achievement. Managers like to hear and spread the ‘good news’ and celebrate achievement. Their discourse speaks of ‘challenges’ and ‘opportunities’ rather than ‘problems’ and ‘obstacles’. They define their own role in terms of providing ‘vision’ and articulating the ‘mission’ of the institution and projecting its public ‘image’.

Within this basic framework there are variations of tone and emphasis. Sometimes the continuing potency of hard-edged managerialism is in evidence. This is apparent in the invocation of terms like ‘objectives’ and ‘targets’, ‘competences’ and ‘standards’, ‘achievement’ and ‘effectiveness’, ‘quality’ and ‘accountability’. The emphasis is on rational strategic and operational planning, usually with a focus on ‘delivery’ within a clearly defined time-scale. School development planning is an example of this.

At other times, a gentler form of discourse can be found. This is sensitive to the ‘morale’ of staff and the ‘ethos’ of the institution. It speaks of ‘empowering’ individuals and giving them ‘ownership’ of policies. ‘Communication’ and ‘consultation’ and ‘collegiality’ are essential elements of this approach. Managers have to adopt a ‘listening’ mode and be ‘responsive’ to the representations of colleagues. They seek to create an atmosphere of ‘trust’ and ‘loyalty’ and ‘openness’ in which the ‘dignity’ of staff is respected, in the hope that they will achieve personal and professional ‘fulfilment’. The inclusion of these terms in the lexicon of educational management suggests that the appeal is more to emotion than to reason, though it would be wrong to present the two forms of discourse as dichotomous. As will be shown, there are important points of convergence.

In an unpublished paper, James (2000) has offered an interesting perspective on these discursive modulations. He states that schools are ‘complex emotional mazes’ which require headteachers to ‘consider more than the rational and functional aspects of their leadership’. Moreover, ‘emotions are powerful and intrinsic within organising and because educational institutions are arenas for particularly high levels of emotion, especially during radical change, managing this emotional dimension is significant’. James draws a distinction between emotional containment, which he presents as a legitimate process involving the creation of ‘structures and processes in organising within which emotions can be experienced’ and emotional control, which involves illegitimate attempts ‘to limit and restrict the experience of emotion’. He concludes that since there is no escape from the emotional dimension ‘it must in some sense be managed’. He adds, however, that ‘emotions cannot be managed in the way that other objects
can be during the management of radical change in schools’. Among other things – though this is a point that James himself does not make explicitly – the management of emotions requires a different form of discourse from the management of, for example, curriculum, resources or finance.

Addressing similar issues, Hartley (1999) offers a more critical account of the shift from ‘rational’ to ‘emotional’ management. Whereas the former attends mainly to structures and bureaucratic processes, and the strategic objectives of the organisation, the latter attends to social processes and the human (not just the professional) qualities of staff. Hartley goes on to suggest that ‘emotional’ management ‘may serve as the new legitimatory rhetoric in the management of teachers’ (p. 317). He cites the discourse employed in a 1998 publication on the training of headteachers in Scotland. This document describes the preferred interpersonal qualities which might be required of headteachers. These are:

- demonstrates confidence and courage
- creates and maintains a positive atmosphere
- inspires and motivates others
- communicates effectively
- empathises with others
- values and works through teams


The discursive shift represented by this terminology can be explained as a recognition that schools are increasingly seen as complex, ambiguous, messy institutions which cannot be managed solely on the basis of rational planning. Attitudinal and dispositional qualities are at least as important: thus the management of those attitudinal and dispositional qualities becomes an issue and the example set by the headteacher is crucial. The headteacher is expected to display and demonstrate a range of permitted emotions which, unsurprisingly, are to be positive and optimistic in character. Hartley coins the term ‘contrived emotionality’ (p. 320) to describe this attitudinal and dispositional repertoire. In a sense, what is happening is the rationalisation of the emotions, a process that helps to explain why the two styles can co-exist without obvious conflict. The sociologist Mestrovic, whom Hartley quotes, describes the process as the ‘manipulation of emotions by self and others into a bland, mechanical, mass-produced yet oppressive ethic of niceness’ (Mestrovic, 1997, cited in Hartley, 1999, p. 319).

Blase and Anderson (1995) show how a culture of ‘niceness’ leads to the ‘institutional silencing’ (p. 138) of criticism. Norms of propriety, courtesy and civility discourage the voicing of concerns which might be construed as a challenge to authority. Furthermore, if meaning is managed effectively, the majority of staff internalize the professional and organizational vocabulary through which work is defined by officialdom. Dissent is silenced by representing it as straying beyond the boundaries of acceptable professional discourse. Descriptions such as ‘troublemaker’, ‘negative’, ‘not a team player’ and ‘over the top’ are used to
label those who refuse to play by the (linguistic) rules of the game. ‘The individual is marginalised and pathologised through labelling in order to protect the legitimacy of the institution’ (Blase & Anderson, 1995, p. 138).

The business of management, however carefully presented and softened by emotional terminology, is at one level concerned with control. It is designed to defuse those aspects of institutional life which are potentially disruptive – the rivalries and ambitions of staff, the personal resentments and disappointments, the anger, frustration and cynicism that simmer in staffrooms, the sense of injustice which management decisions sometimes provoke. These are real emotions, not the sanitised variety that so often features in official documents about ethos and school culture. But they are also negative emotions and so are not ‘permitted’, however justified they may be by circumstances. The functioning of the organisation requires that they are controlled, not least in the interests of pupils. Professional socialisation at the training and induction stages of a teacher’s career provides the basis for self-imposed emotional control. But with a teaching force increasingly affected by low morale, overwork and surveillance regimes of various kinds, other influences are required. It is against this background that emotional management from above becomes important.

There is some evidence of an emerging professional debate involving administrators, policy makers and school leaders, not just academic researchers, about the importance of emotion in educational settings. A recent online conference organised by the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPDC) had, as one of its key themes, ‘Healthy School Communities’ and a number of the contributors made reference to the importance of understanding the emotional dimension of school dynamics affecting students, teachers and parents as well as principals (headteachers). A Canadian contributor (Beatty, 2000) in a paper entitled ‘Pursuing the Paradox of Emotion and Educational Leadership’ (http://www.apapdc.edu.au/) offers a particularly interesting report of empirical studies investigating the positive and negative emotional experiences of, first, teachers in their interactions with educational administrators and, secondly, principals (headteachers) in their roles as leaders. Beatty’s aim is to begin ‘to create a collection of voices pertaining to emotion and educational leadership’ (see also McCrea & Erlich, 1999). Her approach complements (and in certain respects challenges) the perspective on leadership offered earlier in this paper.

Underlying all of this is the question of power. Whose interests do the various strategies of ‘discursive containment’ serve? Who is advantaged by the strategic capture of the marketplace of educational ideas? Ball (1994) says: ‘Discourses are about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority’ (p. 21). To gain discursive control enables a ‘regime of truth’ to be established – ie, a ‘common sense’ version of events that
comes to be seen as self-evident and serves to marginalise or exclude other representations. Thus persuading teachers that they work in a ‘learning community’ in which they are ‘empowered’ and allowed to develop ‘ownership’ of the policies which they are expected to implement is a sound managerial strategy which serves to disguise the power dimension of the organisation. It strengthens the legitimacy of the leadership by representing policy and management in terms of democratic consultation, partnership and consensus. Against this background, it is very hard for teachers to find their own voice, far less to have it listened to, in an arena that will enable it to have any impact. Leaders who present themselves as benign change-agents using a rhetoric that makes great play of ‘participation’ are likely to be much more successful than those who simply invoke the authority of their formal status.

Whether this is, in the words of Bacon, a ‘false and improper imposition of words’ or a legitimate way of trying to cope with the uncertainties and confusions of the post-modern world, might be a matter for debate. But, however it is interpreted, it is important to note the wider political context within which all this is happening. This is an age of public relations experts, spin doctors whose function is to present ‘reality’ in a particular way, an exercise that involves the skilful manipulation of language and media images, the leaking of information and mis-information, the promotion, destruction and rehabilitation of political and professional reputations. Witness the rise, stumble and rise of Chris Woodhead.

Presentation becomes all-important. ‘Reality’ becomes malleable, another commodity that can be packaged and marketed. What emerges is an Orwellian world in which words mean something other than that which they ostensibly denote. Thus ‘guidelines’ are, in fact, mandatory; ‘empowerment’ involves taking on additional responsibilities without additional power; ‘ownership’ requires unreflective acquiescence in the face of central directives; and ‘consultation’ is a process to be managed rather than a source of insight. In all of this the notion that education has something to do with knowledge, truth and understanding becomes a naive anachronism.

It will be apparent by now that the present writer subscribes to the sceptical school of management represented by writers such as Furnham (author of The Psychology of Managerial Incompetence) and Burrell (author of Pandemonium: Towards a Retro-Organization Theory). The value of certain forms of management thinking for educational institutions has been oversold and, fortunately, there is a growing awareness of some of its weaknesses. For example, the jargon associated with Human Resource Management (HRM) and Total Quality Management (TQM) is increasingly subject to criticism (see, Fitz 1999). The mantra of so-called management gurus – terms like commitment, flexibility, excellence, integration, transformation, continuous improvement – is recognised as offering a simplistic solution to highly complex problems. It is no accident that people speak of the ‘cult’ of managerialism – implying a naive faith, gullible followers and charismatic leaders concerned as much with their own power as with the
enlightenment of their audience. Certain forms of managerial discourse have outlived their usefulness – the ‘macho’ variety of the 1980s and its ‘spiv Delboy’ successor which offered to credit-rate and certificate students with an ease that rested uncomfortably with claims of quality. More subtle forms are now in evidence – thus the emergence of emotional management and the appeal of learning communities, the latter implying a collegiality of approach to counteract the less attractive aspects of private corporate culture invading the educational world.

Discourses are constantly developing in response to internal and external pressures coming from ideological, economic, political, professional and institutional forces. This means that the language in which educational policies are expressed is subject to constant adjustment and refinement – examples would be the successive formulations of the National Curriculum in England and Wales and higher still in Scotland. In higher education, staff in the UK are currently having to come to terms with the notion of ‘benchmarking’ as a way of trying to ensure comparability of standards across institutions teaching similar subjects for the same level of award. This exercise, at one level, is a sensible attempt to respond to the move towards a mass system of higher education taught within a highly diversified range of institutions. At another level, it represents a victory for the educational bureaucrats of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and a dangerous move towards a centrally-directed national curriculum in higher education. There is considerable scope for the use of discourse analysis in deconstructing the documentation of QAA and the Funding Councils. For most senior managers in universities, the massive task of simply assimilating the contents of the daily directives which issue from these bodies ensures that critical interrogation is rarely possible. This may help to explain why someone like Sir Stewart Sutherland, Principal of Edinburgh University, has suggested that in recent years universities have failed to ask the right questions and, to that extent, have been complicit in their own containment (Sutherland, 1999). These examples reinforce the point made in the opening section about the need to locate the language/power configurations of particular institutions within the wider political/ideological context which frames them. The final section will attempt to summarise the ways in which the study of discourse can inform both micro and macro levels of analysis.

**Text, voice and narrative**

Both policy and management discourses can be considered at the simple level of ‘text’. This involves looking at what is said, the central concepts and recurring metaphors that are employed, their clarity and consistency, their meaning for the audience or audiences to which they are directed, and the extent to which they relate to the stated purposes of the organisation. Text can be read ‘on the lines’ and ‘between the lines’: discursive threads can be elucidated and subjected to analysis. It is not enough, however, to confine the exercise to internal linguistic deconstruction. Gale (1999) points out that ‘discourses produce texts as well as
interpret them and they appeal to ideologies while also being informed by them’ (p. 397). Attempting to explain the ideological context within which discourses are developed and come to dominance is an essential part of the process.

Management discourses can also be considered at the level of voice. Here the questions are: ‘Whose account is being heard?’ ‘Is it an authentic voice based on real experience or an unconvincing application of half-understood management jargon to the world of education?’ ‘Is there scope for alternative voices, including minorities?’ A comparison with feminist readings of history is instructive here. The dominance of male voices has been challenged and illuminating feminist readings of many fields of human endeavour are now available. Similar techniques need to be applied to the world of educational management in which the dominant voices remain those who exercise authority and have access to privileged knowledge (see Blackmore, 1996). Creating discursive space for the voices of classroom teachers to be heard is not easy, particularly in a climate where they are discouraged from straying from the tightly-defined territory mapped out for them by officialdom. But it is not impossible. There is major work to be done, both in initial teacher education and in continuing professional development, to counteract the negative effects of recent and current policies on teachers’ perceptions of their potential contribution to policy development and management practice.

The voices which control the text are able to construct a ‘narrative’, a preferential account of what happens in organisations. It is usually a story of managerial success and organisational achievement which is hard to challenge, as the experience of ‘whistleblowers’ testifies. Failures are consigned to footnotes or explained as the result of circumstances beyond managerial control. The ‘integrity’ of the organisation and the ‘credibility’ of the management requires that counter-narratives are discredited – by, for example, being presented as the misrepresentations or fabrications of disaffected employees. The highly contestable nature of many of the official narratives that are presented for public and professional consumption is disguised by the form in which they are written. ‘Public policy documents . . . almost always conform to a generic structure that is “written in such a way as to deny the politics of discourse”’ (Gale, 1999, p. 400, quoting Yeatman, 1990, p. 160). Thus certain narratives become dominant and serve as the received wisdom of educational institutions and systems. Discourse analysis can help to expose the political character of official accounts of policy and challenge the ostensibly ‘neutral’ stance adopted by bureaucrats.

The interrogation of managerial discourse along the lines suggested takes the researcher beyond the particular institutional context in which the language appears. It opens up questions about the origins of dominant discourses, the way in which they have been promoted, the ideological climate which has enabled them to gain currency, and the groups which benefit from them. It re-instates the importance of theory in educational debate and lifts the head (and the spirit) above the mind-numbing routine and bureaucratic regulation that afflicts so many educational institutions. Finally, it challenges the claims to knowledge

THE DISCOURSES OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

175
which managers and decision-makers assume and requires them to explain, justify and defend both their own position and the demands they make on others. To the extent that these opportunities for discursive interrogation and the occupation of discursive space are seized, the possibility of beginning the counter-movement to the oppressive regimes of control, which have become a feature of educational systems in advanced societies, will be strengthened.

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References


‘REALLY GOOD IDEAS’?
Developing evidence-informed policy and practice in educational leadership and management

Rosalind Levaćic and Ron Glatter


Introduction
In the light of the current promotion of evidence-informed policy and practice (EIPP), we examine its potential in relation to educational leadership and management. We begin by considering what may be meant by the term and some of the issues to which it gives rise. We then look at some factors promoting and inhibiting the development of EIPP. Finally, and most importantly, we suggest a way forward for developing EIPP in educational leadership and management, including some ideas about the possible role of BEMAS in supporting an EIPP agenda.

Our general stance is that we see considerable potential in this approach, which is why in this article we go beyond a conceptual discussion to develop a set of proposals. EIPP is concerned among other things with the culture of the research community and the relationships of its members with policy makers and practitioners (matters which have been central to BEMAS in the almost 30 years of its existence). It requires the creation of structures and practices that promote effective interaction between the three communities. This is not a simple task. Hence we seek in what follows to be realistic and to take account of the context within which each community operates and the pressures to which it is subject.

EIPP in context
In order to assess the problems and possibilities of EIPP we need to be clearer as to what the term might mean. The word ‘evidence’ defines the term more narrowly than if ‘knowledge’ or ‘research’ were used instead. However, in public debate these three words tend to be used interchangeably. For instance, David Blunkett (DfEE, 2000a) in a lecture to an ESRC seminar affirmed his belief ‘that having ready access to the lessons learnt from high quality research [our italics] can and
must vastly improve the quality and sensitivity of the complex and often con-
strained decisions we, as politicians, have to make’. He stated that ‘good, well-
founded evidence [our italics] for key issues is needed’ and proclaimed that the
‘new Centre for Management and Policy Studies in the Cabinet Office is promot-
ing practical strategies for knowledge-based policy making’ (our italics). At the
same time, he endeavoured to appeal to the whole research community by also
calling for ‘blue-skies research which thinks the unthinkable’. This speech indic-
ates well why we need to disentangle the term ‘evidence-informed policy and
practice’ from the broader but clearly related issue of the value of research—in all
its variety—to society. EIPP cannot be the only justification for social research nor
can all social research fit into an EIPP framework.

EIPP presents the challenging aim that ‘decision-making at every level can be
done in the knowledge of the best possible evidence’ (Sebba, 1999: 6). This con-
trasts with alternative sources of ‘knowledge’ upon which policy making can be
based. Davies (1999), for example, lists these as political ideology, conventional
wisdom, folklore, wishful thinking and public opinion formers using selective,
unsystematic and biased research. Thus what counts as ‘evidence’ is crucial in
defining EIPP and in staking it out as a terrain for particular researchers and
their associated research methodologies. EIPP is bound to be contested territory.
Defined too narrowly it will have very little currency among educational
researchers; defined too broadly it will collapse under the inability to agree on
what counts as ‘evidence’.

The recent shift in terminology from ‘evidence-based’ to ‘evidence-informed
policy and practice’ seems important, for at least two reasons. The first relates to
the conjectural and changing nature of knowledge (and hence evidence) and the
fact that ‘the relationship between knowledge production and knowledge use is
problematical’ (Pratt and Swann, 1999: 5). Recognizing this, the Economic and
Social Research Council (ESRC) is preparing a major research programme on
‘The Evolution of Knowledge: Interaction of Research and Practice’ (ESRC,
2000), covering several fields of professional activity, aimed at developing a
better understanding of the complex processes involved. As Boyd (1998) argues,
it may be simplistic to assume that the main contribution of research to policy is
problem solving, by straightforwardly providing ‘data for decisions’ or clear
evidence on ‘what works’. Its more significant functions may be to illuminate
and formulate problems and define alternatives.

The second reason for the importance of the shift concerns the nature of pro-
fessionalism and policy making. Central to both is the exercise of judgement and
this requires appropriate ‘space’: ‘The judgements that shape professional work
involve applying the knowledge base to unique and particular circumstances’
(Luntley, 2000: 8). In the same way, ‘Policy-makers translate evidence in the
context of the policy process taking into account resource and political implica-
tions’ (Sebba, 1999: 4).

EIPP thus consists of a set of interrelated processes involving various stake-
holders by which research issues are selected, evidence on these collected, vali-
dated and communicated and then used or ignored in decision making by two key players: policy makers and practitioners, though lay and client audiences may also have roles. EIPP corresponds closely to the ‘knowledge chain’ that consists of:

knowledge systems, knowledge creation, dissemination, absorption and application in decision-making and practice. Actual ‘knowledge chains’ involve the interaction of experts, intermediaries, managers and decision makers, using data, information, and knowledge exchanged through a variety of media.

(ESRC, 2000: 4)

A model of EIPP may help in distinguishing the key processes, their relationship to each other and the main stakeholders. This enables us to focus on the major components of EIPP and to locate problems and possibilities in relation to these. A model of EIPP applicable to education or other areas of social policy is depicted in Figure 1. Since EIPP is seen as an interconnected sequence of processes, where one breaks into the cycle is not particularly significant.

Figure 1 EIPP Model.
Research

Research is all the activities that generate research findings and conclusions. We need to distinguish two types of research that can inform practice: ‘public-domain’ research and ‘private-domain’ research.

- Public-domain research consists of investigations that aim to contribute to the accumulation of openly accessible knowledge. It is mainly undertaken by ‘professional’ researchers in universities and research institutes, although practitioners also contribute through part-time postgraduate study and subsequent active research.
- Private-domain research refers to institutionally based research undertaken mainly by practitioners into their own practice or that of groups of colleagues or their educational institution. It is intended for informing practice. Clearly action research is included within this category, though it also embraces other forms of research, for example institutional research into student and parental perceptions, such as the Scottish Office Education Department’s School Ethos Indicators (SOED, 1992a, b) and value-added analysis of student level test and examination data. The research is undertaken by practitioners or alternatively by consultants employed by them, such as providers of statistical analysis of institutional value-added pupil performance data.

There is a tendency in the current debate on EIPP to associate it with public-domain research, as for example in recent discussions on forming a Campbell Collaboration for organizing and disseminating peer reviews of public-domain research in education (Boruch et al., 1999). An important issue is whether the promotion of EIPP as referring to public-domain research will further promote the professionalization of research, with the attendant marginalization of practitioner research (Anderson and Herr, 1999).

Validation

A key process in EIPP is the validation of research, this is the determination of what is good-quality research and hence what findings and conclusions count as evidence. The different research paradigms are distinguished by the kinds of criteria they use to determine good-quality research, an important element of which is what counts as valid evidence. A crucial issue for EIPP in educational management is which research paradigms to include. Currently the most influential model of EIPP comes from health care, in particular the Cochrane Collaboration (www.cochrane.org) which organizes, conducts and disseminates systematic reviews of research on health care interventions (Chalmers et al., 1997). Here the criteria for validating evidence are those required for valid evidence of causality derived from randomized controlled trials (RCT). Clearly, the issue for
education—and even more so for educational leadership and management—is how to develop and implement agreed criteria for validated evidence not only for non-RCT research using statistical analysis of observational data but also for qualitative research.

Validation criteria affect what research is undertaken and how it is conducted, as well as the peer evaluation of published research findings. One of the main planks of EIPP is improved validation through systematic reviews of the literature on given issues and the dissemination of syntheses of validated findings in ways appropriate for the particular stakeholders. The work of the DfEE-funded Centre for EIPP in education will be particularly important in this respect. The EIPP model in action means that some research findings do not get validated by the criteria employed by the EIPP community: the research is in effect designated as not of sufficiently high quality. Figure 1 depicts unvalidated research as being discarded. Such non-validation is clearly controversial, so ‘unvalidated’ research gets diffused outside the EIPP system by members of the research community or the media who are sympathetic to the ‘unvalidated’ research. Hence ‘unvalidated’ research can influence policy and practice.

The validation process for private-domain research is much less public. However, its validation criteria are normally derived from public-domain research methods, even though they may be less formal and rigorous. Greater exposure of practitioners to EIPP relating to public-domain research is likely to feed back into the criteria used for judging the quality of institutional evidence that is used to inform practice.

**Dissemination**

The dissemination of validated research findings within and beyond the research community is the next crucial stage of EIPP. An important element of EIPP is the advocacy of far more replicatory research and of research that is cumulative as it builds on previous work. Peer organization of systematic literature reviews enables evidence to be efficiently accumulated and disseminated, so that it can more readily be built upon. In education (as in other social sciences) placing greater emphasis on replicatory research and systematic review requires a change in what is valued by the research community (Apple, 1999). Funding bodies and academic journals tend to place much more value on ‘original’ research: research replicating previous studies is rare and that which reanalyses data from previous studies even rarer, particularly in qualitative research.

If evidence is to influence policy and practice it must be effectively disseminated to these audiences. This requires communicating findings at different levels of sophistication depending on the users’ prior knowledge and available time. To influence these audiences findings need to be communicated briefly in non-technical language, but still retaining the correct interpretation of the evidence. This can be particularly difficult when evidence is equivocal or applies to
particular circumstances but not others. At the dissemination stage of EIPP some evidence is lost through poor communication and only part of it is actually received by policy makers and practitioners. This is depicted in Figure 1 as a leakage of validated evidence into the discarded category.

**Policy making and practice**

The next stage in the EIPP cycle is the influence of validated evidence on policy making and practice. It is safe to assume that only a fraction of the validated evidence disseminated actually succeeds in influencing policy and practice. The EIPP model treats policy making and practice as distinct spheres of activity. Policy makers and practitioners seek to influence each other and both communities may use recourse to ‘evidence’ as part of these efforts. There is a substantial research literature on how policy is made and implemented (e.g. Ham and Hill, 1993; Weiss, 1991) and on professional practice which can help us to understand how evidence may or may not influence policy and practice (Eraut, 1994). Recent reports from the USA (National Research Council, 1999) and Australia (Selby Smith, 1999), concerned with the influence of education research on policy and practice, both reinforce the view discussed above, that it is more appropriate to aspire to evidence-informed rather than evidence-based policy and practice.

> It is seldom the case that a specific social problem is solved by a decision to use the results of a research study ... Knowledge use is more likely to be a process of 'enlightenment' that is gradual, indirect and interactive, characterised by incremental changes that aggregate over time to become significant structural and substantive changes.

(National Research Council, 1999: 44)

Selby Smith (1999) in a study of the impact of vocational education and training research on decision making makes a similar point, noting that the influence mainly occurs via affecting the climate of opinion. Both these reports stress the importance of building and maintaining linkages between the research community and policy makers and practitioners, if policy and practice in education is to have a more secure research base.

The EIPP model categorizes policy making as either evidence-informed or non-evidence-informed, though as the discussion above indicates, there is no rigid divide between the two. For the purposes of the EIPP model, successfully disseminated validated evidence influences policy making and hence practice via the effects of evidence-informed policies on practice.

The EIPP model also divides educational practice by teachers and educational managers into evidence-informed and non-evidence-informed, recognizing the opaque boundary between the two. As with policy making, the mission of EIPP is to increase the proportion of practice that is evidence-informed. The
The distinction between public- and private-domain research and the relatively low profile of practitioners in public-domain research have important implications for the respective power of researcher and practitioner communities.

In the top–down public-domain version of the EIPP model (the more common one) ‘validated evidence’ is produced by the research community, using practitioners (and their clients) as the subjects of research. The issue then is how to get practitioners to take on board evidence so that it influences their practice. Eraut distinguishes between public propositional knowledge and personal knowledge:

In general, many differences can be found between the personal knowledge of working professionals which informs their judgement or becomes embedded in their performance and the public knowledge base of their professions as represented by publications and training courses.

(1994: 17)

Eraut subdivides personal knowledge into personal propositional knowledge—that which the individual can articulate—and tacit personal knowledge, which individuals use in their practice without being fully conscious of it or being able to articulate it. He claims that ‘a significant proportion of the learning associated with any change in practice takes place in the context of its use’ (p. 33). Practitioners can only utilize public propositional knowledge in their work when they have internalized it so that it becomes part of their personal knowledge. It follows from this that if researcher generated and validated evidence is to influence practice, making it accessible to practitioners is not sufficient. They must be motivated to use it in their practice and be able to learn how to utilize it in their work contexts.

The practitioner-as-researcher has two potential roles in EIPP. One is undertaking public-domain research, for which practitioners do not generally have the time and resources that are available to professional researchers. The practitioner is much more dominant in the other role, that of generating and utilizing private-domain research in order to inform practice. The problem is for practitioners to have sufficient incentives, resources and capacity to inform practice with private-domain research evidence.

Practitioners are, like policy makers, influenced by ‘non-validated evidence’, due often to the absence of validated evidence. For example, in making resource allocation decisions headteachers and governors (as well as the current government) are predisposed to believe in the effectiveness of smaller class sizes and, in primary schools, the use of learning support assistant (LSA) hours. However, we currently have hardly any UK evidence that either smaller class sizes within the normal range experienced or more LSA hours produce measurable increases in student learning (Blatchford and Mortimore, 1994; Crowther et al., 1998). Non-validated findings are depicted in EIPP model in Figure 1 as influences on policy and practice that lie outside the EIPP system.
Selection of research issues

The determination of issues selected for research is the outcome of competition for scarce research resources. EIPP is embedded in what for want of a better label we term ‘plural society’—that amalgam of interests and ideologies that vies for influence over the structures for and forms of political decision making in society. The goals that EIPP addresses are, of course, determined politically and reflect particular interests and values that have been successful in influencing these goals. What issues are currently dominating policy and practice agendas will influence not only what existing research is validated and disseminated to policy makers and practitioners but also what new research is undertaken. An attempt is made in Figure 30.1 to depict the pervasive influence of interests and ideologies on all stages of the EIPP cycle.

In the current UK policy context, primacy is famously accorded to the pragmatic, rather than the ideological or idealistic, through the dictum ‘what works is what counts’. Yet any assessment of ‘what works’ must be informed by some criteria, with particular relative weights attached to them, and these criteria and their weightings will inevitably be derived from a set of values. So the extent of pragmatism may be smaller than is claimed, and the values underpinning ‘pragmatic’ policy are a legitimate and important subject for research.

Another feature of contemporary governance, at least in England, is its centralized character: ‘Increasingly, the direction of change in educational thinking and practice is top–down’ (Davies, 1999: 108; see also Glatter, 1999). Policy making is also accorded an aura of certainty and finality. As the Secretary of State for Education and Employment perceives the position. ‘We know what works and how to spread it’ (Blunkett, 2000). In a television interview, Tony Blair expressed his frustration that, ‘when I’m sitting as Prime Minister trying to get something done . . . you can have a really good idea and drive it through from the top’ (Blair, 1999), but its journey could be blighted on the way down by layers of bureaucracy and the risk-averse nature of the public sector. The Prime Minister’s views on the shortcomings of the public sector have been much debated. Of greater interest to the present discussion is the notion of the ‘really good idea’ originating from the centre. How do central policies arise? One view, which may or may not be an accurate account, is that:

National policy-making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalising theories, research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work.

(Ball, 1998: 126)

A government which promotes EIPP, by putting new funding into research to support it and diverting existing research funding towards EIPP, is exerting
more control over research than a government which maintains policy making as a ‘knowledge-free zone’. Hence, one of the important criticisms of EIPP is that it promotes government control of research to the detriment of the longer term benefits of society from research (Hammersley, 2000), which are broader and more intangible than the instrumental goals which are given priority by EIPP. Since policy goals are contested in a plural society, educational research is not a purely instrumental activity, and the intellectual foundations of policy makers’ goals should come under scrutiny (White, 2000). Such analysis can be an important engine of social advance: ‘Criticism (specifically that which is constructive) is crucial to any endeavour designed to develop knowledge and improve practice’ (Pratt and Swann, 1999: 8).

A crucial issue for EIPP is whether it is founded on the values of research objectivity and rationality, in conformity with which researchers strive to ensure that their validation of evidence is not affected by personal political beliefs or interests. An alternative value perspective is that the purpose of social research is to form part of the ammunition in the competition of ideas through which differing political interests vie for influence and power (Lindblom (1987) makes this distinction). From this perspective researchers interpret evidence through their political values and justify this as serving higher ends.

The fundamental argument for EIPP is that it leads to better achievement of the intended goals of practice and policy, through the use by policy makers and implementers of ‘validated’ research evidence in their decision making. If the research evidence used to inform policy and practice is biased, then research will lose its claim to assist in determining the best means for achieving particular social goals and instead will function only as material for legitimating policies and practices based solely on interests and ideologies. In this event its currency will diminish further over time. An interesting example of the misuse of research evidence in order to legitimate policy is given by Allington and Woodside-Jiron (1999). They argue (with evidence) that certain educational researchers provided a misleading review of ‘30 years of research: what we know about how children learn to read’ which was highly influential in Texas and California in mandating a literacy curriculum that placed great emphasis on phonics. In this example both researchers and policy makers were in alliance, the former to further careers and the latter to legitimate policies founded on opinion and tradition concerning ‘back-to-basics’ in teaching.

It is our view that researchers should not become polemicists and that EIPP should strive for ‘political unbiasedness’ in the validation of evidence. This seems to be the consensus view among those advocating EIPP, a stance which separates it from those who see social research as inherently non-objective and necessarily linked to an ideology. Nevertheless, in advocating a ‘disinterested’ stance, one must still recognize that EIPP serves the interests of those researchers whose methods it utilizes.

When policies have widespread effects, as is likely in a relatively centralized governance structure, it is important that they are well founded and are indeed
based on ‘really good ideas’. This suggests that EIPP is at least as necessary to the stage of policy development as it is to that of policy implementation, evaluation and practitioner use. The contribution of research to problem formulation and the definition of alternatives, mentioned above, is relevant here.

Factors promoting and inhibiting EIPP

The current policy climate in the UK appears more supportive to research than in the recent past. The so-called ‘Third Way’ to policy making emphasizes a pragmatic approach to improving learning outcomes, founded on applying evidence of ‘what works’ rather than on ideology. The DfEE claims to be almost doubling its own spending on research over a three-year period and to be taking steps to ensure that policy makers are well-informed about the current state of knowledge in their areas (DfEE, 1999a). It is also establishing a number of research centres (Wicks, 2000).

In addition, recent policy statements on research (DfEE, 1999a, 2000a) have indicated support for a breadth of research activity, including not just the evaluation of policy initiatives and systematic reviews on the one hand and ‘blue skies’ research on the other, but also research which ‘gives a coherent picture of how society works: the main forces at work, and those which can be influenced by government’ (DfEE, 2000a: 1). This suggests a view of EIPP which goes beyond a technicist approach, and which is not restricted to a current policy agenda. While attacking some research for being too inward-looking and piece-meal, Blunkett’s speech to the ESRC also conceded that government needed to eschew anti-intellectualism and learn to interpret and apply evidence.

Two examples related to leadership and management

Achieving these aspirations may take some time. The explicit use of evidence in policy formation still appears rare. For example, in relation to the far-reaching and controversial proposals on the performance management of teachers, the claim was made that, ‘In designing our proposals, we have taken account of experience in private and public sectors, and of research findings’ (DfEE, 1999b: para 54). There was no discussion of which findings were drawn on or how these related to the specific proposals. This was a noteworthy omission in an area in which the research findings are equivocal to say the least (for example, IPD, 1999; Marsden and French, 1998). Perhaps in an age in which, as Scott (1999: 322) argues, ‘electoral politics seem to be more dominant than ever’, it is naive to expect that high-profile policies mandated from the centre will always be founded on a thorough review of all the evidence or subject to independently evaluated pilots. A researcher respondent to the DfEE-commissioned review of educational research relating to schools considered that ‘Policy-makers introduce initiatives which are not allowed to fail’ (Hillage et al., 1998: 42).
The use of research evidence needs to be extended in another area even closer to leadership and management—that of the definition of standards for assessing individuals’ fitness for leadership positions and for recruitment to them. The development of professional standards in education has been a feature of recent years, deriving from the competency movement in vocational education and training in the UK (Raggatt and Williams, 1999) and it appears likely to become more widespread (DfEE, 2000b). Standards were developed by the Teacher Training Agency for headteachers (TTA, 1997) as well as for other categories of school staff, but despite the wealth of research into headteachers over the past 20 years (Hall and Southworth, 1997) there is no evidence that it had any influence on the construction of the standards. The standards formed the basis for the assessment of candidates for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) during its first three years of operation (1997–2000).

More recently, a different approach to the specification of headship has begun to be taken. As part of the development of the national Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers, the management consultancy Hay McBer conducted ‘behavioural event interviews’ (BEIs) with 40 headteachers in which the subjects described their actions and feelings in specific school improvement situations. The data were subjected to thematic and statistical analysis to produce 15 characteristics of headship which were considered to be related to ‘superior performance’: the resulting framework was termed ‘Models of Excellence’ and underlay the design and delivery of the programme, which has been running since 1998 and has been taken by many hundreds of headteachers. The research has now been extended to cover more headteachers and some deputy heads in order to inform the development of the new version of NPQH, which the government intends should shortly become a mandatory qualification for headship. The government also commissioned Hay McBer to conduct research into effective teaching in connection with their plans for teacher performance management referred to earlier (Hay McBer, 2000).

The development of the ‘Models of Excellence’ was therefore ostensibly a research-based approach, by contrast with the process which underlay the construction of the National Standards for Headship. However, the research has not to our knowledge been published and we are not aware of any plans to publish it. This is highly relevant to the issue of validation, which we raised in our discussion of Figure 1. We would suggest that an EIPP approach requires such models and the research on which they are based to be subjected to rigorous processes of validation, particularly where the models are intended to underpin large-scale programmes of professional development or the implementation of national staff management policies.

A further issue arises from both of these examples (on teacher performance management and models of headship). It may reasonably be argued that embedding an EIPP approach will inevitably take time, and that both the examples include indications of increasing attention being given to evidence and research. However, the increasingly centralist and political nature of educational policy...

189
making discussed earlier may well be a significant inhibiting factor. The political imperative, determined by the electoral cycle, for quick results means there is often inadequate time for piloting interventions and responding to evaluations of pilots before full-scale implementation takes place. As well as the National Standards for Headship, the original formulation of the National Curriculum in 1988 and the National Literacy Strategy of recent years might be considered examples of this. Even in the case of literacy, where there is a considerable evidence base, Hannon (2000) notes that the Labour Government scrapped the idea of an experimental evaluation of the National Literacy Strategy, and embarked on a nationwide implementation, with ‘still no research-based rationale, although one was commissioned later [namely] Beard, 1999’.

Thus ministers can subsequently find themselves defending positions they have taken up without an adequate evidential base. Politicians may consider themselves unable to admit to an error because of the political consequences of loss of legitimacy and credibility: they have a ‘sunk investment’ in what looked originally like ‘really good ideas’ but in fact turn out on investigation to be poor ones. The equivalent phenomenon in the business world has been termed ‘strategic entrapment’ (Proctor, 1993) in which decision makers persist with an ineffective course of action to justify the resources they previously invested in that strategy.

The research assessment exercise

Both promoting and inhibiting factors are also to be found in a key aspect of the framework surrounding educational research, the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The criteria for assessment to be used by the Education Panel for the 2001 Exercise refer to ‘the educational significance of the research and its relevance for the academic community, policy makers and practitioners’ (HEFC(E), 1999: para 3.59.15). Such significance can be included in claims by institutions relating to the two key criteria, the quality of published output and the vitality of a department’s research culture. The new recognition given to ‘educational significance’ can be seen as a response (arguably a limited and provisional one in the context of the exercise as a whole) to the criticisms of the RAE as a significant restraining influence on the development of more policy and practitioner focused research in education (Hillage et al., 1998; Tooley with Derby, 1998). The new emphasis on ‘users’ may also in part be a reaction to the growing professionalization of research which, Scott (1999: 318) has argued, ‘has tended to exclude “amateur” researchers whose main involvement is as policy-makers or practitioners’.

On the other hand, the criteria still give prominence to originality as a characteristic of quality and they do not provide explicit encouragement for researchers to engage in replicatory studies or to devote energy to disseminating the results of their work to practitioners and policy makers and developing long-term linkages with them.
Research and researchers

Other inhibiting factors are intrinsic to the process of research, even when the research is designed to yield evidence for policy or practice. We have already suggested that research may not be able to provide ‘data for decisions’ in a straightforward, problem-solving sense. In addition, it may take a considerable time for studies to yield validated findings. This was the case in relation to studies of the impact of competition and parental choice in which the authors were engaged during the 1990s. In (hopefully rare) cases, the evidence may not arrive until the topic of the research has ceased to be of interest or relevance to user groups. The growing rapidity of change within both society and the educational process exacerbates this tension while at the same time reinforcing the need for EIPP to offer guidance in a turbulent world. Researchers and other stakeholders should address how the problem may at least be mitigated. Finally, the research process, even when conceived of (as we conceive of it here) in terms of disinterested inquiry, is likely to have a sceptical character (Bridges, 1999; Merton, 1973) since it is founded on questioning. This can often present an uncomfortable and unwelcome challenge to practitioners or policy makers who are understandably committed to initiatives in which they have a personal investment.

It is important that this account does not leave the impression that all the constraints upon the development of EIPP lie outside the research community: with politicians, officials, practitioners, the RAE and the research process. As the Institute of Employment Studies report persuasively argued, there are many ways in which researchers can and should adapt their methods and practices to speak more convincingly and helpfully to user audiences, not least in the area of accessibility: ‘The burgeoning forest of academic research and papers appears to be increasingly impenetrable to an academic audience, let alone the wider education community’ (Hillage et al., 1998: 52). The development and maintenance of long-term research-policy-practice partnerships is a key element in the Strategic Education Research Programme proposed by the US National Research Council (1999) and also fostered by the ESRC’s Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The community of scholars and researchers in educational leadership and management in the UK has from its origins been strongly committed to a close linkage between theory, research and practice for improving education, a commitment that is reflected in the membership mix of BEMAS. In the next section, we will outline some ways in which an EIPP approach might sustain and enhance this linkage.

A way forward

In this section we focus on how EIPP could be taken forward with respect to educational leadership and management, under the aegis of BEMAS as an organization dedicated to promoting the symbiosis of research and practice. Hence we focus more on practice than on policy.
There are four main processes within the EIPP cycle depicted in Figure 1 which need to be addressed in thinking about a way forward:

- practitioner interaction with research
- the validation process
- the dissemination of validated research
- the selection and conduct of research

These processes are interrelated. We need to be clear about what kinds of evidence practitioners need to inform their practice before we proceed to organizing better validation and dissemination processes. In turn the availability of accessible and validated evidence will stimulate practitioners’ use of it to inform their practice.

**Practitioner interaction with research evidence**

A first step is to develop a clear idea of the needs of practitioners with respect to informing their practice with ‘validated’ evidence from the public domain. A key question is which aspects of educational research supporting EIPP are appropriate for educational leadership and management as a ‘field of inquiry’? Is it to be limited to research which is about leadership and management or widened to include research evidence on educational practices which headteachers and other leaders/managers of student learning, as well as policy makers, need to know in order to make evidence-informed decisions? We would argue for the latter interpretation because this is the evidence base educational leaders need to have at their finger tips in order to take informed decisions about what educational practices to adopt or modify in their own contexts.

How broadly the topics are defined clearly determines how wide the net is cast for research which is to be included in the validation process. In particular, are the topics to be confined to those which come within the classification of ‘interventions’—that is, concern the manipulation of particular variables or processes which have intended and unintended educational consequences? The discussions about a proposed Campbell Collaboration to undertake and disseminate reviews of educational research have been couched in terms of educational interventions (Boruch et al., 1999; Oakley, 1999). Limiting the research evidence included to educational interventions would make the enterprise more manageable but would exclude more wide-ranging research that is concerned with educational practices in natural settings which do not involve ‘interventions’. In the light of evidence that social science research currently influences policy and practice mainly indirectly by creating a climate of opinion, we need to include within EIPP for educational management and leadership research which goes beyond the technical ‘what works’ variety, provided that it is evidentially based.

Topics and practices that are currently at a stage where systematic reviews
for practitioners could be extended or developed include the effects on student learning and other outcomes of:

- class size
- setting, banding and grouping by ability or gender
- peer group tutoring
- gender differences
- specific strategies/programmes for teaching literacy and numeracy
- organization of the school day/year
- using target-setting for improving students’ educational outcomes
- use of homework at different ages
- specific uses of ICT to enhance learning

Important topics in the field of leadership and management practices are:

- teacher performance management and performance-related pay
- models of excellence for headship
- teacher appraisal
- monitoring teaching and learning
- involving parents in pupils’/students’ learning.

A crucial issue for BEMAS is its role in promoting a culture in which educational leaders and managers use validated research evidence, from both public and private domains, to inform their practice. According to Davies (1999: 111):

> The problem is not so much that teachers do not undertake research or that they are often excluded from determining the research agenda (both of which may be true), but that there is often not a culture of teachers using research to inform their everyday school practice.

The problematic nature of the research–practice interface has long been recognized: it is also contentious because it concerns power relations between practitioners and academic researchers, as experts and gatekeepers of public-domain research. The relationship is made more complex and contentious when politicians impose on teachers educational practices/interventions which the former claim are founded on research evidence, even though this evidence is still highly disputed among the research community.

BEMAS members who work in higher education can assist in the development of a practitioner culture of EIPP in a number of ways. A key role is as providers of postgraduate courses in educational management and leadership. To evaluate evidence teachers need to know about relevant research methodologies. Such knowledge is better developed conducting research relevant to their own practice. Most postgraduate courses include research methods and research projects. However, the research is usually conducted in relative isolation, is inevitably small-scale
and lacks an integrative framework within which research evidence can build cumulatively. We need a way of linking academic-researcher peer group efforts to review and disseminate research on key topics with practitioner research undertaken under the auspices of different HE institutions and in many different educational settings. If validated evidence were more easily available to practitioners and if they could relatively easily check summary evidence in reviews against original studies, practitioners would be in a better position to select projects for their own research which are relevant to their practice and/or can add cumulatively to public-domain evidence.

The validation process

The specialist role for academic researchers is in the validation process for public-domain research. We should start by setting up peer panels to conduct a few systematic focused syntheses of research on specific ‘practices’ relevant for educational leadership and management for which there is a body of existing research evidence. In order to create these research surveys the research community needs to be mobilized. Peer groups would organize surveys of specific ‘practices’, using agreed criteria for (a) what qualifies as a research study to be included in a survey and (b) the criteria for judging the evidence (the effect of the practice on learning or other specified outcomes). The peer group needs to be committed to keeping its database of research surveys up to date. A focus on reviewing existing research requires a change in what the research community values as ‘good research practice’. Much greater value needs to be given to research synthesis, conducting a thorough survey of existing research before embarking on a new study, and doing replicatory and cumulative studies, as well as to dissemination to professional audiences.

In considering areas suitable for review and meta-analysis, we need to recognize and build upon previous attempts to provide syntheses of existing research. For example, in the field of educational leadership and management several noteworthy reviews have been published in recent years. The ESRC commissioned Wallace and Weindling to produce an analytical review of research that had been funded by the Council relating to reforms in school management. The result was a booklet highlighting key findings and messages for practitioners (Wallace and Weindling, 1997) as well as a discussion of the exercise and its implications for future research aimed at an academic audience (Wallace and Weindling, 1999). Hall and Southworth (1997) published a valuable review and synthesis of research on school headship in Britain since the 1970s. Taking a more international (and quantitative) perspective, Hallinger and Heck (1998, 1999) systematically reviewed a wide range of studies in addressing the key question ‘can leadership enhance school effectiveness?’ Such existing overviews and the methods underpinning them should provide useful benchmarks for developing reviews and syntheses of the research literature, both for practitioners and researchers, in the future.
BEMAS and EMA can encourage the setting up of peer group research evaluation and dissemination panels, but additional government funding is required for peer groups to develop a common methodology for systematic review, undertake research surveys, keep them up to date and disseminate them. The creation of the Standing Conference on Educational Leadership and Management (SCRELM) is a very promising step in this direction. At the time of writing, SCRELM is engaging in discussions with the DfEE-funded Centre for Evidence Informed Policy and Practice, about undertaking a systematic review in the field of educational leadership and management.

Research review groups in educational management will need to agree validation criteria and implement these agreements. A crucial and contentious issue, already raised in the discussion of the EIPP model, is what is to count as validated evidence and hence which kinds of research evidence can be diffused within the EIPP cycle. Not all forms of educational research are appropriate for EIPP: for a start, only empirical research is relevant for ‘what works in practice’, though such research needs to be theoretically informed. A further restriction is that not all empirical research produces data, findings and conclusions that can be validated using peer-agreed conventions. Another criterion that would impose a further restriction is that the research selected for validation for EIPP, and the validation process itself, should be ‘disinterested’—that is, not deliberately biased by the social beliefs and personal interests of the researcher.

In attempting to delineate the types of educational research that could be validated for EIPP, the typology of educational inquiry proposed by Constas (1998) is helpful. He distinguishes three dimensions that characterize a method of social inquiry. These are the methodological, political and representational dimensions.

The **methodological dimension** is the criteria by which evidence to support propositions is amassed. The methodological domain is ‘normative’ if there are agreed rules for assessing evidence, in particular the criteria of internal and external validity and reliability/replicability. The alternative methodological domain is ‘idiosyncratic’, when evidence is personal and situational: each project uses its own data preferences.

The **political dimension** is subdivided into ‘centred’ and ‘decentred’. A research approach is centred when it eliminates or ignores power relations that affect the investigation or treats them as variables to be analysed in a detached way. In contrast, decentred research sets out to challenge established power relations.

The **representational dimension** concerns the ways in which research findings are presented. The traditional academic stance, which Constas calls bounded, is described as depersonalized, distanced and objective. Forms of presentation which break these rules, for example, evocative narratives, are termed unbounded. Constas then distinguishes seven research typologies, according to which combination of centred/decentred, normative/idiosyncratic, bounded/unbounded they involve.

EIPP falls into the centred-normative category. We have previously argued
that it should be disinterested and not polemical (hence centred) and that it should have agreed rules for validation (normative). This restriction would exclude research which promotes specific ideological perspectives, whatever their political orientation. Whether or not the presentation of evidence for educational management should have agreed rules and conventions is problematic. If peer groups are set up to review research topics and disseminate reviews, they are likely to develop rules for presentation. Different forms of presentation, in particular different forms of language and pictorial representation, will be deemed appropriate for different purposes and audiences, as is now the case in journals aimed at academic, mixed or professional audiences.

An important challenge for implementing the validation process for EIPP in educational leadership and management is reaching widespread agreement on normative rules for the methodological dimension and implementing these. This will need to be done by review groups set up to prepare reviews of evidence on specific topics, such as, for example: does educational leadership affect organizational performance or what are the qualities of ‘effective’/‘excellent’ educational leadership?

Because of the nature of the issues of importance in educational leadership and management, the research included in validation for EIPP cannot be restricted to random controlled trials of educational interventions. Nor should they be excluded. It will be distracting to devote energies to debating the superiority or otherwise of random controlled experiments in educational research. Instead, we should accept and value the continuum of research designs relevant for investigating educational practices, rather than pigeonholing them as discrete and separate. This continuum of research designs is depicted in Figure 2. First, educational practices can be subdivided into those that can be regarded as ‘interventions’—deliberate manipulation of structures, systems, financial rewards or other variables, which are intended to bring about a discrete change in practice. This could be undertaken as a random controlled experiment, where subjects are randomly assigned to intervention and non-intervention states. Alternatively, the intervention may take the form of a natural experiment (no random assignment), where a particular change takes place in some natural settings and not in others. This enables researchers to gather data on settings where the intervention does and does not take place. By gathering a wide range of data from the selected intervention and non-intervention settings and applying statistical techniques used in observational studies, the threats to internal validity from non-random assignment can be considerably reduced (Meyer, 1995).

Moving further along the continuum, there are interventions that are universally applied to an education system (such as local management of schools, national curricular changes, performance management of teachers) so that there are no control groups, which are not experiencing the intervention. Unfortunately for EIPP research, much educational intervention has been of this type.

Much empirical educational research is not concerned with assessing the impact of educational interventions. This is classified in Figure 2 as non-intervention research: this collects observational data from natural settings. In
some research designs settings can be deliberately selected to exhibit contrasts or similarities (e.g. research on different leadership styles or on differential school effectiveness). Or the settings may be selected to be representative so as to enhance generalizability. Alternatively, there may be no particular pattern or intent in the selection of settings for research.

Whether the data collected are quantitative or qualitative is not necessarily determined by the type of research design. Although random controlled trials generate quantitative data in order to investigate effects sizes, the research design can be enhanced by collecting qualitative data to assist in understanding reasons for differences in effects sizes between settings and participants. Although qualitative research designs are usually associated with research in natural settings, quantitative data are also gathered from non-intervention natural settings (e.g. data on pupil attainment and pupil background and school variables in school effectiveness research designs).

The normative criteria for the methodological domain are essentially the same for quantitative and qualitative data, so long as the qualitative research designs are normative and not idiosyncratic. These are shown in Table 1.
instance, Guba and Lincoln (1981) proposed a set of rules for ‘meeting tests of rigour’ to ensure that the trustworthiness of the information and interpretations drawn from naturalistic inquiry match those of scientific inquiry. The scientific criteria (used for evaluating evidence from random controlled trials as well as from statistical tests of observational quantitative data) for validity are matched by corresponding naturalistic criteria.

Miles and Huberman (1984) proposed twelve tactics for testing or confirming findings in qualitative research. Patton (1990) in the last chapter of his book on Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods, also addressed the issue of enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis, listing three major considerations:

- the rigour of the techniques for gathering and analysing data, attending to issues of validity, reliability and triangulation;
- the credibility of the researcher: since the researcher is the research instrument, information on researcher qualifications, experience and perspective should be provided;
- the philosophical beliefs of the researchers in relation to naturalist inquiry.

Reviews of evidence in educational leadership, developed by peer reviewing groups, should be explicit about the criteria of research validity used to select research for inclusion in a review and to judge the quality of evidence presented in the subsequent review. The development of agreed and commonly applied criteria in the validation process for EIPP should have spillover benefits in improving the quality of research undertaken, in the research methods learnt in educational management courses and in the consequent ability of practitioners to evaluate research evidence critically and undertake their own research contributions.

**Dissemination**

The visible outcome of successful establishment of a structure for EIPP would be easy access for practitioners to evidence on the effects of specific educational practices. One of the major constraints on practitioners informing their practice

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**Table 1** Mapping of scientific and naturalist criteria for research validity

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Scientific criteria</th>
<th>Naturalist criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal validity</td>
<td>Credibility (e.g. triangulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External validity/generalizability</td>
<td>Fittingness for context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability/replicability</td>
<td>Auditability: leaving an audit trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>Data: factual and confirmable</td>
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</table>

with evidence is lack of time to become informed. Hence quick, cheap and ready access is required, which accommodates differences in the extent to which users wish to become acquainted with the breadth and depth of the evidence. The Internet is particularly suited to providing access to evidence for informing practice which meets these criteria. Practitioners should be able to access a website on which they would find high-quality research surveys of the evidence on the effects of specified educational practices. The surveys should be accessible at three levels:

- a bullet point summary
- a survey article
- original high-quality studies included in the survey.

Too often texts making evidence-based claims of ‘what works’ are insufficiently referenced to the sources of evidence, and even if these are provided, it takes time and effort to acquire the sources. Busy professionals do not have the time to pursue original sources, so that it is too easy to proselytize for a particular practice on the grounds that there is evidence that it works when the evidence may well be equivocal or context-specific. It also useful if the methodological perspective of the review is classified as, for example, in the *Review of Review Report* to the ESRC’s Teaching and Learning Steering Committee (ESRC, 1999), which classifies listed reviews as ‘technical’, ‘interpretative’ and ‘mixed’.

**Selection of research studies: evaluation of pilots**

The earlier discussion noted the problem from a policy-making perspective that research evidence is not sufficiently relevant or timely with respect to current policy interventions. In particular, the timeframe of policy makers and practitioners is shorter term than that of researchers. In contrast, from a research perspective valid evidence on the impact of educational interventions on learning and other outcomes takes time to emerge, collect, analyse fully and present. Overcoming this dichotomy requires the building up and sustaining of long-term linkages between researchers, policy makers and practitioners, so that the EIPP cycle can be made more effective through continual interaction between research and policy/practice. It also requires accommodation by both parties. Policy makers would need to acknowledge the dangers of mandating large-scale national implementation of major policy innovations which have not had independently evaluated trials. The research community would need to recognize the time-pressures involved in policy change, develop better and faster methods for the evaluation of pilots, value this form of research activity more highly and accept that all the requirements of rigorous research may not be achievable within the timeframes available. Indicative results may need to be regarded as acceptable when the alternative is no evaluation at all.

A change in the culture of both parties would be needed. Researchers would
need to be prepared to risk producing findings and conclusions which are liable to later revision, while politicians would need to be more open about the tentative nature of proposed policy solutions and less prone to entrapment in sunk policy investments. Other features of such a learning culture would be open, unhindered publication and a preparedness by policy makers and practitioners to change course in the light of the results.

Conclusions

If we look to other models of EIPP, such as the Cochrane Collaboration and the proposed Campbell Collaboration for education, we can see that they are very focused in organizing the validation stage of the EIPP cycle. Clearly this is an essential part of EIPP and without it we cannot expect practitioners and policy makers to base decisions on ‘the best available evidence’. It is also the part of the EIPP cycle for which ‘professional’ researchers have particular responsibility. However, it is only part of EIPP and its development has to link in closely to the interests and aspirations of the other stakeholders, in particular, practitioners and policy makers. More broadly, the ‘new model for educational research’ proposed by the National Research Council (1999) emphasizes interactions among researchers, practitioners and policy makers in a programme of research, synthesis and implementation which concentrates on a limited number of important topics.

EIPP will only fulfil its potential in education if it is not misused by its stakeholders. Researchers may be tempted to progress their careers by promoting insufficiently validated research (which can happen with well-intentioned media efforts to disseminate research), while policy makers in search of legitimation for their policies may be too ready to seize selectively on insufficiently validated evidence.

To develop EIPP in educational leadership and management we need to work towards the creation of a web-site on which users can find high-quality reviews of evidence on the effects of specific educational practices and interventions which are accessible at different levels. To achieve this we need to organize peer reviewing teams and secure resources for review and dissemination.

The cultures of academic researchers and HE teachers, practitioner and policy-making communities need to promote EIPP as the professional norm. This can be encouraged through professional development programmes, organized in HE and elsewhere, and placing greater emphasis on teachers undertaking research which provides evidence for informing decision making and evaluating practice.

Notes

1 The ESRC’s Review of Review classifies Beard (1999) as an interpretative, not a technical, review.

References

THEORY

Emergence of management

Management has become one of the most pervasive phenomena of our times. A number of organizations, in public as well as private sectors, are trying to acquire and apply this body of knowledge and skills in an effort to improve their performance. There is widespread acknowledgement that organizational performance is not optimal and that modern management concepts and techniques have a great deal of promise for improving their effectiveness.

Several indicators of the growing interest in management can be cited. First, the number of institutions that offer management courses has increased manifold. Thirty years ago, there were only two or three institutions that offered the MBA programme. These were prestigious institutions designed to attract the brightest students and train them for high-level managerial positions. Today, there is hardly a university or college that does not offer a management course. This growth is indicative of the demand for management education. With the possible exception of computer science, management is the fastest growing area in higher education. Second, most major organizations have instituted some form of training programmes for their employees. Generally referred to as staff development, most of these programmes focus on management concepts and techniques. Particularly striking is the acceptance on the part of government organizations that their administrators need to be oriented to management. This is evidenced by the establishment of management and training institutes by central and state governments alike. Finally, management is gaining recognition as a profession: a number of individuals and firms have come into existence to offer their services as management consultants.
Why this ‘love affair’ with management?

It seems reasonable to ask what has brought about this obsession with management in recent years. Our organizations were being run prior to the emergence of management. Were they not managed? We did not use the word ‘management’ then; ‘administration’ was more commonly used. Is management different from administration?

Let me cite four factors that seem to explain the ascendance of management in India as elsewhere:

1. Organizations have become large and complex. They have grown not only in size but also in the diversity of their objectives. The diversification of functions has resulted in multiple roles being created for employees.

2. It is recognized that human resources are more important than physical and financial resources. It is the people that spell the difference between successful and unsuccessful, productive and unproductive, organizations. While physical and financial resources are necessary, they can become productive only in conjunction with people.

3. Today’s workforce is more aware, more self-conscious, more aspiring. It has a much wider exposure to outside environment and influences. The traditional ‘command and control’ approach to managing people in organizations is no longer valid. A whole new philosophy is needed to motivate people to higher levels of performance.

4. The discovery of new knowledge and techniques makes it necessary to educate and train people to apply it effectively.

As Bennis points out, management has been particularly receptive to the behavioural sciences, which gathered momentum because conventional wisdom and practice failed to work. A fundamental change in the basic philosophy which underlies managerial behaviour is reflected in the following three areas:

• a new concept of man, based on increased knowledge of his complex and shifting needs, which replaces the oversimplified, innocent, push-button or inert idea of man;

• a new concept of power, based on collaboration and reason, which replaces a model of power based on coercion and fear;

• a new concept of organizational values, based on a humanistic orientation, which replaces the depersonalized, mechanistic, value system (1993: 219).

The essence of management

Let us now see what management is all about. What does it mean? How would one define or describe it? Simply stated: management is a set of activities...
directed towards efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in order to achieve organizational goals.

The key words in this definition are goals (translated as results or output), resources (which constitute the means to achieving the goals), efficiency (translated as economy in the use of resources) and effectiveness (which is measured in terms of results, not inputs). Management literature typically lists planning, organizing, coordinating, delegating, controlling, evaluating as management functions. The term ‘activities’ in the definition, however, is comprehensive enough to include almost anything that a manager may do. It is intent and direction that determine if an activity is managerial or not. This is an important point in understanding the difference between administration and management.

Sources of management concepts

The three major sources of management concepts and techniques are behavioural sciences, quantitative sciences and computer technology. Psychology, sociology and organizational theory and behaviour provide many of the concepts around which the practice of management has been developed. Motivation, communication, interpersonal relationships, authority and accountability, and leadership are among the frequently discussed concepts in management parlours. Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs, McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y, and Herzberg’s Theory of Job Satisfaction are among the contributions of behavioural scientists to management thought and practice. The notion that organizations have their own identity, apart from that of its members, has led to the study of organizational behaviour and the development of organizational theory. The concept of organizational culture has evolved to help management understand the dynamics of organizational life.

The reliance of modern management on rational, objective and quantitative methods has given it the flavour of a science. Mathematical models and sophisticated statistical techniques are widely used in data analysis and decision-making. The information explosion has become a major challenge for management. Since accurate and reliable information is the basis for sound managerial decisions, managers need a systematic way of collecting, sorting out and storing meaningful information. The emergence of computer technology has made all this feasible. Management Information Systems (MIS) has now become a highly specialized field of study.

Administration versus management

A great deal of ambiguity surrounds the use of the terms ‘administration’ and ‘management’. While some see them as synonymous and use them interchangeably, others see them as different and use both, along with the conjunction ‘and’. The pre-eminent degree in management studies is called Master of Business Administration. The Commonwealth Council of Educational Administration
(CCEA), a prestigious professional organization, was renamed Commonwealth Council of Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM) in 1994. Management literature does not help either; in fact, it seems to confirm that words have no meaning; people give meanings to words. Educational administrators in different countries have their own definitions; for most, this is not an issue at all. In India, most professional educators have had to take a course in educational administration where they have learned the values, assumptions and procedures found in the departments and agencies of the government. The first question they ask in a management training programme is: how does management differ from administration?

There are various responses that might be given to this question. In summarizing my thinking I sometimes resort to the idea of presenting the two terms as an overview of two models A and B in Table 1.

One way to resolve the dilemma is to trace the roots of the two words. Since language is a reflection of culture, the root of a word generally provides a clue to its cultural association. Administration, a much older term, owes its origin to the institution of state. It reflects, therefore, the dominant culture of a government organization. Management, a relatively newer term, has come from business and

<table>
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<th>Model A</th>
<th>Model B</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reactive; isolated, single issue/problem approach</td>
<td>Proactive; integrated; systems approach; inter-relatedness of inputs, process, and output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on inputs/resources</td>
<td>Focus on results (Results are always outside the organization; inside, there are only costs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability for maintenance and control; to the higher authority within the hierarchy</td>
<td>Accountability for results; to outside constituents—students, clients, customers, patients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal relationships determined by authority and jurisdiction</td>
<td>Relationships based on expertise and autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigidity; rules and regulations often seen as ends in themselves</td>
<td>Flexibility; rules seen as means to achieving organizational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward system based on seniority (a measure of input)</td>
<td>Reward system based on performance (measure of output)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Command and control; individual and organizational goals seen as conflicting, not complementary</td>
<td>Recognize and empower; individual goals blended with organizational goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility for initiating change rests with top administration; emphasis on restructuring, changing formal structures</td>
<td>Change initiatives often originate at individual and group levels; emphasis on reculturing people</td>
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industry. In fact, for most people in India, and even in the West, management means business management. Drucker (1999) argues that this is an unfortunate error. ‘Management is not business management—any more than, say, Medicine is Obstetrics.’ The reason for associating management with business is that most management literature is focused on business and industry and that business is the pre-eminent institution where management concepts and techniques have been most effectively applied. The term, therefore, reflects the dominant culture of business organizations. Once this is understood, it is easy to compare the assumptions, values and modes of operations that define the two cultures: government and business.

**The administrative–hierarchical–bureaucratic model**

The administrative model that was introduced in India primarily for the governance of the country made its way into most other organizations, including education. It was very effective during the pre-Independence period when government was the only institution that really mattered; institutional infrastructure in the non-government sector was minimal and enjoyed little autonomy to recognize the need for alternative models. Rules, regulations and operating procedures in educational institutions were the same as in government departments. There was unquestioning adherence to the assumptions of bureaucracy, which are:

- Efficiency is achieved when jobs are broken down in segments and routinised so workers need limited knowledge to carry out assigned tasks.
- Organizations are effective when managed from the top down, divorcing both frontline workers and clients from major decisions.
- Knowledge residing at the top of the bureaucracy can be codified in procedures so workers need little skill except in following orders (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

A critical study of selected educational institutions resulted in the identification of the following characteristics that define their organization culture (Sapre, 2000). First, being essentially reactive in their response to issues and problems, educational administrators tend to develop reform proposals on a one-at-a-time basis, unmindful of the consequential changes necessary for their effective implementation. This isolated, single-issue approach is reflected in such recent initiatives as internal assessment of students, performance appraisal of teachers, autonomous colleges and more recently, accreditation. For any of these to succeed, significant other changes must occur. In a system where pay scales and annual increments are predetermined and automatic, performance appraisal is either seen as irrelevant or not taken seriously. This is precisely what happened when the University Grants Commission first introduced the reform. Today, hardly anyone even talks about it.

Second, administrators appear to be overly concerned with resources. An increase in resources is often considered synonymous with progress. Annual
reports of heads of institutions typically highlight additions to inputs made during the year: library books and journals, equipment and technology, space and facilities, and personnel. In comparison, references to the process and product dimensions are minimal.

Third, administrators’ accountability follows the chain of command within the hierarchy. Maintenance and control being the twin responsibilities of administrators, they are answerable to their immediate superiors for the proper deployment of financial and physical resources and the execution of all policies and directives. Lines of authority and jurisdiction are sharply drawn and rigidly observed. There is no audit of performance and little accountability for results produced.

Fourth, inefficiency in the maintenance and control of resources is considered a more serious breach of duty than poor performance and ineffectiveness. Inaction is safer than initiative or judgement, taking risks and committing an error.

Fifth, interpersonal relationships are determined strictly by hierarchical status, authority and jurisdiction. Except perhaps among people at the same rank, relationships are typically impersonal, cold and passive. Dissent is scrupulously avoided in dealing with higher authority.

Sixth, rules, regulations and precedent are the determinants of major decisions. They are viewed, not as means, but as ends in themselves. A rigid, rule-based mode of governance is used more to limit employee freedom than to encourage action.

Seventh, seniority is the principal, often the exclusive, basis of the reward system. Promotions and other privileges are earned in proportion to the length of service. Open, data-based and participatory performance appraisal systems have not yet replaced the ‘confidential report’ which plays a major role in shaping one’s career. This is a subjective evaluation of an individual’s performance and conduct written by the boss and filed in the individual’s service record without requiring any feedback. The formative dimension of evaluation is absent.

Eighth, efforts to bring about change and improvement in efficiency are centred on structure and form, rather than on content and people. It is assumed that when an organization is restructured, reorganized or given a new name, it results in increased efficiency.

Ninth, ‘reculturing’ people in the organization does not find a place in the reform agenda.

Tenth, since the structure is highly centralized, changes occur only when perceived as necessary by, and initiated at, the highest level of administration. Subordinates are encouraged neither to identify needed changes nor to propose improvements.

**Education management and the reform movement in India**

Education reform is a consistent theme in almost all countries. Educational journals report change initiatives and relevant research on a regular basis. In the
developed countries, many proposals for change emanate from professional organizations and school districts. In India, by contrast, all initiatives for educational change come from state agencies—the Ministry of Education, the University Grants Commission, the National Council for Teacher Education and the like. In the absence of a professional culture, educators see themselves at the receiving end of change proposals that often take the form of mandates which they have to carry out, with or without understanding and commitment. The half-hearted implementation, even resistance, explains why the reform movement in Indian education is a story of lost opportunities. In education, as in many other fields, it is easier to change structure than to change process or product. A few examples help us understand this. The 10+2 pattern of secondary education was adopted and has been sustained. The four-year integrated programmes of teacher education, though not abandoned, have not been replicated. Examination reforms, including internal assessment, performance appraisal of teachers, autonomous colleges, and accreditation are in various stages of implementation, if not abandoned already.

One of the major trends in Indian education is the infusion of management concepts in teacher preparation and staff development programmes. This trend owes its origin to two significant and parallel developments. The first is the New Education Policy and Programme of Action, which recommended some form of management training, not only for educational administrators but also for teachers. The second is the phenomenal growth of management education and training in the country. A few universities have introduced formal courses of study in education management. Programmes of in-service education for school administrators, teacher educators and teachers now include such management concepts as the systems approach; performance appraisal; total quality management, and even leadership.

Despite the proliferation of such programmes, there is little indication of any significant changes in the way educational institutions operate. The mind-set of those who have both the authority and the responsibility to initiate reform has yet to change. In a critical review of education reform movements, Pogrow (1996) analysed the dynamics of educational change and explained why top–down reforms almost always end up making things worse: ‘The history of education reform is one of consistent failure of major reforms to survive and become institutionalised’ (p. 9). The analysis is pertinent to India as well. Reformers typically feel that their solutions would work if only people would get on board. When this does not happen, the practitioners are blamed for not supporting the change. It is unreasonable to expect practitioners to develop their own methodology and techniques for implementing a complex reform idea. To support and implement a reform proposal, they need to understand the proposal in its entirety, the rationale behind it, its possible effects on the institution and the people who work there, the step-by-step process of implementation and its subsequent monitoring. When these elements are ignored or dealt with superficially, the reform is doomed to fail. Repeated failure of reform initiatives is un-
settling for practitioners and students. Reformers need a deeper understanding of the dynamics of change, what sustains a reform and what does not.

Disillusionment with top-down reforms, like those coming as state mandates and concentrating more on structure than on content, is growing. Scholars are discovering other approaches to lasting and continuous improvement in education. Pogrow concludes his analysis of the reform movement as follows: ‘The only way to improve education is by the use of more powerful forms of curricula in the hands of very good teachers who are trained to teach better. All three of these conditions must exist.’

**Realizing the potential of management in India**

What then are the prospects of realizing the potential of education management in India? A few suggestions for moving in the right direction seem warranted:

1. Adaptation is wiser than adoption. Not all concepts or models provided by management literature fit into education in their entirety. The systems approach, with its input–process–output model, was devised for industry. Nothing would be more dangerous than to look at education in terms of the assembly line. The usefulness of the model lies in redirecting the focus of educational administrators from resources to results, in sensitizing them to the need for thinking, first, about their goals—the expected outcomes of the educational experience for the students—and then make decisions about appropriate processes and the resources needed to put the processes in place.

2. Since the primary condition for any organizational change to take place is collective will, administrators must become effective change agents. This calls for leadership, which is both collaborative and authoritative. School leaders need to have a vision as well as the ability to communicate that vision to all stakeholders.

3. All change involves resistance. Resistance comes from both the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’. The haves are people in authority who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo; the have-nots are those for whose benefit the change is designed but who are ignorant about its nature, its rationale and its precise consequences. In the context of Indian education, a shift to a managerial–professional model poses a threat to those who have the ultimate power to make decisions.

4. Staff development programmes have to be site-based, carefully designed to achieve identified purposes and conducted and led by people whose credentials and motives are impeccable.

5. Perhaps the greatest challenge in education is to usher in a professional culture in which educators see themselves not only as employees, supposed to carry out other people’s mandates, willingly or unwillingly, but as professionals whose locus of control is internal, who are committed to continued
personal and professional growth, who set their own agenda and consider themselves accountable to those they serve. We have a vicious cycle in India: government justifies its authority and responsibility for educational reforms on the grounds that educators are a passive lot, unwilling to be involved in any change process. Educators lament the fact that the system is too centralized, gives them neither autonomy nor opportunity to be heard, treats performers and non-performers alike (there is no reward for performance and no punishment for non-performance) and holds them accountable for carrying out policies in whose shaping they had no part.

These tasks are not easy by any means. The deep-rooted administrative model has created its own vested interests. The management model has not been understood even by those who are supposed to train others. The only hope lies in the possibility that teachers will become more professional, through individual and collective efforts, feel empowered through professional growth and begin to see the need and the benefits of changing the organizational structure and climate of the institutions where they work.

References

Part 5

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
This article reviews research from 1980–1995 exploring the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement. The focus is on the substantive findings that emerged from the review. Earlier reports focused on conceptual and methodological issues. The general pattern of results drawn from this review supports the belief that principals exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and student achievement. While this indirect effect is relatively small, it is statistically significant and supports the general belief among educators that principals contribute to school effectiveness and improvement. Moreover, the review suggests that previously described discrepancies in research results may be explained by the conceptual and methodological tools employed by researchers. We also emphasize the limitations of these studies. Even taken as a group they do not resolve the most important theoretical and practical issues concerning the means by which principals achieve an impact on school outcomes and how contextual forces influence the exercise of leadership in the schoolhouse. It is concluded that while substantial progress has been made over the past 15 years in understanding the principal’s contribution to school effectiveness, the most important scholarly and practical work lies ahead. In addition to this qualified, we assert that scholars are better equipped conceptually and methodologically to address these challenges than in 1980.

One of the fundamental tenets of research and practice in the school improvement community concerns the apparently powerful impact of principals on processes related to school effectiveness and improvement. Research findings
from diverse countries and school contexts draw a similar conclusion. Schools that make a difference in students’ learning are led by principals who make a significant and measurable contribution to the effectiveness of staff and in the learning of pupils in their charge (Andrews & Soder, 1987; Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982; Murphy & Hallinger, 1992).

The international chorus of support for this belief has, however, occasionally been broken by discordant voices questioning the empirical validity of this claim (Miskel, 1982; Rowan, Dwyer, & Bossert, 1982). Despite the supposedly dispassionate perspective of the scholarly community, those who call this particular dogma into question have not always received a fair hearing. At a professional meeting some years ago Professor Cecil Miskel (1992) presented a rigorous assessment of the empirical basis for claims of principal effects. His presentation was subsequently derided by a senior scholar whose negative critique was based not on the quality of Miskel’s analysis, but on Miskel’s questioning of the orthodox position.

More recently, research in the Netherlands further explored the basis for claims concerning principal effects (van de Grift, 1987, 1989, 1990). Expecting to confirm positive findings of principals from North America and the United Kingdom in the Netherlands, van de Grift and colleagues conducted their own empirical studies (van de Grift, 1989, 1990). Surprisingly, however, they found few significant effects of principal leadership on student achievement or school outcomes.

They speculated on the basis of this discrepancy in results in the Netherlands. Their explanations included context differences in school settings, variation in the principal’s role, alternative theoretical models, and methodological differences in how analyses were conducted. This discrepancy has presented a puzzle for researchers. The puzzle grows into a challenge when we consider that the actual results of empirical studies in the U.S. and the U.K. are not nearly as consistent in size and direction as rhetoric would have us believe (Bossert et al., 1982; Bridges, 1982; Cuban, 1988; Hallinger & Leithwood, 1994; Miskel, 1982; Rowan et al., 1982).

In this article, we review the empirical literature on principal effects that emerged during the period from 1980 to 1995. This was a period of significant activity in policy, research and practice in educational administration. Stimulated by early studies of school effectiveness and a maturing research base in school improvement, researchers turned their attention to examining the impact of school administrators, particularly principals. A series of research reviews appearing early in the 1980s further encouraged researchers to focus on the effects of principal leadership (Bossert et al., 1982; Bridges, 1982; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Murphy, Hallinger, & Mitman, 1983; Shoemaker & Fraser, 1981). The purpose of the current review is to examine the body of empirical research on principal effects conducted between 1980 and 1995. We seek to understand what has been learned about the substance of claims that principals’
Exploring the Principal’s Contribution

leadership practices make a difference in school effectiveness. We also explore explanations for the discrepant findings concerning principal effects that have emerged internationally over the two past decades.

This review builds explicitly on two related papers in which we reviewed this same body of studies (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b). The earlier reviews focused on conceptual (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a) and methodological (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a) issues that emerged from this research. Little attention was given in those analyses to the means by which principal leadership appears to influence the school and its outcomes for students.

In this paper, we focus primarily on the substantive findings from empirical studies conducted during this period. We only address conceptual and methodological issues as they impinge on assessing the validity of the substantive results or help make sense of the pattern of findings. We believe the framework drawn from this knowledge base could form the basis of the next generation studies on the principal’s role.

We begin the article by presenting the method for the review and briefly outlining the conceptual framework used to organize the review. We then discuss the substantive findings from the review. Finally, we suggest how the results from this latest period help frame the next generation of studies of principal effects.

Method of the review

Any attempt to integrate a body of research into a coherent framework that summarizes empirical, conceptual and methodological issues must begin with an acknowledgement of its limitations. First, while this review was conducted at a particular point in time, the field’s conceptualization of organizational processes, including the school leadership construct, is constantly evolving. Thus, characterizations of the field that emerge from a single review focus on a target that is moving even as the review is being conducted. This was certainly the case here as normative notions of principal leadership continue to evolve surprisingly rapidly in response to new environmental demands.

Second, we know of no universal paradigm or theory for examining organizational behavior that is valid in all societal or organizational contexts. This point is especially salient for the current review since we include studies conducted internationally and at different levels of schooling.

Third, a variety of frames have been proposed for studying school leadership (e.g., Leithwood, 1994; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Slater, 1995) as well as leadership more generally. This conceptual diversity has not, however, been borne out via substantial empirical inquiry. This presents a challenge for a review seeking to summarize the effects of educational leadership.

Conceptual diversity also came into play in another respect. As we shall note shortly, our decision to focus this review on quantitative studies of principal effects excluded some empirical explorations that would have incorporated quite
different epistemological assumptions and conceptualizations of leadership (e.g., distributed leadership; see Heck & Hallinger, in press).

Finally, proposed theories often become problematic when they seek to model the actual detail and richness of life in organizations (Bossert et al., 1982; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). The complexity of extra- and intra-organizational processes in schooling represents a challenge for researchers who seek to study causal relationships (Bossert et al., 1982; Boyan, 1988; Pitner, 1988). Social scientists who seek to develop valid theoretical models and apply appropriate analytic techniques to assess how those models work in the world confront a formidable set of tasks.

Within the context of these constraints, the approach taken in this review is to conduct a critical synthesis of the literature. We focus specifically on the substantive findings and interpreting their meaning for the field. We discuss methodological issues as far as they impinge on understanding trends in the substance of the findings.

Selection of studies for review

We began this review with the assumption that the number of studies to be included would not be so large as to require a sampling strategy (Bridges, 1982). This was borne out despite the fact that we conducted an extensive search for studies. We first searched the ERIC (Resources in Education) and Current Journals in Education (CJIE) databases. We used the resulting sources as well as our personal knowledge of published and presented research to identify additional studies.

Three criteria guided our selection of studies for review. First, we were interested in studies that had been designed explicitly to examine the school principal’s beliefs and leadership behavior. The research must have clearly conceptualized and measured principal leadership as an independent variable. We did not require any specific conception of educational leadership for inclusion in the review.

Second, the studies also had to include an explicit measure of school performance as a dependent variable. Most often performance was measured in terms of student achievement data, but occasionally other definitions such as effectiveness were used. It was also our desire, though not a necessary condition for inclusion, to identify studies that examined the principal’s impact on teacher and school level variables as mediating factors.

The dual focus on processes and outcomes reflects the priority that we assign to student outcomes as the goal for school improvement as well as to the importance of classroom and school-level variables in contributing to school effectiveness. We did not, however, include studies that examined principal impact on intervening variables if they did not also incorporate a measure of school outcomes. This criterion shifted the focus of the review towards quantitative studies of principal effects, as opposed to studies about the nature of the principal’s work.
Third, given the growing interest in international perspectives on school improvement, we made an extra effort to seek out studies that examined the impact of principals conducted in a variety of countries. We were reasonably successful in attaining this goal. Eleven of the studies reviewed were conducted outside of the United States. Although we do not undertake comparative analysis in this chapter, we have included studies conducted in a diverse set of cultural contexts including the United States, Canada, Singapore, England, Netherlands, Marshall Islands, Israel, and Hong Kong.

Consequently, the review includes 40 published journal articles, dissertation studies, and papers presented at peer-reviewed conferences. We are reasonably confident that the chapter has captured most empirical studies of principal impact on school effectiveness disseminated internationally between 1980 and 1995. We owe particular debts to the earlier efforts of Bossert and colleagues (1982), Boyan (1988), Bridges (1982), Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins (1990), and Pitner (1988) for laying the groundwork for this review.

Conceptualizing the principal’s role in school effectiveness

Pitner (1988) identified a range of approaches that could be used to study administrator effects through non-experimental research methods: direct-effects, antecedent-effects, mediated-effects, reciprocal-effects, and moderated-effects models (105–108). These models offer a comprehensive set of different perspectives for viewing the effects of the school context on administrative behavior and the influence of administrative behavior on the school and its outcomes.

Of course, these are not the only theoretical perspectives from which leadership can be studied (e.g., Ogawa & Bossert, 1995; Slater, 1995). Pitner’s framework does, however, offer one useful means for conceptualizing and organizing studies on administrative effects. We adapted Pitner’s framework for classifying the studies collected for this review (Figure 1).

We employed variations on three of these models to classify the studies: direct effects (i.e., where the principal’s actions influence school outcomes); mediated effects (i.e., where principal actions affect outcomes indirectly through other variables); reciprocal effects (e.g., where the principal affects teachers and teachers affect the principal, and through these processes outcomes are affected). These theoretical frameworks can also be combined with the antecedent-effects model proposed by Pitner (1988). The simplest combination model integrates antecedent and direct-effects frameworks (see Figure 1, Model A-1). A more complex theoretical model results when antecedent effects are combined with the effects of leadership on in-school processes and indirectly on school outcomes (see Figure 1, Model B-1).

Using this conceptual framework, we categorized and analyzed the content of the empirical studies listed in Table 1. Working independently, we classified the studies by model. After comparing our completed schemes, we resolved several discrepancies and triangulated our results with previous reviews (Bridges, 1982;
Erickson, 1967: Pitner, 1988). Note that Table 1 actually includes 41 studies. The additional study represents our revised analysis of data drawn from one of the studies that we reviewed (Braithwaite & Riley, 1991). In this case we re-analyzed the data using an alternative conceptual model (Table 1).

As is apparent from Table 1, the studies most frequently employed variations of direct-effects and mediated-effects models. Furthermore, there is a chronological pattern in the results. Over time researchers have moved from employing relatively simple direct-effects frameworks (Models A, A-1) to the use of more complex models (Models B, B-1, C). Even among the mediated-effects studies, for example, the later studies tend to use more comprehensive models involving both antecedent and mediated effects.

**Direct-effects models**

Direct-effects models (Figure 1, Model A) propose that the leader’s practices can have effects on school outcomes. Moreover, this approach assumes that these effects can be measured reliably apart from other related variables. Thus, researchers using this model do not typically seek to control for the effects of other in-school variables such as organizational climate, teacher commitment, instructional organization.

At the same time, recognition of the fact that other variables may have a prior effect on school outcomes led several researchers to include variables such as socioeconomic status and/or previous test scores. However, these were not hypothesized as variables interacting with leadership construct or mediating its effects on the selected outcomes.

Figure 1 Modeling principal effects on school effectiveness (adapted from Pitner, 1988, pp. 105–108).
Direct-effects models are quite common among the studies listed in Table 1. Most of the studies in this group were conducted during the earlier period of this review. Prior to around 1987, they represented the norm among principal effects studies (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1994).

Though common, Model A studies have been criticized for making untenable assumptions about the nature of leadership and its effects on school outcomes (e.g., Hallinger & Heck, 1996b; Pitner, 1988; Rowan et al., 1982). In such studies, the process by which administrators achieve an impact on school effectiveness is hidden in a so-called black box. A relationship is empirically tested, but the findings reveal little about how leadership operates.

The methods of analysis used to investigate direct-effects models are mainly bivariate (e.g., O’Day, 1983). Researchers using this approach typically use correlation, t tests, or chi square types to analyze principal effects (see Table 1). Recently, however, more sophisticated analytic techniques such as structural equation modeling have also been more employed to assess the direct relationship between leadership and school outcomes (e.g., van de Grift, 1990). Interestingly, the degree of sophistication in analytic techniques appears unrelated to the trends in results when using a direct-effects model (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b).

The results of direct-effects studies of leadership effects are surprisingly clear. Researchers adopting this model have been unable to produce sound or consistent evidence of leadership effects on student outcomes (e.g., Braughton & Riley, 1991; Cantu, 1994; Cheng, 1994; Krug, 1986; O’Day, 1983; van de Grift, 1990). A finding of no significant relationships has been most common, with occasional findings of mixed or weak effects. This overall finding supports the critiques offered by Bridges (1982) and Miskel (1982) as well as empirical findings from research in the Netherlands (van de Grift, 1987, 1989, 1990).

By way of illustration, Cheng (1994) found many significant differences between weak and strong principal leaders in terms of organizational and teacher performance indicators. However, the results with respect to principal effects on student outcomes were mixed. Cheng only found differences in two of seven student-perceived outcomes: attitudes to school and attitudes to learning.

The direct-effects models (A, A-1) have limited utility for investigating the effects of principal leadership. They have not demonstrated conclusive results with respect to principal effects. Even when employing sophisticated statistical methods such as structural modeling, this approach suffers from severe conceptual limitations. In the future, such studies offer little hope as a means of contributing substantially to our understanding of questions concerning either if or how leadership influences student outcomes.

Mediated-effects models

A mediated-effects framework (Model B, Figure 1) hypothesizes that leaders achieve their effect on school outcomes through indirect paths. Leadership
Table 1 Characteristics of Principal effects studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study author</th>
<th>Sample type</th>
<th>Dependenty variable</th>
<th>Analytic technique</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Model A: Direct-effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braughton &amp; Riley, 1991*</td>
<td>70 tch/20 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantu, 1994</td>
<td>96 tchers, 6 es</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasman &amp; Biniaminov, 1981</td>
<td>29 studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasman, 1983</td>
<td>210 pr &amp; tch</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasman, 1984</td>
<td>302 pr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasman &amp; Heck, 1992</td>
<td>35 pr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasman &amp; Fuller, 1992</td>
<td>20 pr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter, 1994*</td>
<td>52 ms; 331 t, 52 pr</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O’Day, 1983*</td>
<td>140 tch/19 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruczieska, 1988*</td>
<td>155 tch/11 es, ms</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>van de Griff, 1989</td>
<td>182 pr</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>van de Griff, 1987</td>
<td>139 pr</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>van de Griff, 1990*</td>
<td>104 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model A-1: Direct with antecedent effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrews &amp; Soder, 1987</td>
<td>33 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank, 1987</td>
<td>32 hs</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewer, 1993</td>
<td>2070 hs st</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheng, 1991</td>
<td>64 hs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheng, 1994</td>
<td>190 es</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dilworth, 1987</td>
<td>77 tch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krug, 1986</td>
<td>193 tch/11 es</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramey et al., 1982</td>
<td>193 tch/19 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowan &amp; Denk, 1984</td>
<td>142 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>Mediated-effects</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson, 1982*</td>
<td>8 Elem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biester et al., 1984</td>
<td>8 Elem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford et al., 1985*</td>
<td>94 Elem, MS, HS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eberts &amp; Stone, 1988*</td>
<td>300 pr</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silins, 1994*</td>
<td>265 pr</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td><strong>Model B-1: Mediated with antecedent effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bamburg &amp; Andrews, 1990</td>
<td>61 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldring &amp; Pasternak, 1994</td>
<td>34 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>Hallinger &amp; Murphy, 1986</td>
<td>10 es</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Hallinger et al., 1996</td>
<td>87 es</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heck et al., 1990</td>
<td>200 tchers/30 el, hs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heck et al., 1991</td>
<td>71 tch/4 es</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heck, 1993</td>
<td>138 tch/26 hs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallinger &amp; Heck**</td>
<td>70 tch/20 es</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jones, 1987</td>
<td>27 hs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>none</td>
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<td>Leithwood et al., 1993</td>
<td>770 tch/272 sch</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Leithwood, 1994</td>
<td>varied</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Ogawa &amp; Hart, 1985</td>
<td>275 es, hs</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott &amp; Teddlie, 1987</td>
<td>250 tch/76 es</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Weil et al., 1984</td>
<td>20 es</td>
<td>1, 2, 6</td>
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<td><strong>Model C: Reciprocal-effects</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>200 tchers/30 el, hs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

Key for Dependent Variables: 1 = student achievement; 2 = school effectiveness; 3 = teacher perceptions of school effectiveness; 4 = organizational effectiveness; 5 = attendance; 6 = student self-concept.

* Antecedent variable(s) were limited to controlling for exogenous effects on achievement.

practices contribute to the outcomes desired by schools but the contribution is almost always mediated by other people, events, and organizational factors such as teacher commitment, instructional practices, or school culture (Leithwood, 1994). This conceptualization is consistent with the proposition that leaders achieve their results primarily through other people. Mediated-effects studies, therefore, offer concrete indications of possible means through which leadership may achieve an impact on the school’s outcomes and effectiveness.

Notably, these studies also produced a consistent pattern of results, though of a different sort. As seen in Table 1, studies employing a mediated-effects model produced either mixed or consistently evidence of positive effects of principal leadership on school outcomes. When combined with antecedent variables, the more complex model (Model B-1, Table 1) shows an even more consistent pattern of positive indirect effects of principal leadership on school effectiveness.

Table 1 extends the trend implied in our discussion of the direct-effects model concerning the relationship between methods and results. Mediated-effects studies have employed more sophisticated analytic methods than did the direct-effects studies. Researchers initially relied upon multiple regression analysis in which the strength of indirect effects are implied through the use of interaction effects. More recently they have begun to use more powerful variations of path analysis in which the strength of direct and indirect effects can be calculated simultaneously (Hallinger, Bickman, & Davis, 1996; Heck, Larson, & Maroulides, 1990; Leithwood, 1994).

These analytic methods are necessary to cope with the more complex relationships framed in mediated-effects models. It is interesting to note that greater consistency in findings of principal effects only emerged after these methods began to be used by researchers. This reinforces the importance of bringing conceptual and methodological power to the study of leadership effects.

**Reciprocal-effects models**

A third conceptual approach to understanding administrator effects is the reciprocal-effects model (Figure 1, Model C). Scholars have proposed that relationships between the administrator and features of the school and its environment are interactive. This proposition is not, however, captured in either the preceding models, A or B. A reciprocal-effects framework implies that administrators adapt to the organization in which they work, changing their thinking and behavior over time.

Principals enact leadership in the school through a stream of interactions over a period of time. In doing so they address salient features of the school such as the current and changing states of student outcomes or staff morale or commitment. Alternatively, they may initiate changes in the school’s curriculum program or instructional practices. These actions may cause changes in the conditions of the school. This subsequently produces feedback that causes recipro-
cal effects in the originating variable, leadership. This is an example of a reciprocal process.

By way of illustration, a principal might enter a low performing school that has severe problems of discipline and order. In response, the principal might take highly directive measures to establish control. Once the school has achieved a level of stability, the principal may adopt a quite different way of thinking about both goals and actions for school development. To the extent that leadership is viewed as an adaptive process rather than as a unitary independent force, the reciprocal-effects perspective takes on increased salience. When employing this type of model, the researcher further entertains the possibility that causal relationships may be multi-directional, change over time, and even be nonlinear.

As seen in Table 1, few studies were conducted with this model type; in fact, none were specifically designed to model reciprocal effects. The ability to adequately test reciprocal effects has been limited by the types of data collected and the analytical methods employed by researchers. Analyzing how leadership processes and their effects unfold over time is demanding from a methodological standpoint. Up until a few years ago, the necessary methodological means to analyze reciprocal relationships quantitatively (e.g., structural equation modeling) or trend data were not widely accessible.

Cross-sectional data can give an impression that a certain type of principal leadership has an impact on other processes, as in Models A or B. However, it is also possible – even likely – that this form of leadership “worked” only at that certain point in time, or that effects go in both directions. Cross-sectional studies and related conceptual models do not capture the dynamic relationship that may exist among variables, especially with respect to how these may change over time.

A more complete representation, therefore, would require the assumption that the reciprocal effects will only become apparent over time. Thus, in order to specify such models completely, longitudinal data are preferred, and these are in short supply. Further development and exploration of this model represents a profitable area for future research. As research questions are framed within this type of conceptual framework, it will undoubtedly lead to revised conceptual models and corresponding methods of analysis.

**Conceptualizing educational leadership**

Although this review focuses primarily upon the issue of principal effects, we must briefly discuss the range of leadership conceptualizations represented in this body of research. The field’s conceptualization of principal leadership has evolved considerably over the past 25 years (Hallinger, 1992). This was aptly demonstrated in these investigations as researchers employed at least six distinctly different leadership frameworks to study principal effects.

Although a variety of conceptual models were employed in these studies, two major approaches have predominated in the study of principal effects over the
past fifteen years: instructional leadership and transformational leadership. Studies from the early to late 1980s were dominated by an instructional leadership conceptualization drawn from the effective schools literature (e.g., Andrews & Soder, 1987; Biester, Kruse, Beyer, & Heller, 1984; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Jackson, 1982; Jones, 1987; Krug, 1986; O’Day, 1983; Scott & Teddlie, 1987). Though defined in a variety of ways, 31 of the 41 studies conceptualized the principal’s role in school effectiveness in terms of instructional leadership.

Since 1990, researchers have begun to shift their attention to leadership models construed as more consistent with evolving trends in educational reform such as empowerment, shared leadership, and organizational learning. This evolution of the educational leadership role has been labeled as reflecting “second order” changes (Leithwood, 1994) as it is aimed primarily at changing the organization’s normative structure. The most frequently used model of this variety has been transformational leadership (e.g., Jantzi & Leithwood, 1993; Silins, 1994).

Transformational leadership focuses on increasing the organization’s capacity to innovate. Rather than focusing specifically on curriculum and instruction, transformational leadership seeks to build the organization’s capacity to select its purposes and to support the survival of changes to the school’s core technology. The core theoretical and empirical work on this model has been conducted by Leithwood and his colleagues at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Three studies examined transformational and transactional leadership constructs (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1993; Leithwood, 1994; Silins, 1994).

Several other leadership frameworks were used in these investigations. In one study Cheng (1994) adapted Bolman and Deal’s (1992) popular conceptualization of organizational leadership. This framework conceives of four frames – political, structural, symbolic, human resource – for viewing the role of leadership in organizations. Given its widespread use in administration preparation programs, it was surprising to see that so few studies used this framework in the study of principal effects.

We would be remiss if we did note that the epistemological breadth of conceptualizations included in this corpus of studies was limited by the decision to focus specifically on principal effects on school effectiveness and achievement. This decision immediately limited the range of alternative conceptualizations likely to appear in the review. For example, it meant that scholars who conceptualized effectiveness via non-quantitative approaches would not be captured by the review. It also meant that scholars who focused on intermediate-level variables such as academic learning time or other classroom- or school-level process variables would not be included. Finally, it meant that we would miss studies by scholars who employed measures of leadership that did not focus on the principal. These considerations all led, in our view, to the relatively narrow range of conceptualizations embedded in this set of studies.

In this instance, the predominate paradigm of the 1980s – school effectiveness – drove the review. Consequently, our definition of scope for the review –
principal effects on school effectiveness and achievement – biased the study
towards certain ways of seeing leadership effectiveness and also towards certain
methodological approaches. We acknowledge this as a limitation of the review
with the result that the full range of principal leadership studies is not represent-
ted here (see Heck & Hallinger, in press, for an analysis of the broader range of
conceptual models being employed). At the same time, we assert the appropri-
ateness of carefully defining the scope of a research review and the validity of
focusing on the school effectiveness paradigm in this review.

In the following section, we discuss the substantive results from studies
employing these educational leadership models. Although we discuss the overall
trend of findings among the studies, we focus primarily on those studies, that
found administrative effects. Since these studies tend to be found among the
more complex models (B, B-1), that is where we give the greatest attention.

Results
In this section we examine the results that emerged from the substantive findings
of the studies. The findings are organized into three sections representing the
main leadership model components: in-school processes, antecedents, outcomes.

Avenues of influence of principal leadership
Given these varying conceptualizations of the principal’s leadership role, we
needed a more general framework that could encompass the specific models of
principal leadership that were investigated. We chose to organize the presenta-
tion of our findings around Leithwood’s (1994) as well as Ogawa and Bossert’s
(1995) theoretical leadership frameworks for exploring leadership effects. These
represent recent thinking about how school leadership operates within an organi-
zational context and we found considerable overlap in their conceptualizations
of leadership effects.

These frameworks hypothesize four areas through which leadership may
influence the organizational system: (1) purposes and goals; (2) structure and
social networks; (3) people; (4) organizational culture. In the current image of
school organization, therefore, leadership not only influences individuals – it
influences the organizational system in which individuals (e.g., teachers, stu-
dents, parents) work. After we examine the findings along the four identified
domains, we discuss how antecedent effects interact with the mediated-effect
model.

Purposes and goals
The most consistent findings among the studies support the view that principals’
involvement in framing, conveying and sustaining the schools purposes and
goals represent an important domain of indirect influence on school outcomes.
This focus on goals reflects the popularization of vision, mission, and goals in the management literature of this period. Primarily through mediated-effects studies, researchers studied the principal’s impact on the staff’s educational expectations, the framing of educational purposes, the substance of the school’s mission, consensus on goals, and the principal’s role in goal-setting processes (e.g., Andrews & Soder, 1987; Barnburg & Andrews, 1990; Brewer, 1993; Cheng, 1994; Goldring & Pasternak, 1994; Hallinger et al., 1996; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Heck et al., 1990; Leithwood, 1994; Scott & Teddlie, 1987; Silins, 1994).

For example, Brewer (1993) noted that principal leadership affected both the selection and motivation of teachers in terms of their classroom goal-setting. After controlling for a variety of environmental influences, Brewer found higher academic gains in high schools where principals held high academic goals and selected more of the teachers. Conversely, where principals held lower academic expectations and selected fewer teachers, lower test score gains resulted. While the methodology of this study was limited in its ability to clarify fully the relationship among these variables, it reinforces the potential importance of the school culture. It suggests both the importance of the principal’s expectations for achievement and staff selection as a vehicle for increasing the school’s focus.

Goldring and Pasternak (1994) similarly found that the principal’s role in framing school goals, establishing a clear mission, and gaining staff consensus were stronger predictors of school outcomes than other instructional or managerial activities (e.g., allocation of time, control or influence). Notably, within their framework, goals were conceived more broadly than simply as academic achievement. The important variables included emphasizing good citizenship, personal growth, good work habits and learning skills among students and securing staff agreement about educational goals.

Hallinger and colleagues (1996) found that establishing a clear school mission was a key avenue through which principals influence school effectiveness. In their study principal leadership was significantly related to the variable, clear school mission. It was through this avenue that principals shaped teachers’ expectations and students’ opportunity to learn in the school. Again both academic focus and staff consensus were conceptualized as part of a constellation of systemic variables. This path of indirect effects had a measurable impact on the reading achievement at the elementary school level.

Additional supporting evidence for the importance of this component of our model is provided by Leithwood (1994) and Heck (1993). Their data support the key role principals play in identifying and clarifying the meaning of school’s vision. Both studies reinforce the importance of coordinating the school’s goals with its curriculum. Moreover, as in the Brewer (1993) and Hallinger et al. (1996) study, high performance expectations again emerge as a potentially potent source of influence. These variables were related to the principal’s ability to stimulate innovation and flexibility as well as to higher productivity in terms of restructuring the organization’s goals and achieving school outcomes.
It is important to draw a conceptual distinction between the role of goals as employed in the instructional leadership models and the transformational leadership models. Goal setting within the instructional leadership tradition emphasized the principal’s capacity to focus staff on the school’s academic improvement. Within this model, goals are viewed as an instrumental agent used by instructional leaders to narrow the attention of staff, parents and students on a limited range of activity.

This distinction was highlighted by Hallinger and Murphy (1986) in their study of effective and typical elementary schools. They noted that even within the instructionally effective schools, there were differences between how principals employed goals. Some used explicitly defined school goals as instruments for coordination and control. Other principals sought to establish and maintain a general direction for the school, but they employed goals in a more generative manner building upon and reinforcing important purposes that emerged from the staff and community. These observed differences appeared to be related to contextual characteristics of the school such as socioeconomic status of students.

Within the transformational leadership model, as conceived by Leithwood (1994) and Silins (1994), the goal-setting function of the leader is somewhat different. Here the leader seeks to stimulate people to arrive at new (and higher) goals for personal and professional development. Leithwood suggests that the strongest influence of transformational leadership on outcomes is through vision building and fostering commitment to group goals. These in turn lead to an increased capacity for innovation.

Leithwood and colleagues (Leithwood, Jantzi, Silins, & Dart, 1993) provide evidence of small effects of principal behavior in this domain. They find that principal vision, group goals, high expectations, and individual support have effects on several in-school processes such as goal formulation, school culture, teachers, policy and organization. In turn these influence school improvement outcomes including achieving school reform goals, policy and organizational change.

Thus, goal framing and mission-building, though critical in both leadership models, take on different emphases. Despite differences in how the principal’s leadership role is conceptualized, however, both frameworks do emphasize the importance of vision and goal cohesion within the school. Additional research is needed to unpack how goals operate in fostering school improvement. However, these findings offer strong evidence of this domain’s validity in terms of the leader’s role in school effectiveness and improvement.

Structure and social networks

A second domain of leadership influence involves the interplay between organizational structures and social networks. Theorists suggest that leadership is linked to organizational roles and the network of relations among roles because it is this network that comprises the organizational system. Ogawa and Bossert
(1995) propose that leadership enhances organizational performance and survival by affecting social structures, the regularized aspects of relationships existing among participants in an organization. Hence, leadership can be distributed across organizational roles. The concern in this dimension is with how leadership is exercised (e.g., centralized or dispersed) and what are its basic aims with respect to other people in the organization.

Evidence from the mediated-effects studies provides strong support for this view. In an early paper, Weil et al. (1984) found that principal support of teachers and a proactive stance on problem solving were areas separating effective from more typical elementary schools. In a more-recent effort, Silins (1994) determined that transformational leadership (i.e., actions aimed at providing support, challenging work, and sense of vision and mission of the school) produced significant effects on a variety of teacher-perceived reform processes as well as on school, program, and student outcomes. The effects of a contrasting model, transactional leadership (i.e., focusing on fulfilling basic needs and supplying extrinsic rewards) were much less pervasive.

Positive effects of transformational leadership on in-school processes and a range of teacher-perceived outcomes have also been reported by Leithwood and his colleagues (Leithwood et al., 1993; Leithwood, 1994). The areas of transformational leadership that primarily affect this domain are providing support for individual teachers, fostering cooperation, and assisting them to work together toward the fulfillment of identified school goals. Leithwood suggests that principals’ transformational leadership affects three psychological dispositions of teachers (i.e., their perceptions of a variety of school characteristics, their commitment to school change, and their capacity for professional development). In turn, Leithwood argues that leadership indirectly affects the organizational outcomes of restructuring initiatives and teacher-perceived student outcomes, but had little effect on student participation in school activities and student grades.

Several studies across a variety of national contexts indicated that more involvement from a variety of stakeholders in decision making is characteristic of higher-producing schools. Weil et al. (1984) determined that collaboration in decision making was an area separating effective and more typical elementary schools. This was the case for both teacher and parent participation in decision making (also see Heck, Marcoulides, & Lang, 1991). It is interesting to note that this finding receives support from cross-national research. For example, Heck (1993) found that more collaborative decision making and more flexible rule structures were associated with higher-achieving secondary schools in Singapore. Cheng (1994) found that strong primary school principal leaders in Hong Kong schools tended to promote participation in decision making, stronger and more cohesive social interactions, attitudes about work, commitment, and higher morale. In a Canadian study, Leithwood (1994) also suggests greater implementation of a variety of primary school change outcomes where decision making power is shared, principals provide relative auto-
nomy to teachers, and where collaboration is used in decision making, and time is provided for all of these activities.

As implied above, parental involvement may be another area in which principals exercise an indirect effect on outcomes. For example, Weil et al. (1984) noted that parents in effective schools in the study also perceived themselves to be more involved in the school and in participating in decision making about the school. Similarly, in a study conducted in Israel, Goldring and Pasternak (1994) noted that highly-effective elementary principals emphasize involving parents in the school. Controlling for community background variables, Heck et al. (1990) also found that principals encouraged greater levels of parental involvement in highly-effective elementary and high schools. As we also note later, parental participation and expectations have a corresponding impact on principals.

People

It seems clear from several proposed leadership frameworks (e.g., Bossert et al., 1982; Leithwood, 1994; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995) that administrative activity is largely directed at people in the organization (i.e., students, teachers, parents and community, district personnel). Ogawa and Bossert (1995) argue that social interaction among people within the school community is a primary building block of leadership. As they note, leadership requires the use of personal resources, for example, responsibility, cooperation, and commitment.

The evidence from the last 15 years of research on educational leadership provides considerable support concerning the importance of this domain of principal influence. In a synthesis of several studies of the impact of the principal from a transformational leadership perspective, Leithwood (1994) highlights “people effects” as a cornerstone of the transformational leadership model. Within the model proposed by Leithwood and colleagues (e.g., Jantzi & Leithwood, 1993; Leithwood et al., 1993; Leithwood, 1994; Silins, 1994), many of the outcomes of interest in terms of restructuring schools are teacher effects (e.g., changes of behavior, adoption of new programs, teaching techniques). Thus, they suggest a major impact of principal efforts is to produce changes in people.

More specifically, Leithwood (1994) found that principal effects are achieved through fostering group goals, modeling desired behavior for others, providing intellectual stimulation, and individualized support (e.g., toward personal and staff development). In these schools, principals were better at supporting staff, providing recognition, knowing problems of school, were more approachable, follow through, seek new ideas, and spent considerable time developing human resources. A conclusion drawn from Leithwood’s studies is that transformational leadership has an impact on teachers’ perceptions of school conditions, their commitment to change, and the organizational learning that takes place. With respect to outcomes, leadership had an influence on teachers’ perceptions of progress with implementing reform initiatives and teachers’ perceptions of increases in student outcomes.
Other studies using an instructional leadership model also provide considerable support for principal effects on people as a means to affect outcomes indirectly. Heck et al. (1990) found that teachers in higher-producing elementary and high schools spent more time than their counterparts in low-producing schools in the direct classroom supervision and support of teachers, as well as in working with teachers to coordinate the school’s instructional program, solve instructional problems collaboratively, help teachers secure resources, and provide in-service and staff development activities.

Similarly, in our re-analysis (see next section) of the Braughton and Riley (1991) study, we discovered that principals were much more directly involved in the classroom supervision and support of teachers who had lower skills in teaching reading. Principals’ classroom involvement with teachers had a significant indirect effect on school outcomes. Goldring and Pasternak (1994) found that effective elementary schools had greater staff consensus about educational goals than less-effective schools. Eberts and Stone (1988) argued that the principal’s role in resolving conflicts within the school is an area of impact on school achievement (in more effective schools teachers perceived conflicts were resolved adequately). Together these findings suggest that more effective (or higher-producing) schools have greater educational and social cohesiveness (e.g., Heck, 1993).

Organizational culture

Recent theories of school leadership emphasize the influence of organizational culture on the meaning people associate with their work and willingness to change (Bolman & Deal, 1992; Leithwood, 1994; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). As Ogawa and Bossert (1995) argue, leaders operate within environmental (i.e., societal) and organizational cultures and affect how other participants interpret organizational events and thus influence how they behave. This focuses on the importance of developing shared meanings and values.

Relative to societal cultures, few of the studies in the past 15 years were designed to compare leadership across cultural contexts. In one such study, Heck et al. (1991) noted likely differences in principal leadership associated with the cultural context of the schools in which the study is conducted. Others were simply case studies of the principal’s role within a variety of different cultural contexts.

There is less support in this particular empirical literature concerning the principal’s role with respect to organizational culture and learning outcomes than the other three domains. At least in part this results from the newness of this construct as a focal point for research on the principal role. Even within the wider organizational and management literatures, this has been related to disagreement about the conceptual components of the construct.

Similarly, in the earlier effective schools studies, culture was perceived as “climate”. For example, the original Bossert et al. (1982) framework used the
term climate. Weil et al. (1984) found that effective and typical schools differed in several important respects in their organizational processes. They termed these processes school learning climate (e.g., mission, opportunity to learn, expectations), organizational climate (e.g., collaborative processes, open communication), social climate (e.g., sense of community, student involvement). Teachers in the study suggested that effective schools tended to emphasize group processes in solving problems, the promoted instructional improvement, curriculum and testing were aligned, and principals were seen as more supportive of teachers. Moreover, in effective schools the learning climate appeared to be solely a function of the leadership climate.

Heck et al. (1990) also found that principals’ efforts in improving the educational environment of the school (e.g., communication processes, high expectations for students and teachers, increasing morale) were indirectly related to school outcomes. Although they labelled this construct “school climate”, it also emphasizes elements of the school’s value structure (e.g., high expectations). In both of these studies, school climate seemed to reflect values processes that we consider to be important facets of organizational culture.

A few years later, Leithwood et al. (1993) conceptualized school culture as widespread agreement about norms, beliefs, and values. They proposed that school culture was central to achieving the coordination necessary to implement change. Principals were found to impact school culture which, in turn, impacted a range of restructuring outcomes including program, policy, teacher behavior, and students.

Useful distinctions can be drawn, however. In one attempt to clarify the relationships between these constructs, Heck and Marcoulides (1996a) described climate as participants’ perceptions about “how things are” (e.g., work conditions) on a day-to-day basis as opposed to deeper values and structures that affect socialization and norms governing subsequent actions within the organization. In clarifying the relationship between the two constructs, climate, therefore would be expected to change more readily – depending, for example, on the actions of administrators – than the entire system of variables comprising the school’s culture (e.g., its structure, value system, managerial processes).

**Antecedent effects on leadership**

The model discussed above focused on the impact of principal leadership on in-school variables and school outcomes. This body of research also focused on a variety of antecedent and context effects on principals. This relationship was investigated through both direct-effects and mediated-effects studies.

Despite a range of conceptual and methodological problems, one interesting finding is suggested by several studies. Socioeconomic factors in the school and community appear to influence principal leadership and its impact on school effectiveness (e.g., Andrews & Soder, 1987; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Rowan & Denk, 1984). For example, Andrews and Soder (1987) reported that principal
leadership affected reading and math outcomes in elementary schools. When controlling for SES and ethnicity, however, the effects of principal leadership on reading and math outcomes tended to disappear in high SES or predominately Caucasian elementary schools. They remained significant in predominately African-American or low SES schools. This supported their hypothesis of context effects on the leadership exercised by principals.

Hallinger and Murphy (1986) found that community SES affected how elementary school principals perceive their work. For example, the school mission was defined differently in low and high SES effective schools, with low SES schools stressing the mastery of basic skills. Consequently, in these schools a greater percentage of time was allocated to basic skills instruction with frequent, extrinsic rewards for success. Moreover, principals in low SES schools tended to define their leadership role more narrowly in terms of curriculum coordination, control of instruction, and task orientation.

Similarly, Scott and Teddlie (1987) identified a link between SES and elementary school principal expectations. Principals’ expectations, in turn, affected their responsibility; however, they determined that principal responsibility was not directly related to outcomes. Although untested by Scott and Teddlie, we noted a possible indirect effect (likely statistically significant) of principal expectations on school outcomes through principal responsibility.

Antecedent influences were also found to impact upon principal behavior with respect to structures and social networks. Hallinger and Murphy (1986) found that SES impacts how principals go about developing such linkages. For example, they noted that school linkages to the home and parent involvement were weak and limited in low SES effective schools. In contrast, linkages to the home and parent involvement were strong and pervasive in high SES schools. Parents contributed time as classroom aides, their money supported expansion of school programs, and they assisted in organizing schoolwide festivals.

In the lower SES schools, principals acted as buffers between the school and home, controlling access to the school and protecting the school’s program from outside influences that might dilute its effectiveness. In higher SES schools, however, the principal acted as a boundary spanner, constantly seeking ways to involve community members who had great interest and stake in the school’s operation.

These findings hint at the relationship between wider community cultural context and corresponding school culture. The different extent of contact between school staff and community is important because teacher and administrator attitudes appear to be shaped by expectations and beliefs of the wider community (e.g., Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). Outside of this relationship to the wider community (e.g., expectations), Hallinger and Murphy found that effective schools in high- and low-SES also had similarities in terms of their instructional and organizational arrangements – a clear mission, emphasis on achievement results, high expectations, a well-coordinated curriculum, and principal behavior that was concerned with instruction. Of course,
effects of principal behavior with respect to culture is a topic that needs further empirical study.

Cheng (1994), noted that other contextual factors (e.g., school size, teacher background) were not generally found to exert any important influence over principal leadership in secondary settings. Heck (1992) found differences in principal discussion of instructional issues and problems and discussion about how instructional techniques impact student achievement to be similar across school level, with principals in both effective elementary and high-school schools more involved with these variables than their counterparts at low-achieving schools. There is an interaction with level, however, with principals in effective elementary schools more heavily involved than principals in effective high schools. Heck (1992) also noted that principals in elementary schools (controlling for effectiveness) spend more time attempting to communicate goals to teachers and others than principals in secondary schools. The findings from Heck’s (1993) secondary school study tend to corroborate Leithwood’s studies with primary schools in this area, although the leadership constructs employed are different.

Unit of analysis and multilevel effects

Closer inspection of Table 1 reveals that previous research on the principal’s role has been conducted using widely different units of analysis. For example, these include principals, individual teachers, teacher responses aggregated to the school level, and various sub-groupings of students. This issue introduces additional complexity into the discussion of principal effects on school processes and school outcomes.

At each level of the organizational system different effects can be conceptualized. Students bring individual abilities to their classrooms. Teachers shape the children’s classroom environment. Principals monitor teachers within their schools. Superintendents develop improvement plans for their districts. Thus, within a given organizational system the effects of actors (or groups of actors) at different levels must be taken into account.

Theoretically, this has been referred to as a “nested structure” and represents an example of a hierarchical data structure (Bossert et al., 1982). Most of the mediated-effects studies that found a relationship between principals’ leadership, school processes, and outcomes focused on teachers’ perceptions of organizational processes, measured variables either at the individual or school level (e.g., Hallinger et al., 1996; Heck et al., 1990; Leithwood et al., 1993). A smaller number of studies finding positive effects of leadership studied principals directly (e.g., Eberts & Stone, 1988; Silins, 1994). One issue raised by different units of analysis is the extent to which various role groups perceive the principal’s leadership similarly.

When studying the interrelationships among principal, teacher, and student-level variables, therefore, the structural features of educational organizations
take on particular importance. Principals are likely to influence the school level of the organization more directly than classroom (e.g., how teachers organize instruction) or student levels (e.g., the motivation of particular students). Unfortunately, in the past such issues were often blurred in the transformation of conceptualizations into operational measurement.

One illustration of this problem for example, can be seen in the conceptualization of school learning climate, a popular variable measured in these studies. It remains a point of contention whether constructs such as school climate (or principal leadership) are basic properties of the organization or merely perceptions of the individuals. If we accept the former conceptualization, perceptions should be measured at the school level. In the latter case, they would more appropriately be measured at the individual teacher or student level.

Earlier studies on principals seldom addressed the problem of variables such as student achievement that are impacted by multiple levels of the organization. In such studies, for example, the unit of analysis tended to be either the individual level (e.g., teachers and principal as individuals without regard to their school setting) or the school level. In the latter case, teacher responses were summed to create school means. The researchers would then compare schools within the sample.

Neither solution is completely satisfactory. A limitation of a school-level analysis is that every individual in the school is assumed to hold the same perception about the principal. Individual level analyses do not allow us to assess accurately the effects of different levels of the organization on the relevant outcome of interest. For example, if quality of teaching is hypothesized to affect student learning, then we know that some students in our sample of individuals have the same teacher and, further, differ in the quality of teaching that they receive. To ignore this, we violate the assumption of independence of observations that is basic for classical statistical techniques. That is, systematic groups of students in our sample would have the same value on all variables at the classroom level (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992).

Several promising analytic techniques have been developed over the past few years (e.g., structural equation modeling, hierarchical linear modeling) that allow the investigation of these effects across organizational levels. These techniques were not, however, used to investigate multilevel effects in the studies we reviewed. For example, Heck et al. (1990) developed separate structural models at the individual and school levels and compared the estimates. Yet, this approach did not bring together one set of within- and between-level estimates.

To address this shortcoming in principal leadership studies further, Heck and Maroulides (1996b) recently reanalyzed an earlier study to assess the effects of multilevel data on the assessment of principal leadership and its effects. This analysis revealed several new findings. Hierarchical linear modeling (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992) was employed to separate the variance accounted for in principal leadership practices into within-school and between-school components. First, most teacher perceptions of principal leadership were individual proper-
ties; that is, variance in leadership practices across several dimensions (governance, instructional supervision, culture and climate building) was roughly 70% to 80% within each school. This suggests that individual-level analyses do manage to capture most of the inherent variation in the data. Therefore, we should not discount the findings of previous studies conducted at the individual level of analysis. Second, the analysis revealed that in all leadership domains investigated, principals rated their direct involvement more highly than their teachers did.

The 20 to 30% variation in leadership practices across school, however, suggests that there are substantial differences in principals’ leadership practices at the school level as well. In the Heck and Marcoulides (1996b) study, this variation was accounted for by the level of the school (i.e., with high school principals being perceived as less actively involved in various leadership activities) and the achievement context of the school (with principals in high-achieving schools more actively involved in leadership activities).

Thus, the caution here is that between-school studies treat the smaller amount of variation due to differences in leadership among the set of schools as if it were 100% of the variation in the data. This has the potential to alter the findings. Interestingly, another such study (Rowan, Raudenbush, & Kang, 1991) determined that most of the variance in teacher perceptions about principal leadership (roughly 75%) was also the result of within-school variation in how teachers view the principal’s actions. Of course, this variation would be lost if measurements were simply aggregated to school level means, and those school-level means used in a between-school analysis. Therefore, studies that do not account for within-school variation can run the risk of overemphasizing (or underemphasizing) differences in leadership between schools.

Now that several techniques are available to estimate multilevel effects, one alternative solution proposed through hierarchical linear modeling is to develop a within-school model to determine the relative effects of various factors (e.g., gender, backgrounds of teachers) on teachers’ perceptions about the principal’s leadership. The approach is illuminating for many research situations in that it allows the variability in important dependent variables (e.g., outcomes, leadership) to be decomposed across different levels of the organization. In this manner, we can also determine whether leadership has been measured with sufficient reliability and validity within each school to permit a school-level analysis of differences in principal leadership.

Impact of school leadership

As noted at the outset, one purpose of this review was to explore possible explanations for the ambiguity and inconsistency in findings of principals’ effects. The conceptual organization of the studies (see Table 1) began to offer clues for the discrepant findings. As noted earlier, the finding of positive effects to be associated with the conceptual model used by the researcher. That is, mediated-
effects studies yielded more consistent findings than did the direct-effects studies that were popular earlier in the decade.

The contrasting findings between mediated- and direct-effects studies led us to re-analyze one of the direct-effects studies to see if formulating a different theoretical model might affect the nature of the findings concerning leadership and school outcomes. We used available data (through inclusion of a correlation matrix) that had employed direct-effects models and found no principal effects on student outcomes (Braughton & Riley, 1991).

We formulated antecedent with mediated-effect models using their available observed variables and, in the case of the Braughton and Riley (1991) study, applied a different analytic method. For this analysis, we used structural equation modeling. The usefulness of this approach is that it forces the researcher to propose a specific theoretical model before actually testing the model against the data and allows for complex tests of direct, indirect, and total effects involving several dependent (and mediating) variables in one analysis. Moreover, the analysis provides several measures of fit of the hypothesized model to the actual data. This allows the determination of whether the model may be considered a plausible representation of the data.

In the structural equation approach to data analysis, there are two basic steps. First, a series of latent constructs (i.e., unmeasured constructs such as leadership practices) are defined in terms of several observed variables. This hypothesized set of relationships may then be fit against the actual data. After successfully defining the measurement properties of the relations, the structural parameters among latent constructs are then investigated. Through illustrating this approach using previous studies, we hope to raise the possibility of uncovering “hidden” effects in the data by applying a different system of theoretical relations.

In the Braughton and Riley (1991) study, the authors found no effects of a variety of variables measuring principals’ knowledge and supervisory actions on students’ fourth grade reading scores. The model was originally cast as a regression model with several indicators of principal and teacher knowledge and actions as predictors of fourth grade reading. The only significant predictors they found were the students’ second grade scores and fourth grade teachers’ knowledge of reading processes.

We recast their regression model into a mediated-effects with antecedent framework as follows. Drawing on earlier research by Glasman and Fuller (1992), we assumed that student test scores affect principal behavior. We then hypothesized that second grade reading scores might help explain principal behavior in terms of their decisions in supervising teachers’ classroom work with the four grade classes. We, therefore, defined a latent construct measuring principal involvement in supervision and another latent construct measuring teacher classroom reading practices.

We then tested this newly-proposed model with LISREL 8 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1993) using the authors’ correlation matrix as input (Braughton & Riley, 1991). First, our model fit the data quite well. Using several common
indicators of model fit (chi-square/df ratio, goodness of fit index, root mean square residual) we concluded that our proposed model had a good fit with the data. The chi-square/df ratio was 1.3 \( (p=.064) \), the goodness of fit index was .90 (values of .9 are considered evidence of acceptable fit), and the root mean square residual was .08.

After establishing the fit of the model, we examined the standardized structural coefficients (not tabled). We found a significant relationship (.34) between grade two reading scores and teacher practices with these children in grade four. Principal supervisory activities affected teacher practices significantly (−.38) and outcomes indirectly through their supervision of grade four teachers (.23). Consistent with Braughton and Riley’s (1991) own results, we found a direct effect of grade two reading scores on grade four outcomes (.70), and no direct effect of principals’ actions on outcomes (.09). Thus, the effects of principal leadership on school outcomes were almost completely indirect through supervising teachers’ classroom practices (e.g., with the negative coefficient reflecting greater supervision in classroom where teachers were weaker).

A cautionary note

While we believe that this reanalysis provides a useful and valid approach to understanding the meaning of these findings, we must also acknowledge several limitations. First, it is important to remember that in any test of a model the evidence of a good fit to the data does not mean that other models cannot fit the data equally well or better. Failure to reject a particular model as ill-fitting only indicates that this is one of many possible models that might describe the data. We therefore encourage researchers to use theory to enhance the specification of their model tests and when possible to consider testing competing models.

Second, we recognize Jöreskog and Sorbom’s (1993) caution concerning the use of a correlation matrix as input data. For example, if equality constraints are used when making comparisons, they may modify the model. Use of the correlation matrix as input data may also produce incorrect chi-square values and standard errors. Despite these limitations, the same authors also note that in many social science applications the units of measurement in the observed variables have no definite meaning (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 1993). When this is the case, in practice, it is neither uncommon nor incorrect to analyze correlation matrices for interpretational purposes. Of course caution must be exercised and alternative interpretations considered.

We cautiously interpreted the new findings in our re-analysis, as well as the consistent findings from the set of mediated-effect studies in Table 1. Despite continuing limitations in the actual use of these more recent research methods, we conclude that convincing empirical evidence suggests that principals do affect school outcomes. The impact is, however, achieved primarily through complex indirect relationships with other external environmental forces (e.g., community) and in-school processes.
Conclusions

The bulk of research, policy and practice in education has assumed the stance that principals make an important difference in school effectiveness. Over the past 15 years, however, several respected scholars have raised questions concerning the validity of this conclusion (Bridges, 1982; Miskel, 1982; Rowan et al., 1982; van de Grift, 1990). This review was initiated in part to see whether persisting questions concerning the effects of principal leadership might be illuminated by the recent proliferation of research into this domain of educational administration.

The review yielded a number of interesting findings that derive from the interplay among methodology, theory, and results. First, we were surprised by the number of empirical investigations (over 40 studies) into principal effectiveness conducted since 1980. Given Bridges’ (1982) finding of relatively few studies of administrator effects or impact conducted in the immediately preceding period of time (1967–1980), this increase was heartening.

Moreover, the conceptual and methodological trends that emerged from the studies was equally encouraging. We observed a pattern of increasing sophistication in the research during the period under review. This enhanced our confidence in the reliability and validity of the overall findings (Hallinger & Heck, 1996a, 1996b). It also offered evidence that scholars in the field had heeded the recommendations encompassed in earlier critiques of research in this domain of educational administration (e.g., Bossert et al., 1982; Bridges, 1982; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; Leithwood et al., 1990; Murphy et al., 1983; Pitner, 1988; Rowan et al., 1982).

The general pattern of results drawn from this review supports the belief that principals exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and student achievement. While this indirect effect is relatively small, it is statistically significant, and we assert, meaningful. Moreover, the review suggests that it is possible that previously described discrepancies among research results may be explained by the conceptual and methodological tools employed by researchers. Both our own reanalysis of the Braughton and Riley (1991) study and the more general trend in which more sophisticated investigations tended to generate more findings of positive results support this hypothesis.

Despite this generally positive assessment of the literature, we must also emphasize the limitations of this body of research. Even as a group the studies do not resolve the most important theoretical and practical issues entailed in understanding the principal’s role in contributing to school effectiveness. These concern the means by which principals achieve an impact on school outcomes as well as the interplay with contextual forces that influence the exercise of school leadership.

As we suggested earlier, part of this issue is related to the unit of analysis problem (e.g., teachers, principals, individual-level or group-level) and the multilevel nature of schooling (i.e., individual children nested in classrooms, in
schools and districts). In the latter case, we provided a re-analysis of one of our studies to illustrate possible findings about leadership processes related to multi-level analyses. Thus, our assessment is that the field has made substantial progress over the past 15 years and is now equipped conceptually and methodologically to address the important substantive issues in this domain.

For example, we discovered an evolving sophistication in thinking about the principal’s role in this group of studies. This was observable in the theoretical and methodological frameworks used by researchers into principal effects. We view this as suggestive of what Kuhn (1970) described as a change in paradigms – the constellation of beliefs, values and techniques that guide scientific inquiry within a community of scholars.

During the early years of this review, 1980 to 1987, the complexity of the relationship between principal leadership and school outcomes often overmatched the conceptual and methodological tools in use by researchers. Over time, however, we noted a movement from simple to more complex models. Specially, researchers began to move from using direct effects to mediated-effects conceptualizations of the principal’s role. There was a simultaneous pattern of progress in terms of the application of increasingly robust analytic methods. Other recent literature also has begun to explore leadership as a distributed variable, not simply assuming that it resides primarily in the person or is enacted only through the behavior of the principal.

Concurrently, during this 15 year period, the question being asked by researchers shifted subtly. During the early years bounded by the review, researchers focused on answering a relatively simple question, “Do principals make a difference?” More recently, researchers have extended the bounds of this inquiry. They have sought to understand not only if principals have effects on school outcomes, but more particularly the paths through which such effects are achieved (including within- and between-school analyses).

This review revealed several paths that begin to describe the means by which principal leadership influences student learning outcomes. These included school goals, school structure and social networks, people, and organizational culture. In particular, the principal’s role in shaping the school’s direction through vision, mission and goals came through in these studies as a primary avenue of influence. While the state of this research is still evolving, these variables represent both a reasonable focus for principal practice and also for future research into school effectiveness and improvement.

Note
* The authors would like to acknowledge helpful comments offered on earlier drafts of this paper by Ken Leithwood, Edwin Bridges, Larry Cuban, Peter Hill, and George Marcoulides. It should also be noted that papers drawn from this study, though with different foci, have appeared in Educational Administration Quarterly, 32(1), 5-44, and in K. Leithwood et al. (Eds.). The International Handbook of Educational Leadership and Administration (pp. 723–784).
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EXPLORING THE PRINCIPAL’S CONTRIBUTION


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244
A survey is undertaken of the ‘paradigms’ of the academic communities of school effectiveness and school improvement researchers, practitioners and scholars. It is argued that the two ‘paradigms’ are very different, and that this has hindered the improvement of educational practice. Examples are given of programmes which are a ‘blend’ of the two different approaches, and detail is given as to how the school effectiveness and school improvement communities can meet the knowledge needs necessary for improving the quality of schooling.

Introduction

If a Martian, that value free creature so beloved of social scientists, were to visit the planet to take a look at its educational arrangements, one of the most remarkable things that would probably strike him or her about our educational research and practice would be the lack of mesh between the enterprises of ‘school effectiveness’ and ‘school improvement’. With the exception of North America which now exhibits the beginnings of links between these two disciplines or sub disciplines, in virtually all other societies around the world there are few points of intellectual or practical contact between scholars in the two fields. In addition, the take up of school effectiveness knowledge not just directly into the mechanics of school improvement programmes, but indirectly into school practice through influence upon the practitioner and policymaker communities is comparatively rare.

In this paper we outline the reasons for this overall lack of synchronisation between school effectiveness knowledge and school improvement research and practice. We survey the two communities internationally, and attempt to under-
stand the origins and distinctiveness of the different paradigms that inform and guide the two communities. Examples of fruitful intellectual and practical inter-relationships between the two bodies of knowledge, which represent in fact a distinctively new paradigm built on the foundations of the existing two, are then given. It is hypothesized that the further linking of these hitherto separate disciplines would advance our knowledge of how to generate high quality schools for our children. Crucially, we conclude by outlining what changed practice within each of the effectiveness or improvement communities could hope to contribute to satisfaction of the knowledge needs of the other.

An international survey
We should start by further examining the nature of the inter-relationships between school effectiveness research and school improvement practice internationally.

In North America, particularly within the United States, there exists perhaps the closest of the international relationships between school effectiveness and school improvement. Over half of all American school districts are currently running improvement programmes based upon, or linked to, the effective schools knowledge base (General Accounting Office, 1989; Taylor, 1990). It must be noted however that the knowledge base within the improvement programmes is likely to be of the earlier simplistic variety of ‘five factor’ theories developed by Edmonds (1979) and popularised by Lezotte (1989), rather than that more recently developed from a considerably more advanced research base by researchers like Stringfield and Teddlie (Wimpelberg et al, 1989). In addition, there are in the United States the well known demonstration projects which have involved the direct, controlled transfer of research knowledge into school improvement programmes with built-in evaluation of outcomes, which have demonstrated enhanced school effectiveness (e.g. McCormack-Larkin, 1985). In Canada likewise there are programmes which involve the utilisation of school effectiveness knowledge within school improvement programmes (Stoll and Fink, 1989, 1992), and the school effectiveness knowledge base has also penetrated many other ongoing improvement projects (see reviews in Sackney, 1985, 1989).

In spite of this evident relationship between the two bodies of knowledge at the level of practice, at the intellectual level there is less of a relationship or communality of perspective between the scholars who contribute to their respective knowledge bases. In part this may be because school improvement scholars have reacted against the simplistic nature of much North American school effectiveness literature. The emphasis has been on the generation of effective academic outcomes and on simple lists of 5, 7 or 9 ‘factors’ which were said to cause schools to be effective. There has also been the advocacy of certain school processes as being effective within the existing range of school practice, rather than the development of ideas in terms of what might be effective within a differently structured system (see Holly, 1990, for a range of American views).
Whatever the precise reasons, school improvement scholars such as Fullan, Hall, Miles, Louis and Joyce rarely base their school improvement strategies upon the work of school effectiveness researchers. Fullan (1991) for example refers to only half a dozen school effectiveness studies from the United States, only two from United Kingdom and to none from any of the other societies like Australia, the Netherlands or New Zealand in which major school effectiveness projects have been carried out. Indeed, in earlier work (e.g., Fullan, 1985) he makes explicit his emphasis on more ‘process’ orientated approaches to understanding schools as organisations. Were we to take Fullan and the other improvement writers noted above, a survey of their bibliographies suggests that only about 2 or 3 per cent of their total references are from writers commonly regarded as writing within the school effectiveness research paradigm.

Were we also to take the American school effectiveness research community and look at the nature of their references, probably only about 1 per cent of total references would relate to writers conventionally located within the paradigm of school improvement.

The situation of two separate, discrete bodies of knowledge and two separate research communities that exists in North America is in evidence in most other parts of the world; indeed in certain parts of the world the separation is even more in evidence. In the United Kingdom, there has, until recently, been little collaboration between those working within the school effectiveness and school improvement paradigms, little practitioner take up of the knowledge base of school effectiveness (Mortimore, 1991; Reynolds, 1991), little use of the research in school improvement or school development programmes (Reid et al, 1987), and little appreciation or referencing of school effectiveness material in the works of ‘school improvers’ (and vice versa).

In other parts of the world the situation is similar to that in Britain. New Zealand, for example, was the site of pioneering school effectiveness research (Ramsay et al, 1982), but there are no current signs of engagement of this knowledge base by those working within the ‘school improvement through decentralisation’ paradigm that has existed since the Picot Report in the late 1980s. The Netherlands now has perhaps the world’s most extensive research base within the field of school effectiveness (see Creemers and Scheerens, 1989), but there is no evidence of school effectiveness based school improvement programmes, nor of any penetration of school effectiveness research knowledge into schools through the development planning which is now mandatory within Dutch schools. Australia too has a small school effectiveness research base (see Chapman and Stevens, 1989), and indeed some of this knowledge has been linked to school improvement through the school self-management approach of Caldwell and Spinks (1988). But again, more developmentally-orientated material from Australia shows only limited take up of, or reliance on, school effectiveness literature. Indeed, the Australian school improvement tradition relates primarily to the literature on educational management and administration, itself notable for the absence of linkages with the school effectiveness research base.
Only in Israel internationally do we see any systematic application of school effectiveness findings in school improvement programmes (Bashi et al. 1990).

This analysis suggests that underlying these two distinctive bodies of scholarship, and the separation of the two groups of scholars, are two very distinctive intellectual traditions and histories. In the following two sections of the paper, we examine more closely the values, research and practice implicit in both approaches.

The school improvement paradigm

Approaches to school improvement have, over the past thirty years, been characterised by two very different sets of assumptions, as seen in Figure 1.

In the 1960s and 1970s school improvement in the United States, the United Kingdom and internationally displayed a number of paradigmatic characteristics associated with the empirical – analytic tradition. It was linked as an enterprise to a technologial view of school improvement, in which innovations were brought to schools from outside of them and then introduced ‘top down’. The innovations were based upon knowledge produced by persons outside the school, the focus was on the school’s formal organisation and curriculum, the outcomes were taken as given, and the innovation was targeted at the school more than the individual practitioner. The whole improvement edifice was based upon a positivistic, quantitative evaluation of effects. The worldwide failures of this model of school improvement to generate more than very partial take up by schools of the curricula or organisational innovations became an established finding within the educational discourse of the 1970s, explained widely as due to a lack of teacher ‘ownership’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1960s</th>
<th>1980s</th>
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<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>‘top down’</td>
<td>‘bottom up’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge Base</td>
<td>elite knowledge</td>
<td>practitioner knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Target</td>
<td>organisation or curriculum based</td>
<td>process based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>pupil outcome orientated</td>
<td>school process orientated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>outcomes as given</td>
<td>outcomes as problematic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>school</td>
<td>teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Methodology of Evaluation</td>
<td>quantitative</td>
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<td>Site</td>
<td>outside school</td>
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<td>Focus</td>
<td>part of school</td>
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*Figure 1* Characteristics of two school improvement paradigms.
Out of the recognition of this failure came the new improvement paradigm of the 1980s, which is still reflected in much of the writing on school improvement that is current and in evidence today. This new movement celebrated a ‘bottom up’ approach to school improvement, in which the improvement attempts are ‘owned’ by those at the school level, although outside school consultants or experts can put their knowledge forward for possible utilisation. This new approach tended to celebrate the ‘folk-lore’ or practical knowledge of practitioners rather than the knowledge base of researchers, and focussed on changes to educational processes rather than to school management, or organisational features which were regarded as reified constructs. It wanted the outcomes or goals of school improvement programmes to be debated and discussed, rather than accepted as given. Those working within this paradigm also tended to operate at the level of the practitioner rather than at the level of the school, with a qualitative and naturalistically orientated evaluation of the enterprise being preferred to quantitative measurement. The improvement attempt was ‘whole school’ orientated and school based, rather than outside school or course based (see Reynolds, 1988).

There is little doubt that the reactive nature of the new school improvement paradigm outlined above was deficient in terms of it actually generating school improvement, as some of its proponents began to realise. The process orientated ‘journey’ of school improvement was still stressed, but by the late 1980s the journey was also undertaken in order to enable schools to evaluate their processes and outcomes. This attitude was exemplified in the work of the OECD sponsored International School Improvement Project (ISIP) and the knowledge that emanated from it. School improvement was defined in the ISIP as (van Velzen et al, 1985, p.48):

a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.

In this reformulation, school improvement is about developing strategies for educational change that strengthen the school’s organisation, as well as implementing curriculum reforms in the pursuit of student achievement. This obviously implies a very different way of thinking about change than previous approaches to school improvement. The ISIP served to popularise a revised school improvement approach to educational change, and we have summarised the characteristics of so-called ISIP knowledge in Figure 2.

The school effectiveness paradigm

The school effectiveness research paradigm has, of course, a very different intellectual history and has exhibited a very different set of core beliefs concerning operationalisation, conceptualisation and measurement by comparison with the
The approach to school improvement taken by the ISIP rests on a number of assumptions:

- the school as the centre of change. This means that external reforms need to be sensitive to the situation in individual schools, rather than assuming that all schools are the same. It also implies that school improvement efforts need to adopt a ‘classroom-exceeding’ perspective, without ignoring the classroom.

- a systematic approach to change. School improvement is a carefully planned and managed process that takes place over a period of several years.

- a key focus for change are the ‘internal conditions’ of schools. These include not only the teaching-learning activities used in the school, but also the school’s procedures, role allocation, and resource use that support the teaching-learning process (in our words the school’s management arrangements).

- accomplishing educational goals more effectively. Generally speaking, educational goals are what a school is supposed to be doing for its students and society. This suggests a broader definition of outcome than student scores on achievement tests, even though for some schools these may be pre-eminent. Schools also serve the more general developmental needs of students, the professional development of teachers and the needs of its community.

- a multi-level perspective. Although the school is the centre of change it does not act alone. The school is embedded in an educational system that has to work collaboratively or symbiotically if the highest degrees of quality are to be achieved. This means that the roles of teachers, heads, governors, parents, support people (advisers, higher education consultants etc.), and local authorities should be defined, harnessed and committed to the process of school improvement.

- integrative implementation strategies. This implies a linkage between ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’; remembering of course that both approaches can apply at a number of different levels in the system. Ideally ‘top-down’ provides policy aims, an overall strategy, and operational plans; this is complemented by a ‘bottom-up’ response involving diagnosis, priority goal setting, and implementation. The former provides the framework, resources, and a menu of alternatives; the latter, energy and school based implementation.

- the drive towards institutionalisation. Change is only successful when it has become part of the natural behaviour of all those in the school. Implementation by itself is not enough.

Figure 2 A summary of ISIP knowledge (adapted from van Velzen et al, 1985, and Hopkins, 1987).

changing approaches of the school improvers. It has been strongly committed to the use of quantitative methods, since many researchers were concerned to refute the ‘schools make no difference’ hypothesis advanced by Coleman et al (1966) and Jencks et al (1971) by utilising the same conventional methods of empirical research as their perceived opponents had utilised. Many researchers have also believed that teachers, especially North American ones, would pay more attention to work conducted within the quantitative paradigm.
School effectiveness researchers have also been primarily concerned with pupil academic and social outcomes, which is not surprising given the political history of school effectiveness research in the United States, where it has grown and built on the beliefs of Ron Edmonds and his associates that ‘all children can learn’. Processes within schools only have an importance within the school effectiveness paradigm to the extent that they affect outcomes – indeed, one ‘back maps’ with the paradigm from outcomes to process. The school effectiveness paradigm furthermore regards pupil and school outcomes as fundamentally unproblematic and as given. Indeed, in much of the North American effectiveness research, only a limited range of outcomes are used, reflecting the acceptance of ‘official’ educational definitions of the school as an academic institution. School effectiveness researchers indeed often talk of a ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ school as if that were unproblematic.

Lastly, the school effectiveness paradigm is organisationally rather than process based in terms of its analytic and descriptive orientation, preferring to restrict itself to the more easily quantifiable or measurable. As an example, Fullan’s (1985) process factors such as ‘a feel for the process of leadership’ or ‘a guiding value system’, or ‘intense interaction and communication’ are largely eschewed in favour of organisationally and behaviourally orientated process variables such as ‘clear goals and high expectations’ and/or ‘parental involvement and support’. Additionally, the focus within the school improvement paradigm on the attitudinal, and on personal and group ‘inner states’, is replaced within school effectiveness research by a focus on the more easily measured behaviour of persons.

Towards a synthesis

From the outline of the history of the two paradigms above, it can be seen that the disciplines of school effectiveness and school improvement are ‘coming from’ very different places intellectually, methodologically and theoretically. A crude characterisation that contrasts both approaches is as seen in Figure 3.

As noted above, the school improvement paradigm from the early 1980s tended to react against the top down imposition of elite defined knowledge in schools towards a celebration of practitioner lore. In this reactive phase, school improvement has been very different in its orientations to the school effectiveness paradigm which began to emerge in the early to mid 1980s, with the latter’s outcome focus, its quantitative methodology, its concern to generate truthful knowledge about schools (whether practitioners agreed with it or not!) and its concerns with the reified school organisation and easily measured behaviours, rather than with the attitudes, of teachers and pupils.

There is recent evidence, as we noted above, that some of those appreciative of aspects of the school improvement tradition have realised the necessity for ‘paradigmatic change’ within that paradigm and a new, more rigorous approach to school improvement is becoming increasingly common. The Department of
Education and Science project on ‘School Development Plans’ (SDPs) in England and Wales, for example, was an attempt to develop a strategy that would, among other things, help governors, heads and teachers to take control of the process of change (see Hargreaves et al, 1989; Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991). Development planning provides a paradigmatic illustration of new type of school improvement strategy, combining as it does curriculum innovation with modifications to the school’s management arrangements, both with the overarching aim of enhancing student achievement and modifying the culture of the school (Hopkins, 1991). The work of Bruce Joyce and his colleagues (see Joyce et al, 1983, 1988, 1992) has also for some time transcended both paradigms. Although located within the school improvement tradition, Joyce argues strongly for the raising of student achievement through the utilisation of specific models of teaching and staff development designs.

Some scholars within the school effectiveness community have also argued for the interpenetration and synthesis of both bodies of knowledge in the interests of improving pupil performance and school quality. Mortimore (1991, p.223) argues for transferring ‘the energy, knowledge and skills of school effectiveness research to the study of school improvement’. Stoll and Fink (1992, p.104) maintain that ‘it is only when school effectiveness research is merged with what is known about school improvement, planned change and staff development, that schools and teachers can be empowered and supported in their
growth towards effectiveness’. Murphy (1992), himself a school effectiveness researcher who has in his own empirical work existed within the effectiveness paradigm outlined earlier, now also wants to move in directions that celebrate the potential not just of conventional school improvement programmes, but of a more radical ‘restructuring’ of the educational system, its power relations, and the teaching – learning process in schools.

In addition, elsewhere one of us has argued that school improvement attempts need to understand the complex psychological abnormality that is exhibited within ineffective schools (Reynolds, 1992), evidence of which should be taken from the effective schools literature. The mission statement of the journal *School Effectiveness and School Improvement* (Creemers and Reynolds, 1990) also argued for the still, small voice of empirical rationality being utilised to jointly assess the validity both of existing models of school improvement and the validity of our existing, simplistic, factor based theories of school effectiveness.

In all these respects, the historical divisions between school effectiveness and school improvement may be diminishing in importance, and there are currently a number of projects in their embryonic stages which show what a more integrated enterprise might look like. In the following three sections of this paper we give brief examples from our own work of possible lines of development. All three examples below represent a blend of what have hitherto been regarded as mutually exclusive orientations, theories and methodologies. All three approaches suspend existing commitments to present disciplinary purity and to the historically constructed bodies of so called ‘normal science’ and accepted practice, in favour of the adoption of an approach which is problem, pupil and school centred. All three approaches adopt not an ‘either’ ‘or’ orientation but are concerned to ensure ‘both’ school effectiveness ‘and’ school improvement are joined together in an intellectually creative and practically productive new wave of educational studies.

**Improving the Quality of Education for All**

Our first example is the ‘Improving the Quality of Education for All’ (IQEA) project at the Cambridge Institute of Education (Ainscow and Hopkins, 1992; Hopkins et al., 1993), which represents a useful blend of approaches and methods which have until now only been used exclusively in either effectiveness or improvement initiatives. It is pupil outcome orientated, involves measurement of programme success or failure at outcome level but is also concerned with the within-school study of school processes from a qualitative orientation. Although the school improvement knowledge base is used to generate and inform change strategies and professional development, there is also space for both the ‘elite’, research determined knowledge concerning school effectiveness and instructional effectiveness, and for the results of professional collaboration, reflection and education. In short, the chosen improvement strategies exhibit a blend of research and practitioner knowledge.

The project currently involves a group of twenty-five schools in a variety of
Knowledge and Improvement Practice

English Local Education Authorities. The aim is to produce and evaluate a model of school development, and a programme of support, that strengthens a school’s ability to provide quality schooling for all its students.

The key finding, from the research undertaken to date, is that school improvement works best when a clear and practical focus for development is linked to simultaneous work on the internal conditions within the school. Such school improvement efforts appear to include three elements:

* reconstructing externally imposed educational change in the form of school priorities;
* creating internal conditions that will sustain and manage change in schools;
* embedding these priorities and conditions with an overall strategy.

What is happening in these schools is that they are taking the opportunity of centrally imposed change to enhance student outcomes. They do this by strengthening the school’s organisational ability to support the work of teachers. This is done intuitively in many cases, by using a series of strategies that link classroom practice to whole school purpose. These strategies focus on the primacy of teaching and create opportunities for teachers to feel more powerful and confident about their work.

These strategies are concerned with staff development, inquiry and reflection, leadership, co-ordination and planning. Although they are summarised in Figure 4

**Staff Development:**
- staff development processes are used to support individual teacher and school development
- teachers are involved in each others teaching
- where appropriate, external consultants are used to support teacher development

**Inquiry and Reflection:**
- there is a search for increased clarity and shared meanings
- reflection and review activities are used to monitor progress and enhance the professional judgement of teachers

**Leadership:**
- staff throughout the school are encouraged to adopt leadership roles
- temporary systems or working groups are created
- individuals take on key roles in initiating change and supporting development work

**Co-ordination:**
- efforts are made to maintain momentum
- links are made between formal and informal structures
- images of success are created

**Planning:**
- planning processes are used to legitimise and co-ordinate action
- resources for school improvement are specifically allocated.

*Figure 4 Some strategies employed by schools in the IQEA Project.*
linear fashion, in reality they coalesce. On a day-to-day basis, the curriculum focus, the work on the internal conditions of the school, the various combinations of strategy, and their impact on student achievement, combine in the minds and work of teachers to present a uniform whole. It is through this holistic approach to school improvement that the schools are managing to ‘move’, to achieve quality within the context of a national reform agenda and to blend effectiveness and improvement approaches together.

**Halton’s Effective Schools Project**

A second example of fruitful cross-paradigm work is the Halton Board of Education’s Effective Schools Project in Canada (Stoll and Fink, 1992) noted earlier. This began as an attempt to bring the results of school effectiveness work done within one culture (Mortimore et al, 1988) into the schooling practices of another, but it soon became clear to the programme developers that potential difficulties involved in the implementation of the project could only be resolved by the adoption at school and system level of organisational and planning arrangements from the school improvement literature. Essentially, ‘top down’ mandates to schools to address the characteristics of effectiveness were not working because they did not engender ownership or commitment among the very people who were responsible for the day-to-day implementation and ultimate success of their improvement attempts. Furthermore, such mandates rarely paid attention to the process of change and its impact on those who were working through it.

After having conducted a thorough search of the international effectiveness literature, a task force originally came up with a model of the characteristics of school effectiveness. Through visits to school districts where change was known to have occurred successfully, and through familiarisation with the current school improvement literature, task force members became firmly convinced that improvement was more likely to occur when the school was seen as the focal point or unit of change (Fullan, 1991). A School Growth Planning Process was developed, to incorporate four stages: assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Schools were to work through these stages over at least a three-year period, rather than by means of the yearly goal-setting that traditionally occurred.

Where do the characteristics of school effectiveness fit in? Within the assessment phase, when the school is trying to get a picture of its current successes and areas for improvement, it examines Halton’s model of school effectiveness as it relates to its own context. Surveys for teachers, students and parents focus on where the respondents think the school is in relation to a set of indicators, and on how important each indicator is in order to create a more effective school. Through analysing the gap between where the school is and where it should be, the school can identify areas of need. Clearly, this is not the only information schools examine during the assessment phase; they also look at current curricula
and instructional practices, initiatives coming out of the school board and the Ontario Ministry of Education, and also a variety of information related to their students’ progress and development. In line with the emphasis on equity in school effectiveness research, schools are encouraged to disaggregate student data; that is, to look for any differences in achievement, progress or development between subsets of the population (e.g. females versus males).

It quickly became apparent to pilot schools engaged in trials of the growth planning process that this was a very different experience from traditional forms of planning. Increased staff involvement in decision-making necessitated greater understanding on the part of principals of the processes involved in working with groups. The more successful principals paid attention early on to the development of clear decision-making structures and organisational processes that would reduce later problems. In short, they built a climate within which a more dynamic and ongoing planning process could occur. More important, they spent time building a collaborative culture within the school, in which teachers felt valued, and where risk-taking was encouraged. Finally, the successful principals had a vision of where they saw their school and were able to build support for this vision without ‘blinding’ their teachers through their own charisma or zeal (Fullan, 1992). In essence, the growth planning process showed that the creation of an effective school depends on much more than the knowledge of what has been successful and effective elsewhere. Each school is unique, and as such must vary the process slightly to fit its own culture.

Further novel characteristics of this project have been the importance of the role of the school district in the process. Halton created a strategic plan that emphasises three key directions. One of these is the school growth planning process itself. The second is a focus on instruction, in recognition of the central role in the determination of school outcomes of what actually goes on in the classroom. The third direction supports the other two; that is an emphasis on staff development. Thus, the system provides a framework within which growth planning can occur, and offers support for the process. This support comes in the form of workshops for school teams on all aspects of growth planning, and for entire staffs on their chosen instructional goals (Stoll, 1992). Support is also offered through regional consultants who work with individual teachers or whole staffs, and area consultants assigned to particular schools. Thus, the school is not seen as an isolated ‘unit’ of change, but as the ‘centre’ of change (Sirotnik, 1987; Fullan, 1991).

Institutionalisation of school growth planning in Halton has resulted from the weaving together of a variety of initiatives; the development of a shared language around school effectiveness and improvement; incorporation of existing aspects of Halton’s culture, such as the teacher evaluation process, and a strong commitment to collaboration; strategic directions that acknowledge the importance of the process; and an emphasis on well co-ordinated leadership and staff development. The result of Halton’s project has been a combination of the effectiveness knowledge base about effective practices, and the improvement generated knowledge.
base about successful school-based planning and change. Simply, there has been a commitment to make the Halton schools more effective for all students through the blended application of school effectiveness and school improvement research.

*The Cardiff change agent study*

Our final example of a fruitful blending or synthesis of perspectives from what have hitherto been regarded as the traditions of school ‘effectiveness’ and school ‘improvement’ are the school improvement programmes at the University of Wales, Cardiff, in which senior personnel from schools work with University staff, engaged on the process of changing their schools.

The systematic education of school personnel within this novel school improvement programme was based upon the following principles:

- the knowledge base was both the effective schools literature and the practitioner conceptions about what makes for effective practice;
- the programme relied upon individual teachers’ motivation for professional education and upon group activity based in the schools of the participating teachers to ensure permeation within the organisation;
- the programme was located outside the school within the university, although the course was school focussed;
- the programme was ‘top down’ in its relationship to school processes (since most participants were senior managers in their schools), but was also ‘bottom up’ in that attention was given to group based techniques at school level to ensure ‘ownership’;
- the approach was ‘empirical-rational’ in the sense that the course aimed to generate rational, problem solving change agents, but also involved giving participants information about group work techniques, the social psychology of organisational life and the related psychological and psychiatric insights necessary to confront the school cultures of ineffective schools;
- the orientation was both behavioural in the sense of being concerned to change programme participants’ behaviour and the behaviour of others within schools, and was at the same time concerned with ensuring attitudinal change in the ‘deep structure’ of values and relationship in schools;
- the programme was outcome orientated but involved concern with school processes.

The results of these programmes were impressive. Over three-quarters of programme participants changed aspects of their school’s organisation, with an average of four major organisational changes per person. Over 85 per cent of these changes had survived in a six year follow-up study, and the schools that had exhibited organisational change had improved in terms of their academic and their social outcomes by comparison with a group of ‘control’ schools who were not included in the programme (fuller details are available in Reynolds, Davie and Phillips, 1989).
What can school effectiveness and school improvement do to help each other?

Our suggestion, based on the above three experiences, is that school effectiveness and improvement persons should consider suspending their commitment to distinct paradigms and investigate further the utility of putting together coalitions of what have been all too often seen as mutually exclusive approaches derived from the knowledge base of both paradigms. If the two specialties were to form closer relationships, as we have seen above, there is much evidence for believing that both can contribute greatly to the academic and practical needs of the other. To take school improvement first, school improvers need to have knowledge about those factors within schools and within classrooms that may be manipulated or changed to produce higher quality schooling: school effectiveness researchers can provide that knowledge. Correspondingly, at their simplest level, school improvement strategies provide the ultimate test for many of the theories posited within the school effectiveness research enterprise, since the potential changes in school outcomes identified by research as being linked to school processes is the way of testing whether there is a causal link between school processes and student outcomes. School improvement plans, and the strategies based upon the school effectiveness research communities’ identified characteristics, are therefore of crucial potential importance to the future health and development of school effectiveness research.

At the moment, school effectiveness researchers are failing to generate knowledge useful for, and relevant to, the school improvement enterprise. Similarly, there are a number of ways in which changed school improvement practice could facilitate the further development of school effectiveness research. In this section we make a series of suggestions about how this confluence of perspectives can be achieved.

1 There are very few studies at the level of ‘case studies’ of effective or for that matter ineffective, schools that would show the inter-relationships between school process variables and which would paint a picture for improvement practitioners of the fine grained reality of school and classroom processes. The American study of Rosenholtz (1989) and some of the recent ‘mixed methodology’ work from the Louisiana School Effectiveness Study of Stringfield and Teddlie (1990) are exceptions to this trend internationally, but even they do not get that ‘close to the action’. In Britain for example we still have no in-depth, qualitative portrait of the effective school equivalent to Louis and Miles’ (1990) *Improving the Urban High School*, which provides excellent case studies of process variables. The absence of rich case study data reduces the practitioner relevance of the effectiveness research and makes the transfer of knowledge to the improvement community (with its qualitative orientation) more difficult.

2 School effectiveness studies are very deficient at the level of ‘processes’
rather than factors, since effectiveness researchers have considerably more experience at the level of school organisational factors. School processes defined in terms of attitudes, values, relationships and climate have been largely neglected therefore, even though school improvement needs information on these factors within schools, given their centrality to the process of improvement and development.

3 School effectiveness studies customarily show a ‘snapshot’ of a school at a point in time, not an evolutionary and moving picture of a school over time, a neglect which hinders the usefulness of the knowledge for purposes of school development. School improvement needs to have ideas about how schools came to be effective (or for that matter ineffective) in order to replicate (or for that matter eradicate) the processes. This necessitates a dynamic, evolutionary, evolving and ‘change over time’ orientation within school effectiveness research.

4 Most school effectiveness studies from outside North America, particularly those from the secondary sector in Britain (e.g. Reynolds et al, 1987; Rutter et al, 1979), neglect the detailed study of the crucial variable of the principal or headteacher. Both the early British studies of school effectiveness, for example, have few ‘headteacher variables’ because the researchers had to promise their sponsoring educational authorities that they would not concentrate in detail on this area, which in the context of the professional headteacher autonomy prevailing in the 1970s and 1980s was hardly surprising. When the Rutter team later sought to translate their findings about effective school factors into their schools, it is not surprising therefore that their knowledge deficient improvement programmes failed to generate much overall improvement in educational processes or pupil outcomes (Maughan et al, 1990).

5 School effectiveness studies have tended, with perhaps the exception of work by Coleman and Larocque (1991), to neglect the importance and potential impact of other educational institutions, arrangements and layers above the level of the school. As Hopkins (1990, p.188) notes when discussing school improvement conducted within the ISIP ‘... much thought ... was given to the way in which improvement policies are established at various levels ... to the structured factors related to support, e.g. external support. ... Much of the effective schools literature appears to take such ‘meso level’ issues as unproblematic, yet the ISIP case studies suggest that this is just not so.’ School improvement needs to be informed by knowledge as to what conditions outside the level of the school are necessary to generate process and outcome improvement. School effectiveness can currently only generate knowledge about school level variables.

6 School effectiveness research, whether of North American, British or Dutch origin, tends towards the generation of lists of organisational process factors within schools that are associated with pupil outcomes, yet of course what school improvers need to know is not what ten, twenty or thirty factors may
be useful enhancers of outcomes if changed but which one or two factors should be changed. The need for change strategies that relate to a small and discrete number of factors is magnified by the need to alter those variables within schools which are the key determinants of other process variables. No school effectiveness study so far has attempted to isolate the direction and strength of the influences that link school process variables together.

7 School effectiveness research, to compound the difficulties noted above, cannot even prove conclusively which process variables are causes of school effectiveness and which effects. If we take as an example the well-established link between teachers’ high academic expectations of their pupils and their students’ good results in examinations or tests of attainment, it may be that the direction of the relationship is a positive one, or academic success may by contrast generate high expectations, since the experience of high examination passes at school level may lead to an expectation of them continuing. Alternatively, there may be interactive influences. The directionality of the relationship – crucial for the decision concerning what to target for improvement – is not established from the research base for this variable and for many other groups or pairs of variables within the school effectiveness knowledge base.

8 School effectiveness knowledge also misses the chance of satisfaction of the needs for school improvement by being thoroughly dated. Improvement schemes in the 1990s need to be based on knowledge that is generated from schools that reflects the characteristics of schools in the 1990s, not the schools of the 1970s and 1980s. At the level of what makes for effective schooling, process factors such as the assertive principal and instructional leadership which was associated with school effectiveness in the 1980s may not be associated in the same way in the 1990s, when demands for ‘ownership’ by teachers may have changed the educational cultural context. Outcomes appropriate for measurement in the 1980s, such as academic achievement or examination attainment, may not be the only outcomes appropriate to the 1990s, where new goals concerning knowledge of ‘how to learn’ or knowledge in mastering information technology may be necessary.

9 School effectiveness research has rarely been ‘fine grained’ enough to provide information that is needed for school improvement, since the variation in ‘what works’ by contexts has been a focus only of a very limited amount of recent North American work (Hallinger and Murphy, 1986; Wimpelberg et al, 1989). School improvement needs more than the notion of what works across context in the average school, and needs more than data upon the relationships between school processes and outcomes for all schools. It needs knowledge of the factors that will generate improvement in particular schools in particular socio-economic and cultural contexts. Since only a small amount of our school effectiveness data base is analysed by context, the delineation of the precise variables that school improvement...
needs to target to affect outcomes is clearly impossible at present. The needed disaggregation of samples of schools to permit the analysis of contextual variation needs, of course, to also focus on the precise organisational and process variables that may be responsible for the differential effectiveness of schools with different groups of pupils within them (Nuttall et al., 1989). Findings of differential school effects also necessitate investigations oriented towards differentiated analyses of within school factors, rather than the present concentration upon ‘common’ school process factors.

10 Many educationists often find themselves working in historically ineffective educational settings, yet the knowledge base within school effectiveness may not be necessarily easily applicable to those settings. It is probable that the ineffective school may possess variables at the level of interpersonal problems, projections, defences and the like which do not exist in the effective school. Yet the possible existence of these ‘ghosts’ or ‘shadows’ on the change process seems to be rarely considered by researchers. The knowledge required by improvers of ineffective schools is simply not found in school effectiveness research, where the good practice of effective schools is simply ‘back mapped’ onto ineffective schools, and then assumed to be sufficient to make them improve.

11 School improvement practice/research all too rarely measures the impact of changes in improvement programmes upon the outcomes of pupils or students. Part of the explanation for this may be the historical tendency of school improvement to celebrate certain styles of professional practice, because of its association with the training needs and desires of the teaching profession within schools. Another part of the explanation may be the reluctance of many within the school improvement paradigm to be explicit about what the nature of school outcomes, or the educational goals of their programmes, really are. However, the absence of data on programme effects restricts the ability of those within the school improvement tradition to help the school effectiveness research base expand, in terms of further understanding the possible causal relationships between school processes and school outcomes.

12 Those engaged on school improvement need urgently to pay attention to the implications of multi level modelling procedures for their programmes. As noted earlier, the evidence from effectiveness research that schools can have differential effects upon their pupils (Nuttall et al., 1989) and that schools effective for some groups of pupils may actually be ineffective for others, has wide ranging implications for school improvement. These results imply that improvement attempts need urgently to move away from the much vaunted ‘whole-school’ strategies towards more finely targeted programmes that may vary within the school in terms of their content, their focus and their target group. Above all, schools need to examine assessment data, whether these are academic results, attendance patterns, attitudes or any other measures of students’ progress and development, and look for variations between different
subsets of the population. By taking these differences into account, and by focussing improvement at the level of boys/girls, high ability/low ability pupils, and pupils from ethnic minorities/pupils from ‘host’ cultures, it would be possible to generate more appropriate school change strategies. This would in turn allow researchers to generate evidence about differentially effective school processes, as the effects of the change attempts were targeted within schools.

13 Besides focussing more on outcomes, school improvement researchers also need to ‘polish their independent variables’. Knowing that student achievement has increased is not much use for policy making, if we do not know why the change has occurred. Although this point is linked to the three previous ones, it specifically demands more theoretical precision from school improvers in clarifying the links in the school improvement chain, their anticipated impact, and in developing ways of measuring them.

14 School improvement research needs to refocus its activities, from an emphasis only on the school level to include the level of the classroom. A considerable volume of research now exists which suggests that teachers’ focal concerns are with the content of their curricula and the nature of their instructional practices, rather than with the wider ambit of the school. Yet many school improvement efforts neglect the primacy of instruction. By not focussing on instruction, school improvement runs the risk of manipulating variables only at the level of the school, which in most recent research explains much less of the variation in student outcomes than do those variables at the instructional or classroom level (see, for a review, Creemers, 1992).

Finally, in the spirit of collaboration that pervades this paper, we feel that practitioners should extend an invitation to school effectiveness researchers to come into their schools and jointly plan an evaluation of their improvement efforts. Greater teacher involvement in research would lead to increased credibility of the findings and to commitment to their future implementation. A breaking down of the barriers between practitioners and researchers, the transcending of boundaries between effectiveness and improvement, more accessibility in the writing and presentation of research findings and change strategies, and the creation of a mutual process of enquiry into school development will, we believe, result in a more robust knowledge base and more specific strategies for affecting practice and enhancing outcomes in our schools.

**Coda – towards a synergy**

We have described in this paper wide divergencies in the orientation, methodology and theoretical approaches of the specialisms historically known as ‘school effectiveness’ and ‘school improvement’. These differences are the result of the historical development of each group of ‘scholars’ and ‘practitioners’; with
school effectiveness researchers wishing to research within an exclusively quantitative framework and with school improvement practitioners and researchers adopting the qualitative, appreciative, developmental stance of school development. We have noted, however, some movement by members of both groups towards a blending of what had been seen as oppositional approaches. Three examples have been given of programmes which, in fact, are based upon the insights, findings and recommendations of both groups. We have continued by arguing, though, that there is much that school effectiveness researchers can do to develop the knowledge base which practitioners and school improvement programmes need to effect change in schools. We concluded that there is much that school improvement attempts can do to improve the validity and reliability (and in fact the transferability) of the school effectiveness knowledge base, by means of testing the findings of school effectiveness research, and their associated propositions, within schools in improvement programmes. We have then given 14 examples of ways in which effectiveness research and improvement practice could, if it were in each case changed, meet the needs of the ‘other’ more adequately.

Underlying all these discussions has been the implicit assumption that the intellectual and practical enterprises of ‘school improvement’ and ‘school effectiveness’ remain separate. Yet, as is evident, we feel strongly that this separation is undesirable, especially when compared with the potential benefits for knowledge and practice of an integrated, coherent and synergistic intellectual and practical enterprise concerned jointly with research and practice on school effectiveness and school improvement. It is in this spirit that we, one school effectiveness researcher and practitioner, and a school effectiveness and school improvement researcher and practitioner, have collaborated on this paper.

Note


References

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT


In the last few years the steady drip feed of change has been overtaken by a tidal wave of new initiatives: demands for higher standards, pressure for greater accountability and, in some countries, increasing prescription on what and how to teach. All of this has been advocated in the interest of improving schooling and preparing pupils for the future. The imperative of change cannot be denied and pupils at schools today are already living in a very different world from the one which their teachers and parents inhabited – experiencing changes to the working day and week, changes in the nature of access to information, changes in the structure of families and in their communities. Yet, despite the turbulence around them, schools have remained remarkably unchanged over the years.

As we know from more than 20 years of school effectiveness research, schools can make an important difference to pupil attainment and, consequently, to their continued formal education beyond school. We also know from studies of school improvement that some schools have been extremely successful in their attempts at improvement. However, as we discuss in Chapter 1, few studies have looked at schools that were less successful. This is, perhaps, underpinned by the belief that ‘good practice’ is the source of better practice, and we can learn more from other people’s success stories than from their failures. In the mid- and late 1990s, however, two particularly striking phenomena have become apparent. The first is the increase in the number of ‘designer’ programmes for improvement (for example, the New American Schools designs; Stringfield et al. 1996). Schools in many areas are strongly encouraged to ‘sign up’, and in some places virtually instructed, to participate in a preferred programme. Given that many of the well-known design programmes have been piloted and evaluated, it may seem like carping to question whether schools should become involved in them, but the problem is that even when a programme has been evaluated and has ‘passed the test’, there are always schools for whom ‘the pill
didn’t work’. When it comes to wider dissemination, less successful pilot schools are usually forgotten and insufficient attention is paid to determining whether the right programme has been selected by, or for, a school. Indeed, schools do not always know their needs, nor how to choose the most appropriate design (Datnow 1998). This is where the second phenomenon comes in – contextual differences between schools and their implications for school improvement.

In the 1980s and early 1990s a small number of school effectiveness studies examined contextual differences between schools. They found, for example, that leadership strategies in effective schools serving areas of greater advantage are different from those in effective schools serving disadvantaged areas (Hallinger and Murphy 1986; Teddlie and Stringfield 1993). Yet, in some countries, we still appear to be doing what House warned against more than a quarter of a century ago:

Avoid the primary pursuit of transferable innovations. Distributed problems cannot be solved by a single innovation that will work in all local settings, for those settings are not only different and unpredictable in specifics, but they are also constantly changing . . . Different innovations will be more or less useful under widely different specific circumstances of their application. There is no Golden Fleece.

(1973: 245)

House concluded that behaviour is determined more by the ‘complex nature of the school as a social system’ (p. 235) than by staff development in which new teaching strategies are demonstrated. While there has been increasing disquiet about a one-size-fits-all school improvement strategy, it is only recently that researchers have looked at different types of schools and tried to follow through the implications of different school improvement strategies. It appears that different change strategies, leadership styles and communication networks may be required to effect change (Stoll and Fink 1996; Hopkins and Harris 1997; Gray et al. 1999). Furthermore, it seems that while some schools seem to embrace opportunities offered by change, whether it is externally prescribed or internally inspired, others do not even appear able to get off the starting-block. Others still get started then run out of steam shortly afterwards. In revisiting the Rand Change Agent Study of the 1970s in the United States, McLaughlin concluded that ‘the net return to the general investment was the adoption of many innovations, the successful implementation of a few, and the long-run continuation of still fewer’ (1990: 12).

**Internal capacity and its influences**

While most would agree that the ultimate goal of school improvement is preparing pupils to deal with the changing world, Fullan (1993) adds a sharper edge to
that with his claim that ‘the secret of growth and development is learning how to contend with the forces of change’ (p.vii). Our own work leads us to a similar conclusion: that the learning opportunities for generations of pupils are determined by the extent to which their schools are themselves able to learn and grow. Successful schools are, therefore, those which provide conditions for their pupils to learn more successfully, and our explorations have led us to conclude that vital clues lie in the school’s internal capacity.

While other writers have described sets of improvement-related capacities, we see it as a more generic concept. ‘Internal capacity is the power to engage in and sustain continuous learning of teachers and the school itself for the purpose of enhancing pupil learning’ (Stoll 1999). Determining internal capacity and readiness for change is therefore vitally important for internal and external change agents (Fullan 1993).

Our involvement in ISEP from 1995 to 1997 (Stoll and MacBeath 1997; Robertson 1998a) provided us with an opportunity to investigate schools’ initial capacity for change and its relationship with later capacity and links with pupil outcome data.

Two schools

In this chapter we focus our attention on two primary schools and what they can tell us about internal capacity and its relationship to school improvement and effectiveness. In these two schools interviews were carried out in 1995 with the headteacher, a teacher with responsibility for staff development, an experienced and an inexperienced teacher, as well as with groups of pupils in P2 and P6. The headteacher was also interviewed in 1995 and 1997, together with a colleague, about the strategy and process of a specific development in the last few years. Teacher questionnaires were distributed to all staff at the start and end of the project. In addition, a group of staff were taken through a ‘change profile’ (see Chapter 9) in which they individually rated their school against 10 items and then came together to agree on a joint rating. This formed the basis of a discussion with the critical friend and researcher, both of whom also completed the change profile. An ‘ethos observation’ form was completed by the researcher and critical friend at the end of data collection periods; the critical friend completed notes on each visit; and a ‘support review’ form was completed at the end of the project, eliciting schools’ perceptions of support provided by critical friends.1

The two schools, in different parts of Scotland, serve similar deprived areas. Both performed poorly in terms of their raw score results in the English and mathematics tests in the baseline project assessments in 1995 (see Table 1).

Glendale primary school

Located in a ‘battleship grey’ concrete building, likened by the headteacher to ‘a fortress’ and by the pupils to ‘a prison’, this 330-pupil primary school was once
a secondary school. Project team members found it hard to get into the school because of locked doors and, once inside, found it hard to see out of windows. Long corridors made it difficult to move from one part of the school to another. While the school was clean and well kept, there was a feeling of sterility, and wall displays were hard to maintain because of vandalism. The infant (P1–P3) and junior (P4–P7) departments were separated physically, with two different staffrooms, echoed in the way staff in the two departments spoke about the school. The school served an area of extreme disadvantage, with 61 per cent of its pupils eligible for free school meals. Drug problems and violence were also rife in the locality.

The headteacher had been in post for nine years at the start of the project. Her senior management team (SMT) consisted of a new depute head (DHT) and an assistant headteacher (AHT), a dominant force in the school for the last 17 years. There were 17 teachers on the staff at the start of the project, but by 1997 this number had dropped to 15. The school's chosen focus for the project was increasing parental involvement in learning.

Interviews at this school were difficult. The assistant head would not consent to the interview being recorded, and asked, 'Why are you doing this project?' Another staff member, a smoker, blew smoke in the interviewer’s face. It seemed that every visit from the critical friend coincided with an emergency. Meetings were cut short and the critical friend was left waiting for long periods while crises were being averted or sorted out. On one visit a fire engine was called because a boy’s head was stuck in the railings outside the school. With constant disruption as a backdrop, it was hard to get staff to focus on sustained development activities. They were on the defence and both critical friend and researcher found it difficult to create a positive climate for discussion of the issues the school was facing.

By contrast, pupil interviews were open and friendly. However, much of their discussion accepted the inevitability of violence in the playground and pupils saw shouting by teachers as a natural response to disruptive pupils’ behaviour. Pupils appreciated their teachers and saw them as there to help them. Nevertheless, despite generally positive pupil feedback in this first round of data collection, staff were unwilling to accept the negatives, some even claiming that pupils were ‘liars’. Teachers’ own responses to the questionnaire showed that Glendale was one of the four lowest scoring schools on the items that made up Factor 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maths %</th>
<th>Reading %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glendale</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Aubrey’s</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All ISEP primaries</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>55.1</td>
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items related to pupils’ respect for teachers, pupil and parental clarity about behaviour standards, and prompt action to deal with disruption in classes.²

At the end of the project, Glendale pupils’ raw scores were still very low: contextualized value-added analysis showed some positive growth (not significant) in the area of maths but negative movement (not significant) in the English assessments. In terms of attitudes, the value-added analyses showed positive, although not significant, progress on self-rated perceptions of behaviour, engagement and pupil culture, and negative (not significant) ratings on self-efficacy. It was, therefore, a school that performed poorly at the start and the finish of the project.

St Aubrey’s

This school is situated in the east end of a large city in one of the most disadvantaged parts of Scotland and, indeed, Europe. The housing is mainly from the immediate pre- and postwar period and the local area is renowned for its drug and alcohol problems. Many children came from broken homes, with many young mothers and fourth generation unemployment. With 80 per cent of its pupils eligible for free school meals, St Aubrey’s was the most deprived of the 24 case study schools.

The school is a one-storey building at the end of a long road, butting on to derelict land. Despite its bleak exterior, the entrance and reception area are welcoming, as are interior decorations for the most part, giving it a ‘homely’ and ‘well cared-for’ feel, noted by a member of the research team as ‘a quality indicator in this school’. Litter monitors keep the playground tidy and ‘the school is spotless and a credit to the cleaning staff’. Six years ago, the school was burnt down in a suspected arson attack. While the plant was being rebuilt, the school moved in to the local secondary school. From all accounts, the fire proved a defining moment for the school, with everyone – staff, the local community and the local authority – pulling together to help the school through the crisis.

The school’s denomination is Roman Catholic, and a strong consciousness of its pastoral, moral and spiritual role was shared by all staff. At the start of the project the headteacher had been at the school for 16 years, six of them as AHT and 10 as headteacher. She was an imposing physical and emotional presence, and appeared deeply conscious of her role as an educational leader.

The baseline data-gathering experience was very positive, with researcher and critical friend being welcomed into the school. While pupil attainment levels were low and the school was ranked seventh out of 12 case study primary schools in terms of pupil questionnaire results, it was ranked first on both teacher and parent survey results. Indeed, on all three teacher questionnaire factors, the school scored in the top six or seven of all 44 primary schools, with 85 per cent or more of the teachers agreeing with 40 of the 54 items (for the primary teacher sample as a whole this was only true of 10 items). The school was welcoming of the feedback from the baseline data-gathering exercise. Its chosen project was language development and, in particular, functional writing.
The Change Equation

Over the period of the project, the school became increasingly critical of tests being used to determine school effectiveness because of the perceived irrelevance of these assessments, although the concept of value-added continued to appeal to and intrigue the staff. They were disappointed when, due to a change in critical friend, the support they received was oriented more towards the process of change rather than specific help with functional writing. They maintained their involvement throughout, however, and the head, while critical of the tests being used, nonetheless expressed herself as ‘really looking forward to the results’.

At the end of the project, St Aubrey’s pupils’ raw scores were still very low: contextualized value-added analysis showed some positive growth (not significant) in the area of maths but negative movement (not significant) in the English assessments. In terms of attitudes, the value-added analyses showed significantly positive progress on self-ratings of self-efficacy and positive, although not significant, progress on self-rated perceptions of behaviour, engagement and pupil culture.

Comparing outcomes and improvement

At the end of the project, when the pupil assessments and attitude questionnaires were repeated, neither of these two schools made significant gains in pupil attainment, but in relation to pupil attitudes St Aubrey’s showed a significant boost in pupils’ self-esteem. This result is particularly interesting, because only two of 44 primary schools added value to their pupils’ attitudes in this area. Given that as pupils grow older their attitudes tend to become less favourable (MacBeath et al. 1998), this is an important result. In addition, the headteacher had argued passionately at the start of the project that the most important thing the school was trying to achieve was ‘to make children feel valued; to build their self-esteem’. Another teacher at the school said, ‘When ISEP tries to take a snapshot of a class at a certain time there is no magic wand we can wave to make these children’s lives better which in turn would affect their learning. Firstly we have to boost their self-esteem.’ It appeared that what they had set out to do had been achieved. The results in these two very different schools, both starting from such adversity, raise the question ‘capacity for what?’ Are the outcomes selected by many school effectiveness projects, and by governments and state departments, the appropriate outcomes for all schools? If so, should pupils in all schools be expected to achieve them over the same time period?

Given that the project had dual foci – to look at effectiveness and improvement – the research team decided from the outset to analyse the qualitative data and teacher questionnaire data separately from the pupil outcome data, so that improvement could be viewed from different perspectives. After the initial data collection, a variety of techniques were used to examine separate pieces of qualitative evidence, together with survey data, in order to inform predictions about possibilities and directions of improvement (Robertson and Sammons...
1997a). Schools were rated on a five-point scale based on their perceived potential for improvement, as well as their approach to school development planning (Reeves and MacGilchrist 1997):

1 = no likelihood of improvement  
2 = little likelihood of improvement  
3 = on present evidence it is very difficult to tell whether there will be any improvements in this school  
4 = considerable likelihood of improvement  
5 = every likelihood of improvement

On the basis of available evidence, Glendale was assigned a score of 1 and St Aubrey’s a score of 4.

Thirty-five subthemes had been revealed in the analysis of the initial teacher interviews. Each subtheme was associated with one or more of the main project themes – ethos; learning and teaching; and development planning. At this stage, the evidence spoke so strongly about the importance of leadership that this became a new central theme of the project.

In 1997, each fragment of evidence from the data gathering at the end of the project was coded against each of these subthemes and rated on three scales in terms of what it revealed about the current quality of the school and about its potential for improvement. A five-point scale was used (from –2 to +2) to take account of the negative or positive contribution of each cluster of evidence. Ratings were cross-checked. A database was created to hold this categorical information (Robertson 1998a). Each school could therefore have a report based on the main themes and subthemes of the project, with associated scores for current quality, potential for improvement and improvement perceived by the respondents.

Across the 12 case study primary schools, the range of ‘ethos’ values derived from teacher interviews was from –23 to +32. In Glendale, it was possible to see from database reporting that the major negative components of the score were:

- pupil behaviour and discipline;
- teacher responses to challenges in the socio-economic circumstances of pupils;
- pupil–pupil relationships;
- pupil self-esteem and self-efficacy;
- parent liaison and involvement.

In contrast, in St Aubrey’s, the major components of the relatively high ‘ethos score’ were:

- perceptions of teacher expectations of pupils;
- teacher morale and engagement with the school;
THE CHANGE EQUATION

- teacher responses to challenges in the socio-economic circumstances of pupils;
- the influence of historical events on present activity;
- pupil relationships with teachers.

Tables 2, 3 and 4 show an example of categorization and scoring of the teacher interviews on the three scales.

### Table 2 Current quality (1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethos</th>
<th>Glendale</th>
<th>St Aubrey’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>−39</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development planning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and teaching</td>
<td>−2</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>−10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>−48</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note*
See Chapter 6 for an explanation of current quality score.

### Table 3 Potential for improvement (1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethos</th>
<th>Glendale</th>
<th>St Aubrey’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>−23</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development planning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and teaching</td>
<td>−3</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>−10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>−33</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note*
See Chapter 6 for an explanation of current quality score.

### Table 4 Perceived improvement (1997)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethos</th>
<th>Glendale</th>
<th>St Aubrey’s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development planning</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and teaching</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>−13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note*
See Chapter 6 for an explanation of current quality score.
Figures in these tables suggest that while initial indications of potential for improvement may not differentiate between the two schools in terms of their final pupil attainments as measured by mathematics and English tests, strong differences exist in relation to processes and themes of improvement. Not only is St Aubrey’s rated as far exceeding Glendale in terms of its current quality (Table 2) and its own teachers’ perceptions of their school’s improvement (Table 4) but the research team anticipates further potential for improvement (Table 3). One question this raises is whether, with a little more time, gains in pupil outcomes might be observed. It has also led us to consider how we might further explore schools’ internal capacity for improvement.

A model of influences on internal capacity

Many of the contrasting features analysed in these two schools are illustrative of features of a model of influences on schools’ internal capacity (Stoll 1999). Internal capacity is influenced by the individual teachers within the school, the school’s social and structural learning context, and the external context (see Figure 1). In Figure 1, the school is depicted by an amoeba-like shape. This emphasizes the dynamic and adaptive nature of schools; in many ways they could be seen as organisms (Morgan 1996). The breaks in the lines indicate that

Figure 1 The influences on internal capacity (source: Stoll (1999)).
influences at each level (individual, school and external context) are not discrete and self-contained: rather, they blend in complex ways to create different patterns of relationships.

The nature of ISEP did not permit detailed analysis at the level of the individual teacher. For the purposes of this chapter, therefore, we have restricted ourselves to examining the school and external levels, although we acknowledge, as the model does, that individual teachers as learners influence the school’s learning context, and are given their place right at the centre of school change. Eight interacting influences are particularly important to the teacher’s capacity to engage in and sustain continuous learning: life and career experience; beliefs; emotional well-being; knowledge; skills; motivation to learn; confidence that (s)he can make a real difference; and sense of interdependence (Stoll 1999). From these schools’ accounts, it is clear that if significant change was going to occur it would have to have an impact on people’s belief systems, their sense of interdependence, and the confidence that working together they really could make a difference to the lives of these children, however deprived their community. The particular focus of the interviews, however, generally emphasized school-level and external influences, rather than individual teacher influences, and the remainder of this chapter will focus on those two levels, although the following example is worthy of comment at teacher level.

‘Can do’ beliefs at St Aubrey’s came through clearly from everyone interviewed. In one teacher’s criticism of the Quality Assurance inspection of her school recently, she commented:

‘We want the best, but we have to give children tasks they can achieve, an appropriate curriculum. One of our problems with QA was that they came into the school and saw well-mannered children, speaking politely and they thought we weren’t pushing them enough. They didn’t realize that our children can’t take a lot of pressure. They are vulnerable and they have to be able to cope with what they are doing so you can praise them. It doesn’t mean that you don’t push them further the next time.’

She added emphatically: ‘If they are going to learn ... they will learn here’. Another colleague displayed the same firm beliefs: ‘Everyone wants the children to achieve great things’, and 86 per cent of the teachers at St Aubrey’s felt that ‘teachers in school believe all pupils can be successful’ (in comparison with 60 per cent for the whole primary teacher sample).

The school learning context

Teachers as learners do not operate in isolation. Their experiences, emotions, knowledge, skills, motivation, confidence and interdependence interact with the

277
learning context in which they are located (as the spaces in the model outline denote). This context, the other fundamental part of a school’s internal capacity, is influenced by a set of social forces:

**The particular mix of pupils**

Size and age of the pupil body; their ethnic, social class or cultural background; whether they are all girls, all boys or a mixed group; whether they are of a particular religious denomination; and the number with special educational needs all play a role. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) note:

> Contemporary pupils bring different cultures and languages to school, different attitudes and support to the classroom and learning. They themselves are required to navigate difficult and competing pressures of family, peers, and community at the same time that they are expected to function as pupils.

(1993: 6)

The social mix of the school influences a school’s functioning, largely because of the cumulative effect of the peer group processes: how pupils relate and act as a group (Thrupp 1999). Thus, the very pupils who attend a school flavour it in a particular way through their own pupil culture.

In St Aubrey’s one teacher described pupils as: ‘friendly, loveable. They can be difficult. They take a lot of teaching but they respond well. They are well behaved in the classroom.’ Another explained: ‘On the whole they are very caring. They are streetwise; they possess knowledge outwith that of the teacher, but lack maturity. They behave well in the classroom, less well in the playground.’ She also noted they ‘can’t take pressure. If you “push on” and “up” the pace, then they complain of illness.’ One respondent described some of the children’s home lives as ‘emotional turmoil’, saying they were often exhausted when they arrived or ‘have so many things on their mind that reading and number work is very hard’. Researchers’ field notes and teacher interviews confirmed that pupils’ language outside the classroom was different from that inside. A researcher also commented that sometimes there was a feeling that aggression was being kept in check, and could explode if supervision was withdrawn. In contrast, however, she observed an unattended class of pupils working quietly.

Glendale staff appeared to view their pupils very differently. In the staff survey, no teacher agreed with the statement ‘pupils in this school are enthusiastic about learning’ (compared with 65 per cent for primary teachers in all project schools), and only 30 per cent thought that ‘pupils respect teachers’ (compared with 68 per cent for all project teachers). The headteacher felt most children were reasonably well behaved and motivated but noted that higher than average numbers of slow, poor learners and more children with social and behavioural problems affected the
peer group as well as themselves: ‘Much time is given to the aggressive, disruptive children.’ The assistant head felt there were split priorities in the school: ‘You are not able to do your job because of the concentration on discipline and the amount of time you have to spend on it.’ She also believed: ‘The children are out of control.’ This contrasts with the view of a new teacher who found the pupils ‘mannerly and courteous’. This split of opinion was characteristic of many responses to interview questions and tells us that the situations teachers describe are ones which they may also be creating.

**Relationships**

Working together productively in schools depends on positive relationships. When teachers come together as a whole staff or in departments, a dynamic of relationships is created. In some ways, successful schools share many attributes of caring families (Stoll and Fink 1996), but in some relationships are dysfunctional (Reynolds and Farrell 1996), severely inhibiting capacity for improvement. Such difficulties are picked up quickly, for example, by this new teacher in Glendale: ‘I was aware straight away about ripples between the staff.’ The relationship between the headteacher and assistant head in Glendale could be described as strained. An outside observer noted: ‘The assistant head is an obstacle to every good thing happening in the school’, while the head merely commented, ‘We agree to differ.’

At St Aubrey’s, relationships between teachers were described in researchers’ ethos observation forms as supportive: ‘A good team spirit is a feature. Staff talk about the school as a family . . . staff also respect each other’s strengths.’ Communications and relationships were viewed by staff interviewed as a strength: ‘People are willing to share and discuss problems’; ‘Staff are very caring.’ Researchers also commented on the apparent high staff morale, displaying ‘a positive attitude towards work and helping the pupils. All staff appear to work beyond normal school hours’ and were ‘united by care for their pupils’.

**Morale**

While morale is often associated with external conditions, it can vary from school to school (Evans 1998). Satisfaction and morale is higher in some schools than in others. Stark contrasts were seen between the two schools, when we compared teachers’ reactions to the questionnaire item ‘Teachers like working in this school.’ In St Aubrey’s, 100 per cent agreed with the statement, while in Glendale, only 13 per cent agreed (with an agreement rate of 76 per cent across the total primary teacher sample). Moreover, in 1997 almost a third of Glendale teachers (30 per cent) felt that the school had got worse ‘as a place to be’ over the previous two years, in comparison with none of the St Aubrey’s teachers (and 11 per cent across the entire primary teacher sample).
History

Schools, like other organizations, go through life cycles (Schein 1985). During some periods they are ‘ripe for improvement’. At other times there may be institutional ‘inertia’, often dependent on the staff at the time, the leadership, and whether previous efforts at innovation have been successful or otherwise. Some schools may have experienced a significant event – an amalgamation, threatened closure, or a fire. In others, teacher mobility is high or they have a history of appointing large numbers of recently qualified teachers. Over the years, certain schools also build particular traditions and reputations. All these can influence internal capacity.

History appears to have been significant for St Aubrey’s, the fire exerting both positive and negative effects but, on balance, the positive outweighed the negative. While there was clearly devastation at the loss of resources built up by teachers over the years, there was an immediate marshalling of significant support from the local authority, new resources, and ‘rallying around’ of staff as a single unit in the aftermath of the event. This was achieved in the face of loss of pupils’ work into which they had put much effort, upheaval involved in relocation into temporary accommodation, and immediate effect on staff morale. Relocation in part of the local high school also helped to build new connections. Perhaps something symbolic in the fire marked the end of the old and the beginning of the new. Added to this, the following year the school received a Curriculum Award in London. It had promoted great pride among teachers and parents, and had provided an important boost after the fire tragedy. Threat of closure prior to the fire had also seen mobilization of parental support, and closure was happily averted.

Specific historical events did not appear to have played a major role at Glen-dale, although staff changes seemed significant, with some new teachers attempting to introduce changes and bring together a split staff. Notably, the depute head, new just before the start of the project, tried to bring in team teaching, although by the end of the project, researchers noted that she seemed to have given up, and was looking to move to another school.

Culture

Improvement attempts that do not address school culture can be seen as ‘doomed to tinkering’ (Fullan 1993) because school culture influences readiness for change. The essence of a school’s culture is the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs shared by members, operating unconsciously, and defining the organization’s view of itself and its environment (Schein 1995). Each school has a different reality of school life, how to go about its work, and its orientation to learning. The views of teachers in the two schools highlight differences in expectations. In Glendale, when asked about the most significant factors affecting pupils’ ability to learn, replies included: ‘Home background,
deprivation, parental views on education. Often survival is more important than taking on board educational opportunities’, and: ‘Some children are never going to achieve very much.’ An aura of powerlessness was emitted, a feeling that it was impossible to overcome the forces ranged against the school, most notably social factors and deprivation. Feedback of data was resisted and the increased accountability that the school was facing was viewed as creating ‘quite a burden’. While each person interviewed offered a broadly similar vision of what the school was trying to achieve (‘a good, wide education’), their perceptions of how this might be achieved, and barriers to achieving it, varied.

In contrast, in St Aubrey’s, a teacher commented: ‘. . . there are no limitations. You can come in this door and the world is your oyster . . . the children will be encouraged. Nothing is holding us back’, while another told of how ‘the school is always trying to better itself’. The headteacher was clear: ‘Children come first . . . Pupils expect to be taught and taught appropriately and stretched.’ This was reinforced by all teachers interviewed, including a new member of staff, who felt the most important thing she was trying to achieve was: ‘To take the child from where they were when I got them and to take them forward . . . I try to build confidence.’ And when she was asked what she expected from teaching, she replied: ‘A feeling that I am doing something for every child in my class. Not only knowledge, but standards.’

St Aubrey’s also displayed norms of continuous improvement and collegiality (Rosenholtz 1989; Stoll and Fink 1996). The headteacher remarked: ‘Learning and teaching is part and parcel of the conversation of this school’, confirmed by 100 per cent agreement to the teacher survey item ‘teachers regularly discuss ways of improving pupils’ learning’ (compared with 74 per cent for the primary teacher sample as a whole), 93 per cent agreement to ‘teachers regularly collaborate to plan their teaching’ (57 per cent for the primary sample), and 100 per cent agreement to ‘staff have a commitment to the whole school and not just their class or department’ (72 per cent for the primary sample). Teachers told interviewers people were willing to share and discuss problems; a new teacher found teachers planned in pairs: ‘You bounce things off each other . . . I find that excellent.’ The school had also chosen to participate in the project for feedback on how it was progressing and a ‘fresh’ perspective on the school.

Micro politics

Schools are full of internal politics (Ball 1987); they are places in which control is a key issue. Teachers make strategic decisions daily as to what is ideal and possible in their context. Some are ambitious, some want to influence school decisions, others want to be left alone. Some schools, however, promote positive politics (Blase 1988), such that natural political activities of staff contribute to school goals.

The two staffrooms at Glendale symbolized the rift between the staff. In the assistant head’s opinion: ‘The smokers were thrown out, and this has caused a
split in the staff.’ Teacher responses to the survey highlighted disagreements. Only 36 per cent thought ‘decision-making processes are fair’ (in comparison with 62 per cent for the whole sample), and even fewer (29 per cent) that ‘staff participate in important decision making’ (compared with 59 per cent for the whole sample). The staff development coordinator, new to the school, mused, ‘Where there has been consultation with staff, I do not know how deep it has gone.’

In contrast, at St Aubrey’s teachers felt their opinions mattered and they were encouraged to give their views on school policies. The headteacher commented there was so much ongoing talk in the staffroom about issues that, once a decision had to be made in a meeting, there was seldom disagreement and if there was, ‘we disagree without falling out’. She reflected back on what the school had been like when she arrived. The previous headteacher ‘did divide and rule. One set would be cast up to the other. There has been a major shift, but it took a long time. Everyone is now treated with mutual respect and we can talk to each other. The community now knows that this is what the school stands for.’ Indeed, all teachers agreed with the survey item ‘there is mutual respect between the staff and the senior management team’, while 87 per cent agreed that ‘decision-making processes are fair’ and ‘staff participate in important decision making’ (the remaining 13 per cent were uncertain). The several new staff at St Aubrey’s were viewed as bringing a counterbalancing influence, as exemplified in a comment by a teacher at the school for 16 years: ‘New people bring new outlooks, yet we have stability with the head and deputy head.’

Support staff

Support staff can play a significant role in the lives of a school. Many live in the local area and are connected to the local community. Their involvement and interest in the school as a whole, and the ways in which they facilitate learning, are all potential influences on a school’s internal capacity (Mortimore et al. 1992). Support staff in both schools were viewed as friendly by the research team on their initial visit. Those at St Aubrey’s were also perceived as particularly helpful. In this school, all of the teachers agreed that ‘non-teaching staff feel involved in the life of the school’ (compared with 76 per cent for the entire primary teacher sample). The head, reflecting on what she described as a participative management style, observed: ‘The buck does stop here, but I do not see myself being separate in any way from any of the staff. From the cleaner right up we are all in this together and everybody’s role is important.’

In Glendale, only half of the teachers thought ‘non-teaching staff feel involved in the life of the school’; the other half were unsure, and the role and participation of support staff was not discussed by any teachers interviewed.
Structures

Schools are bounded by structures that can shape their capacity to learn and respond to change. For example, traditional egg carton, compartmentalized school designs inhibit collaboration, whereas more flexible architectural designs are more likely to support collaborative cultures. The size of the school and classes within it, the physical plant, and how the school day is divided are other examples of structural aspects of a school’s capacity. These types of structure could be viewed as ‘givens’, over which staff members may have limited if any control (Mortimore et al. 1988), but even within such structures decisions can be made concerning location of different departments or classes. While structural conditions appear to be less powerful influences on developing school-based professional communities than social conditions (Louis et al. 1995), they can influence internal capacity.

Glendale staff’s descriptions of their school building were stark: ‘The outside . . . was horrific looking’; ‘One of the things that struck me to begin with was that there was not that welcoming atmosphere about the school. It is badly sign-posted and I think the building has lost its humph: when you enter a department it should meet you and I don’t think ours does.’ Glendale parents, while generally positive about the school in survey responses, were less impressed than other parents that ‘school buildings are kept clean and in good order’ (37 per cent disagreed, versus 7 per cent for the total primary parent sample).

In St Aubrey’s, by contrast, bright and interesting displays of pupils’ work adorned the walls. The rebuilding after the fire enabled minor adaptations: ‘This improved the educational environment of the school, for example resource areas and storage facilities’, and gave ‘a facelift’ providing ‘a welcoming atmosphere’. The school is open plan and, in the headteacher’s words, this ‘forces cooperation. It can be threatening, but it also provides support. Teachers watch and learn from each other.’ A new teacher agreed: ‘I was glad to have come in to an open plan school. I like people being able to move in and out of my class.’ It had also been arranged for everyone to get together each morning from 8.30 until 9.00 for consultation and planning sessions.

Leadership

Countless studies have found positive leadership to be a powerful force for school effectiveness, school improvement and organizational learning (for example, Hallinger and Heck 1996; MacBeath 1998; Mortimore 1998; Leithwood et al. 1999). St Aubrey’s leaders appeared to present a picture of clarity about their vision and focus. In both 1995 and 1997, all teachers agreed that ‘the SMT communicates a clear vision of where the school is going’, and 93 per cent and 100 per cent respectively (in 1995 and 1997) agreed that ‘the primary concern of everyone in the school is pupil learning’. There was also a high level of satisfaction with what one teacher described as the school’s ‘open
management’. When asked about her headteacher’s leadership and management, a teacher responded: ‘Superb. She knows everything that goes on. She knows the curriculum, the children, the staff inside out, she picks up on your attributes. She brings out the best in everybody. She knows how her school wants to be.’ The head was extremely clear about her role: ‘I know what I want and I will get it.’ She acknowledged she was occasionally manipulative or devious but this was done ‘with good humour and also with respect for teachers’, whom she believed often knew much more than she did about classroom practice. She, therefore, viewed criticism as inappropriate. Others saw her as leading by example, and some explained how in the previous two years a larger senior management team (SMT) had evolved as she had brought in new people to work with her. While the SMT was seen as making a lot of the decisions, everyone felt they were consulted. Hiring decisions were also viewed by the head as critical, so the school could ‘capitalize on what they brought with them’. In contrast, a teacher in Glendale commented: ‘I would describe the management style as autocratic to a certain extent and not approachable enough.’ Results of the teacher questionnaires in both 1995 and 1997 showed teachers responding negatively to many items within the leadership and management factor. In 1995 the school was one of the four lowest scoring primary schools on this factor, and one of the six lowest scoring schools in 1997. Furthermore, when asked about change in leadership and management in the school over the previous two years, 30 per cent of the teachers felt it had become worse (compared with 9 per cent for the total primary teacher sample).

External contextual influences on internal capacity

While the school’s capacity and its readiness or orientation for change is internally driven, the external contextual influences on a school’s internal capacity cannot be ignored. Central among these are the following.

The local community

Schools are located in and serve very different communities. School effectiveness researchers have consistently demonstrated the impact of pupils’ background characteristics on their school achievement. Parental expectations and aspirations may also vary according to location and type of school. The demography of a school’s community can not only affect attainment outcomes but a school’s internal capacity for improvement. Disadvantage, however, does not automatically inhibit its internal capacity. Schools in disadvantaged areas can boost their pupils’ progress more than those in advantaged areas as our own study and previous research (Mortimore et al. 1988) has shown.

Both in Glendale and in St Aubrey’s, pupils brought with them into the school their experience of multiple disadvantage – a key factor affecting school ethos, pedagogy, management style, pupil–teacher relationships and relation-
ships between home and school. While social background factors are key con-straining influences on overall school attainment, they do not diminish the school’s internal capacity nor need they necessarily inhibit the process of sus-
tainable improvement. It need not imply that the teachers cannot prepare their pupils for challenges they will face in the changing world beyond the school gate. Comments of teachers in the two different schools, however, reveal significant differences in how they viewed their local communities and their impact. At Glendale, the community’s influence was described as the main limi-
tation of the school: ‘The community influence anything we try to do.’ More than a third of the parents responding to the survey (37 per cent) disagreed that ‘the school has a good reputation in the community’, significantly more critical than ISEP primary parents as a whole (6 per cent).

Although the St Aubrey’s catchment area was similar to Glendale’s, and the academic starting point of its pupil intake generally 18 months below the average (‘colours, number, recognition of shape cannot be taken for granted’), parents were seen as a strength: ‘They are loyal and supportive’, and teachers commented that the headteacher ‘knows them as a friend’. The head explained how it was necessary to offer a very safe and caring environment, for parents as well as pupils: ‘A lot of the parents, if it is a first child coming to the school, come to us with the baggage of their own experiences of school and they do not always have pleasant experiences.’

The broader community

The broader community can include many different groups. Universities’ and businesses’ requirements of those leaving schools influence curricula and assessments. Similarly, unions’ policy and practices influence how at least some of their members respond to changes in school. Attitudes of the broader community to schooling, particularly the media, can also affect teachers’ motivation and belief that what they are doing is worthwhile. Other key stake-
holders include local authorities. In Scotland these have not faced the same threat as their counterparts in England. ‘Devolved School Management’ has given more autonomy to schools but authorities, nonetheless, continue to play a significant role.

For St Aubrey’s, local authority support was high at the time of the school fire, both in terms of people and finance. As one staff member commented in 1995, ‘I have nothing but praise for the local authority.’ Concerns were being noted, however, that ‘support is now crumbling’, and by 1997 staff talked of a lack of support for an increasing number of children with emotional, behavioural and learning problems: ‘and there is no one there to answer your cry for help’. In Glendale, the picture was somewhat reversed. In 1997, the headteacher felt the school and local authority had moved closer together since 1995, and described various authority initiatives. A new teacher commented however, in a somewhat strained interview, that learning support had been lost.
**Political action and ‘tone’**

Policies and beliefs about the purpose of education that underpin them are critical influences on schools. The sheer amount of policy-oriented change is particularly significant. Overload is a dilemma and, with the best will in the world, teachers bombarded by unrelenting changes over a short time period tend to be exhausted. They find it hard to maintain energy, enthusiasm and, ultimately, willingness for change (Helsby and McCulloch 1996). It is not necessarily teachers’ characteristics that cause resistance, but pressures on them and limitations to their involvement in making change happen (Fink and Stoll 1998). With increasing demands on them, they face intensification of their work leading, in many cases, to feelings of guilt (Hargreaves 1994). While, for some, these present fairly easy-to-resolve dilemmas, for others there are uncomfortable tensions or constraints that can lead to stress (Woods et al. 1997). The very language and labelling of schools as ‘failing’ contributes to low teacher morale and feelings of impotence, and encourages the general public to believe that standards are low and that a significant minority of schools are in a state of perpetual crisis (Stoll and Myers 1998).

Glendale teachers described an increase in paperwork (‘it tends to take up so much of your time that you really can’t think straight with specific ideas that you want to teach . . . it’s way over the top’). In 1995 the headteacher commented that the Scottish Office supported schools ‘through the volume of manuals and guidelines received. The 5–14 documents are leading the way with the curriculum’, and their ethos documents were ‘fine, if you concentrated on that alone’. By 1997 she concluded: ‘Information is sent to be read, but it doesn’t really affect teachers or classrooms’, while another teacher’s view was ‘This 5–14 with its 10,000 strands. There’s too much curriculum change, too much jargon . . . 5–14 has affected terminology rather than practice . . . the burdens of 5–14 are too great.’ In contrast, one teacher at St Aubrey’s felt the 5–14 changes were ‘for the better, but it involves a lot of work and you need to be organized’, while another thought the 5–14 documents had ‘made us more aware’, although she, and other colleagues, had specific concerns about one subject document which ‘made us feel deskillled’. By 1997, however, the headteacher found the documents ‘much better than before . . . clearer, and quite helpful’.

**Professional learning infrastructure**

Some schools are located in areas or regions where the professional learning infrastructure is better developed than in other areas. Fullan and Watson (1997) argue that systems that sustain high-quality professional development have frameworks of support including elements such as appropriate policy, shared and agreed-upon priorities, time to engage in learning, access to best practice and recent research, and appropriate rewards and incentives.

Both schools were in areas where they could draw on a variety of external
sources, although neither was entirely happy with the externally available support. The head of St Aubrey’s described the school’s experience of external staff development as ‘not very positive’, with some described as ‘totally inadequate, staff returning frustrated, feeling time was wasted’. She believed: ‘The focus should be on what staff feel they need in relation to the school development plan and individual professional needs. Our career reviews are helpful in determining this. Staff have an informal chat with the head or depute head – where do you want to go? How can we help you get there?’ The school’s staff development coordinator added that staff development mainly takes place in the school: ‘where the most important staff development takes place . . . courses can be valuable, but staff development is not just going on courses’. Other teachers thought within-school staff development was ‘continuous’ and that if they wanted anything else, it was available. Indeed, when asked how the College of Education supports the school, one teacher replied: ‘It’s the other way around. We help the college.’ This school, therefore, appeared to have built its own infrastructure.

Although Glendale’s headteacher felt that staff development was suited to the school’s needs, and ‘the senior management team can give greater direction from an overview of the development plan and perceived staff needs, plus being able to send several staff on the same course’, she also commented on variable quality of outside courses, and problems in devising time for feedback by teachers who had attended courses. In response to a question about staff development, however, an inexperienced teacher appeared more concerned ‘that staff should feel that they are not on their own; that the management should be there to back them, as part of a team’. Teacher survey responses also showed that only 32 per cent of respondents agreed ‘staff development time is used effectively in the school’ (compared with 100 per cent agreement at St Aubrey’s and 59 per cent agreement in the total primary school sample).

Global change forces

Social, economic, technological, political and ecological forces, among others, shape our daily existence. Institutions, political, economic and social structures and, indeed, value systems worldwide appear to be changing or under pressure to do so. Such forces have major ramifications for all schools, including Glendale and St Aubrey’s, making it increasingly imperative that schools have the internal capacity to respond to such forces.

Issues

Preliminary analysis of the data for two Scottish schools suggests that the model of influences on school capacity may offer possibilities in helping identify schools with the internal capacity for change, but it also raises some issues:
The capacity model needs further testing in a range of contexts, and in relation to what is already known about improvement in different types of schools.

The model is not a model of increasing pupil outcomes per se. It is an attempt to take a closer look at a school’s internal dynamics and potential: what can help or hinder it from starting and sustaining the learning process. It is based on the premise that pupils will learn best when their teachers and schools learn. This may not always have appeal in a time of increased accountability and emphasis on standards, but it raises serious issues about the meaning of school quality, as well as potential for quality.

The various influences at the three levels can be positive, neutral or negative, and are a complex braid, many of which are interconnected. This needs further investigation to try to understand the way the influences connect. It also suggests that designers of improvement or restructuring programmes are likely to find it hard to identify particular actions to be taken in relation to each specific influence. There are no simple solutions.

The model highlights that schools can significantly differ from each other in a subtle range of ways. This means that ongoing auditing of the influences that affect each school is essential. Furthermore, for some schools, capacity building may need to focus on helping teachers develop the motivation and confidence to be able to get started in a change process, never mind becoming experts in a particular new teaching strategy.

In emphasizing social dynamics and social systems, the model tries to reach a more fundamental level about human relationships and philosophies of life. The differences in language of teachers in these two Scottish schools in areas of equal deprivation suggest a great deal more needs to be understood about differences between schools as human and dynamic systems before governments, in particular, advocate tightly controlled and regulated designs. The sharp contrasts of the two schools seem to suggest that the schools’ learning context is of more significance to their internal capacity than the external context. However, these are two schools serving very similar catchment areas. If one had been located in an area of affluence the picture might have been different, although ‘cruising’ schools (Stoll and Fink 1998) possess powerful norms that inhibit development.

**Research challenges**

We believe it is necessary to continue working with and studying schools to develop greater understanding of their internal capacity in the following areas:

- How the different influences work together – How do the range of combinations interact within and between levels? How important is each in the model? For example, if a school focuses considerable energy on external
forces, dealing with extended negative media attention or implementing a state or national government curriculum that does not take into account its local circumstances, needs or interests, to what extent might the learning context suffer or atrophy (Fink 1999)?

- Are the influences the same in schools in different phases? If not, how do they differ? Which ones are more important in secondary schools, for example, and why? What is missing?

- Differential internal capacity of different schools – For example, are individual teachers in a school like Glendale actually different from those in one like St Aubrey’s, two schools in very comparable social areas? Are they generally less confident as individuals that they can really make a difference to the lives of pupils in disadvantaged areas? Alternatively, are the leadership, relationships, culture and within-school internal learning context holding them back?

- How to build capacity in different types of schools – For example, if schools like Glendale are characterized by dysfunctional staff relationships, micro politics, and underpinning beliefs that some children will never learn, are the most important actions to be taken (a) developing a continuing focus on people, (b) promoting positive politics, (c) combating low expectations? Is it even possible or appropriate to determine a time sequence for capacity-building strategies?

- How schools with variations in their initial change capacity use different change strategies (Stoll and Fink 1996; Hopkins and Harris 1997; Earl and Lee 1998) and how they use external support – for example, did St Aubrey’s really need a process consultant or would specific help in their chosen area of writing have been more valuable? When does a school know what help it needs, and is there any school, no matter how successful, that would not benefit from a critical, external eye?

Some of these questions can be answered through statistical modelling. Many, however, depend on drawing on detailed case studies of schools and their improvement efforts (for example, Louis and Miles 1990; Mortimore et al. 2000) and by producing further case studies whose value as freestanding narrative should not be underestimated. As Robertson (1998b) argues, they show the way teachers understand the schools in which they work; and how they see the wider Scottish educational context. She continues: ‘These studies contribute towards our understanding of schools as organisations and also to the debate about the meaning of the “good school” ’ (1998: 4). Certainly, this cannot be teased out in infrequent regulatory inspections. This is because the nuances of people’s belief systems, interpersonal dynamics and subtle interconnections among influences are more likely to be seen over time. Only through ongoing involvement with the school and use of qualitative instruments over time could the project team see that a positive interview from the headteacher of Glendale at the start of the project was merely ‘putting a front on it’. In contrast, the
interview with the assistant head at the same time, while unpleasant, and difficult to carry out, was honest. This highlights the need for further carefully controlled longitudinal studies. Until more is known, through detailed case studies and specifically focused and evaluated capacity-building programmes, it is all too easy for blanket policy solutions to be advocated.

Greater attention also needs to be devoted by researchers to exploring how schools use research findings and how they could be used more beneficially. Without specific support, practitioners appear to view dissemination of research as imposed change (Wikeley 1998). The role of researchers in supporting and promoting the development of schools’ internal capacity could offer great potential.

Conclusion

Bringing about change in schools is extremely complex. School improvement and other reform strategies thrust on, or even offered to, teachers without taking account of unique differences between schools in their internal capacity are likely to lead to loss of the energy and creativity needed to take schools forward in the future. While support for real improvement involves challenge and accountability, more fundamentally, this study emphasizes it is about helping schools understand and develop their own capacity. This means focusing on individuals, their internal learning context and the external context. Without this, the chances of deep and lasting changes that can lead to improved pupil learning are slim.

Notes

1 See Chapter 3 for further details of project design.
2 See Chapter 6 for teacher questionnaire factors.
3 See Chapter 7.

References


Part 6

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
AND THE LOCAL
MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS
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35

MONETARY INCENTIVES AND THE REFORM OF TEACHER COMPENSATION

A persistent organizational dilemma

Stephen L. Jacobson*


Introduction

It seems that whenever education comes under attack, school reformers turn first to private sector models of monetary incentives to increase what they perceive as a lack of teacher productivity. The use of monetary incentives in the private sector is predicated on the basic economic assumption that workers will increase their level of effort if they believe that their rewards will increase accordingly. The application of monetary incentives to education assumes that teachers are subject to the same income/leisure substitution effects as workers in other vocations. Advocates of monetary incentive plans argue that without such incentives there is little reason for workers, teachers included, to exert effort beyond the minimum performance requirements of their respective jobs.

During the 1980s, over 99% of the teachers in the U.S. worked in districts using uniform schedules that paid salary increments based solely on longevity and graduate credit accumulation (Murnane & Cohen, 1985). At the same time, a number of influential reports appeared that questioned the quality of public schools in the U.S. (see, for example, Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1983; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). These reports raised the spectre that a deteriorating educational system posed a serious threat to America’s global economic pre-eminence. Indeed, some suggested that a causal relationship existed between the widespread use of the uniform salary schedule and “the rising tide of mediocrity” in American public education (NCEE, 1983). The issue received considerable public attention and led to calls for marked changes in the way teachers are compensated. Among the most often recommended compensation reforms were increases in entry-level wages, career ladders with
differentiated salaries, and scarcity bonuses. But the most contentious reform proposals were calls for performance-related pay, more commonly known in the U.S. as ‘merit pay’ (Lipsky & Bacharach, 1983).

As we shall see, merit pay plans have been tried and tried again in public education, but their use has always been short-lived. Obviously, the question of whether the plans work needs to be examined. Not surprisingly, some plans work and others don’t. But judging the vicissitudes of educational policy solely on the relative success of a few monetary incentive plans represents a limited perspective. There seems to be a regular ebb and flow in public interest in the use of monetary incentives for teachers, and the question of how to most appropriately compensate teachers is one that persists. As Cuban (1992: 6) points out, problems that persist often do so because they require choices to be made between “competing, highly prized values (that) cannot be fully satisfied.” Cuban suggests that attempts to use the “template of technical rationality” to address administrative problems may hide conflicts in inherent values, leading to conflict-filled ‘dilemmas’ of administrative practice. In the first chapter of this book, Cuban points out that unlike problems that can be solved, dilemmas can only be managed, and the key to managing these persistent dilemmas is to recognize the values that are in conflict.

The purpose of the chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the conflicting values that underlie debates about the reform of teacher compensation. Elsewhere I have studied teacher compensation and incentive plans pragmatically, trying to understand what works and why? (see, for example, Jacobson, 1993, 1991a; 1991b; 1990; 1989a; 1989b; 1989c; 1989d; 1988a; 1988b; 1988c; Monk & Jacobson 1985a; 1985b). In this chapter, I re-examine the effects of monetary incentives on teacher recruitment, retention, and absence, focusing on the conflicts in personal and organizational values that cause problems with teacher compensation to persist. Two key issues to be considered are normative expectations of teacher behavior and differential responses to income/leisure substitution. I will argue that the way society views teachers and the way teachers see themselves are often at odds. At these times, changes in compensation and the use of incentives are introduced in order to bring teacher behaviors in line with public expectations. The public’s perception of a ‘dedicated’ teacher is of an individual who is more concerned with the welfare of students than the attainment of monetary rewards. Teachers, on the other hand, desire to be treated like ‘professionals’ and not be compelled to compete for rewards. Yet, when monetary incentives are offered, they tend to adjust their labor market behaviors in relatively predictable ways, much like other workers in other fields.

I will argue that herein lies the root cause of a persistent organizational dilemma, i.e., school systems turn to monetary incentives to motivate teachers, yet they really don’t want teachers who are primarily motivated by money.
Teachers want to be respected for their dedication to children, yet they respond to monetary incentives and often demand extra compensation for activities school officials and the public perceive as being a part of their professional responsibilities. In other words, teachers and their school district employers both exhibit behaviors that seemingly conflict with their beliefs and values.

A case in point, teachers in the U.S. are presently being asked to become increasingly involved in site-based decision-making. The opportunity to participate as full partners in the governance of schools is perceived by the public as a professional responsibility that teachers should enter into without additional remuneration, i.e., teachers should volunteer their time just like parents and other community members who are involved in shared decision-making. Teachers, on the other hand, are questioning why they must subsidize these additional responsibilities by reducing their leisure time, i.e., why should they take on additional responsibilities without being offered additional income? Many teachers are asking that they be compensated for their involvement in shared decision-making activities, either through extra pay for extra work provisions, or release time from other professional responsibilities.

**The organization of the chapter**

In order to place this discussion in its political and social context, I begin the chapter with a look at teacher compensation in the U.S. and an examination of the composition of the American teaching workforce. Next follows a brief history of merit pay for teachers in the U.S., as well as a review of a number of studies of compensation reforms implemented over the past decade. I then examine what teachers value in their work and what society values in teachers. The reader will see that while monetary incentives can influence key labor market behaviors of teachers, their use tends to conflict with personal and societal expectations of what a ‘good’ teacher is and wants. There is also some misunderstanding about the income/leisure substitutions that teachers prefer. While monetary incentives plans assume that teachers will work harder for more pay, there is reason to believe that many teachers see the opportunity for more leisure time as a more attractive incentive than more money. These conflicting values and perceptions produce a persistent organizational dilemma caused in part by the very mechanisms employed to ‘solve’ it.

**Monetary incentives and the teacher workforce**

*Teacher compensation in the U.S.*

The reason salary is often singled out by educational reformers is that it is highly visible and easily amenable to comparison. As public employees, teachers’ salaries are a matter of public knowledge and negotiated locally. This is particularly relevant in a decentralized system such as the U.S., where there are nearly
15,000 districts. Texas alone has over 1000 school districts. Each district has its own Board of Education which is responsible for determining the district’s rate of pay, either unilaterally or through collective negotiations with teacher representatives. One consequence of local control is that teacher salaries vary markedly both across and within states. For example, in 1990–91, estimated average salaries for public school teachers across the U.S. ranged from a high of $43,808 in Connecticut to a low of $22,363 in South Dakota, a difference of almost 100% (Thompson, Wood & Honeyman, 1994). Within New York State, average district salaries for classroom teachers in 1992–93 ranged from $62,406 at the 90% percentile to $28,187 at the 10% percentile (NYSED, 1994).

These wage disparities reflect regional differences in the cost of living, alternative employment opportunities for teachers, teacher union strength, and the average level of teacher experience and education. America’s teacher workforce is very experienced and well-educated. Of a total teacher workforce of roughly 2.5 million in 1990–91, almost 65% had over 10 years of experience, 25% had been teachers for more than 20 years, and 47.5% had a Master’s degree or above. In addition, the teacher workforce is 72% female, meaning there are 1.8 million women teachers in the U.S. (NCES, 1994).

Wage disparities are also a reflection of the willingness of the local community to support public education. It is important to note that in the U.S., local control also means local support. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 1994) reports that in 1990–91, 46.5% of all revenues for public elementary and secondary education came from local sources, slightly less than the 47.3% provided by state governments (Federal sources account for only 6.2% of all revenues for public education). When one considers that professional salaries and benefits often account for 65–70% of a school district’s operating budget, coupled with the fact that current per pupil expenditures have risen 33% since 1982–83 after adjustment for inflation (NCES, 1994), it is not surprising that American taxpayers have become highly sensitive to both increases in teacher salary and reports of declining student achievement.

The so-called ‘first wave’ reforms of the 1980s noted earlier, as well as a ‘second wave’ of reports (see, e.g., Carnegie, 1986; Holmes, 1986) led to significant improvements in teacher salaries. By 1992–93, the average salary for public school teachers in the U.S. was $35,334 (NCES, 1994). Adjusting for inflation, this is an 18% increase from a decade earlier, when the report *A Nation at Risk* (NCEE, 1983) first made educational productivity a national priority. But while their wages changed markedly over the past decade, the way that teachers are compensated did not. The vast majority of America’s teachers still work in districts that pay increments primarily on the basis of experience. Yet this has not always been the case and the use of monetary incentives has a long but erratic history in American public education (Johnson, 1984).
The use of merit pay

As early as 1903, teachers in Chicago fought the implementation of a merit pay scheme they felt would jeopardize their newly-won, longevity-based salary schedule (Urban, 1985). During the early 1920s, almost half of America’s schools had ‘merit pay.’ There was considerable interest during that period in applying the efficiencies of industry to education, and merit pay was one manifestation of that interest.

Ortiz and Marshall (1988) contend that, “a misreading of Taylor’s scientific management turned schools into competitive bureaucracies, rather than collaborative service organizations (p. 123).” Merit pay plans were, in fact, intended to foster competition, in the belief that competition can bring out a worker’s best performance. But ‘merit’ in these early plans was more often determined by gender or level of instruction than by performance. By the 1930s and 1940s uniform salary schedules were becoming increasingly commonplace. Public interest in the use of monetary incentives was renewed in the late 1950s when the Soviet Union launched Sputnick, and by 1969, 1 in 10 (11.3%) districts enrolling more than 6000 students used performance incentives as part of teacher compensation. But once again interest waned, and within a decade, the number of districts using monetary incentives was down to only 1 in 25 (4%) (Porwoll, 1979).

More recently Murnane and Cohen (1985) tried to identify schools districts that had used merit pay plans for at least five years, had paid awards of at least $1000, and had an enrollment of more than 10,000. They could find only seven districts that met these criteria in 1985. And in these few districts, Murnane and Cohen found that merit pay did not appear to have much of an effect on the way teachers teach.

But while monetary incentives may not affect the way teachers teach, other recent studies suggest that they do have an important effect on other teacher labor market behaviors, specifically recruitment, retention, and attendance.

Monetary incentives and teacher labor market behavior

Recruitment: occupation and location choice

A career in teaching can be demarcated by a series of critical choices, the first two, occupation and location choice are recruitment issues for the profession and school districts respectively (Jacobson, 1993). The first career choice, occupation, is particularly problematic and many of the reports cited earlier, most notably A Nation at Risk, expressed alarm at the lack of high caliber individuals entering teaching. During the 1970s and 80s, salaries in teaching, especially at the entry-level lagged behind those of other professions requiring equivalent educational preparation (Monk & Jacobson, 1985b). These national reform reports were unanimous in their recommendation that starting salaries in
teaching had to become more competitive with those in other occupations. The
resulting salary increases noted earlier indicate the influence of those reports.

After a person decides to become a teacher, s/he decides next where to teach,
i.e., the choice of location. This is especially important in the U.S. because the
decentralized nature of American education means that improvements in entry-
level salary must be dealt with at the local level. As teachers choose among
locations, they can be considered both buyers and sellers in the educational labor
marketplace, simultaneously purchasing the job characteristics of school dis-
tricts including starting salary, while selling districts their services (Antos &
Rosen, 1975; Chambers, 1981). Given that salaries vary from district to district,
one can chart the behavior of teachers to see whether their location choices are
influenced by money.

I examined school districts in two regions of New York State to see how
changes in starting salary affected the ability of these districts to compete
amongst themselves for the services of beginning teachers (Jacobson, 1990). I
found that school districts that improved the relative attractiveness of their start-
ing salary vis-a-vis their regional neighbors subsequently improved their likeli-
hood of recruiting the most highly educated novice teachers available. In other
words, beginning teachers are responsive to monetary incentives, and districts,
knowledgeable of that fact, use money to recruit these talented candidates as
they compete with other districts for their services.

Retention

After deciding where to teach, the next critical career choice an individual
makes is whether or not to remain in teaching, or more specifically, in a given
school district. Even those authors who contend that teachers begin their careers
with a willingness to forego high salaries in anticipation of teaching’s intrinsic
rewards recognize that over time frustration with salary becomes an increasingly
critical factor in teacher turnover (Chapman & Hutcheson, 1982; Goodlad,
1983).

Using the same sample of districts I used in the recruitment study, I also
examined the effects of salary change on teacher retention (Jacobson, 1988a).
The findings revealed that districts that improved the relative attractiveness of
their salaries, particularly salaries paid mid-career teachers, were the districts
with the highest rates of teacher retention. In addition, women in these districts
were more responsive to salary change than men, a finding that countered earlier
studies that claimed traditional economic forces have little influence on female
teachers (Charters, 1967; Lortie, 1975).

Attendance

What work to do, where to do it, and whether to remain represent choices made
just a few times over the course of a career. But whether to go to work on a
given day represents a decision teachers make regularly throughout their careers. In New York, a school calendar generally runs 180–190 days per year. On average, teachers in New York use 9 sick days per year, roughly 5% of available work time (Ehrenberg, et al., 1989). Some school districts have tried to use monetary incentives to reduce teacher absence. I studied teacher absence and found one attendance incentive plan that produced a significant, short-term reduction in the average number of days that teachers were absent from work (Jacobson, 1991a; 1989a; 1989b).

While it is not clear from these studies whether monetary incentives affect the quality of teacher performance, taken together the studies do indicate that monetary incentives have a significant influence on the way teachers behave in the educational labor market. I offer these findings to show the centrality of monetary incentives to the relationship between teachers and their public employers. When monetary incentives are offered, teachers tend to adjust their labor market behaviors in much the same way as other workers. But does society really want its teachers to act like other workers, or, do they hold teachers to a different standard? Next we look at what teachers value, and how these values match up with society’s expectations.

**What do teachers value? What does society value in teachers?**

Recall the central proposition of the chapter is that problems persist in teacher compensation because of conflicts in highly prized personal and organizational values. The studies reported above indicate that school officials use incentives to influence teacher behavior. Yet, the public’s perception of a ‘dedicated’ teacher is of an individual who is more concerned with the welfare of students than the attainment of monetary rewards.

In a study of New York City teachers, Griffiths et al. (1965) categorized teachers based upon what they valued most in their work. The “dedicated” teachers in this typology were those individuals who are most interested in children – the “pupil-oriented” teachers. The values held by these teachers match most closely society’s expectations of what teachers should value. “Subject-oriented” teachers represent a second category of teachers. The values these individuals hold dearest are not inconsistent with society’s expectations. The public recognizes that schools need individuals who are concerned with the subjects they teach and not just those who take their subjects. On the other hand, “benefits-oriented” teachers – individuals who value their package of compensatory benefits, including the generous vacation schedule – are anathema to these normative expectations.

Benefits-oriented teachers are teachers who use the compensation system to their best advantage. Griffiths et al. write that these “benefits-oriented” teachers move horizontally “until they find a good deal” (p. 24). When monetary incentives are offered, these teachers adjust their labor market behaviors in much the same ways as the teachers reported in the studies above, i.e., they move to better
paying districts, they remain longer in districts when their salaries become more attractive, and they attend more regularly when regular attendance is monetarily rewarded. And herein lies the rub, when money is offered, these teachers respond and school officials anticipate that they will. Yet neither side is entirely comfortable with the bargain. Teachers would prefer to be treated and paid like ‘professionals,’ and not ‘bribed’ with monetary incentives, while the public would prefer teachers who work to their full capacity without making additional monetary demands.

It would be naive to suggest that the categories in this typology are mutually exclusive. Certainly there are pupil-oriented teachers who are concerned about their benefits, and benefits-oriented teachers who are concerned about their subjects and students. It is as unfair to expect all teachers to be dedicated to their students as it is to suggest that all teachers are solely interested in their benefits. I believe that the relatively generous vacation schedule that teachers have accounts in part for public resentment over their attention to benefits. Let me offer one example of this resentment. I recall speaking to a dairy farmer in rural Central New York who was angry over teachers’ demands for higher salaries. In his eyes, the teachers in his district were part-time employees. He pointed out that a teacher’s workday begins well after his, and ends well before. And while children stay home on weekends, holidays, and ten weeks during the summer, his cows need to be milked twice a day, every day. From his perspective a teacher is a part-time employee. With so much time off, he would argue that teachers can find other employment if money is so important. Which brings us to the second issue in conflict, i.e., income/leisure substitutions and how society views teacher time.

**Income/leisure substitutions**

Richards et al. (1993) write that the income effect is, “The difference in the effort supplied at two different income levels” (p. 32). The relationship between income and effort is assumed to be positive, and the use of monetary incentives in education suggests teachers will work harder if they can earn more money. It also implies that unless these incentives are available teachers work at levels of effort that is beneath their capability.

In contrast, “the substitution effect occurs when an increase in earnings predisposes the employee to purchase more leisure” (Richards et al. 1993: 32). In other words, after attaining a certain level of income, workers are likely to seek more time rather than more money. To someone like our dairy farmer, the idea that increasing teachers’ salaries could lead to their purchase of more leisure time runs counter to his basic work ethic. He would argue that if we are to give teachers more money, they had better produce more, and not ultimately convert increased wages into still more free-time.

Those who advocate the use of monetary incentives in education believe that teachers presently have plenty of free time, and therefore additional time and
effort to be purchased. But teachers do not see themselves as part-time workers, countering that they already subsidize public education through low wages and the amount of preparatory work they undertake at home, on their own time, at their own expense. In fact, many teachers view time as a more attractive incentive than money.

**Trading money for time: deferred salary leave plans**

Deferred salary leave plans (DSLPs) allow teachers to voluntarily defer a part of their annual salary for a given number of years in order to self-fund a leave of absence. Teachers use the leave year for graduate study, travel, and other personal and family matters. The vast majority report a renewed enthusiasm for teaching upon returning from a leave, and quite a few opt into a second plan as soon as they return from their first. While some teachers use the leave year to improve their instructional skills, others simply want to escape the stress of teaching. These self-funded leaves are viewed by some teachers as an antidote to burnout (Jacobson & Kennedy, 1991; 1992).

DSLPs have been used in Canada since the late 1970s, but it wasn’t until 1993 that the first plans of this type were negotiated in the U.S., in school districts in Muskegon, Michigan and Rochester, New York. Government officials in the Netherlands, concerned with high rates of long-term teacher absences related to stress, have also expressed an interest in implementing DSLPs.

The increasing popularity of DSLPs (13% of teachers in one Ontario school district are involved in one stage or another of a leave plan), indicates that the opportunity for release time may outweigh the attractiveness of monetary incentives to teachers. In other words, the premise that teachers have generous amounts of free time and are willing to use that time to increase their productivity in exchange for extra money, may underestimate the level of effort that teachers currently expend and the extent to which they value what leisure time they have. More time rather than more money seems to be what some teachers want, but allowing teachers additional free time runs counter to society’s traditional work ethic.

**Conclusions**

Language can often confuse, as well as clarify, the way we look at our world. Much of administrative preparation and practice in education is concerned with the process of ‘problem-solving’ – identifying and framing problems, developing alternative solutions, and selecting among competing alternatives for the most feasible solution. When we have ‘problems,’ we seek solutions. But some problems seem to be more difficult to resolve. They defy a neat overlay of scientific rationality because they represent on-going struggles between competing values. As noted at the beginning of the chapter, the use of the “template of
technical rationality,” is likely to ignore these conflicting values and therefore the problems persist (Cuban, 1992).

Educational reformers of the 1980s reported problems with American education, especially problems with its teacher workforce. According to these reformers, teachers were both the cause of and potential cure for deteriorating student achievement. These first wave reforms focused on market incentives and state mandates to solve the ‘teacher’ problem (see, Farrar, 1990; Petrie, 1990; Jacobson & Conway, 1990 for details). Compensation reform was seen as a rational way to ‘solve’ the problem. There were few attempts to examine underlying values, and as Urban (1985) noted, current initiatives like those that had come before once again poured “old wine” (merit pay) into “new bottles” (compensation reform). Teachers rejected what they perceived as the demeaning treatment of having to compete for rewards, yet lobbied for substantial increases in salary. The public didn’t necessarily object to higher wages so long as teachers worked harder for them. Both parties recognize the importance of money, yet both have reservations as to how important it should be. In many ways teachers are no different than workers in other professions, but in one very important way they are expected to be quite different, i.e., they are expected to be dedicated to their students, and place their own benefits second. But teachers question why they’re expected to subsidize their employment in ways that other workers are not. Recall the example presented earlier, in which teachers and school officials disagree over whether teachers should be compensated additionally for their involvement in site-based decision-making. Should this be viewed as a function of good citizenship within a participatory democracy, or simply a case of extra work demanding extra compensation? As a result of fundamental disagreements such as this, the use of monetary incentives remains as much a topic of discussion as a practical reality.

The emerging wave of “systemic” reforms that have characterized the late 80s–early 90s, have become increasingly interested in the relationship between the social organization of the school workplace and teachers’ commitment, performance, and productivity (see, for example, Mitchell et al., 1987; Reyes, 1990; Rosenholtz, 1989; Jacobson & Berne, 1993). In some ways, these systemic reforms are closer, conceptually, to Cuban’s notion of managing the compensation dilemma than early reform attempts to solve it. For example, in order to make education more attractive to individuals contemplating teaching as a career, as well as to draw local stakeholders into educational decision-making, current reform initiatives in the U.S. have focused more on improving the school workplace and its relationship to its constituent community than on teacher salaries. Moreover, when incentives are successfully employed, they are used to reward collective rather than individual behavior (Richards et al. 1993).

Even with this heightened understanding of the systemic nature of the educational enterprise, policymakers continue to consider the appropriate role of compensation in school improvement. It is essential that we continue to explore relationships between monetary incentives and teachers’ behaviors. The studies
reported in this chapter suggest that monetary incentives can influence teacher recruitment, retention, and attendance, and that adjustments in compensation disbursement can allow teachers more leisure time which creates opportunities to alleviate job-related stress and burnout. But no less important to managing these persistent dilemmas is the need to study and try to articulate the personal and organizational values in conflict.

Notes
1 The fact that the teacher workforce is predominantly female may also shape this dairy farmer’s perceptions of their work and how teachers time should be spent.

References


MONETARY INCENTIVES AND TEACHER COMPENSATION


This paper sets out to understand local management of schools (LMS) in terms of the theory of organizational form. It is argued that the 1988 Education Reform Act was designed to change the LEA from a unitary form of organizational structure to a multidivisional (M-form), though the regulatory role of the LEA required in an M-form organization was left underdeveloped. Without a quality assurance function for a regulatory body decentralized management structures approximate more closely to a holding company or H-form organization. This interpretation of LMS is then applied to a case-study LEA. The theory of organizational form provides an analytical framework for understanding the restructuring the education sector is undergoing, while the case study yields data for assessing the applicability to current organizational changes in education of the multidivisional form model and its claimed efficiency advantages.

The M-form model is offered as a resolution of the apparent paradox in the Education Reform Act between the centralization of the curriculum and the decentralization of management responsibilities.

It is also argued that the M-form model for the LEA is more likely than a holding company structure to promote higher educational standards because of its stronger element of quality assurance. However, subsequent government policy changes have prevented LEAs developing as M-form organizations and are set to fragment and centralize LEAs’ previous strategic functions.
Introduction

This paper sets out to understand local management of schools (LMS) in terms of the theory of organizational form developed by, among others, institutional economists. The fundamental premise, therefore, is that the theory of organizational form applied to firms and public sector organizations is also relevant to education. I argue that the 1988 Education Reform Act was designed to change the LEA from a unitary form of organizational structure to a multidivisional (M-form), though the regulatory role of the LEA required in an M-form organization was left underdeveloped. This interpretation of LMS is then applied to a case-study LEA. The theory of organizational form provides an analytical framework for understanding the restructuring the education sector is undergoing, while the case study yields data for assessing the applicability to current organizational changes in education of the multidivisional form model and its claimed efficiency advantages.

I have two major reasons for proposing the M-form model. First it is offered as a resolution of the apparent paradox in the Education Reform Act between the centralization of the curriculum and the decentralization of management responsibilities. Some see this as an evident contradiction (Campbell et al. 1987, Coulby 1991, Busher and Saran 1992). Coulby argues that ‘the Act contains a particularly high level of contradiction’, citing this particular example (Coulby 1991). Others, however, spot the crucial connection between LMS and the national curriculum (Whitty 1989, Ball 1990). Ball comes close to recognizing the M-form structure when he writes:

The introduction of national tests alongside the provisions of the education market provides parents with a simple and crude but direct point of comparison between schools. Given that schools are also required to provide a fixed National Curriculum it is tempting to refine the business model slightly and see the education market as a system of franchises.

(Ball 1990: 68)

The second purpose is to put forward the M-form model for the LEA as more likely than a holding company structure (i.e., one with no central strategic management function) to promote higher educational standards. However, the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the legislation foreshadowed in the White Paper, Choice and Diversity (Great Britain 1992) have removed the possibility of a fully developed M-form structure for LEAs. Instead the strategic functions of the M-form headquarters’ management are set to be increasingly taken over by central government.

Section 1 sets out briefly the theory of organizational form, sections 2 and 3 apply the theory to LMS, and the remaining sections apply and evaluate LMS as a M- or H-form organizational structure using the case-study data.
The theory of organizational form

If we take the basic element of social life to be an ‘activity’ (i.e., using resources of human time and materials to some end) then once an activity involves more than one person ‘transactions’ take place and co-ordination is required. The social science literature has coalesced around three basic modes of co-ordination – market, hierarchy and network (Thompson et al. 1991). The modes of co-ordination are briefly characterized as follows:

- **Market co-ordination** occurs between economic agents (either individuals or firms/organizations) who voluntarily exchange the ownership of goods and services in return for money. The price at which exchange takes place (the rate of exchange) is the key instrument of market co-ordination and is determined by the interaction of demand and supply. Self-interest is the prime motivation of the transactors. However, for the market to function agreements to exchange contracts must be enforceable. This is done both through a social culture whereby transactors are trusted to honour agreements to exchange and, failing this, through state legal enforcement.

- **Hierarchy** is co-ordination by means of rules and commands set within a pyramidal structure of superordinates and subordinates. Authority is concentrated at the peak of the hierarchy and distributed downwards through tightly specified rules. The transactors are thus vertically related in contrast to the horizontal linkages between market transactors. Hierarchical co-ordination occurs both within an organization and between organizations that are hierarchically related (e.g., the central government, local education authority and school). Individuals within hierarchies are motivated through rules specifying rewards and sanctions.

- **Network** is a lattice of interlinking individuals or organizational units which exchange information and favours. Since agreements to such exchanges are generally informal, relations depend largely on trust and are conducted within specific group cultures. Different kinds of networks can be distinguished, such as professional, social, interest group and policy networks. Networks coexist with market and hierarchical modes of co-ordination and lubricate their functioning. Networks operate within hierarchically arranged organizations and often underpin business and market relationships.

The key question is why some activities are co-ordinated mainly by one of the modes while other kinds of transaction are co-ordinated by another of the modes. Institutional economics (arising originally out of the work of Coase [1937] and developed by Williamson [1975]) has sought to find a rational explanation for this – namely that a particular mode of co-ordination is the most efficient in certain types of circumstances and will therefore emerge as the dominant mode – at least in sectors where competition prevails. The issue of which is the efficient mode of co-ordination in specific circumstances
arises because transactions are not costless. Transactions are costly because information is not perfect and freely available. This is due in part to uncertainty about the future and to the fact that even if information were certain it would still have to be collected and interpreted. Also contractual arrangements are costly to agree, monitor and enforce. It follows that an efficient organizational design is that which minimizes transactions costs. However, the valuation of transactions costs is not independent of individuals’ preferences, so what constitutes an efficient organizational design depends on the purposes of the organization and whose interests it is supposed to serve. This is a much more complex issue in public sector organizations than in the private sector where it is assumed that firms should aim to maximize shareholders’ wealth. Shareholders have a common interest in maximizing share value whereas citizens have conflicting interests and beliefs as well as a common interest in the provision of public and merit goods.

In examining the characteristics of an efficient organizational form for a particular set of activities being undertaken for some specific purpose, institutional economics has focused on three key sources of transactions costs – bounded rationality, opportunism and asset specificity (see Williamson 1975, Levačić 1992a):

- Bounded rationality is the limited capacity of the human mind to possess and process all the information that in principle is needed in order to make optimal decisions.
- Opportunism is the guileful pursuit of self-interest, not only on the part of those operating in markets but also of those working in organizations.
- Asset specificity exists when a capital asset acquired in order to produce specific goods or services would have much less value if it were transferred to some other use. When such assets are acquired in order to fulfil a contract then the asset’s owners will suffer losses if the contract is reneged upon by the other party. When assets are highly specific contractual arrangements which cannot be easily broken are much less risky and so less costly.

Initially institutional economics focused on the central question of why some economic activities are undertaken by separate firms and co-ordinated by the market while other activities are combined within a single firm. The academic analysis was stimulated by the observed growth of firms through vertical and horizontal integration. The original approach (Williamson) categorized co-ordination within a firm as hierarchy, arguing that bounded rationality, opportunism and, in particular, asset specificity mean that co-ordination by hierarchy within a firm results in lower transactions costs than market co-ordination. Subsequently much greater attention has been given to different organizational structures within firms which are assessed for their relative efficiency in resolving the problems posed by bounded rationality and opportunism.

Three distinct organizational forms are distinguished – the unitary or U-form...
firm, the multidivisional or M-form firm and the holding company (conglomerate) or H-form firm. Standard definitions of these organizational forms are:

- **U-form firms** are functionally specialized, hierarchically arranged organizations. There is a single peak co-ordinator (a person or board of directors to whom are responsible the heads of specialist departments dealing with production, marketing, purchasing, finance, etc.). Within each functional area there may be several further horizontal layers of responsibility and vertical demarcations of more finely specialized tasks.

- **In the M-form firm**, production activities are broken down into a number of quasi-autonomous operating divisions (typically based on products, brands or geographical area). The activities are co-ordinated via a general office, assisted by an elite staff, which undertakes strategic planning and resource allocation among the divisions, and exercises a characteristic form of monitoring and control over them (Cable 1988: 13).

- **The holding company (H-form).** This is the divisionalized enterprise for which the requisite internal control apparatus has not been provided (Williamson 1975: 152).

The U-form firm was the original structure adopted in the 19th century. Its particular advantage is that specialist functional departments can achieve lower costs through the division of labour and economies of scale. However, it is generally argued (Chandler 1966) that as the U-form firm grows in size and complexity, it can no longer enjoy the benefits of U-form since top management lose the capacity to direct the entire enterprise so as to fulfil organization-wide goals.

The inherent weakness in the centralized, functionally departmentalized operating company . . . became critical only when . . . the operations of the enterprise became too complex and the problems of coordination, appraisal, and policy formulation too intricate for a small number of top officers to handle.

(Chandler 1966: 382–383)

Williamson (1975) attributes the loss of organizational control in U-form firms to bounded rationality and opportunism.

Continued expansion eventually overcomes the capacity of the office of the chief executive to provide strategic planning and maintain effective control, which is another manifestation of bounded rationality. The usual means for augmenting this capacity has been to bring in the heads of the functional divisions into the peak coordination process . . . This change in the composition of the strategic decision-making unit produces a shift away from preferences characteristic of the office of the
chief executive, which tend to be enterprise-wide in scope, in favour of partisan interests more closely associated with the functional divisions.

(Williamson 1975: 135)

The multidivisional firm is seen as the solution to these problems because it releases top management from day-to-day operational matters and frees them to devote time to strategic oversight of the organization. A few instances of M-form developed in the 1920s and 1930s but it was only in the post-war period that it spread widely among large corporations. By the 1980s it came to be advocated for public service organizations.

**LMS as multidivisional and holding company organizational forms**

The summary characteristics of the M-form structure as summarized by Williamson (1970) are set out in Table 1. They mirror quite closely the original schema for the post-ERA education authority set out in the Education Reform Act and its supporting circulars (DES 1988, Welsh Office 1988) by the Audit Commission (1989a, b) and Coopers and Lybrand (1988) and latterly by the Society of Education Officers (1991).

As can be seen from the last row of Table 1, a key function of the top management and the general office of an M-form organization is to audit and evaluate the operational divisions in order to ensure good performance. The national curriculum is essential to the M-form model in providing the targets for schools to aim for and against which their performance is evaluated. Initially quality assurance was envisaged as an LEA function which would be enhanced under post-ERA restructuring. Subsequently this function has been taken from LEAs by the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the related proposals of the White Paper (Great Britain 1992) and is to be given to privatized inspection teams regulated by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Schools. When in place the M-form headquarters’ quality control function will be performed by central government. With the withering away of the LEA all other headquarters functions would be performed by central government agencies. While these functions remain attenuated the schools system approximates to the holding company model. The main function of the business holding company is to act as an internal capital market which allocates resources to its divisions in accordance with performance signals received from the market.

**The U-form LEA prior to LMS**

The typical U-form structure of the pre-ERA local authority is depicted in Figure 1. Its design owes much to the adoption of corporate management structures in the 1970s. The authority is organized into operational departments (such as education, social services, transport, housing) and functional departments (such as
finance, property and planning, personnel, legal). The functional departments provide services to all the operational departments. The finance department, for example, does the accounting for the education department. Teachers’ salaries are recorded in a single account, regardless of the school at which they are employed. Similarly utility invoices are dealt with in another account, and not attributed to the building which incurred the heating or water costs. By paying utility bills in large batches discounts are obtained from suppliers. In like manner the property department services and maintains all the authority’s build-

### Management of Schools

**Table 1** The characteristics of the M-form organization applied to LEAs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The M-form organization as specified by Williamson</th>
<th>The restructured LEA as specified by the Education Reform Act</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The responsibility for operations is assigned to (essentially self-contained) operating divisions.</td>
<td>Schools turned into operating divisions. LEAs must delegate budgets and management responsibilities over resources to school governing bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The separation of the general office from operations enables general office executives to concentrate on the overall performance of the organization rather than become absorbed in the affairs of its operational divisions.</td>
<td>Formula funding to ensure a hands-off approach by LEA officers. The principle of maximum delegation: limitations on resources LEAs can retain centrally and on their ability to control school spending decisions through financial regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The general office is principally concerned with strategic decisions, involving planning, appraisal and control, including the allocation of resources among the (competing) operational divisions.</td>
<td>Open enrolment: LEAs cannot direct pupils to schools with surplus places. LEAs left with the functions of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The elite staff attached to the general office perform both advisory and auditing functions. Both have the effect of securing greater control over operating division behaviour.</td>
<td>determining the education budget; producing a DES-approved formula for allocating budgets to schools; allocating capital expenditure as approved by central government; determining admissions criteria to schools; determining, with DES approval, the number and kinds of schools in its charge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide support for budget and management planning, staff development, legal and technical matters. Hold schools financially accountable. Regulate the quality of educational provision.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

314
ings. It therefore deals directly with schools which it deems to require maintenance work.

The education department is itself organized along U-form lines with distinct functional and operational departments. An example of operational departments are schools and community education divisions. Typical functional departments are the advisory service, educational psychologists and special needs support, education welfare, peripatetic teachers and learning resources, such as school museums and libraries. Characteristic features of U-form are that the general office and/or the functional departments decide what services should be supplied to the operational units and are involved in determining detailed operational matters, such as the number of teachers to be employed at the school or what maintenance work will be carried out. A particular feature of the local authority U-form structure is that the education department does not control all the resources used in schools – this is shared with the central functional departments which pursue either their own internal or authority-wide objectives.

The M-form LEA

An outline for a pure M-form model for an LEA is indicated in Figure 2. The roles of both the service department – education – and the functional departments are radically changed. Managerial responsibility for operational matters is delegated to self-managing operational units, such as schools, colleges (leaving LEA control in 1993) and community education committees. The education department general office concentrates on strategic planning, resource allocation
and evaluation functions. Responsibility for the various functions, determined in
the U-form model by central functional departments, passes largely to the opera-
tional units. The operational unit, such as the school, typically has a U-form
structure with specialist committees and associated senior managers for finance,
curriculum, staffing and property which now take over these functional tasks.

In some M-form organizations all the functional specialisms pass to the oper-
ating units, leaving the general office with the specialist functions required for
strategic control. In other M-form organizations functional departments still
exist but no longer have a hierarchical relationship with the operational units. Instead hierarchy as a means of co-ordination between operational and functional departments is replaced by an internal market. Operational units also relate to each other via a market relationship. For example, community education now has to rent premises and equipment from schools.

An internal market is a mode of co-ordination within an organization which is distinct from either hierarchy or network. The internal market mimics the external market in many respects but is ultimately regulated by the organization’s headquarters managers. In the case of education the regulations within which the LEA’s internal market operates are set by both the DES and the LEA, given their respective powers. For an internal market to exist within an organization it must be decentralized in structure so that there are a number of sub-units which act as buyers and sellers in exchanging goods and services with each other. Competition is an essential feature of the internal market. For this to exist the buying and selling units must have alternative independent parties with whom they can conduct exchange. For this reason exchange with agents external to the organization is usually a feature of internal markets.²

In an M-form authority, schools and the LEA’s ‘general office’ relate to each other both as buyers and sellers. The LEA acts on behalf of parents in buying education for children from its schools. Through the formula the LEA sets the price and other conditions at which it will contract with schools for education provision. Parents then determine, given the available places, which schools’ services are purchased. Thus in this part of the internal market the sellers (schools) are not free to set the price nor can they directly choose which pupils to admit. This can only be done indirectly through marketing activities and exclusion policies.

In the M-form model schools (and other operating divisions) are buyers of resource inputs, such as property maintenance work and advisory services, which under U-form were provided by the authority’s functional departments. A crucial aspect of the LMS legislation is the limitation placed on the proportion of the potential schools budget (PSB) that can be retained centrally. Further pressure to delegate central services was placed on LEAs by the DES when approving LMS scheme applications (Thomas and Levačič 1991). Central government squeeze on local government spending has had a similar effect. Once schools receive budget allocations for these items, the LEA functional departments need to sell their services to schools who may go elsewhere with their custom. Local authority property services departments have faced identical pressures. Although they have had to contract out to tender many of their services, direct labour organizations have been successful in winning contracts. As most of these contracts were entered into prior to schools receiving delegated budgets, schools were required to accept the local authority contract arrangements and were not able to negotiate their own until the existing contracts came up for renewal.

The ultimate justification for the M-form organization is that it leads to better performing organizations than U-form. In the private sector version of the model
good organizational performance for customers depends on the existence of competitive markets which forces the organization to perform well in order to survive and flourish. Under a U-form structure top management ensure good performance through hierarchical control of subordinates to whom they issue detailed instructions about operational matters. According to the theory of organizational form, top managers’ bounded rationality combined with subordinates’ opportunism brings about increasingly ineffective control systems as the organization becomes larger and more complex in terms of both its technology and its environment. If the M-form organization is to perform well, top managers must ensure that new mechanisms of control replace hierarchical control. Subordinates must be motivated so that they act to further the organizations’ goals, not personal or purely sectional ones.

Thus the whole analysis revolves around the issues of information and incentives. What kinds of information do top management and the middle managers in charge of operating and functional departments need and how should they be motivated in order to ensure organizational effectiveness? According to the M-form model setting up the operating and functional units as profit (or cost) centres economizes on the amount of information top management needs for effective control of the organization. The internal market is a crucial element in this argument since the fundamental basis of the Austrian school’s claim that the market is a more efficient co-ordination mechanism than hierarchy is that market arrangements economize on information and provide incentives for seeking out and utilizing information in order to satisfy consumer wants. To be effective the M-form organization depends on top managers motivating the divisional managers by setting them appropriate goals, measuring their attainment of these goals and rewarding them accordingly. This is achieved through the general office activities of strategic planning, resource allocation and evaluation. The operational decisions of how the goals are best achieved with the available resources is left to the divisional managers who are free to make their own decisions but are then held accountable for the results. The top managers economize on information because they need have no knowledge of operational details in order for the operating divisions to be effectively managed. The opportunism of middle managers is exploited for the benefit of the organization by ensuring that personal and organizational goals coincide. Another strategy is to reduce opportunism by inculcating an organizational culture which encourages employees to identify with the organization and its objectives.

Problems in applying the M-form model to the school system

Although there are many convincing parallels between the M-form model and the post-era school system, there are a number of problems in applying the M-form model to the education system.
The dual role of LEA as customer and producer

The first problem relates to the dual role of the LEA as customer and supplier of educational services compared with the M-form firm’s single role as supplier. A firm, whatever its organizational form, is not run in the interests of its customers. This is only ensured by means of the regulation provided by competitive product and capital markets, buttressed by legal safeguards. If these do not function adequately to protect customers’ interests, then the firm can earn monopoly profits for the benefit of the owners or instead be run by the managers in their and the employees’ interests as reflected in higher costs. In principle public service organizations exist for the benefit of the community and need to respond to the often conflicting interests of taxpayers and service users. In practice they are run by the provider professions and related workers. Without market regulation, good performance for clients (defined as users and taxpayers) is obtained through hierarchical controls and professional values.

Compared with the U-form structure M-form makes a much sharper and more transparent distinction between the provider and client roles of the LEA but there still remains a tension between them. In its role acting on behalf of taxpayers and users, the LEA determines the size and allocation of the education budget (within constraints imposed by central government) and, with DES approval, determines the number, location, size and types of its maintained schools. These are the roles of ‘planner of facilities’ and ‘leader of the education service’ proposed by the Audit Commission (1989a). A crucial LMS activity for the LEA is devising and operating the funding formula. Another two of the Audit Commission’s roles for LEAS – ‘providing information to users of the education service’ and ‘regulator of quality – also fall within the remit of the LEA in acting on behalf of taxpayers and users. With the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and mass opting out, if it occurs, only the consumer-oriented functions of funding and information provision with respect to LEA schools remain.

The final two Audit Commission roles – ‘banker to schools’ and ‘partner’ – cover the services which LEAS provide for schools. Most are due to disappear or be traded on an internal market. The image of partnership between LEA and schools is a long-standing one. Once used to soften the perception of hierarchical control of schools by the LEA, it now implies that the LEA provides support services which are valued by schools who can actively choose whether or not to use them. By means of the internal market the functional departments of the authority treat schools as their clients and solicit their custom.

The regulatory role of the LEA

The M-form model applied to the LEA requires the LEA to act as regulator on behalf of users and taxpayers. Although the monitoring and evaluation element of LEAS’ control system has in many cases been rather weak (Audit Commission 1989b, Hargreaves 1990) the thrust of ERA until the Education (Schools) Act
1992 was to strengthen this role. The government’s concern about the producer domination of LEAs underpins its desire to ‘privatize’ inspection. Denying LEAs the means to evaluate schools and apply rewards and sanctions removes from them a crucial internal mechanism of control which characterizes an M-form organization. Unless central government is able to perform the quality control function the restructured school system will resemble an H-form organization. H-form firms rely much more on market signals than internal control mechanisms for their main function of allocating resources.

Whether the M-form, with its strong internal control mechanism, is more effective than H-form depends on how far good performance (from the client perspective) can be secured from the two remaining and highly contrasting control devices – the professional culture of teachers, and the exit and voice of parents and pupils in the educational marketplace. In the theory of organizational design, internal monitoring, evaluation and reward mechanisms are needed to combat the opportunism of the organization’s employees. Such opportunism does not exist if members of the organization are motivated by professional ideals and public service values, so long as these reflect social preferences. Whether such opportunism is rife in the education service is very much a matter of ideological perspective, with public choice theorists claiming a disjuncture in public service monopolies between clients’ and professionals’ preferences. Under an H-form model great reliance is placed on the market as a regulating mechanism for ensuring that schools respond to customer preferences with inspection providing market information.

**Economizing on information**

A major strength claimed for M- and H-form organizations is that they economize on information. Top managers can be far more effective because they need less information to run an M/H-form structure and can concentrate on the information needed for strategic planning (in the M-form case), overall resource allocation and divisional monitoring. However, as the case-study evidence in the next section suggests, the informational demands of M/H-form in the public sector are likely to be greater than in the private sector precisely because the market is not allowed to function freely. The price system under LMS functions in a highly restricted way. Schools cannot vary the fees they receive except through collective political lobbying and cannot charge direct users except in a very limited way. The price is established by a complex formula which requires much gathering and analysis of information at the centre. This is in complete contrast to decentralized free market price setting which is not necessarily dependent on formal information-gathering activities. Deeply entrenched egalitarian values in society have prevented the government from permitting state schools to set their own prices, but at the same time it is recognized that schools need to incur different costs for pupils of the same age either because their plant operating costs differ or because pupils with learning problems are judged to need more resources applied to them. Consequently the LEA has to establish and
maintain a complex formula funding mechanism. Accounting for schools as cost centres has also contributed to the informational demands of LMS.

**Organizational restructuring in an LEA**

The rest of this paper is concerned with applying the theory of organizational form to the restructuring undertaken by a county LEA in implementing LMS in the period 1989–91. The LEA, Barsetshire, has experienced changes in party political control. It has neither enthusiastically embraced the radical right restructuring of local government from providers to enablers nor has it been predisposed to resist the implementation of the LMS as much as possible.

First the LEA’s role as purchaser of education services through formula funding is examined, then its changing role as service provider to schools, and finally the much murkier area of performance assessment is discussed.

**LEA as purchaser: the funding formula**

The funding formula is the chief means by which the internal market is regulated as it expresses the price and other terms on which the LEA contracts its schools to provide education. As schools cannot change the age-groups of pupils they admit or their admission limits or be closed or opened without DES approval, schools’ and LEAs’ ability to influence exit from and entry into the market is severely restricted.

The DES (1988) guidelines state that the formula should

a. be simple, clear and predictable;

b. be based on an assessment of schools’ objective needs, rather than on historic patterns of expenditure;

c. allocate at least 75% of the aggregated schools budget according to the number of pupils in each school weighted for differences in their ages.

In practice Barset’s formula was relatively complex because of the large number of other factors to be taken into account – additional costs of small schools, pupils with special educational need, size of school buildings and grounds, energy costs, community use of premises and split sites. A further complication was the addition of a transitional element to protect schools with higher than average teacher salaries. Thus the informational demands of the formula are considerable.

Transition to an M-form structure was marked by tensions in the relationship between the education department and the authority’s functional departments. For example, in devising a sub-formula for energy use the education department depended on information from the property services department on energy expenditure by school – data which had never previously been assembled. Reliable costs centre accounts were difficult to put together so the LEA had to allo-
cate energy costs on a historic basis for the first two years. There were disagree-
ments over devising a sub-formula for energy, with the property department
wanting an easily maintained formula based only on pupil numbers, while the
education department pressed for a fairer formula based also on premises area.
There were also problems with the accuracy of figures for compensating schools
for the cost of community use of their premises.

Another element of informational complexity was Barset’s special needs
index for the formula which was based on seven measures of social disadvan-
tage. This was poorly understood by teachers and governors. Few liked the
index but because Barset did not use authority-wide testing and DES rules did not
permit judgemental indices there seemed little alternative. The problem of con-
structing a special needs index is a good example of the informational demands
of the M-form structure adapted for the public sector. This information would
not be required if the LEA could set one price for all children of a given age and
not have to differentiate further. Neither would the information be needed at
headquarters level if schools were free to charge their own prices or differentiate
between pupils. Once additional social policy demands are made of the educa-
tion service then the issue of information requirements surfaces as does that of
incentives. The market way to induce schools to cater for special needs is
through cash incentives. This implies that an index which attaches extra money
to individual pupils is more effective than one which does not do this explicitly.
Apart from extra funding for pupils with special needs, there is also the question
of schools’ incentives to get rid of troublesome pupils. Barset’s formula discour-
aged such head teacher opportunism by requiring schools to pay for excluded
pupils’ tuition.

As well as price, a vital element of the contract is specifying the units being
bought. The Barset formula, like most, calculated the number of age-weighted
pupils for funding purposes as a 50:50 split between the numbers on roll in the
form 7 count in the January before the start of the financial year and the
number forecast for the next January. If pupil numbers had been under-fore-
cast schools did not receive additional money until the next financial year.
Secondary head teachers were dissatisfied that the forecasts did not take
account of more up-to-date figures on actual admissions for the coming year,
collected by the education office areas. The delay in information flows
between authority departments had not mattered prior to LMS when pupil fore-
casts were used for long-term planning purposes only. The LEA proposed to
make better use of admissions data in its forecasts. A further complicating
factor was the late decisions of Appeals Panels, in one case adding a form of
to entry to a school. The LEA has responded to under-forecast pupil numbers by
allowing schools with significant under-forecasts to budget for a deficit in
anticipation of the additional funding due in the next financial year.

One of the benefits of formula funding is that it has made much more trans-
parent what actual educational priorities are as revealed in the distribution of the
authority’s education budget to different ages and characteristics of pupils and
types of school. This has stimulated debate about educational priorities which focuses to a great extent on the formula.

As in other authorities, the primary sector was vociferous in pressing for an increase in primary age weights. In response to a well-argued case by the Barsetshire primary head teachers association, the members increased the primary budget by 5.5%. The real increases in primary and secondary funding are shown in Table 2.

Within the secondary sector 11–16, schools complained of being unfairly treated in comparison with schools with sixth forms which received a larger fixed cost element in the formula as well as a higher weighting for sixth formers. In 1991/92 the fixed cost addition for sixth forms was removed as part of a budget-cutting exercise. But the authority’s attempts to rationalize sixth-form provision by setting up a new tertiary college were put on ice on hearing of the government’s intention to remove colleges from LEA control.

An important policy issue now reflected through the formula is the maintenance of small schools. Barset’s formula gave lump sums for schools depending on the age range of its pupils. These accounted for 8% of the ASB in 1990/91 and 7% in 1991/92. The formula itself in 1990/91 was not biased against small schools (Levac’ic 1992b) though the greatest losses and gains were among small primaries. In Barsetshire Conservative councillors supported village primaries while Labour members favoured urban schools through the special needs element of the formula. However, in 1991, faced with the need to cut expenditure, the members agreed to reduce the fixed cost allocations of primary schools by 25% and put more money into age-weighted pupil units for the primary years. The episode is interesting because it is a clear example of members using the funding formula as a policy instrument. There were widespread complaints that the Council had no open policy on small schools: they were being underhand in using the formula to bleed small schools slowly to death rather than devising a rational plan for school closures and amalgamations. In response the members asked officers for a review of primary school provision. Meanwhile the district auditors started their own review. There had already been some structural adjustments with a number of infants, junior and

Table 2  Increase in real ASB expenditure: Barset 1989/90 to 1991/92

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary sector budget share</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary sector budget share</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total aggregated schools budget</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary: change in per pupil funding</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary: change in per pupil funding</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall change in per pupil funding</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
four middle schools being amalgamated and the governors of a school with 19 pupils requesting closure. So there is clear evidence that formula funding coupled with financial stringency increased the pressures to rationalize primary provision.

However there was no indication that the LEA encouraged popular schools to expand. One popular school in our case study sample of 11 was unwilling to grow. There is therefore some emerging evidence that parents are increasingly indicating a preference for an out-of-catchment school and that the LEA will have to decide how to respond by closing uneconomic schools and expanding popular ones, as well as in its policy towards subsidizing transport costs.

The LEA as client: selling in the internal market

As already indicated, Barset could not be classified as a radical decentralizing M-form authority. Its initial inclination was to retain under discretionary exceptions rather than to delegate. However, for 1991/92 the education committee had to cut £6.5 million or 2.5% from its planned budget in order to avoid community charge capping. School budgets were protected while the main brunt of the cuts was borne by central services and by peripheral school related activities – farms, outdoor centres, the library, museum and advisory services, curriculum projects, home-to-school links, music tuition, units for disruptive pupils and boarding places. Thirty to 40 central posts were shed and special needs advisory teachers reduced by 25%, a move particularly regretted by schools. The estimated real changes in primary and secondary school budgets over the years 1989/90 to 1991/92 are shown in Table 2.

Property services also faced enforced restructuring on M-form lines. Under local government legislation cleaning, school meals, grounds and building maintenance have been contracted out by the authority and most schools had to accept authority contracts. Some of these were won by DSOS, others by ex-council employees and yet others by independent private contractors. Other items, such as the property services department advice on building maintenance and energy, were to be charged for. With certain exceptions the schools’ level of satisfaction with authority-contracted services was rather low. One school in our sample, which was able to opt out of the county grounds maintenance contract and employ its own groundsman, was highly satisfied with the result. A number of schools wished to employ their own caretaker or handyman and ideas for joint school appointments surfaced. In the area of property services at least there is considerable evidence that M-form internal market arrangements have shown up the inefficiencies of the previous system. Private sector contractors, supplying such services as refuse collection in competition with district councils, were entering the market. The internal market in which schools, seeking value for money, are supplied both by the authority and private sector firms looks likely to flourish in the area of property services.

The Audit Commission (1989a) singled out ‘banker to the schools’ as one of
its six roles for post-ERA LEAs. Though budgets were delegated to schools, the actual unit of account remained largely a book-keeping entry in the LEA’s computers. In 1990/91, apart from a small amount paid into a bank account, schools did not get their budgets in cash. As the LEA openly acknowledged, reconciliation of the LEA’s and schools’ accounts proved a major headache, partly because of bugs in the software, inadequate training leading to operator errors and a lack of co-ordination between the three central departments involved. The lack of co-ordination stemmed from having to replace the previous U-form structure, whereby the finance department was a central functional department doing the accounts of all the other departments, by a system of cost-centre accounting. On the whole the schools were tolerant of the LEA’s problems in getting a complex system operating to the tight time-scale dictated by central government. Because of the lack of accurate and up-to-date budget monitoring data schools were largely navigating in the dark, relying heavily on their own records. The lack of information on spending must account, at least in part, for the extreme caution of schools which generated a large budget surplus of £6 million (7% of schools’ budgets).

Under impetus from members, the authority was already working on a cheque book pilot scheme prior to Circular 7/91 requiring LEAs to introduce chequeing facilities for non-staff payment for all secondary schools and offering them to primary schools. From the school’s point of view the potential advantages of cheque book facilities are gains from interest payments and prompt payment discounts and from cutting down the time spent querying the LEA’s version of the school accounts. The costs are the loss of interest earned by the LEA from managing large cash balances (deducted from the schools’ budgets) and the systems needed to ensure that the authority can still discharge its duty to account for public money.

To offset this loss of financial services provision, the LEA started a scheme of loan and saving facilities for schools. Provided a school committed surplus funds to the LEA for over a year it would earn interest at base rate. The LEA would also loan money to schools for specific projects at base rate plus half a per cent.

The provision of financial information for budget monitoring and planning is one of the major informational costs of LMS. The issue of how the financial recording and reporting function is best distributed between LEA and schools is not yet resolved but one can detect a distinct shift towards M/H-form structures, with the operating divisions taking on more of the functional activities and an internal market served by both the LEA and private sector banks developing.

**Accountability and regulation**

A key distinguishing feature of M-form organization compared with H-form is that in the former head office operates a strong internal control system for holding the divisions accountable by monitoring, evaluating and rewarding their
performance. In this aspect the M-form organization as applied to firms differs from the version in education. The top managers of a firm, whether or not it is M-form, are accountable to the firm’s shareholders via the market. The accountability of all other employees is channelled through the top managers: they hold the divisional managers accountable to them alone. In education accountability is diffused. Unlike middle managers, heads and governors are not in a clearly subordinate accountability relationship through the director of education to the members. Responsibility for holding the school’s professional managers accountable is shared between governors and LEA. Governors have their own power base through direct elections and can oppose the LEA so long as they do not display such incompetence that the LEA can take over their role. Even then the governors can appeal to the Secretary of State for reinstatement of their responsibilities. The shared accountability between governors and LEA reflects the fact that LMS in Britain involves political as well as organizational decentralization. This is in contrast to North American examples of school-based management which involve organizational decentralization giving no real power to school governing councils of elected parents (Brown 1990, Levačić 1992a). Central government, the third body politically accountable for education, has increasingly sought to tighten the regulatory framework for schools through the national curriculum, testing and inspection.

In Circular 7/88 the DES clearly stated that LEAs are expected to monitor and evaluate schools’ performance and required a statement of their intentions in their LMS scheme document. This specification of the LEA’s regulatory role is an essential element of LMS as an M-form organizational structure for LEAs. It was argued (e.g., Audit Commission 1989b) that most LEAs would have to strengthen their regulatory (i.e., inspectoral) function and separate it more clearly from the LEA’s advisory role. Others argued that the inspectoral and advisory roles needed to be fused (Hargreaves 1990). Whichever stance one adopts, evaluating value for money in the education service requires bringing together two previously entirely separate forms of monitoring – financial and educational.

Barset, like most if not all authorities, had separate processes for financial accountability and educational accountability. To account for themselves financially schools submitted their budget plans to the finance officers for approval. The criteria were financial: does the budget balance without relying on risky assumptions about costs or income? There was no consideration of educational goals, which the finance officers could not professionally assess in any case. Schools had few problems passing this test and the large surplus generated in 1990/91 was a testimony to their financial prudence. Barset’s educational culture favours professional not managerial accountability and a fusion of inspection and advice. Its pre-LMS educational accountability processes were based on ‘looking with schools not at schools’. Choosing their own objectives, schools carried out an extensive self-evaluation every five years assisted by divisional officers and advisers. The review was then shared with a panel of members. In late 1988 a working party on performance indicators identified around 200 performance
indicators which were presented as a menu from which schools could select items. In March 1989 the Education Committee approved a set of principles for evaluation and monitoring. The main ones were that institutions should be responsible for their own evaluation using their own data and supported by central staff. The institutions should supply the LEA with summary data and present reports to members. Two years later this was extended to include an annual school plan to be shared with members every four years. Thus the tight externally directed accountability enforced by top management in the M-form model was not favoured in Barset, an LEA which then had no opted-out schools. Interviews with heads confirmed the LEA’s soft approach to accountability which is at odds with the managerial accountability typical of the M-form model.

Barset’s tentative moves in the direction of more transparent accountability of schools illustrates well both the diffused, if not confused, nature of accountability specified by the 1988 Education Reform Act. LEA’s attempts to improve accountability of schools to them and develop a system of support for schools has now been undermined by the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the legislation proposed in the 1992 White Paper (Great Britain 1992). It is now quite clear – which it was not in the 1988 Act – that the Department for Education, through Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Schools, is charged with the quality assurance role of headquarters management in the M-form model.

Conclusion

This paper has developed a model of LMS as a restructuring of the education service from a U-form to an M/H-form organization. The discussion has highlighted the key concepts of information and incentives, their interrelationship and their significance for organizational design as applied to LMS. The conclusions are:

1. Interpreting LMS as a transformation from U-form to M/H-form is supported by empirical evidence from one LEA.
2. The claimed superiority of M/H-form in handling problems of bounded rationality and opportunism needs to be carefully reassessed when the model is applied to the education service, particularly in the form currently proposed.

The benefits of better incentives to generate and utilize information to improve efficiency and effectiveness have to be set against the extra costs of obtaining an increased quantity of information. The volume of information problem arises in large part from the market’s natural efficiency in processing information being suppressed by regulating it for social policy objectives. The information required for drawing up the internal market contract is not just factual, such as the cost of heating a building, it is largely judgemental, as with special needs funding and assumptions about class size. This stems from the fact that there is
not a well-specified educational production function mirroring the technical specifications of manufacturing production lines. This, of course, is a major justification for LMS, namely that schools know better how to allocate their resources between different inputs and processes than the LEA. If the education production function were well specified then it would be easier to organize its effective provision from the centre.

Some of the potential benefits of the M/H-form organization in terms of efficiency and effectiveness can be discerned from the Barset data though no attempt to assess their magnitude was made. One benefit is the much more transparent information about resource allocation which is stimulating debate about educational expenditure priorities and informing policy changes, in particular increased funding for primary schools. Greater efficiency in the allocation of resources is being promoted by moves to close or amalgamate higher cost schools. The tentative beginnings of an internal market in property services indicates that schools do not find existing LEA-provided services the most efficient and are looking for alternatives. The verdict on the most critical issue – whether schools make more effective use of the resources now delegated to them – is not addressed here. No methodology for directly establishing improved educational outcomes was deemed feasible given the lack of data in Barset on educational outcomes. Drawing on qualitative data from 11 case-study schools in Barset a very tentative conclusion is reached by Marren and Levačić (1992) that school managers by and large consider that they are now better able, even if in a limited way, to allocate resources according to their school’s priorities and that some schools have been actively developing processes for more effective resource management.

Another major issue is whether opportunism means that managerial modes of accountability have to be developed or whether opportunism is sufficiently limited in the education sector that professional modes of accountability are better at motivating staff. The 1992 Education (Schools) Act together with the 1992 White Paper have stymied the original intentions of the 1988 Education Reform Act that LEAs should develop further as regulators using combinations of managerial and professional modes of accountability. Instead considerable reliance is being placed on a market model of regulation, in which publicly available audit information informs consumers in their choice of school and lay governors in their policies towards their professional staff. Fearing that market regulation may prove inadequate, the 1992 White Paper has proposed compensating for the absence of an LEA quality assurance function by the creation of ad hoc Education Associations to turn round failing schools. Thus the White Paper belatedly recognized the absence of a well-specified schools’ regulator with a quality control function in the government’s earlier legislation. However, the government has fragmented the strategic functions of the M-form model’s headquarters management amongst a number of agencies, including residual and attenuated LEAs. Thus the postulated efficiency in information processing of the M-form organization is most unlikely to be fully achieved with the currently
proposed organizational design for the education system as it both fragments and concentrates discrete planning, funding and quality assurance functions in different central government-controlled bureaucracies.

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by ESRC grant R000 23 2234. I wish to thank education officers, teachers and governors in Barset for their cooperation with this research, in particular their goodwill in sparing time to provide data when ERA has imposed its own great demands on their time. I wish also to thank Eamon Marren and Julian Ducasse for their assistance in collecting and analysing data, and participants in the Education Reform Act Research Network Seminar (University of Warwick, February 1992) for their stimulating comments. All errors of fact and interpretation are my responsibility.

Notes

1 Some writers treat the holding company as a sub-division of the M-form.
2 For a further elaboration of internal markets applied to education, see Levačić (1992a).
3 The Austrian school of economists is associated in particular with von Hayek. In the 1980s it became much more influential politically. Its advocacy of the market is much less cautious than that of mainstream neoclassical economists with its concept of perfect competition and its static mathematical analysis. In contrast Austrian economics is dynamic and non-mathematical.
4 The real change excludes inflation and budget changes which have a neutral effect on schools, for example because they are adjustments of funds between the ASB and other budgets.
5 See Thomas (1991) for a survey of this part of LMS schemes.
6 See Kogan (1986).

References

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS


330
EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND THE LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

Tim Simkins


This paper reviews selected parts of the recent empirical literature on the consequences of LMS with particular reference to the latter’s potential for influencing school efficiency and effectiveness. It explores three areas: the effects of formula funding, patterns of resource allocation within schools and changing patterns of influence in school decision making. It suggests that LMS may be efficiency enhancing, but the evidence primarily relates to input efficiency, which in some cases may represent little more than economy, while the implications of LMS for effectiveness have been little considered. The paper explores some of the issues involved in examining these concepts more rigorously and concludes that greater consideration needs to be given to the interrelationship between efficiency and effectiveness and considerations of equity.

Local management of schools (LMS) in the UK is one of the key elements of the Conservative Government’s education reforms of the past five years. It represents one strand in a strategy designed to pursue the ‘five great themes’ of ‘quality, diversity, increasing parental choice, greater autonomy for schools and greater accountability’ (DEF 1992: 2). Under LMS schools are being given very wide powers over the management of resources: school budgets and most aspects of personnel and premises management are, or shortly will be, managed at the level of the individual school.

The powers granted to schools under LMS are delegated to governing bodies containing representatives of parents, teachers and the local education authority (LEA) as well as co-opted members; headteachers are responsible to these governing bodies. LMS, therefore, in Brown’s (1990) terms comprises both organizational and political decentralization of power. According to the Government:
Effective schemes of local management will enable governing bodies and head teachers to plan their use of resources – including their most valuable resource, their staff – to maximum effect in accordance with their own needs and priorities, and to make schools more responsive to their clients – parents, pupils, the local community and employers.

(DES 1988: para 9)

The reference to responsiveness alludes to the fact that the powers of LMS must be exercised within an environment which is itself undergoing a very significant transformation. There are two key elements here. First, schools are being made much more explicitly subject to market pressures, through a significant increase in parental choice of school and requirements that certain kinds of information about schools be published including performance of pupils in tests and examinations. Second, however, this market is being firmly controlled through the implementation of a National Curriculum and a tightly defined regime of testing associated with it. This paper focuses primarily on LMS, but it will be impossible to consider its effects in any depth without keeping in mind this broader context of increased parental choice and centralized curriculum control.

The radical nature of restructuring which LMS involves raises a whole range of research questions. It is possible to explore its consequences from accounting, economic, political, sociological and educational perspectives (Simkins 1990). The focus taken here will be primarily an economic one: it will explore in particular how ideas about efficiency and effectiveness underpin, implicitly or explicitly, the reform, and how far research about the consequences of LMS can be related to these ideas. The paper will draw on a selected number of research studies which address the resourcing and resource management consequences of LMS. In interpreting these studies it is important to bear in mind that the reform is still in its early stages of implementation so any findings about its consequences can be no more than extremely tentative.

**Efficiency and effectiveness**

It is now a commonplace, following the work of the Audit Commission (1985), to refer to the ‘three E’s’: economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Economy is defined as the purchase of a given standard of good or service at the lowest cost, efficiency as the achievement of given outcomes at least cost, and effectiveness as the matching of results with objectives. This distinction does not prevent confusion, however, especially when discussing educational programmes. This paper will focus primarily on the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness.

I will distinguish between a number of concepts of efficiency. *Production* efficiency concerns the relation between resource inputs and outputs: it comprises *technical* efficiency – combining resources in ways which maximize output per unit of input – and *price* efficiency – choosing that combination of resources which makes best use of a budget given a particular pattern of relative
prices. Particular educational objective might be achieved in a number of ways, all of which are technically efficient, but only one of these is likely to be price efficient for any particular pattern of prices. LMS is clearly and explicitly intended to cause schools to become more efficient in these terms. Block budgets, with almost complete virement within them, give managers the opportunity to choose resource combinations which seem to them most likely to provide the best value for money. The range of choices available is wide and will be considered in more detail below.

Considerations of efficiency are insufficient, however. Questions about how to produce have little meaning unless they are related to ideas about what to produce. The issue here concerns effectiveness: the matching of outputs to some objective function. The key problem for managers under LMS is that such an objective function can be derived in a number of ways. The Government statement reproduced above implies two perspectives: ’[governing bodies and head teachers’] own needs and priorities’ and the demands of ‘their clients – parents, pupils, the local community and employers’. To this must be added, of course, both the overriding expectation that schools will teach and test the National Curriculum and also professionals’ own perceptions of what is in the best interests of their pupils in relation to their educational and other needs. The implications of these competing conceptions of effectiveness have been little discussed in the empirical literature on LMS although they are clearly central to any attempt to evaluate its impact.

We will return to these issues later. It is sufficient to note here the two key questions posed about LMS by the efficiency and effectiveness perspectives. First, what assumptions about production efficiency guide choices in the allocation of resources to and within schools? And second, how do those within schools choose to deploy resources towards objectives which must balance the demands of the National Curriculum, of parents’ and other ‘clients’’ expectations, and of their own staff’s values and concerns?

Formula funding

School budgets under LMS must be determined on the basis of a formula which is dominated by pupil numbers – the ‘age-weighted pupil unit’ (AWPU). The operation of formula funding has been a major focus of research in the early stages of LMS. The importance given in the legislation to funding schools by formula gives both the Government and LEAs the opportunity to express key values and policies through the details of formula design. The majority of studies in this area have involved the examination of available documentation or large-scale surveys to explore how these values and policies are carried through in practice. The Government’s values have been embodied in the requirement that a high proportion of funds (initially 75%, now 80%) are allocated on the basis of pupil numbers and ages. LEAs, however, have the opportunity to exercise discretion – and hence pursue their own values – through the age weightings they use, the
ways in which they define and protect small schools, and the ways in which pupils with special needs and/or those suffering from socio-economic disadvantage are supported (Thomas and Levačić 1991, Thomas and Bullock 1992). There is not space here to review in any detail studies of the ways in which formulae have been designed, but a number of main findings need to be highlighted:

- LEAs vary considerably in the relative weightings which they give to pupils of various ages, but they follow a common pattern with older children more favourably resourced than younger ones (except for those in the very early years) with a noticeable step at around age 11 between primary and secondary school and smaller steps at age 13/14 and at the end of compulsory schooling (age 15/16). Absolute levels of funding per pupil at each age differ considerably between LEAs (Bullock and Thomas 1992, Levačić 1992a).
- The scale of gains and losses among schools as formula budgeting is implemented varies considerably among LEAs. However, there is a tendency, which is not uniform across authorities, for larger schools to gain, in both primary and secondary sectors, at the expense of smaller schools. Secondary schools with fewer than 700 pupils have the greatest chance of being losers (Levačić 1992a, Thomas and Bullock 1992).
- LEAs protect small schools in a variety of ways: by lump sums given to all schools, by sliding scales of additional resources related to school size and/or salary protection, or by a combination of these. Where lump sums are used the definition of smallness varies widely with sample LEAs ranging from 150 to 250 pupils in the primary sector and from 470 to 832 pupils in the secondary sector (Thomas and Bullock 1992).
- Pupils with special educational needs and those suffering from socio-economic disadvantage are supported through a variety of mechanisms which vary in the criteria used and do not distinguish consistently between these two kinds of need (Lee 1992, Thomas and Bullock 1992).

The idea of an ‘objective’ formula can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it might simply imply that the formula is specified so that its outcome can be predicted once the values of the independent variables are known. Alternatively, and more demandingly, it might mean that there is a clearly defined rationale for its components. Evidence suggests that the early days of formula funding have been dominated by the former interpretation. First, the constraints imposed by the Government in its search for simple formulae have precluded the design of formulae based on any complex assessment of need. Second, and probably more important, LEAs in designing their formulae have generally attempted to reflect earlier patterns of resource allocation. In part, no doubt, this has been because such patterns were deemed to reflect long established – albeit qualitative – assessments of relative need. More important, though, has been the
determination to minimize the difficulties of transition in a situation where, for most LEAs, few if any additional resources were available. Thus the reaffirmation of earlier patterns of choice has been reinforced by the pressures to minimize the number of ‘losers’ and, therefore, the number of ‘winners’.

Comments made by Bullock and Thomas (1992) about differences in age-weightings can be extended without too much difficulty to differences in funding more generally:

The public and explicit nature of these resource rules provides a means for asking questions about the educational implications of resource distribution and the rationale for these first formulae. All too often it is likely that LEAs have sought to replicate current funding priorities rather than alter them . . . Yet the introduction of the National Curriculum suggests a case for examining the distribution of resources. Regardless of local or historic explanations, can the lower levels of funding at the junior level be justified given the demands of the National Curriculum? Questions may also emerge about the variations between LEAs in funding pupils of comparable ages: on what basis are such differences to be justified?

(Bullock and Thomas 1992: 12)

Such arguments bring to the fore questions of effectiveness and efficiency in a powerful way. What kind of educational provision is the formula expected to fund? And how might such provisions be made in the most cost-effective way? Formula funding enables the answers to questions such as these – which are rarely made explicit in LEA resource allocation policies – to be tested. Some studies, however, have begun to explore them from first principles. For example, Kelly (1992) develops a model on the basis of assumptions about curriculum provision, maximum group sizes, required contact time for teaching-related activities and for management, and provision for special educational needs. This generates an increased funding requirement for both primary and secondary sectors, but with a proportionately greater increase for primary schools. Other LEAs are now undertaking similar studies and reaching similar conclusions (e.g. Sheffield City Council 1992). The basis of such conclusions, of course, derives from professional judgement rather than any empirically established relationship between resource inputs and learning or other outcomes. It embodies, therefore, a particular conceptualization of how efficiency and effectiveness should be defined – in terms of ‘need’ – and of the kinds of evidence which are acceptable to demonstrate the resource requirements necessary to achieve them. The debate about need-based funding, especially in relation to the primary sector, will undoubtedly grow; but any resolution seems a long way off in a climate of tight public expenditure control.
Internal resource allocation

Compared with the ‘macro’ consequences of the implementation of formula funding, fewer studies of the responses of schools in terms of their internal patterns of resource allocation have been reported so far. This issue, among others, is addressed by a national study of the effects of LMS as perceived by headteachers which is being undertaken by a team from Birmingham University (Arnott et al. 1992). An initial survey of 812 headteachers in the second half of 1991 produced a number of interesting, if tentative, findings:

• headteacher workload: an average of eight hours per week associated with LMS, with two-thirds of heads feeling ‘unacceptable pressures’ as a result;
• staff contracts: indications of an increasing use of temporary staff;
• secretarial and clerical staff: a tendency for schools to increase modestly the number of hours worked;
• the effect of salary level on appointments: 18% of heads reported that salary had been a factor in the appointment of candidates;
• discretionary authority over salary level: 16% reported they had used this.

These findings must be treated with caution: they date from 1991, they are based on limited longitudinal data, they represent self-reporting by headteachers and they are not related to schools’ circumstances such as their size or whether they are winners or losers under formula funding. Some of these qualifications can be overcome by the use of detailed case studies; these, however, are relatively expensive and can take time to lead to conclusions. One such study, by Marren and Levačič (1992, Levačič and Marren 1992b), examines the first year of LMS in 11 schools in one LEA. Despite the short time-scale covered, a number of the findings are indicative. Schools are classified by sector (secondary, middle, primary) and by whether they are ‘winners’ or ‘losers’. The main findings confirm the expectation that the approaches taken by schools will depend upon their position on the ‘winner-loser’ spectrum.

... some schools were clearly constrained by their formula allocation in their ability to plan their resource use in relation to identified priorities. Those schools not so constrained were either content to continue as before or ... to use LMS actively to pursue the implementation of a number of stated objectives, [in one case] working closely with the school development plan. Other schools [mainly losers] had to be more selective and focused on particular priorities such as enhancing core curriculum areas ... or of increasing the pay of secretarial support staff. This has meant that other priorities have had to be shelved, such as an agreed incentive allowance structure or curricular provision ...

Those on the edge of viability ... were not even able to do this but had to use every means at their disposal to survive as they were. This
involved ... detailed examination of how every part of the budget was spent to ensure that limited resources were used most efficiently. This meant that schools were economising in ways they would not have had to previously. This included considering the cost of new staff ... Those schools ... which did worse under formula funding have been forced to examine their existing structures to find savings.

(Marren and Levačič 1992: 146–147)

These findings have been quoted at length because they raise important issues. They suggest that losers are more likely to concentrate on ‘efficiency’ strategies than are winners, but the latter do not necessarily use the opportunity provided by an increase of resources to pursue explicit ‘effectiveness’ strategies designed to enhance the achievement of their key objectives. Much seems to depend on the headteacher’s management style and the degree to which development planning is seen as a central element in school management: ‘energy and capability [in managing resources] did not depend on whether a school was a winner or a loser’ (Levačič and Marren 1992a: 22).

Nevertheless, resourcing opportunities, and therefore choices, clearly do depend on resourcing levels. Examples of choices made by ‘winning’ schools in the study by Marren and Levačič include increases in staffing and in non-contact time, increasing the salaries of head and deputy, maximizing incentive allowances, increasing secretarial support and salaries, additional funding on in-service training and increasing the resourcing of key curriculum areas. Losers, in contrast, had to consider restructuring, not replacing staff when they left and targeting additional resources extremely carefully to areas of critical need. The degree to which they could achieve the latter often depended on the ‘luck’ associated with such factors as staff retirements. Furthermore the, admittedly limited, evidence in the paper suggests that as the scale of budget loss increases (and as schools get smaller) efficiency strategies designed to pursue key priorities with fewer resources are increasingly replaced by ‘economy’ strategies whose main concern is to save money whatever the long-term costs.

School decision making

LMS has placed major new responsibilities on schools and has changed significantly the formal roles of headteachers and governing bodies. How are these changes being implemented in practice? A number of studies have explored this issue, mainly using a case study approach (Bowe and Ball 1992, Broadbent et al. 1992 and 1993, Levačič and Marren 1992b, Sheffield City Council 1992). One of the clearest findings from these studies is that resource and financial management are generally undertaken by one or two senior members of staff, sometimes, but not always, working with one or two active governors. The senior staff involved are normally the headteacher in primary schools and the head and/or a deputy in secondary schools, with an increasing tendency in the latter
case to employ a bursar or finance officer. The potential paradox here is stated clearly by a study in Sheffield:

In Sheffield, as elsewhere in the country, the growing practice of school development planning places great stress on a collaborative process of curriculum and resource planning led by governors and, through them, the head, and involving all the staff ... The case studies [of eight Sheffield schools] suggest that, for whatever reasons, we are still a long way from achieving this collaborative model ... This prompts two questions. Is this a satisfactory state of affairs? If not, what ought to be done about it?

(Sheffield City Council 1992: 6)

The reasons usually given for this centralization of resource management include both the level of knowledge about whole-school resource issues residing ‘at the top’ and the perceived need, in the words of one head, to ‘act as a buffer, a filter to protect the rest of the staff from the huge amount of issues, many of which are not important and would only upset them if they had to contend with them’ (Broadbent et al. 1992a: 59). Despite the rather patronizing assumptions embodied in this quote, the evidence from the case studies does seem to imply that teaching staff generally do not wish to be closely involved in decisions generated by LMS. For example, on the basis of interviews in their 11 schools Levačić and Marren commented on ‘the far higher rate of indifference to LMS [among classroom teachers] which a number of teachers attributed to the time demands upon them, particularly by the National Curriculum’ (1992b: 6). Their findings, however, place an interesting gloss on these issues. Their interviews showed that the differences in orientation between senior staff and classroom teachers seemed to hold whether the schools concerned were winners or losers: at all schools – including losers – senior staff were in favour of LMS while at almost all schools class teachers were indifferent, wary or hostile. The only exceptions to the general finding were large primary schools where teachers as well as heads seemed positively oriented towards LMS, because, it is argued, these schools represented an exception to the rule in drawing classroom teachers into LMS decision making through the development planning process.

Some of the research findings concerning middle managers in schools, especially heads of subject departments, raise similar issues. Both Levačić and Marren (1992b) and Bowe and Ball (1992) find that some heads of subject departments feel disempowered under LMS, in part because of the concentration of key decisions at senior management level, but also because formula funding has removed an important source of independent resource power – funds from LEA subject advisers. Bowe and Ball also suggest that there is an increasing tendency to delegate difficult resource decisions within schools rather than involve middle managers corporately in their solution.
In a number of instances it appeared as if delegating the consequences of financial constraints assumed more importance than discussing the principles on which costs might be balanced with benefits.

(1992: 76)

Currently the evidence of the impact of LMS on decision-making patterns within schools is quite limited beyond the general finding about centralization. However, given that any thorough analysis of effectiveness and efficiency must link resource considerations with curriculum delivery and the quality of learning, and teaching and learning depend primarily on classroom teachers and middle managers, research on LMS will have to probe more deeply before long.

The search for efficiency and effectiveness: the emerging agenda

So far I have attempted to map some of the research findings concerning the very early stages of a major innovation. These findings are inevitably tentative, but they do raise issues about the implications of LMS for the pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness. What can we say in general about these questions?

The Birmingham survey (Arnott et al. 1992) asked headteachers about their views in this area: 83% agreed that LMS ‘allows the school to make more effective use of its resources’, while only 68% agreed that LMS ‘means resources are being used more efficiently’. The difference is an interesting one; the problem, however, is that effectiveness and efficiency are not defined. Indeed, the research on LMS is often not precise in its use of these terms. For example, Bowe and Ball (1992: 112–113) write about ‘budgetary responsibilities [being] set over and against educational ones’ as ‘decisions about the best and most appropriate form of delivery for the National Curriculum were subordinated to budget setting and vocabularies of institutional survival’. On the other hand, Broadbent et al. (1992a) found that in all four of their case study schools, winners and losers alike, ‘educational values of the school remain intact. Nowhere has been heard the argument that any of the school’s activities should be stopped or reduced because of the economic or financial reasons only’ (1992a: 65). It is not clear here how far such conclusions represent contradictory evidence, which may or may not be explained by the differing circumstances of the schools studied, how far they arise from different conceptualizations of ‘educational values’ (and hence of effectiveness), or indeed how far the data-gathering processes are such as to elicit different responses from respondents. The rest of this paper will explore the efficiency and effectiveness consequences of LMS in more detail.

Efficiency

I will begin by considering the issue of efficiency as this is more consistently explored in the studies being examined and lends itself to less ambiguous conclusions. It can be addressed at two levels: the macro and the micro.
At the macro level issues arise about the distribution of resources between schools, especially in relation to school size. As we have seen, virtually all LEAs have built an element into their formulae to ‘protect’ smaller schools. There is no doubt that small schools have higher unit costs than large ones. For example the Audit Commission (1991) estimated that primary schools with less than 80 pupils on roll cost between £2000 and £3800 per pupil against £1000 for schools with more than 120 pupils. The limitations imposed on funding formulae by the Government, together with the political consequences of making this cost information more openly available at a time of severely constrained budgets, is likely to lead to pressures for rationalization over the next few years, at least in urban areas, and hence to the achievement of greater efficiency in unit cost terms at least. For example, Levačić (1992b: 6) found in a study of one LEA that:

. . . the formula is efficiency promoting in the sense that schools with low unit costs (which are related to size pupil-teacher ratios and occupancy rates) systematically benefit.

Further studies are likely to repeat this finding. However, it begs a number of questions about optimal school size which will be addressed shortly.

At the micro level of the individual school, an issue which has received less attention than formula construction has been the dynamic effects of the formula funding process itself. The requirement that formulae should be ‘objective’ means that the consequences of changes in independent variables – such as the number and age distribution of pupils, the relative weighting given to pupils of different ages or the number of pupils with special needs – on the dependent variable of the school budget can be predicted largely unambiguously. This should enable us to explore the consequences of such changes for provision within the school. What is the impact on the school’s budget, for example, of given change in roll or of a changed proportion of pupils with special needs? What choices do schools make about resource allocation at the margin in response to such budget changes, and what does this tell us about their values in relation to ideas of effectiveness and efficiency? And how far are school strategies influenced by their perceived consequences for future funding?

The issue of school size is particularly interesting in this context. As indicated earlier, there is certainly evidence from case studies that small schools find LMS more difficult to manage than large ones, especially if they are budget losers. However, as LMS develops, two further issues are likely to come to the fore. These are the consequences of changes in school size and, related to this, the concept of ‘optimum size’. As formula funding responds to changing patterns of parental choice as well as to population changes, schools will discover that ‘becoming smaller’ involves a rather different set of problems from those associated with ‘being small’. Arnott et al. (1992: 16) found that:

. . . a substantial number of primary schools may be experiencing
annual changes in pupil numbers equal to a roll change of 4%. Many secondary schools may be experiencing roll changes of 2.5%. These are changes that have a significant impact on their budgets and do not appear to be a consequence of competition. The requirement that, from April 1993, 80% of the Aggregated Schools Budget (ASB) be allocated on the basis of pupil numbers is likely to heighten this effect.

These changes, of course, may involve increases as well as decreases in roll, and in fact seem to be distributed approximately equally between them. Roll falls, however, are likely to cause the most problems, although the exact nature of these problems will be directly related to the design of the formula under which any particular school is resourced. Whether small schools are protected through a sliding scale of additional resources or through a flat rate allocation of resources to all schools will be critical in determining the possibilities available to schools in responding to falling rolls. Decisions made at the margin and from year to year will need to consider carefully the balance between efficiency and effectiveness. How far, for example, and for how long, will a school be able to provide a particular curriculum package before diseconomies of scale force it to modify its objectives? Conversely, how will growing schools strike a balance between resourcing a given curriculum more intensively and broadening the range of activities available to pupils? It is common to discuss matters of size primarily in terms of efficiency, with educational objectives taken as given. Yet school size clearly has an effectiveness dimension too. Many would argue that when a school’s size goes beyond a given range it is no longer the same school. For example, Bowe and Ball found that ‘In fact all of our case study schools actually developed and operated with a fairly well worked out sense of “optimum” or “preferred” size’ (1992: 46), and they go on to argue that ‘the rhetoric of the market has failed to address the issues involved in the impact of growth on quality in complex “people-processing” institutions like schools’ (1992: 49).

Whatever a school’s size, a major consequence of LMS is the extension of choice about the ways in which it can deploy its resources. At present evidence is patchy about the ways in which schools choose to exercise this increased freedom. More case studies over a longer period will be necessary before any clear patterns emerge. However, two themes can be identified which suggest that both technical and price efficiency considerations are increasingly likely to influence schools’ decision-making processes.

The first relates to the overall balance between the major areas of expenditure: teaching staff, support staff, materials and premises-related expenditure. Prior to the implementation of delegated budgets, most LEAs determined the number of teaching and support staff allocated to schools on the basis of different formulae with no virement allowed between them or into or out of other areas of budget expenditure. It is difficult to generalize but two trends do seem apparent: schools are thinking more creatively about the number and types of support staff they need (Mortimore and Mortimore 1992), and increasing
attention is being given to efficiency savings in areas of expenditure related to premises and grounds.

Second, the role of resource pricing is likely to change, particularly with respect to teaching staff salaries. It is Government policy that this should be so: schools are funded on the basis of average not actual salary costs, and there are increasing possibilities for schools to be flexible in their patterns of staff reward. We have already noted a trend for some schools to use discretionary authority over salary levels and to be influenced in their appointments by salary costs. The evidence suggests that these opportunities are only being used in a minority of cases at present, but this is likely to change over time.

The research on LMS to date, then, is most illuminating in relation to efficiency. There is some evidence that larger (and hence more efficient?) schools are being favoured at the expense of smaller ones. And it also seems that schools are increasingly choosing to deploy resources in new ways which imply some – albeit crude – sense of technical and price efficiency in their decision making. As Levačič argues:

The evidence . . . shows that delegated budgeting and the development of quasi-markets has improved efficiency on the input side of the education production function. School managers are seeking and finding new ways of using and combining resource inputs.

(1993: 25)

What is not clear, however, is how these changes relate to educational outcomes. Indeed, it is not always clear that the choices being made are concerned with efficiency rather than with economy: how for example, are we to interpret the appointment of a probationary rather than an experienced teacher because of budgetary pressures? There is little evidence about the ‘mental production functions’ which underpin managers’ choices about the allocation of resources, nor is there any clear evidence about the impact of these choices on pupil learning or other outcomes. This leads us to a consideration of effectiveness.

**Effectiveness**

As the foregoing suggests, a good deal of the research on the implementation of LMS can be explored in terms of its consequences for efficiency. Attempts to apply an effectiveness perspective, however, are fraught with difficulties both conceptual and empirical, and little of the research to date attempts to deal with the issue, at least explicitly, within an LMS context.

The most obvious way to explore effectiveness in education is to address the issue of pupil learning. The Birmingham study asked heads directly whether children’s learning was benefiting from LMS: 35% said it was while 31% said that it was not. Similarly 35% agreed that LMS ‘reduced staff time for the direct support of children’s learning’ while 40% disagreed. The authors comment as follows:
The paradox in our survey data is a matter of concern. How is it that heads are claiming that LM allows more ‘effective’ use of resources whilst reporting uncertainty about its effects on learning? This raises many questions. Might it be the case, for example, that whilst head teachers welcome the ‘flexibility’ of LM it is at a cost – in some schools – of an additional workload upon the head which affects their familiarity with the pupils’ learning? Or does the paradox arise where head teachers welcome the opportunities to make decisions without having to obtain LEA approval, recognise this as enabling a better use of resources but are not clear as to its effects on learning? Is the paradox a short term phenomenon, as the change becomes embedded, or does it relate to long term difficulties which may be associated with schools size and levels of resourcing. Are there explanations to be found in terms of the head teacher’s role as manager?

(Arnott et al. 1992: 6)

Of course, these points address only part of the problem. They beg the question of whether heads were equating effectiveness with children’s learning and, even if they were, whether they shared a conception of what ‘benefits’ in learning means. The issue of how effectiveness is to be defined, let alone who is to define it, is therefore not addressed. This is the case for most of the studies reported here.

Bowe and Ball, however, give one interpretation of this issue:

[Tensions] surround the definition of purpose, and these arise mainly from the constraints, requirements and opportunities created from the provisions of ERA. For example . . . educational decision-making may be set against budget-led planning, professional judgement against the expediencies of market image and professional autonomy against managerial fiat. Thus the development of ‘new management’ is not simply or primarily a structural or administrative change (although new roles and relationships are created): it is also a profound change in organisational culture.

(Bowe and Ball 1992: 145–146)

The point here is that, through LMS and its associated developments in relation to parental choice, schools are increasingly being expected to act as if they are enterprises in a ‘quasi-market’. However, ‘precisely what such enterprises maximise, or could be expected to maximise, is unclear, as is their ownership structure’ (Le Grand 1990: 5). The truth is that educational organizations must respond to a variety of competing claims on them from groups whose conceptions of effectiveness may differ considerably, as does the nature of their influence on school-level decisions (Kouzes and Mico 1979). The result of the reforms of which LMS is a part has been to establish at least three perspectives from which effectiveness can be viewed.
The first is that of national policy emanating from the Department for Education and embodied in legislation and regulations. The key elements here are the establishment of National Curriculum requirements and associated tests and examinations, and – no less important – the requirement that certain kinds of information, for example on examination and test results and on truancy, should be published. At this level, therefore, it could be claimed that a very clear definition of effectiveness is being mandated by Government.

Simultaneously, however, schools are expected to become more responsive to parental choice. It is possible, of course, that parental conceptions of school effectiveness are consistent with the Government’s emphasis on examination and test results and attendance. However, in so far as this is not the case, schools must attempt to ascertain parental expectations, perhaps try to influence them, and consider how their own strategies – including those of resource management – should take account of parental concerns.

Finally, those working within schools will have their own concerns and values. These may give rise to professional judgements about what is in the best interests of the particular set of pupils in their care which may or may not entirely match the expectations of the Government or of parents. They may also, of course, be expressed in particular professional interests which they wish to advance or protect.

It is difficult to discuss school effectiveness in the context of LMS without considering these complexities. We can do little more than pose some relevant questions:

- How far will the Government’s emphasis on test and examination performance backed up by the comparative publication of results lead schools to shift their balance of priorities towards academic achievement (especially that defined by test and exam scores) above other objectives?
- How far will parental expectations, or schools’ perceptions of these, (especially if they are not adequately encompassed by examination and test results) modify schools’ objectives?
- How far, as schools expand or contract, will schools of different sizes be seen, or claim, to be qualitatively different in the kinds of experience they offer pupils?
- How far will schools modify their professional definitions of the needs of individual pupils and groups – such as those with special needs – and their priorities amongst them if these are felt to be inconsistent with other externally imposed demands?
- How far will schools’ freedom to make choices about the allocation of resources be used to protect or to weaken teachers’ employment and working conditions?
- Will the various changes taking place in the school system lead to schools becoming more diverse or more alike in terms of the objectives they pursue?
These are complex questions not easily answered. What they do imply, however, is that, with changing demands on schools arising from the various threads within the legislation, the concept of effectiveness must be considered as both dynamic and contested: dynamic because definitions – whether explicit or implicit – will, for many schools, change over time as governors, managers and classroom teachers attempt to respond to pressures for change arising inside and outside the school; and contested because, for many schools, the various ways in which effectiveness might be defined may not prove easily reconcilable. Economic analysis, therefore, cannot easily be separated from micro-political considerations.

The latter can be explored at two interrelated levels. One concerns the relationship of the school with its environment. This includes the school’s response to Government demands, to parental behaviour and to the responses of other schools in the locality. Considerable research is taking place on these issues which suggests that environmental changes are indeed influencing schools in new ways but that both the changes themselves and the responses are more complex and differentiated than might perhaps be expected. There is a growing body of research on parental choice but rather less on school responses to such choice (Glatter et al. 1993). A research study at the Open University is exploring the interactions which occur in the ‘competitve arenas’ which are developing as a result of recent reforms (Glatter and Woods 1993, Woods 1992). The issues emerging from this and related research can only be touched on here. Two points are of particular importance. First, parental preferences seem to be differentiated, among other things, by social factors.

[Our] analysis . . . suggest that working class parents display significant differences (compared with middle class parents) in their pattern of priorities: in particular . . . they attach importance to their child’s preference for the school and his or her friends being there. The factor most important to professional and middle class parents was the school’s standard of academic education . . . The question is whether the differing priorities are the result of social inequalities (manifested for working class families in transport difficulties and a belief that certain schools are ‘not for them’) or whether they represent variations in values that stem from dissimilar (and equally valid) cultural perspectives.

(Glatter and Woods 1993).

Such findings suggest that schools seeking to respond to parental preferences may need to take quite fundamental decisions about which parents’ preferences should receive priority (assuming, of course, that certain types of preference are incompatible in terms of their policy and resource allocation implications), and, indeed, which groups of parents they particularly wish to attract.

The second point concerns school responses to parental choice. Here a distinction is made between changes which are ‘substantive (to do with policies,
practices, curriculum and the like)’ and those which are ‘concerned only with image and activities aimed at promoting the school’ (Woods 1992: 207). The Open University study is finding responses of both kinds. Changes of the former kind, drawn from a variety of schools,

... include alterations to homework policy, the introduction of banding, emphasis on the caring and pastoral aspects of schooling, encouragement of staff to gain more qualifications, increased stress on extra-curricular activities and greater community access to school facilities ... Whether such changes are in line with what parents want is another matter. Our data do not yet allow us to draw conclusions. However, it is apparent ... that in general enthusiasm for finding out what parents want is considerably less than for promoting the school to parents and the wider community.

(Glatter and Woods 1993: 15)

The ways in which schools choose how to respond to parental and other expectations in formulating resource allocation and other policies leads us to a consideration of the second key micro-political arena – that of the school itself. Where there are inconsistencies and potential contradictions between different interpretations of a school’s purposes and priorities attention is inevitably focused on the processes through which decisions are made. Of particular significance here is the evidence presented earlier about the growing ‘gap’ between senior managers and classroom teachers under LMS. From an economic perspective this can be viewed as a form of task specialization which may be potentially efficient.

In the vast majority of organisations the financial function is a specialization ... [F]inancial management is a task for senior management and ... should only impinge on teachers to the extent that it affects their immediate job. This division of labour implies an increasing differentiation between class teacher and senior manager and the need for the latter to acquire a range of competencies and understanding that extends beyond curriculum leadership.

(Levačić and Marren 1992b: 9)

The question which then arises is:

To what extent is class teacher involvement in financial decision making required in order for local management to result in improvements in teaching and learning expected of it by its proponents?

(1992b: 10)

For Bowe and Ball, however, the evidence can be interpreted in another way:
The ‘gap’ between the new managers and teachers is . . . not simply a division produced by role specialization. It also represents a division of values and purposes . . . establishing a balance between the marketing of the school and its income on the one hand, and making the right choices for individual students on the other.

(1992: 159)

A similar view is expressed by Broadbent et al. (1992a). For them, organizational responses to LMS may cause the ‘lifeworlds’ of the school to become fragmented with a small group of senior staff, working with governors, increasingly adopting the market-oriented and managerial values associated with LMS while the rest of the staff maintain traditional, pupil-oriented professional values. They do not think this inevitable, but where it does occur schools could become ‘schizoid . . . having different lifeworlds within different groups of organisational members. This may then lead to conflict within the organisation’ (Broadbent et al., 1992a: 67).

The argument here is that there is a contest within the school through which senior managers increasingly mediate the concepts of effectiveness arising from the demands of Government regulations and the ‘market’ while classroom teachers attempt to defend traditional, professional values deriving from the individual assessment of pupil needs. The implication is that these two sets of concerns are inevitably in conflict, or at least in tension. Clearly this does not necessarily follow: the degree of consistency between the values and expectations of different groups is an empirical question. The debate does, however, raise important issues about patterns of coupling within schools. What LMS does do is to emphasize ‘a corporatist’ conception of a school’s purposes – which is inevitably reflected in the concerns of senior managers – in contrast to a more ‘individualist’ one which is the prime concern of classroom teachers. In the corporatist conception, effectiveness is an aggregative concept relating to the achievement of broad objectives demonstrated through such indicators as aggregated measures of examination success expressed in league tables and trends in parental choice of school. In the individualist conception, effectiveness lies in the degree to which the complex needs of each child are identified and met and his or her learning maximized. In the days before the reforms it was possible – indeed common – for school managers to share with teachers an individualist conception of effectiveness; as the implementation of the reforms unfolds this is becoming more difficult.

What are the implications of this discussion for a consideration of school effectiveness in the context of LMS? The key point, surely, is to accept the contested and dynamic nature of the concept and to explore how its interpretation is reflected both in the choices which are made at school level and in resulting outcomes. It has always been the case that those within schools have had the task of reconciling as far as possible the demands of internal and external stakeholders and making choices about the use of resources in relation to these. The major
change arising from the legislation is that the balance of power has been redistributed among the stakeholders and the framework of constraints surrounding resource choices has been changed. In this context, it is highly relevant to ask what it is that those within schools now seek to achieve and how they use the new powers granted under LMS to enable them to do it. There are at least three ways into this issue.

The first would be through careful longitudinal analysis of expenditure patterns in an attempt to explore the concept of effectiveness through examining schools’ values-in-use as opposed to their espoused values (Argyris and Schon 1974). The kinds of questions which might be addressed by such an approach include:

- How far do schools use their increased discretion over resource use to channel resources of various kinds (including staff time) to the direct support of teaching and learning?
- Where resources do support teaching and learning, what aspects of the curriculum and which groups of pupils benefit? For example, is the emphasis on maximizing test/examination achievement or on targeting pupils with special needs?
- What resources are devoted to the management of LMS, including the management of the ‘marketing’ function?
- What resources are devoted to the enhancement of the school’s image?
- Are teaching technologies modified, through resource substitution (such as employing more support staff and fewer teachers) or through deploying existing resources differently (such as streaming or setting)? If so do such changes occur in response to professional judgement or to parental influence?
- Are resources used in ways which improve or protect teachers’ conditions of service (for example, through protecting permanent posts, providing free meals for teachers, or maximizing supply cover)?

Information relating to questions such as these would help to illuminate discussion about the kinds of changes which are taking place in schools’ implicit objective functions as they wrestle with the consequences of LMS and its related reforms. Interpreting such evidence would not be unproblematic, however. Information about patterns of resource allocation is notoriously capable of multiple interpretations: for example, decisions to protect full-time teaching posts might be interpreted in terms of the technological assumption that small group sizes and teacher stability are the prime determinants of teaching quality or in terms of the protection of teacher interests. Such alternative interpretations cannot easily be tested, however, because so little is known about the production function in education. Furthermore, and partly because of this, choices of technology may be as subject to micro-political negotiation as choices of objectives. An excellent example of this is the case quoted by Bowe and Ball.
(1992: 50–52) of a school under pressure to change its pattern of pupil organization in English in response to parental pressure and despite strong teacher reservations.

A second way to approach the effectiveness question is to consider whether the ways in which schools manage themselves under LMS embody specific attempts to use the flexibilities which LMS gives to focus on key outcomes, especially that of improving pupil learning. It might be asked, for example, whether LMS increases or reduces the likelihood of schools developing the characteristics associated in the literature with ‘effective schools’ (Rutter et al. 1979, Mortimore et al. 1988, Riddell and Brown 1991). The evidence available at present only addresses this issue in a fairly limited way. It might be argued, for example, that:

[i]f, as seems evident . . . principals become primarily concerned with financial management and public relations within the education marketplace, then the educational leadership which researchers find to be strongly associated with effective schooling, will be minimal, if not totally compromised.

(Ball 1993: 7)

On the other hand, there is some evidence to suggest that there is an increasing concern in schools to clarify objectives and priorities, to plan to achieve these and to monitor success. Certainly LMS has been accompanied by strong regulatory and other pressures for schools to engage in systematic ‘school development planning’ (Hargreaves et al. 1989, Hargreaves and Hopkins 1991). The Birmingham study found, for example, that:

Development Plans (DP) are prepared in almost all schools, although it is a very recent innovation. The adoption of a DP had led more than half of schools to review their statement of aims . . . [O]ver half of heads [reported] that DPS help in planning, prioritising and evaluating. Only 9% (63) reported that its preparation had not been helpful.

(Arnott et al. 1992: 13)

Such managerial approaches may be seen as an attempt to resolve, or at least reduce, the tension between the corporatist and individualist perspectives described earlier, although the evidence suggests that the turbulence of the policy environment makes such planning particularly difficult in present circumstances (Hutchinson 1993, Wallace 1991a, b). Furthermore, it is dangerous to generalize about concepts such as development planning which can mean very different things in different school contexts. This is undoubtedly an area where we need to know more and where a conclusion about British research to date would mirror that of Wohlstetter and Odden in relation to US research on school-based management (SBM):
There also is scant research on the intervening variables that have been shown to be related to student learning. How does SBM change the enacted curriculum? . . . How does SBM help to build a collegial or professional teacher culture at the school? . . . How does SBM build a powerful change process?

(1992: 536)

The linking of school effectiveness research and research on LMS is clearly an area for possible development in the future.

Finally, the issue of effectiveness might be addressed by considering the impact of LMS on school outputs directly. The problems associated with such an approach are clear, not least that of separating out the effects of LMS from those arising from other changes. As our earlier discussions have suggested, much of the work to date, for example in relation to formula-based resourcing and to school size, is primarily concerned with unit costs of provision and the definition of need in terms of expenditure levels. In this respect it mirrors most of the work on economies of scale in education. It does not attempt to relate costs to any measures of output such as learning achieved or examination success. Conversely, British literature on school effectiveness, referred to earlier, gives relatively little attention to questions of resources and costs. There is, however, a large and growing body of literature on the measurement of school performance with a particularly active debate on the measurement of value added. Little of this has been related directly to LMS but here again there is clear potential for future developments.

A fourth ‘E’: equity

Before concluding, it is important to recognize that the educational reforms have major equity implications. Indeed, it could be argued that, despite the Government’s strong emphasis on the objectives of increasing effectiveness, efficiency and choice in the school system, it will be equity considerations which are likely to dominate the debate as the consequences of the reforms begin to work through. However, the issue of equity has received only limited systematic attention in the research on LMS. Like effectiveness and efficiency, it can be considered in a number of ways.

First, a distinction clearly needs to be made between procedural and distributional equity. With respect to the former, it can be argued that the distribution of resources by formula is now ‘more equitable in that it is based on objective criteria (in the sense that the criteria are set out as common rules and not determined by administrative discretion)’ (Levačič 1992a: 27). The implications for distributional equity, however, are both more complex and less clear.

Wildavsky (1979) distinguishes between ‘market equity’ under which services are distributed equally among users, and ‘equal results’ under which resources are distributed in ways which attempt to ensure that all benefit equally
and that inequalities in starting points are compensated for. Certainly the design of formulae generally addresses equity questions more explicitly than it does those of efficiency and effectiveness. Since at least 80% of the budget must be allocated on the basis of the number and ages of pupils with the remainder available for use to compensate for pupils’ special needs and circumstances and for the diseconomies associated with small schools, the implicit rationale for the funding of schools appears to be one of equal opportunity qualified by some gestures towards equal results. However, clearly the issue is deeper than this. The requirement that the basic age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) should be the same for all children of the same age in any LMS scheme introduces an element of equity, but only on the assumption that age is the prime determinant of need. Since this is only partially the case, much then depends on how allocations to small schools and to meet the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs actually work out. LEAs differ considerably in the ways they treat these factors, as indeed they do in their age-weightings and in the amount spent per pupil unit. Furthermore, the ability to meet differential need adequately is limited by the requirements to allocate the bulk of the budget on the basis of AWPU and to make the formula simple and objective (Lee 1992).

The issue is further complicated by the impact of parental choice on pupil opportunity. Many writers argue that, where such choice exists, situations will soon arise where popular schools will be able to select their pupils rather than the other way around, and this issue is made even more sensitive by the Government’s creation of a new class of schools – grant-maintained schools (GMS) – which can, on the basis of a parental ballot, ‘opt out’ of LEA control and be directly funded by central government.

It is not possible in this paper to review the substantial literature on the consequences of the creation of a more competitive education market in the UK. However, some points should be noted, particularly in relation to the level of the individual school, where the interrelationship between effectiveness, efficiency and equity needs to be better understood. In other words, we need to supplement our earlier discussion about decision makers’ conceptions of what is to be achieved through their resource choices and how with a consideration of whom they wish to benefit.

Here again the consequences of LMS need to be related to the wider package of educational reforms. Increasing competition accompanied by the publication of particular performance indicators, notably examination results and attendance rates, is likely to affect not only schools’ definitions of their purposes and their allocation of resources in pursuit of these purposes, but also their perception of pupils as ‘raw materials’ rather than ‘clients’. It can be hypothesized that an incentive system which emphasizes test and examination success will encourage schools, first, to become more selective in their admissions policies and, second, to exclude pupils who exhibit behavioural or other problems which affect the school’s image or place particularly heavy demands on resources, especially teachers’ time (Ball 1993). This is clearly an important area for research. At
present systematic evidence is limited, although there are some indications that both of these hypotheses are being validated in some cases (Stirling 1992).

A second issue relating to equity at school level concerns the ways in which resources are distributed internally among groups of pupils with differing educational needs. We need to explore decision makers’ assumptions about the contribution which particular patterns of resource allocation make to the achievements of particular groups of pupils. Relevant here is Brown and Saks’s (1975) distinction between ‘levellers’ who prefer smaller dispersions of pupil performance and ‘elitists’ who are willing to accept wider dispersions for the sake of higher mean levels of performance. Very little has been written about this so far; it is an area where much more research is needed.

**Conclusion**

This review of selected parts of the research literature on LMS suggests a number of findings which, given their tentative nature, might best be considered as hypotheses in need of further research. At a macro level, formula funding is tending to favour larger schools at the expense of smaller ones and is making assumptions upon which schools are funded more transparent. It is leading to a developing debate about the relationship between resources and needs. At the level of the individual school, LMS seems to be encouraging resource decision making which is consciously efficiency enhancing. However, the conception of efficiency used here is strongly input oriented, and it is not clear how choices made by schools about their patterns of resource acquisition and deployment relate to intended or actual learning outcomes or to other conceptions of effectiveness. Indeed, there is little evidence concerning the impact of LMS on school effectiveness, beyond examples of schools responding to parental choice through both ‘image-enhancing’ and ‘substantive’ changes in curriculum and organization. Furthermore, it is too early to draw firm conclusions about the consequences for efficiency and effectiveness of changes in school size which will occur as a result of increased parental choice as well as of demographic changes.

The nature of school responses to LMS seems to depend both on their circumstances (especially whether they are ‘winners’ or ‘losers’ under LMS formulae) and on the managerial approaches of their leaders. These leaders are finding themselves increasingly functionally separated from their staffs as they address issues of ‘corporate’ effectiveness in relation to the demands of external stakeholders while classroom teachers continue to concern themselves with the more individual needs of pupils within a context increasingly defined by the demands of the National Curriculum and testing. This separation is reflected in differences in orientation to LMS itself – headteachers overwhelmingly in favour, classroom teachers less so – whatever the resourcing experience of the schools in which they work.

More generally the paper suggests that, while the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness provide a useful and important framework for examining the con-
sequences of LMS, and much of the research can be related to these ideas and leads to interesting, if tentative, conclusions, much would be gained by a more rigorous and consistent use of the concepts. In particular, fundamental consideration needs to be given to how efficiency and effectiveness are to be interpreted and measured in a situation where schools’ objective functions are both dynamic and contested, and greater consideration needs to be given to the interrelationship between efficiency and effectiveness and ideas of equity.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Rosalind Levacic and Hywel Thomas for comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

Note

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References


SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL (1992) *Resourcing Sheffield Schools* (Sheffield: Sheffield City Council Education Department).

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL (1992) *Resourcing Sheffield Schools* (Sheffield: Sheffield City Council Education Department).


In his classic textbook on the economics of education, published a quarter of a century ago, Mark Blaug (1970) commented:

... the surprising thing about the economics of education is the extent to which the subject invariably draws upon the most basic concepts of economics. ... We do not need to know a great deal of economics to apply it to education, but the little we do know we must have in our bones.

(p. xv)

There remains a great deal of force and validity in that statement and part of my purpose is to show how the application of basic concepts continues to illuminate policy choices. However, it is also my intention to argue that national and international changes in education—notably the emergence of market forms—require economists to contribute to a clarifying analysis about the organizational contexts through which educational provision is made. This article begins, therefore, by outlining the main features of such an analysis and leads to the proposition that the challenge to policy-makers is how best to manage a mixed economy of provision. Such a proposition places a great deal of emphasis on an empiricism which tries to describe and explain the impact of different ‘mixes’ of market and non-market forms. It is at this stage, therefore, that I draw upon the concepts of efficiency and equity—as key social and economic criteria for evaluating policy change—and apply them to some of the field research I have undertaken in recent years. Finally, I intend to consider the status of research evidence in contributing to ‘objective’ judgements on the performance of education systems in meeting their goals. The article ends with a brief conclusion.
Exchange relations as mixed economies

There is a good deal of confusion in some contemporary usage of the language of markets in education. For example, in a book which ‘attempts to explain the philosophical underpinnings of the educational uses of terms which share a “family resemblance” with “markets” and “managers” ’ (Halliday, 1990: vii), it is evident that much of the text is concerned with the increased orientation of education to the ‘needs of the economy’ (p. vii) through vocational training and responding to employers as consumers of education. Indeed, the author is supportive of an increasing role for ‘free markets’ in determining the curriculum (p. 156). McMurty (1992) provides a second example of the elision of ‘markets’ with the needs of the economy, whereas what is described is a hierarchic model of government control. Such problems of definition and usage are not confined to education. In a collection of historical essays on *The Culture of the Market* (Haskell and Teichgraeber III, 1993), none of the contributors provides a definition of a ‘market’. Much closer to conventional definitions are the usage of Bowe and Ball with Gold (1992: Ch. 2, passim) where the underlying assumptions of an ideal-type market are given and their limitations addressed. There is also a recognition—following Le Grand—that what exist in education are quasi-markets. However, the identification of the quasi-market appears to lapse and the chapter contains the following usage: markets; ‘markets’; quasi-markets; micro-markets; pseudo-markets (p. 45, no definition); social markets (p. 46, no definition) and untrammeled market (p. 56, no definition). In their definition, Le Grand et al. describe markets as

... a form of economic organisation in which the majority of allocation decisions are made through the ostensibly uncoordinated actions of large numbers of individuals and private firms. The coordination of activities ... comes about because each factor of production (land, labour and capital) and each commodity has a price to which diverse groups respond in a way that reconciles their separate actions ...

(1992: 21)

Yet, the maintained-school system is almost wholly funded by general taxation and, for parents and pupils, is free at the point of consumption. The overall level of spending is determined by government (central and local), and the means of production are largely owned or employed by government, which also determines the rules for allocating funds to schools. More important still, the curriculum and assessment of pupils is largely determined by the Secretary of State. Indeed, in many ways, the maintained-school system is the counterpart of the ‘market’ system:

By ‘market’ is usually meant an allocative and distributive mechanism, the counterpart of which is not the state but ‘hierarchy’ and ‘planning’.
Whereas the ‘unit act’ of markets is voluntary exchange, the ‘unit act’ of hierarchies is ‘command’.

(Berger, 1990: 104)

It might be argued, of course, that I am missing the point and, indeed, there is undoubted force in characterizing the form of decentralization in England and Wales as a pupils-as-vouchers scheme with many market-like features (Thomas, 1988: 23). There are, nonetheless, strong arguments for a careful analysis of markets and their alternatives, not to classify usage as ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ but to provide a sounder basis for the analysis of education policies. I have set out such an analysis elsewhere and outlined a framework for clarifying the exchange relationships in the school system; the advantages and disadvantages associated with each form of exchange are considered and it is argued that no one form alone is either realistic or desirable (Thomas, 1994). It is not my purpose, therefore, to set out that argument here, but, in order to advance the wider analysis, it is necessary to summarize the framework.

In the 1994 article I argued that two concepts—interest and decision—provide the means of defining and discussing the mechanisms by which a society decides upon how much education it requires, what is to be provided, who is to provide it and to whom. The dimensions of Figure 1 represent each of these concepts.

The market, for example, represents those circumstances where decision-making is decentralized and self-interest is assumed to be the motive force of human action. By retaining the assumption of self-interest and introducing centralization as the locus of decision, we move to an allocative system characterized by ‘hierarchies’. This can be taken to represent the command view of the state and is the conventional opposite of the ‘market’. The distinction of ‘markets’ with ‘hierarchies’, presented by Berger and others is, however, more illuminating. It is a distinction which rests upon the concept of the ‘unit act’ which, in ‘markets is voluntary exchange [and in] hierarchies is “command” ’ (Berger, 1990: 104).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centralized</th>
<th>Command</th>
<th>Collective</th>
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<tr>
<td>Locus of decision</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Decentralized</td>
<td>Market</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Locus of interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1* Allocative mechanisms as ideal types.
The third form of organization I label the *college*. This *ideal type* identifies those contexts where altruism is assumed to be the motive force of human behaviour and where decisions are decentralized to small groups. I take altruism to be 

\[ \ldots \text{behaviour that benefits another (unrelated) actor and which imposes some cost on its originator}\ldots \]; it excludes behaviour to benefit a close relative someone with whose interests the actor may be presumed to identify, and altruism is defined here in *behavioural* terms and has not been related \ldots to the motives of the actor involved. 

(Ware, 1990: 187)

The choice of the word ‘college’ to represent this ideal type has the merit of creating an image of relatively small groups, the consequences of whose actions for others within the group can be anticipated. The self-images of professional groups, for example, would lay claim to modes of behaviour which place the interests of clients ahead of those of the service provider. We do not need to accept that image uncritically in order to recognize the place of some forms of altruistic behaviour as an important component of the commitment of some working groups, and relevant, therefore, to our understanding of how societies produce and distribute goods and services.

The final *ideal type* allocative mechanism is the *collective*. Here, decisions are taken by altruists but the locus of decision is centralized. The social order is one where its members draw satisfaction from an increase in the goods available to others and where there is general agreement that the efficient production of these goods and services requires complex organizations and centralized decision-making. Decision-makers would also make decisions on which goods and services should be produced, which breaks the personal connection between the provider and the recipient which would occur in the ‘college’, so that utility is derived impersonally from the act of giving.

The work of Titmuss (1970) on blood donation in the UK illustrates a real-world example of the production of goods and services and also argues that altruism draws forth acts of reciprocity. If this is so, it might equally be asserted that recent emphasis on self-interest will also draw forth reciprocity in kind, clearly an issue that needs to be taken into account when we consider the effect of changes in the mix of allocative mechanisms. That the choice lies in the emphases in our mixed models, however, is central to my argument. There is no choice between market and non-market provision in education but a world where these forms of provision necessarily coexist:

It has been the purpose of this paper to argue that a debate which juxtaposes ‘markets’ against some alternative(s) can be over-simplistic as, indeed, would be an argument as to whether people are motivated by self-interest or by altruism \ldots what is required is the much more complex resolution of the balance(s) to be struck between the variety of
means by which education services are produced and allocated in our society—the mixed economies to be found within the matrix bounded by decision and interest.

(Thomas, 1994: 52–3)

This view places a premium upon empiricism, as the choices required on the best mix of allocative/exchange mechanisms depend upon evidence on the nature and consequence of the mix and should not be guided by a value-based predisposition for or against markets, command, college or collective. Let me turn, therefore, to consider some data on the nature and consequence of the mixed economy of exchange relations in our school system. In doing so I intend, inter alia, both to illustrate the importance of the concepts of efficiency and equity to our analysis and to illuminate the paradoxes and ironies of some contemporary assumptions about markets. I will do so through two ‘vignettes’ from research projects in which I have participated.

**Efficiency and equity in mixed economies**

Efficiency is one of the more abused words in the lexicon of economics, having been used by the government over the last decade and more as a code for cheapness. As it is not my usage, let me begin with a definition of *economic efficiency*. This

\[
\text{ refers to the use of the budget in such a way that, given relative prices, the most productive combination of resources is used. That is, no alternative combination of resources, given the budgetary constraint, would enable the organization to produce a higher output.}
\]

(Levin, 1976: 153)

This definition makes some demanding assumptions about production possibilities, which are:

\[
\text{ governed by certain technical relationships, and the production function simply describes the maximum output feasible with different sets of inputs \ldots it represents the maximum achievable output for given inputs.}
\]

(Hanushek, 1979: 353)

On this criterion, we can be confident that schools are not efficient. That this should be so turns primarily on the absence of a convincing or wholly adequate theory of learning—a prerequisite for specifying clear technical relationships as a predictive basis for the relationship between inputs and educational outcomes. However, it is also a consequence of imperfections in the labour market, in which prices do not represent marginal productivity and labour and other factors are not easily substi-
tuted for each other. There is the added difficulty that schools are multi-purpose organizations and the achievement of some goals are not always compatible with others. For these reasons, therefore, it would be more accurate to refer to schools as seeking to become more cost-effective, an efficiency-related concept which is not predicated upon the same demanding conditions as production function studies. Cost-effectiveness analysis compares alternative ways of achieving the same objective: the most cost-effective will be the least costly of alternatives being compared, which is not necessarily the cheapest possible method of attaining the objective. In practice, however, since the word ‘efficiency’ is used to describe these least cost conditions, it is a usage I will follow in this article.

Information on efficiency also contributes to an analysis of equity, which I take to be a concern with who gets what. Secada (1989) argues that, as a position, disparities between social groups in society is ‘an injustice in the educational system’s distribution of its goods and that affirmative steps should be taken to remedy those injustices (p. 3). He later develops an argument around the principle that equity ‘refers to our judgements about whether or not a given state of affairs is just’ (p. 68). As this is a theme that I examine more fully in the last main section of this article, I do not develop the argument further here and proceed to examples which raise issues of efficiency and equity in the context of changes in exchange mechanisms.

Vignette one: is funding by age of pupil efficient and equitable?

Changes in the funding of schools was one of the major elements of recent reforms in England and Wales. Using its newly acquired powers of ‘command’, the national ministry set out detailed guidelines on how schools were to be funded, which transformed conditions at the local level where, previously, most Local Education Authorities (LEAs) had not known how much was spent on individual schools. The old system was replaced by a published formula by which all schools were funded on the same rules, so that comparable schools would receive the same level of funding. Whilst the change led to some schools gaining additional funds and others losing, there can be little doubt that the new arrangements are, in principle, more equitable; conditions where levels of funding were a mystery can, in Secada’s terms, scarcely be just.

When the new patterns of resource allocations are examined, however, the basis for deciding the relative requirements of different age groups is not readily apparent. Certainly, there is no consensus on their comparative requirements, so that it is impossible to discern a common view on the resources needed to provide an education, based upon the national curriculum, to pupils of different ages. Table 1 shows the value in 1990 of the age-weighted pupil units (AWPUs) in 10 LEAs, selected from a set of 71 because their AWPU for 8-year-olds (Year 4) are close to the mean for the 71 LEAs. The data raise questions about efficiency and equity.
Why do the LEAs in Table 38.1 differ in their assessment of the relative needs of pupils of different ages and why are the junior years cheapest? The step in funding from age 10 to age 11 has a mean of 38 percent, although it ranges from zero to 64 percent. Are these tenable in terms of differences in the requirement of the national curriculum? Following its own inquiry into this issue, the Education Committee of the House of Commons (1994) concluded:

... that concentrating on the change in funding between Year 6 and Year 7 can obscure the more important issue: the enormous importance of primary education (which has traditionally not been recognised in the resources it receives) and the continuous nature of the education process. The current funding profile does not recognise this educational continuum ... 

The greatest relative differences in Table 1 are between the AWPU for 8-year-olds as against 16–19-year-olds. In the Isle of Wight, for example, AWPU16 (£2325) is 2.9 times greater than the weighting of AWPU8 (£801). This compares with Sunderland, where the value of AWPU16 (£1664) is 2.08 times that of AWPU8 (£799). In some respects these age differences do no more than reflect the tradition of higher levels of resourcing for older students, but the different relative judgements among LEAs suggest an area for further examination in order to inform efficiency judgements about the most appropriate way of matching finance to curriculum requirements. Adoption of new powers of 'command' in the funding of education has opened these issues to public scrutiny for the first time.

The impact of LEA formulae on the funding level of individual schools was examined in a study which tried to select comparable schools from different LEAs (Bullock and Thomas, 1992). The selected example in Figure 2 is for schools with 221 and 222 pupils on roll. In this set the greatest difference in the level of funding through AWPU occurs within an LEA. School 12 is the least well-placed school and requires 22.8 pupils to attract the funds for an additional teacher and School E7 needs only 18.9 pupils. The difference is equivalent to an extra 21 percent of funding through the AWPU. Schools in other LEAs are close to both these levels of funding.

School E5 is almost the least well-funded school on the formula-per-pupil criterion, receiving £995, but School B15 has £962, £33 per pupil less. The best-placed school on this criterion is School G3 with £1323, 27 percent more than is received by School B15. The data on the primary sector as a whole show a wide range in the funding of schools through the AWPU factor. The greatest difference within one size range is 25 percent in the value of an AWPU between the lowest and highest figure, which occurs for schools in the size range 122–3. The smallest range is 6 percent and is for the largest primary schools. All other ranges are greater than 10 percent. These data raise questions about efficiency and equity: Is it necessary, for example, for comparable schools to be funded at such different levels in order to provide the same national curriculum?
### Table 1  LEA Funding (£) at Different Ages (AWPUs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEA</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cleveland</td>
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<td>856</td>
<td>856</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>1139</td>
<td>1139</td>
<td>1139</td>
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<td>1563</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>1917</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coventry</td>
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<td>803</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>1239</td>
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<td>1724</td>
<td>1732</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derbyshire</td>
<td>887</td>
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<td>783</td>
<td>802</td>
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<td>806</td>
<td>1135</td>
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<td>1497</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>1803</td>
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<td>801</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>801</td>
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<td>869</td>
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<td>North Yorks</td>
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<td>816</td>
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<td>1607</td>
<td>1921</td>
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<tr>
<td>Redbridge</td>
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<td>804</td>
<td>804</td>
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<td>Tameside</td>
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<td>1869</td>
<td>1934</td>
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<td>1862</td>
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**Results for 71 LEAs**

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<td>Mean</td>
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<td>831</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>820</td>
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<td>1383</td>
<td>1475</td>
<td>1843</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
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<td>1633</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>2325</td>
<td>2325</td>
<td>2630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Thomas and Bullock (1994).

**Notes**

a A level, £237; GCSE 6th Form, £2331.

b £1890 non-exam; £1952 exam.
Are the schools with comparatively high levels of funding providing a superior experience and achieving more than the less well-funded schools? It is only as a result of the new system of funding schools that there is evidence which enables these questions to be considered—a clear benefit from introducing a greater emphasis on ‘command’ in the funding of schools.

**Vignette two: funding additional educational needs**

The quasi-markets of locally managed schools do not necessarily have negative effects upon disadvantaged communities. For example, the requirement that schools meet the actual costs of teachers means that those schools that attract more expensive staff must now meet the additional costs—and vice versa. By contrast, under previous arrangements schools were allowed to employ an agreed complement of staff, as a result of which a hidden subsidy was made to those schools attracting the more costly staff. In practice, and on the basis of studies of the distribution of teachers, this meant a subsidy for schools in more privileged communities (Zabalza et al., 1979; Smithers and Robinson, 1991).

There is also evidence that, in some LEAs, schools serving more disadvantaged communities systematically benefited from the change to formula funding introduced as part of local management of schools (Bullock and Thomas, 1994). The same study also shows, however, that in other LEAs it was schools serving more disadvantaged communities who systematically suffered from the change to formula funding.

The ‘Funding’ study examined the individual formula allocations to 2792 primary and secondary schools in 13 LEAs. A detailed analysis compared each school’s historic budget with its formula budget, dividing schools into two groups: ‘winning’ schools, in the sense that a school’s formula budget is more than its historic budget; and ‘losing’ schools in the sense that the formula budget

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*Figure 2* Formula per pupil, awpu per pupil and n pupils for teachers [nor = 221/222].

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MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS
is less than the historic budget. The size of the loss or gain was also calculated, as a percentage of the formula budget, and an analysis undertaken of the relationship between the size of the loss or gain and the size of the AEN (Additional Educational Needs) allocation. Is it the case, for instance, that schools with comparatively large AEN allocations are more highly represented in the ‘losing’ group? Or is it the case that as the percentage of formula allocated on the basis of AEN increases, so the size of the loss decreases?

For 10 of our 13 LEAs these hypotheses could be explored and what is apparent is the diversity of local circumstance. The national framework for LMS (Local Management of Schools) has been sufficiently flexible to allow some LEAs to direct resources in such a way that the greatest beneficiaries have been schools with the highest proportion of AEN pupils. Far from being a regressive change, in four LEAs LMS has led to an apparent initial redistribution of resources benefiting the least advantaged. In three LEAs, however, the effect of LMS has been in the opposite direction, those schools with a high proportion of AEN pupils being the losers in the change of funding; in the remaining three there was no systematic pattern of change. These findings emphasize the need for empirical work to assess the effects of restructuring allocative mechanisms. In this case, the introduction of the pupil-based formula, a key component of the move to a market-based system, has effects which differ between LEAs. It is also apparent that a modification in the funding mechanism could increase the resources going to schools and pupils with additional educational needs.

The data reported in these ‘vignettes’ contribute to debates about the efficiency of schools and their performance on equity criteria; some also provide perspectives on the effects of changes in the mixed economy of the school system. This may be as much as can be expected—the data providing an episodic commentary on changes in the system. In other words, are the data part of an unresolvable debate about the ‘right’ level of funding, as in differences in the funding of primary as against secondary schools? Or are convincing and long-standing answers to these questions obtainable? In effect, is it possible to secure agreement on an assessment of educational needs that can underpin a more explicit and less subjective decision on funding education?

**Education and a theory of human need**

**Obtaining welfare from education**

In an earlier discussion of the problems of measuring ‘school effectiveness’, I offered a general welfare-based definition of education. Education was described as:

... an activity which generates a mixture of present and future satisfactions and dissatisfactions, with its net balance over time representing the sense of benefit and well-being created for the individuals involved.

(Thomas, 1990: 7)
In specifying what contributes to that sense of benefit and well-being, Hodgkinson wrote that education

... seeks to establish and enhance the values of security, health, the common good, the interest of the state, the capacity for profit, wealth of all sorts and the highest values of philosophy, ideology and religion. It is on this sense the most general human pursuit. If we were to seek a term for the basic educational value we might call it fulfilment. Education has been shown to be a general set of human behaviours and experiences organized about three categories of purpose: aesthetic, economic, and ideological. It can also be said to subserve all human values and to be a prerequisite to their fulfilment. It is this all-inclusive quality which makes education so special and, at the same time, so human.

(1991: 27)

Hodgkinson’s recognition of the importance of fulfilment is resonant of ‘benefit and well-being’, and both definitions set a demanding test for measuring the achievements of education. On the basis of these definitions, most of the measures normally used for reporting on the achievement of education—examination results, length of participation, levels of expenditure—are, at best, only proxies for the changes that take place in an individual and which manifest themselves over a lifetime: ‘occurring, in the last analysis, only within an individual mind’ (1991: 62). Whilst we might accept the moral force of Glennerster’s proposition that

The proclaimed objective of welfare provision in most societies is to ensure a basic standard of living for their citizens [and] will usually entail a minimum income and access to food, shelter, education, health care and support if they are sick or disabled.

(1992: 3, emphasis added)

Hodgkinson’s and my own more general definitions challenge the ‘commodity fetishism’ implied by Glennerster’s focus upon the provision of goods and services. My own general definition is influenced by Sen’s (1980) discussion which emphasizes the ‘relationship between persons and goods ... income and wealth are not valued under utilitarianism as physical units, but in terms of their capacity to create human happiness or to satisfy human desires’ (p. 366). On this argument, the level of access to education or the level of provision of education are not, in themselves, ways of directly measuring welfare; welfare is the sum of the ‘satisfactions’ embodied in the experience of education by those individuals who gain access and secure provision.

To insist that the measurement of welfare from education must be rooted in individual welfare is not, however, to argue that individuals must necessarily be given complete freedom to make their own welfare-seeking decisions. The more
difficult challenge is to ask whether some socially determined framework can be specified against which both the preferences of individuals can be assessed in terms of their entitlements and the achievement of the system judged in meeting the entitlements of all.

**Measuring human development**

In developing my answer to that question, an early influence has been the work of Sen (1987; Nussbaum and Sen, 1993) and, latterly, the work of Doyal and Gough (1991); within educational administration, Evers and Lakomski’s (1991) work is also relevant. Sen has challenged the neo-liberal view that preferences cannot be aggregated. The idea that social welfare can only be calculated by assuming the ordinality of utility and the impossibility of interpersonal comparisons is replaced by the opposite assumptions of cardinality and the use of interpersonal comparisons through ‘meta-ranking’ based upon a moral code. The result is a framework which makes it possible ‘to “tell” effectively the rich from the poor’ (Sen, 1979: 336). Cardinal measures of utility alone are inadequate: when utility information is the only legitimate information, two social states of equal utility may be equal because one allows torture to attain the utility level while another redistributes food (pp. 339–41). If we are to accommodate issues such as ‘telling’ the rich from the poor, exploitation and liberty—all of which are closely related to conceptions of welfare—an approach is required that is free not only from informational constraints but also neutrality (Sen, 1977: 258). This involves the use of weighting procedures so that some forms of utility count more than others (1979: 343), such weighting being non-utility information based upon underlying principles, such as notions of discrimination, exploitation or entitlement to social security, a general system of rights. Elster and Roemer (1991) provide a useful and recent edited collection of essays on these themes.

A practical outcome of this approach is the annual *Human Development Report* of the United Nations (UNDP, 1990). This provides indices of human development that incorporate data including life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rates and GDP, thereby challenging traditional practice that assumed national income statistics convey all the essential information on standards of living.

Doyal and Gough (1991), in this tradition, set a wider agenda, tackling directly the nature of the relativist debate in social science and its impact upon ideas of human need. They begin by rejecting the view that ‘only individuals can decide goals to which they are going to attach enough priority to deem them needs’ (1991: 9). Integral to their thesis is the argument that implicit in the position of several schools in the social sciences is an appeal to some external and objective concept of human need. Doyal and Gough’s proposition is argued through critiques of orthodox economics, the New Right, Marxism, critiques of cultural imperialism, radical democrats and phenomenological arguments—the
central thesis being that in different ways each makes some appeal to an external and objective conception of human need (Chs 1 and 2 passim). Parallels to their critique are found in Wainwright’s (1994) challenge to the ‘free-market right’ in which postmodernism’s apparent rejection of the ‘very possibility of objectivity’ is challenged:

... some kind of objective reality, posited without any presumption that language or the present state of our knowledge can ever directly reflect it in the way that positivism imagined, is a necessary condition for any collective effort to resist the injustices and oppressions in which postmodernists have shown language and culture to be actively complicit.

(1994: 9)

In their own challenge to relativism, Doyal and Gough argue:

All of the examples of relativism which we have examined thus far have attempted both to denounce universal standards of evaluation with one hand only to employ them to endorse some favoured view of the world with the other.

(1991: 33)

The consistent relativist

... must not chop and change in this way. But the consistent relativist—one who regards the whole of social life as a ‘construction’, each aspect of which has no more or less veracity than any other—enters a moral wasteland into which few have feared to tread.

(p. 33)

In such a wasteland, ‘Objectively, there is not much to choose between anti-Semitism and humanitarianism. Racism will appear vicious to a humanitarian while humanitarianism will appear vapid to a racist’ (Feyerabend, 1978: 8–9). Doyal and Gough argue that we are able objectively to choose between these conditions:

A wide range of concepts concerning the evaluation of the human condition seems inextricably linked to the view that universal and objective human needs do exist. . . Human needs, we argue, are neither subjective preferences best understood by each individual, nor static essences best understood by planners or party officials. They are universal and knowable, but our knowledge of them, and of the satisfiers necessary to meet them, is dynamic and open-ended.

(1991: 2–4)
Writing in the context of educational policy and administration, Chapman states this theoretical position:

The position from which I am working might be called pragmatist and anti-essentialist. . . . Having rejected absolutism and eschewed relativism, I am seeking to arrive at some set of provisional theory-constructs, that will pro tem resist falsification, and to work out and operate with a set of ad hoc agreements that will constitute a pragmatic consensus we can then apply to the solution of problems that are in principle amenable to treatment.

(1993: 4)

Chapman recognizes the influence of Evers and Lakomski (1991) on her position. They argue that ‘moral reasoning is embedded in theory laden reasoning in general, and develops most readily along with our overall theory of the world (p. 189). In illustrating their argument, they suggest that the quality of the social rules in Rawls’s Theory of Justice owe something to the existence of a de facto model of society (p. 182):

. . . the reasonableness of maximin depends on making assumptions about the distribution of probabilities for social positions. So the ‘veil of ignorance’ condition for generating impartiality imposes de facto a model of society for generating moral rules. They argue that if the model was sharply divergent from the circumstances in our own society, the theory of rationality upon which it depends ‘comes apart from the best theories we might use to describe our society’.

(p. 182)

Sen’s analysis and that of Evers and Lakomski provide a basis for a more open and participatory process of value selection and administrative decision-making. In Sen’s case this arises obliquely from the idea of ‘Basic capability equality’ (1980). A development of Rawls’s expression of equality in terms of an entitlement to certain ‘primary goods’, it shifts attention ‘from goods to what goods do to human beings’ (p. 368), but shares with Rawls the view that ‘primary goods’ include liberty and opportunity, an emphasis on a more equal distribution of income and wealth, and self-respect. These rights point to notions of participatory decision-making in organizations and not elitism. Evers and Lakomski, writing about educational administration, are more direct; their argument centres upon the contention that ‘maintaining the social relations of inquiry is as relevant to moral theory as it is to empirical theory. . . . The common theoretical virtues of problem-solving and promoting the growth of knowledge are used to adjudicate rules or principles of social and administrative practice’ (p. 186). Preliminary work on its application to education generally is developed by Doyal and Gough.
Defining educational need

Education has a key role in contributing to an individual’s need for autonomy of agency and critical autonomy. As a means for leading to autonomy of agency it implies

... a core curriculum of subjects, more or less the same for all cultures, including basic numeracy, general social skills, physical and biological processes, general and local history and vocational abilities which are relevant to further employment. Ideally, learning of this kind readies students for active participation in the entire spectrum of practices/choices on which the continuation and, hopefully, the improvement of their well-being depend.

(Doyal and Gough, 1991: 215)

If we are to monitor factors which contribute to these outcomes, there is a requirement to monitor access to inputs of teaching. Doyal and Gough recognize the limited quality of such information and suggest data on access to formal schooling:

... number of years of completed study, the school/higher education occupational qualification obtained, the educational level reached (as indicated by the International Standard Classification of Education), the number of years at different levels of the education system, age on completion of study, and participation in adult education.

(p. 216)

They acknowledge these as limited too, and also note the absence of data on the quality of teaching—an issue to which I will return. More demanding conditions are set when they move to the concept of critical autonomy:

To criticise and to make choices between the current rules of one’s own culture and the rules of others requires a broader transcultural knowledge. However proficient someone is in knowledge of her own culture she will be unable to subject it to searching scrutiny without a knowledge of other social systems and an understanding of the rules of comparative method ... a curriculum ... must include the teaching of different cultural traditions and provide a forum for these to be discussed and debated openly.

(p. 216)

Further and higher education is seen as a means for developing this wider consciousness, and access to higher education is suggested as a proxy indicator of critical autonomy. That critical autonomy must await further and higher educa-
tion is, I would argue, remarkably cautious about the capacities of younger learners.

Setting aside the problems of international comparisons, for which some evidence is available (OECD, 1993), how might this approach be made operational in England and Wales? It is a task with at least four distinct components: first, the need to formulate more precise criteria by which we measure the level of attainment of personal autonomy and critical autonomy; second, issues about specifying the level at which data are collected, analysed and reported; third, the choice of agency for undertaking the task; and, fourth, issues about the role of government and governors, national, local and institutional, in responding to the reported data.

**Measuring educational need in England and Wales**

A beginning has been made on devising a framework against which we can assess the extent by which English and Welsh schools are meeting educational needs. Whatever its weaknesses, the post-Dearing national curriculum does provide the foundation for a framework by which we can monitor performance against the core curriculum suggested by Doyal and Gough. However, to this I would add a comment from *Learning to Succeed* (National Commission on Education, 1993):

> It is clear that children at school should learn about the society in which they live and how they can contribute to it. They should come to understand how decisions are made in a democratic society and how they can learn to take part in them through discussion and the ballot box. They need to know how Parliament and other democratic institutions work, and the place of the law in safeguarding our rights and freedoms. They need to understand how wealth is created. They need also to learn how they themselves can become active members of society. They must know what rights they have, but also what responsibilities they must bear as good citizens.

*(p. 39)*

These would seem to be essential characteristics in developing an individual’s critical autonomy.1 Yet, unless a school in England and Wales is particularly alert to non-statutory guidance on cross-curricular themes it could easily fail to address several of them, despite a general statutory requirement upon them to do so. Only with an explicit framework for defining educational need can we begin to assess the extent to which we meet those needs. This example is cited as indicative of the work required to specify the content of a framework and, *pari passu*, the criteria by which achievement is measured.

The second part of the task is determining the level at which data are collected, analysed and reported. National data are essential for some overall view of
performance and much could be added to the existing league tables on examinations and attendance; for example, spending levels on comparable schools in different LEAs could be added with relative ease.\textsuperscript{4} The Scottish Office has already begun publishing these data and it is certainly within the administrative capacity of the DfE (Department for Education) to do so (Scottish Office, 1994a).\textsuperscript{5} Within LEAs, data on schools should be reported by LEAs, whose potential role in a decentralized system has yet to be clarified. Since they already have a clear function as purchasers in a system where schools are providers, an obvious role is performance monitoring and quality assurance, although few LEAs appear to have developed this role. Is this because they are inhibited by their history and culture from such a development, or is it the spectre of schools opting-out if the LEAs were to develop better performance reporting?

At present the extent of data analysis is inadequate. If the system is seriously to address issues of equity, for example, there is a need to have annual, large-scale, national and regional analyses of pupil and student performance by, at least, gender and race. Whilst some of these data are already being collected, they would have greater utility if some additional information were sought, facilitating analysis by gender and ethnicity, for example.

The third party of the task is the choice of agency for undertaking some of the work. If we define the first task as specifying a framework, might this be part of a continuing role for the National Commission? This stage would not be expensive, but could contribute to shaping a debate about how best to specify our educational needs and monitor our performance in meeting them. Beyond that, the responsibility for monitoring and reporting is one that properly should fall to government, but it may be necessary for a non-governmental body to take on the role as an independent rapporteur.

As things stand at present, however, we have a rudimentary approach to assessing our nation’s educational performance. Published examination results, unauthorized absence data and the 4-year cycle of school inspection reports do give some information, but, more important, are indicative of what modern information systems could provide. Some of these data need to be improved upon but it is also necessary to extend the range and form of the data to be collected. Already, more information on provision could be extracted from the OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) database and the Form 7 data provided by schools and held by the DfE. Formula allocations to schools could be obtained from the Section 42 returns made to the DfE by LEAs—the source of the funding data reported earlier in this article; some process and performance data can also be obtained from some of these sources. There are also examples of schemes for collecting the views of teachers, parents and pupils and reporting them in comparative form (Scottish Office, 1992a; 1992b).

A framework for reporting upon the achievement of national, regional and institutional goals can provide a means for reviewing and reporting upon the efficiency/cost-effectiveness and equity of the school system. It can provide a
source of information which by being more open, brings greater equality in debates which are otherwise heavily skewed in the direction of the professionals. Information provided by the LEA about the quality of school processes and performance can, for example, assist governors in undertaking management responsibilities in a more equal relationship with their head teachers. Within schools, within LEAs and at the national level there is a potential for creating a framework and an information system by which a dialogue of accountability can be encouraged between the range of stakeholders in the system. Consistent with Judith Chapman’s comment cited earlier, there is scope for a pragmatic consensus against which the achievements of the school system can be assessed annually and systematically.

Conclusion

In this article, I have argued that the school system operates in a mixed economy of exchange relations and suggested that is desirable that it does so. I have also sought to illustrate the applicability of the concepts of efficiency and equity to schools and provide some perspective on how they can inform judgements about the appropriate balance in the mixed economy. My discussion of efficiency and equity concluded by asking whether any framework is available against which we can judge the system’s general direction, and whether it is becoming more or less efficient and more or less equitable. This led into a theoretical treatment of the concept of educational need and a subsequent sketch of how it may be possible to operationalize a framework for defining need and the criteria against which achievement can be assessed. This concluded with the view that contemporary information systems could be harnessed to this task and that a key outcome would be information that was not owned by specific stakeholders but available to all. As such, it could be the basis for a better and more open dialogue of accountability, informing decisions about appropriate levels of provision and, in that context, appropriate expectations about process and performance.

For too many years in England and Wales, we have managed the school system—and the education and training system as whole—where there has been a quest for some efficiency, some effectiveness but—overwhelmingly—economy. Out of this, I suggest, have come many changes for the better but, associated with real concerns about genuine efficiency, too little concern with equity and a danger that the limited range of published performance information will lead to an over-emphasis upon a basic curriculum—a contemporary version of the 3Rs. I hope I have illustrated that there are ways and means for careful development of exchange relations in the school system which can improve efficiency and enhance equity. Doing so also requires attention to and the specification of a theory of educational needs, and from this could emerge a different 3Rs—a resourced, redistributive and relevant school system for all our children.
Notes

1 The absence of the ‘market’ in the curriculum was aptly put by Sir Keith Joseph: ‘The best “national curriculum” is that resulting from the exercise of true parental choice by parents and children acting collectively, and being provided collectively by governors and teachers in response to that choice. The substitution . . . of a government-imposed curriculum is poor second best’ (cited in Chitty, 1989: 217).

2 This is not to suggest that valuable work cannot be done on efficiency in learning. A recent doctoral study is a rare example of an attempt at examining the ‘personal time and effort given by a learner to achieve some desired learning’ (Hewitt, 1994). Yet, a focus on the use of time in learning—not time on task but economy of (non-linear) steps to achieving desired learning—may have a potential in efficiency gains that far outweighs those obtained through decentralized resource management.

3 In this respect, the forms of democracy and how they might be measured (Beetham, 1994) cannot overlook the role of the school system in preparing its citizens for that democracy.

4 Approaches in developing more persuasive value-added data, contextualized for schools, have been commissioned by OFSTED and reported (Sammons et al., 1994). SCAA (1994) has also completed its own review for the Secretary of State.

5 In the same series of Information for Parents, the Scottish Office reports on leaver destinations (Scottish Office, 1994b).

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EFFICIENCY, EQUITY AND EXCHANGE IN EDUCATION

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375
MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

Part 7

FURTHER EDUCATION
As governments worldwide articulate the rhetoric of a ‘knowledge economy’ traditional cultures of education management and leadership are found to be wanting. At the same time, growing recognition that market and managerial reforms have not improved levels of educational performance has increased government interest in the transformative powers of business and charismatic leadership. This paper considers this phenomenon with reference to the changing conditions of corporate leadership taking place in the further education (FE) sector. Whilst ostensibly a ‘very English’ case study, the paper draws attention to the wider implications of managing and socializing others in the self-surveillance rules of corporate education culture. Drawing on data from an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded project the paper analyses the shifting discourse of leadership as it is experienced by principals and senior managers involved in the study. In so doing the paper seeks to examine how principals and senior managers mediate changing education policy agendas in a sector recovering from an intense period of financial crisis, industrial action and low staff morale.

Introduction

This paper examines shifting discourses of leadership in the changing policy context of the English further education (FE) sector. In contrast to a strong research and policy interest in school-based leadership and management (DfEE 1998), this area remains largely neglected territory in further education. This is surprising given that FE has been the subject of intense market experimentation and has experienced the worst industrial relations record in the public sector.
since the miners’ strike in the early 1980s (Burchill 1998). As the sector slowly recovers from highly publicized episodes of industrial action, mis-management and financial crisis, this paper questions the extent to which changing leadership styles challenge or reinforce prevailing forms of managerialism in FE. In addressing this issue the first half of the paper briefly examines the changing corporate context of FE that provides the backdrop to changes in senior managers’ work. This section draws on narrative evidence from a recently completed ESRC project looking at the impact of FE reforms on changing professional and managerial cultures at college level.1 In the second part of the paper, such evidence is analysed in the broader context of policy – practice related change in the FE sector and beyond. The third and final section critically explores the apparent transition from a hard edged managerialist approach to a more inclusive style of leadership, and questions its likely impact on re-fashioning education policy at the micro policy level of the college.

Managing the meaning of work in FE

The context of this paper is framed by the impact of the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) which led to the incorporation of colleges in 1993 (Gleeson 1993). The term ‘incorporation’ refers, among other things, to the introduction of local management of colleges, institutional self-governance and independence from local authority control. As Lucas (1999) has argued, the grounds for the quasi-market reform of further education had been laid earlier in school reforms associated with the Education Reform Act (1988). If, at one level, incorporation introduced greater autonomy to colleges, allowing them freedom to compete as business in the VET market, it also laid the foundations for even greater central control of FE via market and managerial forces. At college level pressures on FE lecturers to be more accountable, in terms of increased student participation, achievement and retention while, at the same time, experiencing harsh management strategies and new contracts of employment, took their toll (Elliott 2000). Following the initial euphoria of independence from local education authorities in 1993 the funding reality of ‘more for less’ soon became a major cause of concern for principals and senior managers, many of whom had no experience of business or corporate management. As financial pressures intensified, many colleges became preoccupied with entrepreneurial activities, while others entered into ill-advised franchising and commercial ventures which had little to do with the further education needs of their local communities.

In the period 1997/99 numerous colleges were investigated by the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) for financial and management irregularity precipitating a House of Commons Select Committee of Enquiry into Standards of Probit in the Sector (Hodge 1998). Such irregularity represents the tip of an iceberg in which many colleges have been driven to desperate measures in seeking to reduce their debts and maintain competitive advantage. Of deeper significance is the financial fragility that has underlined the bullish marketing
front of many colleges. Behind the marketing images and new foyer facades a serious funding crisis has characterized the institutional reality of this fast growing £4 billion sector. In the period 1993–97, the FEFC reported that more than 50% of colleges were in the red with 63 projecting negative resources, 156 financially vulnerable and 93 financially weak FEFC (1997a/b). As the FE sector has sought to recover from such pressures, there has been a 30% turnover of lecturing and senior staff and a significant increase in casual and contract employment (Williams 1998, Lucas 2000). At a time when industrial action and financial uncertainty has dogged FE the issue of management and leadership has been high on the policy and political agenda (Kennedy 1997). According to the General Secretary of NATFHE (National Association of Teachers in Further & Higher Education) the fascination with market and managerial reform has had dramatic effects in terms of how the new breed of principal and senior manager interpreted their changing corporate role:

You had all these Principals walking around with ‘Thriving on Chaos’ by Tom Peters in their briefcases, and what it said to Principals was: ‘and you are God’. That was a disaster. The process took reasonable people and turned them into monsters.

(Mackney, quoted in Beckett 1998)

Evidence in this paper suggests, however, that principals and senior managers do not necessarily constitute such a neat or homogeneous group. Their responses and perceptions of leadership vary in relation to institutional effects, context, experience and gender. At the time of interviewing and undertaking fieldwork for this research, there had been considerable change in senior personnel across the five colleges involved in the study, with four principals appointed between 1995–97, two of whom were women. Moreover, a majority of senior managers were also appointed in this period following major restructuring and a wave of early retirements. Apart from curriculum managers appointed mainly through the ranks, the majority of senior managers (in marketing, personnel, estates and finance) were recruited from business, industry and commerce. One might expect, therefore, that this weighting of business experience would inevitably identify them with the corporate aims of their new employers. Many, however, were appointed during the period between 1993–97, when industrial action in colleges was at its height. Much of the unpopular restructuring had been instigated by and conveniently blamed on previous principals and senior managers who, with little business experience, had taken their colleges through the first phase of institutional independence. Thus, the majority of the 30 senior managers interviewed in this study, were relatively new and circumspect about their role. Appointed at the point or near aftermath of major conflict, budget deficit and redundancies, the ‘new guard’ of principals and senior managers adopted a more strategic and inclusive view of management, as a means of uniting a beleaguered and often hostile workforce. Though much of the day-to-day activity of
principals and senior managers is taken up with managing staff budgets and planning strategy, it also involves interpreting shifting national policy agendas at college level and making these meaningful to staff on the ground. This is how a recently appointed senior manager from industry and an advocate of market managerial reforms in FE, sums up her view of the new ‘reality’ being communicated to staff in her college:

Eastward College is a corporation: we are the employer and we are totally responsible for our employees in terms of employment legislation . . . The employer in the past was **** County Council – a body far removed . . . The college has got a strong identity, although having said that, some people have taken quite a while to adjust to it – some people perhaps won’t ever adjust – and it has brought with it . . . a sort of commercialisation, a sense of reality that we have to win.

(Sally, senior manager)

This account suggests that senior managers such as Sally see an important aspect of their role as one of persuading staff in the college to accept this new reality. It is a strategy increasingly connected with transparency, a term associated with openness (opening the books for all to see), designed to ensure participation, teamwork and compliance among those all in the same boat. This apparent spirit of inclusivity is, however, not always reciprocated. There are, in Sally’s view, a few isolated individuals who do not like change and who will not adjust. Implicit in her account is the characterization of the previous organizational order, based on a public sector model of professionalism as bureaucratic, complacent and wasteful. By comparison the new managerial order stresses responsibility on the part of staff and, above all, responsiveness to change in terms of flexibility.

New managerial values, stressing efficiency, compliance and flexibility, pose a challenge to the perceived ‘easy-life’ that existed for lecturers prior to market reform in the early 1990s (Randle and Brady 1997, Elliot 1996). The management of consent which guides change towards such ‘new realism’ also requires a different set of organizational values to those previously associated with public sector professionalism and are made explicit by senior managers through a variety of means. These include: college mission statements and corporate plans issued to staff; training courses aimed at the professional development of staff; and meetings intended to identify targets and values with which staff are expected to identify. The approach is increasingly, though not exclusively, expressed in progressive terms, often disguising managerialist ambitions in core values associated with inclusivity, teamwork and communication (Casey 1995). The following extract from a senior management group interview, provides an example of this approach:

. . . we’ve got quite a sophisticated communication system to start with and I think that staff know what is going on and that may be a con-
tributing factor. We don’t have any secrets. That is also very helpful, and also staff have copies of the strategic plan. They know about the mission, the vision, the values etc. and we do reinforce the successes in terms of telling people how well we are doing on a regular basis so people know we are doing well; we have always underlined DON’T GET COMPLACENT.

(Group Interview, senior manager)

In this account what comes across clearly is the requirement that staff, as individuals, must take responsibility for ensuring that success is internalized and maintained. Thus, while staff may be rewarded for their successes, they are reminded that they must not ‘get complacent’. The communication of such values, often associated with an intensification of work performance, requires senior managers to manage the meaning of work for staff so that it is appropriately internalized. In the wider organizational literature the management of such meaning in the workplace is identified as a major management priority and responsibility for increased work performance (Collinson 1994, Salaman 1997). For FE, this is particularly important since the new contracts of employment introduced since 1993 have, in many cases, led to an increase in teaching and contact hours coupled with, in real terms, a decrease in pay requiring a difficult leadership job for principals and senior managers. Managing the corporate FE culture in such circumstances involves deliberate attempts to structure the meanings employees attribute to the organization and their work (Flynn 1999). In an increasingly competitive environment this approach is presented by management gurus (Peters 1992, Handy 1994) as a key method of achieving institutional participation and allegiance designed to produce economic benefits through human and organizational performance (du Guy 1996). Successful attempts by senior managers to redefine the work culture of their staff through charismatic leadership are contingent on staff internalizing realism and regulation.

Part of the emerging corporate culture of FE involves senior management representing the college as a unified body through the expression of a corporate or unified voice. In the account presented below the college is represented through a discourse of unity that transcends different identities and often competing professional cultures that exist within the college. Though the rhetoric often does not match the experiences of many lecturers at the sharp end of the system (Shain and Gleeson 1999), the following account is illustrative of the authority that is invested in senior managers speaking on behalf of the organization, in defining its inclusive culture.

The culture is one of an open style of management . . . we are looking at leadership rather than management of staff and no doubt you have seen the college’s ‘organizational values’ which I think sum up the fact that we are all working together, we are all part of the college. I don’t see it as an ‘us and them’ or ‘management and staff’ . . . I think every-
body knows what we are about, or they should know. We spend a lot of
time communicating with staff and staff understanding what our stra-
tegic aims are: what our vision and mission is; we should all be
working together. Now, no doubt some people don’t feel part of it as
much as others; some people will choose to opt out anyway, but I think
in terms of the ethos, it is one of all participating as much as possible at
all levels in decisions which affect the staff and students.

(Sally, senior manager)

Here the culture of the organization is defined by a senior manager through a
discourse of unity. Management and staff are apparently unified in working
towards common goals and purposes for the organization. The discourse of
openness and inclusivity associated with this account draws on the notion of the
college as a community in which senior managers have different but
complementary roles in working together with staff to produce organizational
harmony and consensus. This visionary model is, elsewhere, seen to contribute
to a ‘happy’ atmosphere at work. The image of the corporate college as a
community also defines the role of principals and senior managers as community
builders and representatives of core values of tradition and continuity. It is an
approach that involves an inclusive style of management that is embodied in
managers’ vision, presence and approachability. As Salaman has argued, it is an
approach that requires the manager:

. . . to move modestly among the people, disclaiming the panoplies of
rank . . . a leader in touch with the people, who manages by ‘walking
the talk’, by being accessible and working with subordinates. Through
this consensual approach employees are both free to make their
empowered decisions and can safely be relied upon to execute their
new authority judiciously.

(Salaman 1997: 255)

At a time when the FE sector is seeking to establish greater stability after a
period of unprecedented change, this charismatic style of inclusive leadership is
increasingly in evidence as the account from a recently appointed principal illus-
trates:

It is about having to read, to think quickly, to use some part of your
experience and a lot of intuition and to walk around calmly and posi-
tively . . . that is no different from any other leadership role; it is to
demonstrate that you are in control and that you are comfortable. What
I have fed back to me is that everybody sees that I am actually quite
excited about the job. I am not walking around cynically, which would
have been the other option, saying, ‘oh no, more problems’: I think it is
very important to actually spread that excitement about FE now,
however difficult it is and actually pick up and say what the opportunities are.

(Maria, principal)

In talking about her vision of leadership Maria highlights the importance of spreading excitement around the place and instilling this into employees by her own example. This approach is, however, more than just a morale boosting exercise for staff. It is also a communicative technology that goes hand in hand with the internalization of regulation and self-discipline (Ball 1990).

We have spelt out the culture of this college; we have actually spelt out organizational values, which we put out to the staff and the desirable features of the college structure. Now we put these out not for consultation but for people to add to so we said (to staff), ‘there are ten things we think are our values . . . Everyone is responsible for striving for continuous improvement: there is openness and respect, which is important because people have different views; it is welcoming and supportive; promoting equality of opportunity; recognizing contributions . . . it is open rather than explicit.

(Maria, principal)

For Maria it is important that staff adopt a self-critical approach that connects with the corporate vision. This involves self-motivated staff taking more responsibility for the success of the college without constant supervision. However, for staff to internalize the new rules of the organization principals and senior managers must play a central role in communicating these values to staff. This process of unifying staff around an institutional mission and core values takes a variety of forms, including displaying posters, issuing leaflets, meetings, memos, workshops, training days and appraisals. The culture of the college is, as Maria illustrates, literally spelt out to staff. Such is the speed of change in FE that spelling it out is seen as a necessary precursor to inclusivity. In order to achieve this, however, senior managers may also adopt a more direct role that involves the policing of people to make sure it happens.

I went though a stage last year where I felt like a police lady, policing people. [I was saying] ‘you can’t do that, you have to use a corporate image’ and I don’t like that at all but . . . having developed a good corporate style then I couldn’t then allow people in a way to do their own thing and so it has to be controlled, but in a nice way. I don’t like controlling people; you get the best out of people by letting them all do their own thing but then you can get chaos and when you are dealing with the public you obviously have got to instil in staff that there are rules to this.

(Gina, senior manager)
Again we see the adoption of the community metaphor, but here the senior manager takes on the policing role that is deemed necessary in order to prevent the kind of chaos that might ensue if newly established rules are not adhered to. In other instances, an approach of coaching may be necessary in order to encourage middle managers to take responsibility for their staff and, at the same time, to accept their ‘right to manage’:

I think to get managers to actually manage and to see that they are responsible for staff . . . sometimes it [involves] coaching managers on the job. We had a disciplinary meeting a couple of years ago. I hadn’t been here very long and I was almost rehearsing the managers saying, ‘right, this is how you are going to run the meeting and what you are going to say and if I think you’re going way off I will call an adjournment’. I am not here to do the manager’s job, [I am] just here to help them to manage their staff. I could make a decision in five minutes but I spend an hour with the manager looking at all the options and hopefully he or she will come to the decision I think is right but it is their decision at the end of the day.

(Sally, senior manager)

Here, not telling middle managers what to do (in ways which allows them to reach the right decision) is the trick of managing and socializing others in the self-surveillance rules of corporate culture (Ball 1990). But is this process so neat and clear-cut in practice? As Collinson (1994) notes, despite insisting on the essential reality of consensus and community within the organization, leadership campaigns are often at odds with the existing conceptions and experiences of employees. This suggests, as others have noted, that corporate culture is not automatically accepted by FE lecturers or by senior managers themselves (Ainley and Bailey 1997).

For Brian, who came through the ranks from lecturer to director of studies (and now vice-principal), there is a sense of frustration with the overt rebranding of FE’s image which compromises his sense of professionalism. His feeling of unease, for example, with the ‘business speak’ of FE draws attention to the ethos and language of the corporate college.

There is a kind of business speak about FE. Directors, managers, clientele, finance, efficiency gains. What I can understand about it is the new ethos and you have to live with it. It’s not just us, it’s the National Health Service, and others. A lot of the former public sectors have now got this ‘post-Thatcherite’ language and rationality. I understand where it comes from but I’m not entirely comfortable with it, at least not all the time. I suppose, yes, I still see myself as a teacher.

For others, such ‘business speak’ is also reflective of wider reforms in the
public sector associated with growing divisions between professionals and man-
agers (Flynn 1999). According to Richard, a senior manager recruited from
industry, there is a link between iconoclasm and de-professionalization in public
sector reform.

There is a kind of iconoclasm built into incorporation in the same way
as there is for all sorts of other government initiatives such as those
which have taken place in the health service, which is a de-profession-
alization. There is actually restructuring of the system in a way that
doesn’t give the primacy of view to the educator in the classroom – that
says ‘well I think that in order to achieve these students should receive
X’. In the same way that doctors don’t run the health service any more,
it’s to say well in effect that professional argument, as a basis for
running the system, is broken.

(Richard, senior manager)

The iconoclasm referred to by this senior manager connects the market frac-
turing of professional and managerial knowledge in FE with wider changes in
the public sector. If, in theory, professionals are now expected to get on with
their jobs supported by principals and senior managers running the operational
side of ‘the business’, that division in practice is not clear cut or without contro-
versy. The main frustration felt by some senior managers is that the business
environment to which they have been recruited is not businesslike enough.
Rather, it is seen to be more determined by funding and bureaucratic systems
associated with government, than by the college itself. While many senior man-
agers in the study agreed that college independence and new funding arrange-
ments gave FE more status and flexibility, the means to achieve this were seen
to be contentious. A key concern is the displacement of time and energy which
goes into data gathering, market research and ‘bidding’ for funds, resulting in a
culture change more linked to funding requirements than the learning needs of
students:

It’s meant staff having to go through a culture change, which they are
still going through to get to grips with the way in which we are funded
and to understand the importance of finance. I personally believe that a
lot of decisions that we ought to take within the college ought to be
driven by educational philosophy and what we want to do for students
and what is good for students. Whether we get it right or not is what we
ought to consider, and we try to do that, but the funding methodology
drives us more and more to take decisions which we have at the fore-
front of our minds, i.e. finance . . . as well as education and possibly
even instead of . . . and that is bad I think and staff who might want for
very good reasons to run a class in a minority subject with two or three
students . . . which we would have supported and still try to support, are
now having to understand that funding is numbers related and they
can’t do what they might have done five years ago. We have tried very
hard to get the message across to staff and I think it’s getting across.
but the culture is changing.

(James, vice-principal)

The nature of such culture change is closely associated with new ways of
working that are linked with how successful senior managers are in making bids
to the European Union and government agencies for funding. Essentially, the
difference between ‘winners and losers’ in this bidding process is tied to the
quality of information and evidence provided by institutions to the Further Edu-
cation Funding Council in order to obtain funds. Thus, not only is a high degree
of investment in information systems and data retrieval required, but also per-
sonnel, time and resources which can detract from investment elsewhere,
notably in relation to the curriculum, teaching and learning. For Emma this
process is seen to have had a detrimental effect on senior management’s rela-
tions with rank and file lecturers. For her there is a close connection between the
speed of change and the funding and management of that change on FE lecturers
working in the sector.

I think the way it has impacted upon staff is that, to some extent, it has
constrained their opportunity to develop their curriculum, their subject,
the things that they are interested in because of methodology and
funding. It has also de-professionalized their role because of things like
the Student Centered Learning Approach etc. The models that have
been driven in from a more financial basis have meant that staff have
been threatened by that whole approach. We can have a demonstrator
now and not a teacher. Well if the machine does it where does that
leave me? Does it mean that I am a software developer? That has very
much been an attitude of staff. I think Incorporation has been very
threatening for them but it has de-professionalized staff. It has been
heavily dependent upon the type of management we have had. If you
were able to have supportive management in the process of post-incor-
poration then the de-professionalization and the challenges would not
have not been quite so threatening whereas, if you have had a very
aggressive management, then the challenges have been so threatening
that lots of people have just turned off and felt that they are no longer
of any value or that they have any professional worth.

(Emma, senior manager)

The notion, therefore, that senior managers are necessarily distant and lack
empathy with their lecturer colleagues can be challenged. Many such senior man-
gagers as Emma acutely recognize how cultures of managerialism affect them too,
particularly in their management relations with disillusioned colleagues. This
‘reading’ of the tension finds further expression in the often contradictory education and business ambitions of the institutions in which senior managers work as a corporate team as, again, Emma points out.

There is a real tension between being told that you are a business and getting your funding from public funds for 90% of what you do, being told how you must spend it or how you may acquire it, or not. You either get on and run yourself as a business or you don’t and I would much prefer to be part of a public sector and I do consider myself a public servant and consider that is part of my job. It is to serve the community. To have a level of provision which meets the needs of the community, not because it meets my business needs but because it meets the community needs . . . but not necessarily without having an eye to the finances of that.

(Emma, senior manager)

Given the funding crisis in the FE sector (FEFC 1997a), reconciling such ambitions has proved elusive to more than 50% of institutions in the sector. Thus, despite recognition that the education and business interests of FE are connected the issue, according to Hilary, is one of remembering what kind of business FE is in.

As long as it is always remembered that our business is about people. We are not making iron bars. We are not trying to make thousands of students exactly the same. Everybody that comes in is different, comes in different, goes out different. What they need, and their capability of achievement is different so everybody is unique and an individual . . . and it is important to remember that. Yes, we do need a business model. We also need a strategic plan and we do need to run ourselves as a business. We have to make sure that we make a surplus. We need to actually manage the budgets properly. . . . All of those kinds of things. We do need our own functions, finance and human resources but we must not forget what our business is all about and sometimes I think people have forgotten it is all about people.

(Hilary, senior manager)

Both Emma and Hilary’s accounts reveal tensions in ‘the business of learning’, and that no amount of corporate newspeak is likely to bridge the two (Ainley and Bailey 1997). The assumption, therefore, that senior managers passively accept the corporate line, despite working within it, ignores their experience and interpretation of educational reform as it affects their working relations with staff. Narratives in this study indicate that principals and senior managers resist and feel morally uncomfortable with hitting targets that do not conform with educational reasoning and rationale. Brian, for example, talks of
some of the ‘dodgy tricks’ which can compromise senior managers and lecturers in FE.

I think the targets we were set and the financial penalties incurred if you didn’t reach them is really getting more for less, it’s really put a lot of strain on the colleges and it has made a lot of colleges do some chancy and risky things that have not always been done for educational reasons. You do it for maximizing units. You get more students in and some colleges are going for some very dodgy franchises.

(Brian, senior manager)

Here, Brian draws attention to pressures which, for financial reasons, have drawn institutions into risky activities – some of which have been induced by funding mechanisms – and which nationally have attracted critical attention (Kennedy 1997, Hodge 1998). Again, as with other participants in this study, principals and senior managers often strongly resist pressures which they see as dodgy or compromising, though not always successfully. Elsewhere, Linda points to some of the ethical and professional dilemmas of matching image with reality when marketing new programmes and courses in her college.

The equal opportunities group and the multicultural forum produced a little leaflet and we got somebody to translate it into Urdu and possibly another language as well. It was translated into Urdu and distributed through the local community and I said ‘this is all right but what happens when somebody who speaks Urdu rings up? Who is going to speak to them? That is fine provided they are there. I do find that particularly difficult and I suppose that is one of the biggest challenges really, matching what we do to the image that we project and trying to live up to people’s expectations that we have created. There is always a danger in marketing, where you go out to get as many people as you can . . . and when people come we let them down. It is trying to get that balance.

(Linda, senior manager)

The balance between marketing, provision and expectation, to which Linda refers, captures both the excitement and risk associated with a more dynamic and enterprising FE system. However, extreme financial pressure on colleges to attract students from a wide range of backgrounds, in this case ethnic minorities, tempts many institutions to test the market as a means of signalling inclusivity and drumming up business. The downside of this is, as Linda notes, that marketing strategies can often precede the promise to deliver on provision (Avis et al. 1996). For some senior managers such tensions between the corporate rhetoric of inclusivity and the reality, in which they work with staff, are not one and the same thing. This, coupled with ongoing conflict in colleges over performance related pay, redundancy and casualization, is increasingly challenging the belief
among some principals and senior managers of the efficacy of managerial and funding-led reform in the sector. In a system acknowledged to be slowly recovering from crisis how do principals and senior managers view the future, and what has gender got to do with it?

**Gender, touch and leadership**

Despite the overt and less obvious trappings of FE corporate culture so far discussed, there are signs that extreme forms of managerialism, described earlier by Mackney (1998), are now taking a different shape. Two factors explain this. The first connects with the growing realization that FE has been an industrial relations disaster with lecturing staff at the limits of what can be expected of them, in terms of pay, conditions, institutional change and morale (Burchill 1998). The second relates to the unprecedented turnover of principals and senior staff in which 32% of 431 colleges (139 colleges) have appointed a new principal since September 1996. Of the ‘old guard’ of principals and senior managers in post before or just after incorporation many have since been replaced by a ‘second wave’ of new appointments, more versed in the ways of market and managerial reform. Though the evidence for this is speculative the ‘old guard’ fell into one of two groups: those who willingly embraced college restructuring and the industrial relations battles which followed and those, more circumspect, who sought a middle way between public sector professionalism and market-led managerialism. With little experience of business, information, human resource or management systems, the initial excitement of college independence soon wore off for ‘first wave’ principals and senior managers. Many such pioneers retired early as the funding and political ratchet of industrial disputes over lecturers’ pay, conditions and contracts increased. Not surprisingly there has been great variation in the management and leadership responses of colleges in the post-incorporation period (Green and Lucas 1999). As the FE sector grapples with the aftermath of such rapid change, a new breed of principals and senior manager is discernible. There is, for example, recognition among recently appointed senior staff that stress levels throughout FE are counter-productive to achieving a more inclusive learning culture and that more flexible and inclusive teaching and management approaches are called for.

Some of them [lecturers] feel that the management’s external accountability has meant a further rift between teachers and management. Some of them are conscious they are working harder and harder. Greater stress, more and more bureaucracy. Some of that has come from the awarding bodies. They are having to work very very hard. The stress builds up. Some of them go off sick, they then have to cover for sick colleagues and they become sick. The volume of change and the speed of change has meant some people have got left behind. . . .

(Maria, principal)

391
For Maria, there is a close association between the management skills that she advocates and issues of gender. Paradoxically, the need for a ‘second wave’ of restructuring in the face of near collapse in the sector has opened up new appointments and opportunities for women managers in senior posts, with a slightly increased proportion of women Principals rising from 14% to 20% in 1999. If jobs in estates and finance remain predominantly male orientated, colonization of ‘softer’ more feminized areas of senior management, in curriculum, personnel and marketing, has occurred partly as an antidote to rifts and divisions generated by macho management and partly in response to women’s professional experience in those areas (FEDA 1997a and b). Here, Maria connects what she sees as the ‘woman’s touch’ to a management style characterised by inclusivity.

. . . the issue of gender is important whether you want it or not. It isn’t the only factor but it is an important ingredient and it goes from walking around and saying ‘this place is dirty’ and I have been told, ‘we can see already there is a woman at the helm because it is much cleaner’. The other thing is about touch. Women have less difficulty touching whilst they are talking and I know that I touch. I don’t necessarily do it consciously but I have been told I do. The other thing is the ability to operate it through four different levels simultaneously because I have brought three children up and prepared the evening meal and prepared classes simultaneously and, therefore, the awareness of the skills that you pick up of having been a housewife and mother. I think that is mixed in with the human concern.

(Maria, principal)

Such apparent accommodation or privileging of gender is not, however, straightforward or uncontested in FE or the wider workplace. Neither does it signal the onset of the widespread ‘feminization’ of FE (Hughes 2000). The promotion and accommodation of women in senior positions in FE is still not the norm and remains as much a combination of legitimate ambition, (self) exploitation and stereotyping as in the past. Brenda, for example, sees both sides of this issue, in terms of what ‘being a woman’ means in senior management terms.

I have these views that women can juggle more things in the air and be more flexible. It’s never been proven has it, but it’s a question that is continually asked. Women tend to be more adaptable. Women have to be adaptable . . . it could be why there are a lot more women Principals and a lot more senior managers now . . . the communication of team working that is necessary for Incorporation. Would I call it exploitation? I think sometimes it is exploitation and sometimes it is just a matter of management and personality.

(Brenda, vice-principal and recently promoted to principal of another college)
As noted elsewhere (Gleeson and Shain 1999), while there is evidence that some women middle managers feel exploited by such experience others, at more senior level such as Brenda and Maria, view their gender, knowledge and skills as integral. It is also the case that adaptability, teamwork and communication skills in the current FE climate have as much to do with strategy and pragmatism than with ‘feminization’ or apparent feminine attributes. According to Limb (2000), there is a need to go beyond ‘monochromatic stereotyping’. She argues that a more appropriate familial model of leadership, based on the role of ‘containing parent’, is called for: ‘... holding back the demonising and idealisation of leadership in creative tension’ (Limb 2000). While the apparent ethos of leadership emerging here suggests a familial and perhaps less confrontational management style, it may be no less managerialist or macho in practice. In a sector riven with debt, casualization and low morale more participative rather than distant or overtly managerialist approaches, represent a highly pragmatic response for both men and women senior managers. In the case of Jim, recently appointed principal following major financial difficulties in his college, an altogether different participative approach to management is seen to be a high priority. In an atmosphere described by one of his senior management colleagues as previously ‘like living in Stalinist Russia’, Jim talks of rebuilding the relationship with staff:

I have spent quite a lot of time around the college speaking to groups of staff either in formal situations but more often informally, getting around staff rooms, getting around classrooms. Being seen around the institution. Again that is a difference from the previous world that we were in and I think that helps. People know that they can talk to me and that I do listen and I try and do something about it. I can’t always give them the answer they want but I would be sympathetic, understanding and I would look into it and try and do something if I possibly can and I think staff do appreciate that.

(Jim, principal)

In such circumstances ‘being seen around the institution’ is an essential ingredient of management wisdom. The importance of ‘walking and talking’ the job is also perceived by Maria as an antidote to a previous distant management regime. In the following account, for example, she views consultation as an integral feature of her preferred management style.

The first thing is to get to know the staff and the college. That means walking around, attending meetings, talking to people and nipping into staff rooms. Calling meetings, walking the job and picking up what is going on and so that the decisions I take in this office have got some relevance to what happens outside and that is also my style.

(Maria, principal)
If Jim and Maria’s accounts say much about the need for a more tactile ‘hands on’ leadership approach, in circumstances where trust and morale has to be rebuilt, they also connect with the mantra of visionary management thinking associated with presence, visibility and touch. (Peters 1992, Handy 1994). Although few principals and senior managers in this study acknowledge being influenced by such discourse their references to ‘walking and talking’ the college would seem to suggest otherwise.

One consequence of the FE system being in crisis is that it is requires new thinking about changing conditions of leadership, management and professionalism (Hodge 1998). Endless exhortations by government to greater flexibility and smarter working practices do not, however, cut much ice with principals and senior managers, many of whom have experienced the demoralizing effects of funding cuts and industrial action. As early advocates and forerunners of incorporation have fallen victim to their own constructions of managerialism, more participative or inclusive leadership responses have since emerged. Though most ‘new guard’ principals and senior managers in this study spoke of being heavily pressurized by funding, staffing and managerial constraints, they were not consumed or overtaken by such pressures. While operating in a highly competitive and cash strapped environment three of the five principals working in neighbouring colleges met regularly to discuss joint cooperative ventures with schools, HE, community and other bodies regarding student participation, course rationalization and recruitment.

I think there was always competition with private training providers and fine, why shouldn’t there be. I haven’t got a problem with that. I do have a problem with competing with other FE colleagues and certainly if you have spoken to [other Principals in this area, you will know that] we have made a decision that we are going to work together and we will. We will all say ‘our college has got to survive and our college is the best at X, Y and Z’, but there are certain things where we are doing, a lot of collaboration.

(Wendy, principal)

Here, Wendy points to how FE institutions are able to operate more effectively through co-operation in a competitive market situation, in ways that make sense to all those involved. Jim, a principal and a close neighbour of Wendy’s college endorses this view, pointing to the ways in which colleges themselves can ‘grow the market’.

We are more concerned about growing the market in total than we are in taking shares from each other. It is much more important that more people participate than we win some students from X or Y College wins some students from us. To some extent the Y College and us are really quite complimentary. Our big emphasis is Post 19, sort of 80%
odd of our students are over the age of 19 and 80% odd of their stu-
dents are 16–19 so there is that issue. We are not in head on competi-
tion. They are recognized as the main A-level centres for example in
the area but we have all sorts of specialist provision, which nobody else
locally has. So it is partly complimentary.

(Jim, principal)

In the absence of any coherent national policy for FE, principals such as Jim
and Wendy have initiated partnership links for themselves. If this is partly to do
with market share, protection and growth the question arises whether emerging
forms of partnership and inclusive management style represent just another
version of managerialism, or support more democratic forms of leadership and
professionality in the sector? Certainly the rhetoric would seem to confirm that
FE ‘under new management’ is less obsessed with macho images, and more
concerned with learning, staffing and leadership matters, if only for strategic and
pragmatic reasons.

This issue of ‘rhetoric and reality’ returns me to the central focus of the
paper. If at one level market and managerial reform is seen to have undermined
professionalism and collegiality in FE, at another, it has paradoxically exposed
various anomalies, policies and myths surrounding a ‘golden age’ of FE
(Gleeson and Shain 1999). Between the old guard of senior managers who have
since departed FE and the ‘new wave’ of recently appointed Principals and
senior managers, how is corporate culture in FE best understood? In addressing
this question wider research in public sector management is split between those
who discern a growing interchangeability between professional and managerial
roles in the education workplace (Menter and Muschamp 1999), and those who
see an increasing separation between them in response to market and managerial
reform (Gamble 1988, du Guy 1996, Flynn 1999). If, ironically, both views
acknowledge the inevitability of post-structural change in the public sector
workplace, the former tends to talk up the possibilities of professional recon-
struction arising from market dislocation while the latter tends to exaggerate the
de-professionalizing tendencies experienced by workers at the sharp end.

The narratives considered so far suggest that the effects of deregulation, mar-
ketization and managerialism have impacted on FE in intense fashion. Such
effects have, however, gone largely unnoticed by the wider education commu-
nity, partly due to FE’s historical invisibility and partly due to a lack of public
understanding of a sector marginalized between school, work and higher educa-
tion. This, coupled with FE’s voluntaristic and entrepreneurial legacy has ren-
dered it accessible to ‘market capture’ in response to various government and
business agendas, designed to both realign FE with the economy and increase
patterns of student participation at relatively low cost (DfEE 1995; 1998). Yet, if
FE has been restructured along quasi-market and managerial lines – essentially
on a ‘more for less’ model – it shares much in common with public sector
reforms in the UK and elsewhere (Exworthy and Halford 1999). What
distinguishes FE is multiple restructuring resulting in the unprecedented exodus (and recruitment) of principals, senior managers and lecturers. Since the introduction of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, FE has experienced continuous professional, managerial and industrial disruption coinciding with belated public interest in the probity and effectiveness of leadership, management and governance in the sector (Hodge 1998).

One way of interpreting such contingency in FE leadership and management is to see it as part of a postmodernizing tendency, linked with greater social and economic diversity at institutional level (Hargreaves 1994). This points to new ways of understanding how institutional and professional leadership can arise in conditions of crisis and chaos. Whether, of course, the transition from government to market governance in FE heralds the introduction of such a postmodern awakening in FE is debatable. Arguably, much depends on how one views the type of leadership shift considered so far, as either a progressive response to pluralism or as a means of managing and controlling it. Thus, while inclusive leadership may appear to offer a strategic response to rapid social and economic change it is not clear whether it represents a new way of dealing with a differentiated polity or is ‘part of the problem’ in perpetuating the kind of chaos that has been experienced in FE and the wider public sector to date. The danger of uncritically accepting the mantra of charismatic leadership is that it promotes naive personality ‘trait’ solutions to market problems, ‘… with no sense of the structural, the political and historical as constraints’ (Grace 1994; 1995).

While the narratives in this study suggest that principals and senior managers are strongly influenced by the shifting FE policy agenda, they are not necessarily taken over by its various facets. There is, nevertheless, a noticeable shift in leadership style from the ‘old to the new guard’, following a second wave of restructuring soon after the onset of college independence in 1993. If the first wave of senior managers both initiated and ‘ran the gauntlet’ of market reform, often as perpetrators or victims of the new managerialism, their replacement by a new breed of corporate principal, more versed ‘in the business of FE’ (Ainley and Bailey 1997) has passed by virtually unnoticed. Less compliant and overtly managerialist than their predecessors, the new corporate senior management team are more strategic in their thinking about policy-practice related issues. At the same time, as Avis (1996) notes, these possibilities are constrained by wider government and Business agendas as well as the forms of governance and surveillance in which they operate at college level. The nature of these constraints range from auditing methodologies, linked to the previous Conservative Government’s low trust model of professional accountability, through to New Labour’s consensual ‘Third Way’ which, though high on the rhetoric of inclusivity and social justice, maintains a largely fiscally driven FE reform agenda tied to targets, delivery and qualifications (Skelcher 1998). In the immediate context of their work principals and senior managers often have to balance these parallel and contradictory processes in two ways. The first concerns working within ever declining funding levels while, at the same time, responding to national demand
for widening patterns of participation and learning provision (Dearing 1996, Kennedy 1997). The second concerns one of how to match New Labour’s agenda of inclusion with the job of motivating an often under-trained and demoralized lecturing workforce, stalked by a legacy of market experimentation and policy neglect. The wider parallels here with public sector reform, in health, social and welfare services, and transport, are compelling (Esland 1999).

Seven years down the line from incorporation there is now less euphoria about college independence, funding and management-led reform following a protracted period of industrial dispute and casualization. While the partial evidence presented in this paper indicates that principals and senior managers have absorbed the contradictory discourse of corporate culture they do not necessarily readily identify with the aggressive managerialist agendas which underpin it. One way of interpreting the emerging culture of ‘collaboration within competition’ is to view it as yet another variation of ‘light touch’ managerialism: as a more feminized or inclusive form of social control. Another possibility is to see it as a basis for rethinking professionality in the FE sector and for raising new questions about how professionality, gender and leadership can be critically reworked around pedagogy and community. There is, however, little evidence of that to date (Hughes 2000). On the surface it would seem an impossible task to reconcile such contradictory positions given the degree of organized anarchy that the FE sector has experienced in recent years. The danger is one of treating principals and senior managers as victims of funding led or managerialist reform, rather than as strategic interpreters of policy in the reconstruction of FE practice at college level.

**Conclusion**

Despite widespread evidence of managerialism in the FE sector this paper has sought to draw attention to competing forms of senior management response which both promote and challenge the hegemony of managerialism from within. As principals and senior managers become more aware of various alternative interpretations and re-workings of democratic professionalism (sharing, co-operation, inclusivity) this may, in the absence of a consistent national policy for FE, encourage new ways of thinking about leadership and management within the sector. This will require, as Whitty (1997) argues, ‘. . . new forms of association in the public sphere, within which citizens’ rights in education policy can be reasserted against restricted visions of the State and a marketised society’. From this viewpoint more inclusive management styles alone are unlikely to succeed in the absence of changes in the broader distributive policies adopted by government and the state. It also requires new solutions in transforming the market machinery of managerialism in favour of a more public vision of pedagogy and leadership in further education, which resonates with changing professional and learning cultures ‘on the ground’ (Ball 1994). What this paper demonstrates is that devolved forms of managerialism both negate and draw attention to a wide
variety of leadership and management responses at organizational level. Its principle argument is that corporate managerialism is neither as complete or uncontested as it is sometimes portrayed. In discerning a cultural shift toward more inclusive leadership styles in FE much depends on whether principals and senior managers believe this shift to be real or simply a reworking of old managerialist imperatives. It may be that belief is too risky a concept to rely on. Yet, depending on which interpretation one takes it may have a significant bearing on the future outcome of leadership at the micro-policy level of FE, as the sector responds to wider principles of learning and social inclusion. If leadership in this volatile sector is to be more than just a trick of managing and socializing others in the self-surveillance rules of corporate culture, a more critical understanding of learning and professional development is called for.

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Notes

1 This paper draws on evidence derived from the ESRC project Changing Teaching and Managerial Cultures in Further Education (ESRC Award No. R000236713, 1997–99), directed by Professor Denis Gleeson, Research Fellow Dr. Farzana Shain. I am grateful to Dr. Shain for allowing me, in this paper, to draw on collaborative work connected with this project. The fieldwork for the project was conducted over an eighteen month period from January 1997 to March 1999 in five colleges across three counties in the Midlands. In each institution, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a cross-section of 20 to 25 individuals, including principals, governors, senior and middle managers, lecturers, support staff and union representatives. In all, over 150 interviews took place that included some follow up individual and group interviews. In addition, documentary data (inspection reports, strategic plans, policy documents and internal memorandums) from colleges was analysed and observations were recorded where possible of key meetings (e.g. strategic planning, management and sector meetings).

2 The evidence base of this paper is drawn mainly from the interview accounts of 30 senior managers (a majority of whom were appointed since 1993). Interviews covered a range of issues regarding role, position, experience and perceptions of work including the impact of national policy on senior management roles at college level. Though each institution was subject to different geographical, educational, business, labour market and funding conditions, the research sought to illuminate different narratives that express recurring themes among senior managers across the colleges. The research on which this paper draws attempts to make sense of FE policy through the experience of a small group of senior managers, as they manage and mediate FE reform in the professional field in which they work (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

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FURTHER EDUCATION

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN FURTHER EDUCATION

The business of values

Jacky Lumby


Introduction

Managers within further education have been subject to criticism both from those working in the sector and those observing from outside (Ainley and Bailey, 1977; Elliott and Hall, 1994), and stand accused of ‘managerialism’—an ill-defined concept which seems to imply the inappropriate adoption of business values and practice. Strategic planning can be seen as exemplary of the adoption of managerialism, deriving as it does from corporate practice. Prior to 1993, colleges participated in a planning process which was led by the local education authorities (LEAs), intended to produce some coherence in the provision of post-compulsory education and training. Since incorporation in 1993, colleges of further education have been required to undertake strategic planning as independent institutions, encompassing not only curriculum issues but also aspects of planning such as human resources and premises which had previously been the formal responsibility of the LEA. In attempting a strategic view, harmonizing all assets and activity within a long-term plan, colleges have moved to a planning process much closer to that undertaken by independent businesses. A second aspect of the greater similarity to commercial strategic planning is the degree to which the absence of local coordination has resulted in a competitive environment which may be detrimental to current and potential students and may be of national concern (Kennedy, 1997).

Crisp (1991: 3) defines the process: ‘Strategic planning is the set of activities designed to identify the appropriate future direction of a college, and includes specifying the steps necessary to move in that direction.’ The generic literature abounds with reminders that strategic planning is a very complex and contested theoretical area. Both the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA, 1995) and the National Audit Office (1994) by inference adopt a rational approach in the guidance they offer colleges, and detail the failure of colleges to
match the assumed features of this model, that is the achievement of a mission-derived hierarchy of precise and measurable objectives with clear timescales and responsibilities. This criticism has been balanced by the recognition that colleges have survived in a period of successive financial cuts (FEFC, 1996a) and expanded their student numbers (FEFC, 1996b), indicating some success with their planning process. The Kennedy Report (Kennedy, 1997) discriminates between increased student numbers and widening participation, arguing that the current deregulated context may be leading to colleges increasing numbers in ways which still do not address the non-participation of the disadvantaged, implying criticism of the value base and methods of colleges.

This article reports on interviews with principals in the context of analysis of a sample of college strategic plans, with the aim of further understanding how the process of strategic management has been experienced and understood in colleges, and to explore the relationship between college’s experience and generic models of strategic planning. It also investigates the values colleges bring to strategic planning, exploring whether there is evidence to support Kennedy’s concerns.

Research method

As Ainley and Bailey (1997) point out, further education is undertheorized, and although there is a body of literature on applying corporate strategic planning concepts to the public services (Bryson, 1988; Wilkinson and Pedler, 1994), the parallel literature on further education is very sparse. An answer to the question posed by Wilkinson and Pedler (1994: 188), ‘Is the strategic managerial task inherently different in public service?’ and more specifically, inherently different in further education, requires an answer urgently, both to enrich the pool of theory from which managers in the sector can draw to guide practice, and also to act as a touchstone against which to judge the justification of those who criticize strategic planning in further education for not conforming, or for conforming too strongly, to business models.

Bogden and Biklen (1992), in discussing the nature of qualitative research, emphasize the goal of better understanding human behaviour, and the use of ‘participant perspectives’ to this end. The research reported in this article was concerned not just with the products of strategic management, the strategic plans themselves, but also with how those concerned created meaning within the process. To achieve this ‘empathic’ perspective (Bogden and Biklen, 1992) interviews were conducted with four principals and one second-tier manager with particular responsibilities for strategic planning in colleges in five counties in the Midlands and eastern regions of England. Three colleges were in cities and two in smaller towns in more rural areas. Given the reluctance of many colleges to speak about what they perceive as a very sensitive area, the interview respondents were a convenience sample of those who offered help to further the research. As such they cannot be taken as representative, if indeed representation
is achievable in such a diverse sector, but the conformity or divergence of their views may offer clues as to how strategic planning has been experienced by those charged with leading the process. For convenience, this group will be referred to as ‘the principals’ throughout the article.

To balance this personal perspective, the author requested copies of the strategic plans of the 222 general further education colleges in England. There were 53 responses: 29 full strategic plans and 24 partial plans. It was therefore possible to analyse the content of full or partial plans of 24 percent of all general further education colleges in England. The scrutiny of plans was designed to offer an insight into the process of planning and the stated intentions of colleges which could be related to generic theory of strategic management and form a context for the interviews with principals.

The national framework

College strategic plans must be negotiated with both the FEFC and the local Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). The FEFC (1992) has offered guidelines on the structure it expects in college strategic plans. Analysis undertaken centrally indicates that most colleges conform to the expectations (FEFC, 1996b). The FEFC’s suggested approach is based on classical Taylorist ideas of management (Taylor, 1911), with carefully identified aims and objectives and the allocation of responsibility and resources against numerically specified outcomes, but the technical inclusiveness veils a strategic vacuum. The FEFC is charged with ensuring the adequacy and sufficiency of further education, so they have responsibility for the overarching mission. However, all of the principals felt that this was more evident in rhetoric than in fact. As one explained: ‘They are charged with providing adequacy and sufficiency. When you say to them what does this mean they do not know. I know they do not know because I have asked the question.’

The principals perceived the procedure of the FEFC to be to spot where a college was withdrawing provision in a curriculum area and then to consider if a response was needed:

The only approach of the Funding Council is to wait until people say they are getting out and then say, oh that is a problem. Could we talk to you about perhaps staying in? It’s not a pro-active approach. It’s not sitting down and saying what is adequacy and sufficiency. Have we got provision to match demand? Where do we need to be? The situation at the moment is for them to ask, well who’s giving up? Do we need to patch the hole?

Generic theory (Ansoff and McDonnell, 1990) suggests that the responsibility for the overall mission or vision is properly placed with the top level of the organization, and that subunits must plan within the overall strategic aims which
relate to mission. Within further education, the national mission is not defined in a way which is meaningful, and the absence of such direction leaves colleges de facto with the task of achieving a national strategy in a context where there is no well-defined and agreed mission and where they have little power to shape resources. Kennedy’s (1997) concern about a lack of coherence seems borne out, but the suggested response of a greater degree of collaboration and partnership will not address the lack of a national mission defining adequacy and sufficiency of further education provision.

If the FEFC framework was not seen as much positive help at a strategic level, none of the principals felt it to be a constraint on their strategic thinking. Fitting the thinking into the planning framework was a secondary process:

> You have what you might call a technical constraint of having to try and think back and turning what you would do in terms of responding to need into a numerical format, putting so many students into each programme area, so there is a sort of constraint there but it is not a constraint on the way you think strategically. It is a constraint in terms of interpreting the strategic plan into something which satisfies the Funding Council.

Similarly the TECs were not seen as a constraint on strategic thinking. As one principal explained, he did not believe that his local TEC had the quality of information which would allow it to challenge any of the college’s plans:

> From our point of view, I tried to involve the TEC from very early on this year, sent them an early draft, but I hadn’t had a discussion with any one of them about it. They have simply written back saying we think it is lovely and here’s your letter (of endorsement) and that has been the extent of negotiations with them.

All of the principals felt that they would wish to take account of the FEFC and TEC as important players, and some had helpful and supportive relationships, but ultimately, they felt free to shape their college’s objectives.

**The content of the plans**

The plans themselves were analysed to identify the range of terminology, how far the different levels of the plans related logically to each other, and the range of aims and objectives. This uncovered a semantic minefield. At the level of expressing the overall corporate aims and objectives, colleges referred to vision, mission, values, strategic aims, corporate aims, objectives, targets, strategic tasks, key commitments, key themes, crucial objectives, critical success factors, outcomes for students, motto, significant factors. There was no common usage of these words.
In many plans there was a loose relationship between the different sections. Johnson and Scholes present a neat, logical sequence of planning in which each level relates to the previous one (see Figure 1, adapted from Johnson and Scholes, 1993: 13). This model assumes that the first level of planning is a visualization or concept of where the organization wants to be which is strategy neutral—i.e. the means to reach the desired state are not chosen. As the hierarchy descends, the means to reach the overall aims are chosen and become ever more specific, each dependent on the previous level. Whether this figure fully represents what happens outside education is contested elsewhere, but it certainly does not describe the majority of further education college plans that were analysed.

First, the means chosen to achieve the ends were apparent in many primary statements of aims: overarching vision, mission and aims were not necessarily strategy neutral. Additionally the sections which came in sequence and had titles relating to the generic concept of a hierarchy of specificity, often were simple restatements of the same general aims. In other words the ‘vision’ would give some general aims which might be restated in the ‘values’ or ‘mission’ or ‘corporate aims’. Whatever sections were called, they were not necessarily a further refinement or specification of the previous section. They were more focused on rewording, finding new words to restate the same content as the previous sections.

The plans often incorporated sections on quality, accommodation, etc., as suggested by the FEFC and also sometimes sections which related to the units into which the college was organized, such as faculty or programme areas. Cross-referencing was used by some colleges to try to retain strong connecting links between different parts of the plan, but there were many examples where the multiplicity of sections were not clearly linked. It was often as if each individual or group of individuals, from governors through to programme area teams, had reworked the sections into statements which were all their own and which bore no strong connection to other parts of the plan.

![Figure 1](image-url)
It would be easy to hold this up as a failure to achieve the logic and precision required by rational planning models, and indeed colleges new to the process may have struggled to keep control of the coherence of the overall plan. However, it may be that the contrast with a strictly rational approach points to a different need and a different way of working. All of the principals referred to the unimportance of the strategic planning document and the importance of the process. For four of the five, the fundamental purpose of the strategic planning process was to identify the purpose of the college: ‘It is actually about galvanising yourself into some conscious thought about what you are there to do. You have to say things to yourself and to each other if you are to be able to act purposefully.’ The key phrase in this statement is in italics (my emphasis). Strategic planning to this principal is not just about arriving at crisp rational aims, objectives and costed action plans, but about speaking to each other. The use of words is not to achieve unambiguous targets for action, but primarily to explore the values and understandings of those who are involved. This may involve a limited group, such as the senior management team, or the entire college community, but it is essentially a conversation, an exchange which is only secondarily designed to delineate action. Primarily, it is an act of union, designed to reinforce commitment and motivation.

Although the language and structure of plans varied, the actual aims and objectives were very general and very similar from college to college. All of the corporate aims could be categorized under four headings:

- the product or curriculum
- market
- resources/costs
- capability building

The majority of plans had strategic aims of all four types and a generic list of college aims could be deducted (see Table 1).

Of course, at a high enough level of generality, the strategic aims of all organizations would appear similar. ‘Surviving long term’ is just such an aim. However, the wording of the college plans retained this level of generality often not just in the primary strategic aims but further into the plan, at those levels where one would expect specificity to distinguish one college from another in the way that one company might be distinguished from another in business. This raised another point of comparison with generic theory. In the latter, companies seek to acquire a competitive edge by differentiating themselves from others, particularly rivals within their market. As Peters (1989: 137) puts it: ‘Don’t just stand there, be something!’ Peters’s argument is further developed to suggest that companies must strive to be not just different from others, but significantly different. Colleges are clearly following the route of attempting to focus on product, costs and market, but this is not necessarily leading all of them to a significantly differentiated position.
Making strategic choices

To explore further this indication that colleges were not necessarily seeking to distinguish themselves from each other, the principals were asked what strategic choices they felt their colleges had. There were apparent differences in opinion. One felt ‘We have absolute freedom’. Another explained that he did not feel that there were any true strategic choices at all: a hundred years before someone had sat in his office making decisions about the curriculum and probably someone would be undertaking the same task in a century’s time. The decisions were tactical. He argued that the only strategic decision was whether the college continued or not, and in this there was less choice than might be imagined, as he felt that if the college closed, the community itself would set up a college of further education, as it had set up the colleges a century before. The college would continue to exist as a service to the community whatever managers might deliberate. The only decisions were small ones concerning minor changes in the curriculum. Another principal echoed this strongly, arguing that the inheritance of a college shaped the choices it could make. All felt that other colleges might have greater choices, but the principals emphasized a primary commitment to the college’s local community. Where work was undertaken elsewhere, it was to access resources which could be brought back to that community.

Our strategy is based on what we perceive to be our communities’ needs. We define our catchment and we are primarily here to serve...
those with a 25 mile radius of any of our sites but we go beyond that for a reason, and again this is written in our policy, that if we deliver beyond that catchment area we are doing so to make money to bring back to our catchment area . . . We do not need a big competitive edge against our nearest college. Most of the people will come to us anyway.

Where choices were made to work outside the college’s local area, they might be value and not just finance driven. For one rural college, the choice to engage with several national and overseas market niches was partly to put money back locally, but also to ensure that students were not trained in a parochial environment.

Colleges which had a large local population were able to make choices within their local community, again, at least at the moment, based on values. One college, faced with costs of £12 million to offer the 16–19 curriculum, and income of around £8 million, had chosen nevertheless to continue to provide for this group:

Sticking with it would be a value driven decision. Sticking with it would be to say that the market is 16–19 year olds and this college is about educating 16–19 year olds and that is the service that we wish to continue providing, even though we do so at some financial cost. However I don’t know how much longer I can continue to do this and let the buildings crumble around me.

Market choices were possible, whether to adopt specialist areas with national or international recruitment, whether to concentrate on training the 16–19 years olds or local employed people, or returning adults or to offer higher education, but all this was within the parameters of a primary commitment to local people. For some colleges, the need is to provide for as many of the local groups as possible: ‘In the particular geographical location in which we operate i.e. largely a rural location, we have a particular responsibility to the communities in this rural area to provide the broadest curriculum portfolio.’

Underpinning the ability to achieve a sense of choice was the position in relation to resources. All of the colleges were engaged in activities which were designed to generate income to plough back into provision for the local community, but the difficult financial position of some undermined strategic choice. The necessity to generate sufficient income to continue to survive may in effect dictate choice.

The business of values

The colleges then were engaged in choices, but not all of them in the sense which might be recognized in the commercial world. The drivers of strategy were fundamental commitments to the value of education and training and to the
people of the local community. These factors would be followed even at financial cost as long as the college could survive. The comment quoted earlier ‘You have to say things to yourself and to each other’ is relevant in that the people working in further education colleges may not have recourse to developing a strategy of competitive edge or differentiated markets-and-products. They are a public service and, as such, work within different parameters, and may need to reinvent continually their basic commitment to an unglamorous and low-status world. One principal said the real challenge lay with colleges like his own, which had historically grown up by meeting the range of local needs not covered by schools or universities:

The worst thing to be is a general purpose further education college . . . because almost certainly, the really distinctive things belong to some other institution . . . I look at this college and we are transparent. The worst thing you can be is in the middle ground with nothing distinctive. . . . Lots of tiny little niches, that is where the strategic choices are, let us try a bit of this, let us not do that. Actually, in a big sense there is nothing particular, just lots of little tiny moves.

How can the generic theory of strategic planning, with the need to achieve distinctiveness, be linked to this understanding, where the planning process is ‘lots of tiny little moves’ in an organization which is ‘transparent’? Clearly, some general further education colleges are working in a context which is too different to business to find such a theory either a helpful description of their experience or an appropriate basis to analyse the possibilities for further action. Compared to the logic and competitive drive of the theory, many of the college strategic plans appeared to be a muddle and lacking individuality. However, a minority of plans had a driving sense of direction with clear connections between sections, a logical development of a hierarchy of objectives and a strong sense of developing a distinctive market position.

A hypothesis which emerged is that the difference in the nature of the plans may relate to the geographical and historical context within which each college worked. Where the inheritance of geographical position allowed, the college had a real sense of strategic choices. For example, colleges located in an east coast port were able to offer a very distinctive vision of supporting a European market and global exporting industries. Colleges in a declining rural area, with a thin population and little concentration of industry or similar challenging environments, may feel that they are constrained by the imperative to meet as wide as possible a range of needs, particularly of those in the local community who are often the ‘socially excluded’. Despite an acute awareness of financial realities, values, not a competitive position, lay at the root of the choices or lack of them, and may also explain the language and structure of the strategic plans themselves.

A college’s plan could therefore be based on the need to achieve a distinctive
niche and the ability to drive forward hard in a logical and focused way, or on the need to use the strategic planning process to reaffirm values and commitment to the needs of local people, a position which was not distinguished from other colleges, and where the creation of commitment overrides all other possible aims of strategic planning. Despite the accusations of managerialism, the principals interviewed gave a strong sense of a value-driven process:

This is the difference between a college and a company. A company can make a strategic decision to get involved in a different area of activity, and to employ resources in different areas so that they will creep away from what their founders initiated to some other area. A college can flavour education, but it can’t strategically step away from it. . . . Why? What is the fundamental drive? It’s because people want to learn, want to change.

Viewed from this perspective, the purpose of strategic planning in further education may differ fundamentally from that in business.

The process of planning

The process of strategic planning was seen as difficult by all the principals. One described calculating the years of experience in education of those involved in formulating the strategic plan. It added up to a huge number and yet ‘we can’t get the projections right. Every year we get them wrong . . . We are asking the impossible.’ Two major issues were the difficulty of securing adequate information and the most effective way of involving staff. Local information was universally seen as problematic and may remain a stumbling block for some time to come.

The involvement of staff was a more complex problem. Ainley and Bailey (1997: 60) state: ‘Strategic decisions are taken at the centre and these are passed for local implementation to middle managers in their specialist curriculum areas. This is one of the sources of the new managerialism in further education.’ Interviews were only conducted with senior managers and therefore the perspective of middle managers and lecturers was not included. However, it was quite clear that the practice was, at least in intention, more varied than indicated by Ainley and Bailey and that the simple equation of involvement good, imposition bad, was not seen as unequivocal. The plans themselves sometimes indicated that the process had not been top–down. Some college plans were produced by a synthesis of plans written by programme area teams. One plan noted that contributions had been sought from the whole community and 120 staff had contributed ideas. The whole issue was fraught with problems, as one principal explained:

How do you get an organisation of 400 people who are all working in different ways, in different sets of people within the organisation, and
don’t appreciate each others’ culture and values, to own something that is called a strategic plan? That is what all the models say you are supposed to do.

He went on to define his own position as disbelieving this as an absolute. He did not believe that all wished to make a contribution, nor that all could achieve an overview of the college. Speaking of the IT technicians as an example, he explained:

I don’t think they would ever say that they want ownership of the strategic plan. They want leadership and they want to make some contribution. They want to feel that their views are important even if they have no views to make and often they will have no views to make. So I am a bit confused about exactly what ownership is.

The concept of ‘ownership’, if this meant everyone agreeing on aims and objectives and being fully committed to the plan, was seen as unrealistic. All of those interviewed had tried to involve staff to differing degrees. One had established a framework for every group from governors to programme area teams to be part of the process which was consensual not consultative. It was not a question of writing a plan and then sending it to people to comment. The plan was evolved through a collaborative process, each stage being agreed before the next was initiated. Other principals did use a consultation process, where the plan was written by senior staff, sometimes incorporating the ideas from a number of staff and other stakeholders, and then circulated for comment. Of the five principals interviewed, one was committed to a collaborative approach. The others were attempting a consultative process:

I am not advocating total involvement. We are not a democracy. We are an organisation in which some people will have more influence in strategic planning than others, but we do want as much ownership as we can achieve and as much contribution as possible from different staff in formulating the plan.

Implementing the plan

The difficulties of involving staff in the formulation of the plan shade into the difficulties of motivating them to implement it once formulated. The problem is widely acknowledged. Quinn (1993: 83) comments on executives who ‘rely on the awesome rationality of their formally derived strategies and the inherent power of their positions to cause their organisations to respond. When this does not occur, they become bewildered, if not frustrated and angry.’ The plan itself was seen by the principals as of limited value, partly because if it encompasses targets that can
be reached they may be too unambitious, and also because things change so fast that it is in a sense redundant from the moment it is completed. Nevertheless, the possibility of using it was a benchmark to guide and discuss progress emerged, though with some caution as to how far targets could be delegated in an endless succession like ripples emanating from the centre. While the use of objectives and targets was seen as helpful, the process of changing attitudes and behaviour as a result was seen as much more difficult. One principal described the challenge:

Of course having a plan on its own does not mean anybody will do anything. . . . At some point during the working week the caretaker in this institution has to think that what he or she is doing is making some sort of contribution to the college plan. That may sound grand, but if I don’t get them to the point where they think about their attitude to students. . . . if they don’t at some point in their working week realise that they are not putting a brick in a wall they are building a cathedral, then the strategic planning has failed. It must touch people’s lives.

In attempting to achieve this principals were building ownership processes, but also micropolitical tactics and coercion. The power base of players resulted in agendas which were not always perceived as in the best interest of the students or of the strategic management process. Some people just did not want to change. One principal described a programme area which was convinced it had as many students as it could possibly teach and was already a centre of excellence. He told them that they needed to teach more students and that they were not yet a centre of excellence: ‘I had to tell them to do this. I listened to all their views as to why they could not and then I had to tell them to do it anyway.’ Questioned on how the staff had reacted, the principal answered: ‘The nice answer would be that they were convinced by the arguments. The unpleasant answer is that they saw the need to do it or else. I think it was both.’ The staff had gone on to succeed in recruiting more students and improving quality. The means of achieving this were a mixture of coercion and reason, with a reorganization so that some individuals had new roles dependent on achieving what was planned. Not all agreed and it was acknowledged that they probably never would. Achieving a ‘dominant view’, in the words of the principal, was the aim:

All the time I am after a dominant view and sometimes it can be through the force of argument, sometimes it will be through putting people who are supporting in positions of power. It sounds hard but it is one way of doing it and also making people’s career dependent upon their supporting the direction of the institution and making it clear that if they don’t, they are along for the ride, but they are not moving anywhere in their own career. I don’t believe I just said that, but it is true.

Perhaps this could be seen as an example of the ‘new managerialism’ cited by
Ainley and Bailey (1997). The problem is that this is certainly not a new type of behaviour. The use of micropolitical activity was recognized for at least two decades before incorporation (Ball, 1987; Bolman and Deal, 1984). Consequently, whatever type of managerial behaviour it may be, it is certainly not new. The assumption that it is in some sense wrong is open to question. It is still not acceptable to openly admit to micropolitical behaviour, hence the final sentence of the comment above, where the principal surprised himself at the openness of what had been said. There has been relatively little research in any phase of education into micropolitical behaviour, partly because of the inherent difficulty of researching behaviour which is by definition hidden. The use of career prospects as a lever to create loyalty or direct behaviour is indisputably present in many institutions. It is therefore more likely that when college leaders are exhorted to achieve a consensual approach, they may need to consider how far the prevailing models of collegiality are a normative mythology and how far they may need to be modified into a more realistic approach, including a wider range of tactics.

The need for all staff to be fully aware of and committed to the strategic plan was also questioned. One principal pointed out that, in wandering round the college, unless a senior manager was encountered, the staff met at random would probably disclaim all knowledge of the strategic plan: ‘I think people are aware that changes are happening but they would not package it up and say oh that’s because of the strategic plan. They would describe it as managers cutting budgets or attribute it to something else.’ The real need, as he saw it, was for managers at all levels to be able to interpret and draw out the important points and motivate people in the direction of the plan. The strategic plan was a failure if the behaviour of teachers with students was not touched by it, but the behaviour would not be touched only by every member of staff being fully conversant with the plan and having fully contributed. The latter was certainly one way, and an important way to all of the principals, but it was not the only way. If a teacher changed what he or she did without realizing that it was as an indirect result of actions set in motion by the strategic plan, that was fine.

**Conclusions**

All of the principals agreed that engaging with strategic planning had brought benefits to their college. They felt that the process had resulted in:

- a greater sense of purpose
- an increased feeling of independence
- a benchmark against which all decisions could be measured
- better systems and efficiency
- better communication as there was something important to communicate

To use their words it had ‘taken away the adhocery’ and provided ‘a peg to hang everything on’. There was admiration from one principal that the FEFC had
forced colleges ‘kicking and screaming’ into better practice. The picture that emerged did not support Kennedy’s criticism ‘that the new ethos has encouraged colleges not just to be businesslike but to perform as if they were businesses’ (Kennedy, 1997: 3). Colleges had become more business-like, but not in any simplistic sense of being profit or competition centred. They were more sure and more committed to what their business was:

Business-like means recognising who we exist for, who we are serving, who our clients are and measuring ourselves against the satisfaction of those customers/clients . . . so by business-like, I am not meaning that you have got to measure every success in terms of profit.

In a public sector environment, as Wilkinson and Pedler (1994) point out, what may be required from strategic planning is a broad rather than detailed direction, so when writers analysing public sector plans from the perspective of private sector thinking criticize them as ‘travesties’ (Argenti, 1992) because of their lack of detailed verifiable objectives, it may reflect misunderstanding. Equally, those who have criticized senior managers in the sector for ‘managerialism’ may need to research further how far the behaviours in question are new or detrimental to the organization or the students.

The planning context of a perceived strategic vacuum at national and regional level concerned the principals, and it may be that the new emphasis on developing regional partnerships (Department for Education and Employment, 1998) will address this problem to some degree. Such a development was cautiously welcomed:

As resources get tighter we have to work in more partnerships, employers, the TEC, government bodies, other colleges, whoever, and it is getting understanding with them at a stage which could influence our own planning. What tends to happen is that you issue plans to people which outlines this is what we are going to do instead of developing plans with people. There will be a bigger emphasis on that in the future.

However the move from a free market towards a partnership model may be difficult as colleges balance their own desire to retain autonomy with the desire to achieve regional coherence and widen participation (Lumby, 1998).

The process of strategic planning has provided a vehicle for colleges to engage in discussion as to what they are about and how they are to achieve it. For some, the purpose may be to identify ways of surviving in the face of aggressive competition, but for many general further education colleges, the process is different. There are certainly strategic choices, but they are small ones about shifts in how to meet the vocational education and training needs of their local people. The process of planning allows them to commit to this business and to become more business-like, that is more centred on how better to meet
the needs of their students. The range of behaviours to achieve the plans may include micropolitical manipulation, but this has always been the case. Perhaps the real point is that there is now more chance of the purpose of such tactics being clearly understood and related to student need.

Strategic planning in further education therefore differs greatly from that undertaken by private sector organizations in that the process is used to position not only, or in some cases not primarily, against competitors but against, in the words of one principal, ‘governmental drift’. Government has policies for schools and for higher education. Whatever is left over is further education, and against this grim scenario strategic planning had helped to maintain some sense of the worth and value of the work of the sector. Criticizing managers in further education for not conforming to private sector rational models or for implementing a business-derived inappropriate coercive regime is to underestimate the diversity of practice and to miss the opportunity to better understand and support those engaged in an almost impossible task.

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EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND MANAGERIALISM
Comparing the experience of schools and colleges

Tim Simkins

This paper explores the organizational and management consequences of the changing policy environment facing public sector education in England and Wales over the past 10 years. In particular it considers how far arguments about the replacement of older ‘bureau-professional’ forms of organizational order by more ‘managerialist’ forms in the public sector in general can be applied to the specific case of education. The paper begins by reviewing the major policy changes that have affected schools and colleges since 1988. Drawing on published studies from these sectors, it then considers a number of themes: changing roles of senior and middle managers; changes in managerial and organizational culture; and changes in specific aspects of management. Emphasizing the tentative nature of the evidence, the paper identifies some common trends which imply a movement towards managerialism in many institutions. However, it also identifies areas where the position is less clear and suggests a number of factors which may explain differences of experience. It emphasizes the importance of not reifying a previous ‘golden age’ of collegiality and concludes that what is being experienced is a complex and dynamic process of adjustment between old and new organizational and managerial forms.

Introduction
Since the late 1980s the British educational system has experienced a roller-coaster of policy changes. The focus and content of these changes have varied over time and among different parts of the educational system. Yet they have all been driven by a clear underlying rationale: to create a policy framework that
will provide an imperative for schools and colleges to respond to the improvement agenda of both Labour and Conservative Governments.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the evidence on the organizational and management consequences for schools and colleges of this changing policy environment and, in particular, to explore how far and for what reasons patterns of change may be differentiated among organizational contexts. The paper begins by outlining the similarities and differences between the policy contexts facing schools and colleges as a result of the reforms introduced by the present Labour Government and its Conservative predecessor. These changes are then related to the concept of ‘managerialism’, which is becoming an increasingly important part of the discourse about public sector reform in the UK. The paper then proceeds to review some of the changes which appear to be taking place in the management of schools and colleges as a result of the reforms, before drawing some general conclusions about the factors which may have affected the different experiences of institutions as those within them have attempted to respond to the new pressures which they face.

The policy context for schools and colleges: variations on a theme

The policy framework for schools was established initially by the Education Reform Act of 1988 and modified by later legislation. Under these arrangements governing bodies of schools have been granted considerable powers to manage their own affairs, including the management of block budgets out of which the great majority of their resources must be funded. These budgets are determined by pupil number-led formulae that local education authorities (LEAs) determine within government guidelines. The funding mechanism, therefore, is designed to provide schools with incentives to maintain and enhance their enrolment, within a context of enhanced parental choice.

These aspects of government policy – developed governance, formula funding and enhanced parental choice – have, despite some changes in detail, been the constants of the policy environment facing schools since the late 1980s. However, for most schools, at least as important as these aspects of policy have been other powerful non-financial control mechanisms which have been designed to constrain the nature of the choices which schools make in the deployment of their resources. These policies have focused directly on the curriculum, the means by which it is delivered and the results achieved. A constant theme has been the requirement that test and examination results be published to enable the performance of schools to be judged and, it is argued, to inform parental choice. Beyond this, the relative emphasis that has been given to particular aspects of policy has varied over the period since 1988. Initially the focus was on the National Curriculum so that for a number of years thinking in the majority of schools was dominated by the twin imperatives of delivering the National Curriculum and implementing devolution. From around 1992,
however, a new policy pressure emerged: a regime of regular inspection with the requirement for schools to produce action plans following such inspections (and the monitoring of their implementation in the case of schools deemed to be failing). Since then, the prospect and the experience of inspection has emerged as a dominant pressure for many schools, placing stress on senior managers and staff alike as they have prepared for and responded to inspection visits.

Since the May 1998 general election, further themes have emerged. First, the focus on the publication of test and examination results has been developed into a regime of institutional performance management through the requirement for schools (and LEAs) to set targets for the improvement of student achievements as the focus for planning (DfEE 1997, 1998a). Secondly, more interventionist policies on input management have been established through centrally-driven recommendations on the organization of teaching and, more recently, proposals for potentially radical changes in the ways in which teachers are managed within schools (DfEE 1998b). Such developments suggest that the new Labour Government is placing less emphasis on incentives derived from the quasi-market of decentralization and parental choice and relying much more on placing demanding expectations directly on institutions with the possibility of intervention when they are deemed not to be achieving them. There would seem to be two reasons for this: first, impatience with the assumed imprecision and unpredictability of mechanisms which attempt to affect performance primarily through the quasi-market; and, second, concern about some of the equity effects of quasi-market solutions to the ‘problem’ of school quality.

The policy framework for colleges was established by the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992. Under this, colleges were granted full legal autonomy as corporations, with responsibility for staff, assets and financial management, with their core funding provided on a formula basis. However, compared with the schools sector, the funding mechanism for colleges has been used more directly, more centrally and more ambitiously as a policy tool. Unlike the schools sector where, despite strong central government steers, responsibility for funding is distributed among, currently, more than 170 local education authorities, all institutions in the colleges sector receive substantial parts of their funding directly from one of two national funding councils (one for England and one for Wales). Furthermore, again unlike the schools sector, this funding is provided on the basis of contracts which colleges make with the councils to deliver specified levels of provision at specified unit costs, with colleges bidding for resources in relation to criteria established on an annual basis by the funding councils. This means that the councils can, and do, use their funding mechanisms explicitly to achieve particular policy goals that are derived in substantial part from government policy. The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) in its early years has sought to achieve the following through the mechanism of formula funding:

- to encourage growth through enabling colleges to bid for additional funding for student numbers beyond a core level;
to encourage efficiency (or, more specifically, to encourage high cost colleges to reduce their unit costs) by seeking a convergence of the level of unit funding across the sector;
• to reduce wastage and increase achievement by tying some funding to successful learning outcomes;
• more recently, to widen the participation of under-represented groups in further education.

Thus while all parts of the educational system have been subject to significant resource constraints, the pressures for increases in resource efficiency have been much greater for colleges than for schools as the Government has pursued a policy of substantially increasing participation while constraining expenditure.

As in the schools sector, these funding mechanisms have been complemented by other policy tools, which focus more explicitly on the internal management of colleges. These include inspection and requirements for a range of formal management provisions, such as strategic plans, college charters, disability statements and learner agreements for each individual student. However, these had not yet, at the time of writing, significantly qualified the enormous power of the funding mechanism as an influential policy driver (Bradley 1996), although plans had been announced to introduce into the sector approaches to the management of outcomes based on benchmarking and target-setting similar to those in the schools sector (FEFC 1999).

In summary, all parts of the education system have been subject over the last ten years or so to a number of major policy pressures, but the ways in which these have been applied have differed in detail. Thus, each sector has experienced:

• decentralization of major powers from local education authorities to institutional level and the empowerment to varying degrees of clients as ‘customers’;
• outcome-based management through the specification of performance criteria and the establishment of target-setting and associated planning processes in relation to these. For schools these have focused primarily on outcomes measured in terms of test and examination results; for colleges the emphasis has been primarily on enrolment patterns and unit costs, although this emphasis is now to be supplemented by a focus on student achievement;
• more detailed interventions concerning organizational processes and decisions, relating for example to curriculum provision in schools and to planning and management processes in colleges;
• on-going processes of surveillance through regimes of inspection.

The rest of this paper examines the consequences of these changes for school and college organization and management.
The rise of managerialism in education?

In a seminal paper, Kouzes and Mico (1979) argued that ‘human service organizations’ in the public sector operate simultaneously in a number of ‘domains’, each of which has a rather different set of legitimizing norms which generate particular kinds of governing principles, success measures, structural arrangements and work modes. These domains are: the ‘policy domain’ of representative government; the ‘management domain’ of hierarchical authority; and the ‘service domain’ of professional support for clients. Kouzes and Mico argue that the natural condition of such organizations is a state of tension as each domain struggles to maintain its own integrity and reinforce its own standards within the organization. I have argued elsewhere (Simkins 1997) that this kind of analysis is particularly fruitful in analysing the underlying changes in power distribution sought by the educational reforms of the last decade. In particular, these reforms have sought to introduce new forms of accountability which: redistribute power in the policy domain from local representative government towards central government and its agencies and newly constituted governing bodies of institutions; disempower the service (professional) domain within institutions in favour of a reconstituted management domain; and empower ‘consumers’ directly through marketization and, in the schools sector, enhanced ‘voice’ within governing bodies.

The public policy literature suggests that such developments in education are part of a wider trend in forms of control in the public sector. For example, Hoggett argues that:

> The restructuring of the public sector in Britain illustrates several elements of hands-off control systems (e.g., the development of structured markets, the linking of resource allocation to performativity, the new forms of operational decentralisation), but these have to some extent been dwarfed by visible elements of centralisation (e.g. the destruction of the autonomy of local government, the development of the quango state) and the extended use of hands-on systems of performance management creating a form of ‘evaluative state’...

(Hoggett 1996: 29)

It is further argued that these developments are changing patterns of organization and management within those institutions which are subject to them through the development of new forms of organizational control which can be characterized as ‘managerialism’ (Pollitt 1993, Clarke and Newman 1997). For example, Clarke and Newman (1997) argue that such forms of control are replacing an ‘organizational settlement’ between two modes of co-ordination or ‘organizational orders’ – bureaucratic administration and professionalism (which they link as ‘bureau-professionalism’) – which dominated the public sector for much of the post-war period. Gewirtz et al. (1995) have argued
similarly in relation to schooling. These analyses suggest that bureau-professionalism and managerialism can be distinguished along a number of dimensions.

First, bureau-professionalism is characterized by a series of cross-cutting attachments to client-centred, professional and public service values, such as equity and care, whereas managerialism is characterized by commitment to the over-riding values and mission of the specific organization. Such attachments are derived from different forms of socialization: those with management responsibilities within bureau-professional systems are socialized within the specific professional field in which their organization is located, for example education or health, whereas managers within more managerialist systems are socialized directly into the values of ‘management’ as a generic discipline. Second, bureau-professionalism is characterised by decision-making through a combination of bureaucratic rules and professional discretion and judgement, whereas managerial decision-making is characterized by discretion entrusted to those who hold clearly identified managerial roles and authority and who use specialist management techniques to help them make choices. It is assumed that such techniques for achieving better management are knowable; indeed that they are known and generally applicable – they can often be found in best practice in the private sector. Thirdly, bureau-professional agendas are based on the needs of individual clients and client groups as interpreted or formulated by professionals. Those of managerialism, in contrast, derive from concerns focusing around organizational objectives and outcomes and the deployment of resources as defined by managers in response to their interpretations of the environmental forces with which the organization is faced. Finally, the norms of bureau-professionalism are defined in terms of the well-being, needs and rights of clients while those of managerialism are based on concepts of efficiency, organizational performance and customer-orientation.

The bureau-professional and managerial orders may be conceived in both normative and descriptive terms. In their normative or ideological form they represent sets of values and ideals which provide competing discourses to justify and explain particular policy and management regimes. In so doing they also embody contrasting assumptions about power and legitimacy. Thus bureau-professionalism gives primacy to the roles of the professional and the public service bureaucrat; managerialism, in contrast, justifies and legitimates managerial power and challenges the values and power bases embodied in the ‘traditional’ bureau-professional settlement. It requires that managers be given the ‘freedom to manage’, which in turn implies delegation of power within managerial hierarchies and may also imply the disempowerment of other groups such as political representatives and workers, including professional workers.

Alongside their normative content, however, these ideas have considerable potential for describing and analysing change in public service organizations, including those in the education sector. Viewed from this perspective, managerialism provides a framework, not just for analysing the discourses which justify and legitimate change, but also for exploring the particular arrangements which are developed to translate policy agendas and goals into practical organizational
consequences in particular situations. The rest of this paper will consider the ways in which the policy changes described earlier have impacted on the management of schools and colleges. It will explore in particular the degree to which the kinds of policy changes which education has experienced over recent years have indeed led to increased managerialism in schools and colleges and whether such an impact, if any, has varied across organizational contexts.

**Changes in organization and management**

* A focus on the organization and its leadership

There can be little doubt that the reforms in both the schools and the colleges sectors have altered thinking about the purposes and outcomes of education to place the primary focus on the performance of the individual school or college. This does not mean that the dimensions of the individual pupil or student or of the wider local and national system have been lost. Indeed, in both sectors, greater emphasis is being given to the development of sophisticated tracking systems to monitor the performance of individual students, and in the schools sector LEAs as well as individual institutions are being required to achieve ambitious targets in relation to pupil performance. Rather, the new emphasis sees effective management at the level of the school or college as the primary means by which policy goals are to be achieved and the place where the educational ‘buck’ stops. A major consequence is a reframing of the roles of senior managers.

It seems clear from all the literature on the consequences of reform that, despite *de jure* empowering of governing bodies, one of the major consequences of devolution has, in fact, been to reinforce the pivotal position of heads and principals as organizational leaders (Jephcote *et al.* 1996, Hall and Southworth 1997). This has been a natural consequence of two related facets of the new policy world: centrally-driven attachments and agendas which emphasize the overall performance of the institution above all other measures of success and the unprecedented degree to which individual leaders are now held responsible for that performance. Thus Hall and Southworth (1997) suggest that:

> heads have become more overtly aware of their schools’ levels of success. Several factors have contributed to this move . . . All these have caused heads to monitor and evaluate trends in the school’s performance. They are apparently taking a stronger interest in outcomes and the school’s ‘product’.

(p. 166)

Similarly in further education, a more robust approach to the quantitative measurement of performance has powerful effects on those aspects of the institution to which senior management attention is addressed (Elliott and Crossley 1994).
The idea of strong and effective leadership seems to have attained a pre-eminent position in the discourse of school management in England and Wales. It is quintessentially embodied in the priority given by the Government to national leadership qualifications for headteachers and the planned National College for School Leadership. In part, no doubt, this emphasis reflects the current attention given to leadership within the wider management discourse. However, it also reflects the emphasis which, for example, the school effectiveness literature and the work of Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and the Teacher Training Agency have given to the role of the headteacher. In further education, similar trends can be identified. The pressures created by incorporation for principals of colleges have been enormous, but the position of those who have survived seems to have been significantly enhanced by their typical designation as ‘chief executives’ of ‘corporations’.

Complementing this development are two sub-themes relating to senior managers. Firstly, despite the continuing pre-eminence of the head/principal, there seems to be a trend towards greater sharing of responsibility at the top within, sometimes smaller, senior management teams (SMTs). Hall and Southworth (1997) make this point about secondary schools, while Menter et al. (1995) note the development of SMTs or analogous structural forms in some primary schools. In further education Ainley and Bailey (1997) found that, in both the colleges they studied, the SMT is ‘a small and cohesive group of people very different from the old hierarchy of Principal, Deputy and the Heads of Department’ (p. 40).

Secondly, the nature of the work of senior managers seems to have changed. It has certainly become more intense (Jephcote et al. 1996, Webb and Vulliamy 1996), but its emphasis has also altered. For many writers this change can be related to Hughes’ seminal distinction, in relation to headteachers, between the roles of ‘leading professional’ and ‘chief executive’ (Hughes 1985). Indeed, managerialism might be argued to be virtually synonymous with the predominance of the chief executive role. Thus Raab et al. report growing ‘tensions between [heads’] traditional role as educational leaders concerned with curriculum development, teaching and learning, and their new role as financial managers’ (1997: 151), while Jephcote et al., note similarly that the focus of principals has become ‘the organization and financial management of the corporation . . . [C]urriculum matters have generally not been amongst the main current concerns of principals and boards of governors’ (1996: 44).

**Cultural change**

One of the major consequences of the reinforced role of heads and principals, the ‘drawing in’ of senior management teams and the increasing focus of their work on the broad policy of the institution and its place in the wider world seems to have been an increasing distancing of senior managers from other staff. For example, some writers on the consequences of local management of schools,
particularly those writing about secondary education, have identified an increasing ‘division of values and purposes’ (Bowe and Ball 1992: 58) between the ‘corporatist’ views of senior managers whose prime concern is with the school as a whole and its relationship with its external environment, and the more ‘individualist’ orientation of teachers whose prime concern is with the needs of individual pupils (Simkins 1994). Some have gone so far as to suggest the development of ‘schizoid organizations’ (Broadbent et al. 1992). A similar distancing has been widely commented on in the colleges sector. As Ainley and Bailey argue: ‘While integration amongst the [senior management] team increases . . . there is a danger for them to cut themselves off from other areas of college’ (1997: 42). For example, one study contrasts the perspectives of senior managers, ‘who were very concerned with the survival of their colleges’, with those of lecturers, among whom ‘there appeared to be little awareness or concern for the substantial financial pressures that were motivating the senior management’ (Hewitt and Crawford 1997: 118–19, 125). Another study in one college found that 85% of those interviewed believed that college management did not share the same educational values as staff (Randle and Brady 1997: 233).

When this idea of ‘cultural distancing’ is explored further a number of issues arise. First, the structural implications of ‘distance’ itself are interesting. For example, there appear to be contrasts in the ways in which organizational ‘layering’ is being managed in schools and colleges. In many primary schools new management layers are being created with clearer roles for deputy heads and curriculum co-ordinators where previously there was only ‘the traditional two-tier model’ of head and classroom teachers. This may be having the effect of reducing the direct influence of classroom teachers on school policy (Webb and Vulliamy 1996: 447). In contrast, in the college sector ‘delayering’ has been common, partly to establish clearer lines of accountability but also as a source of financial savings. However, it has been argued that this, too, has been accompanied by an increase in the distance between managerial layers, with less emphasis on management through face-to-face communication and greater use of new technologies (Ainley and Bailey 1997: 52–53).

Such changes in structures and communication patterns raise important questions about the ways in which organizational cultures are evolving. There is a good deal of debate about the degree to which the management of schools and colleges is becoming more or less participative as the consequences of the reform process work through. In the primary sector, for example, some studies claim to have found ‘a small shift to towards a top-down directive approach to management and a larger shift towards “managed participation” and away from a fuller form of collaborative collegiality’ (Menter et al. 1995: 303). Others, in contrast, argue that, their research shows ‘no evidence to support the view that, as primary schools become more autonomous, there is a shift away from collective decision-making towards a more top-down or directive approach to management’ (Bell et al. 1996: 259). Similarly, while Gewirtz et al. identify ‘a tendency towards speedier and non-consultative or pseudo-consultative decision-making
by management’ in secondary schools (1995: 97), Hall and Southworth (1997) suggest that ‘[t]he belief in heads monopolising leadership is at the very least softening . . . [T]here is an increasing reliance on shared leadership’ (p. 165). The situation in further education also seems far from clear-cut. For example, Jephcote et al. note ‘how different principals sought to either increase or decrease [the] sense of alienation’ resulting from incorporation. ‘Several principals described how they went to great lengths to involve staff in the changes and to keep them informed . . . Others, however, deliberately engineered a situation where staff were excluded’ (1996: 39).

At this stage, therefore, while cultural distancing seems a widespread phenomenon, it is difficult to discern clear common patterns of change in managerial cultures and styles more generally within sectors, let alone between them. In part this may be because of lack of comparability between studies. Differences may arise from the sample of institutions chosen in particular studies, from the methods used (for example, interviewing heads/principals only or a wider variety of staff) or from the ways in which evidence is actually interpreted. The difficulties are well-illustrated by a paper, which sees simultaneous pressures in the primary sector both ‘to break down the private individualistic culture of schools and replace it with one characterised by openness, trust and collaboration’ and ‘to promote . . . managerialism and the directive styles of headteachers associated with it’ (Webb and Vulliamy 1996: 455). This is clearly an area that needs further systematic investigation.

**Middle management roles**

With changing roles for senior managers and their increasing distancing from other staff, it is to be expected that the roles of those holding other leadership and management positions would also change. The evidence here is rather less clear, but a trend can be identified towards the establishment of more clearly defined ‘middle management’ roles within tighter managerial structures. The term ‘middle manager’ means different things in the secondary and primary school contexts. In the former it increasingly means heads of subject departments with line responsibility for groups of staff (Harris et al. 1995), whereas in the latter it means deputy heads and co-ordinators who typically have school-wide responsibility for areas of the curriculum (Webb and Vulliamy 1996). In both cases however, such roles are being more clearly defined and clearer lines of accountability established, although the process has inevitably gone further in secondary schools. This trend is likely to increase as a result of current developments such as the Government’s proposals for the management of the teaching profession (DfEE 1998b).

The much greater complexity and variety of work of the typical college compared to that of schools, and the greater financial pressures to which many colleges have been subjected, has raised particular issues in relation to the role of middle managers in that sector. Resource accountability in particular seems to
be being pushed lower and lower. For example, Carroll (1996) suggests that ‘caseloading’ is being explored as a method through which individual lecturers and teams might be given responsibility for using the flexibility associated with a high degree of delegation of the staffing resource to deliver targets for recruitment, retention and student achievement derived from college’s FEFC contracts. Such developments suggest that the increased distancing of senior managers and other staff described in the previous section may, paradoxically, be accompanied by approaches to management which significantly reduce the degree of ‘loose coupling’ which has often been claimed as a key characteristic of many educational organizations. In such circumstances it is perhaps not surprising, as one study finds, that a very strong tension has emerged for many middle managers ‘between a sense of being impelled by finance and a real struggle to retain student need as a basis for decisions’ (Lumby 1996: 336).

One general issue concerning middle managers which cuts across sectors is that increasing numbers of staff are now expected to come to terms with the fact that they are middle managers, whatever this may mean. As one Head of School in a college is quoted as saying: ‘[O]ver the last five or six years my role has changed from being a teacher and doing some management to being a manager and doing some teaching’ (quoted in Ainley and Bailey 1997: 57). In schools, too, even where an individual’s teaching load has not changed, similar changes in role understanding are expected.

Managing staff

In both the schools and further education sectors, legislation has given governing bodies greater powers to establish personnel policies to meet the needs of their institutions. Such freedoms have been considerably less in the schools sector – basic salary scales and conditions of service continue to be determined nationally for most schools. Nevertheless, within these, governing bodies may award additional salary points for excellent performance as well as defined responsibilities and they are required to review the performance of the headteacher annually and to determine his or her salary accordingly. Evidence suggests that most governing bodies are using these powers minimally or not at all as a means of managing staff (DfEE 1998b, paras 42 and 67, School Teachers’ Review Body 1999), and personnel management issues do not seem to have been as significant at an institutional level for many schools as they have been for many colleges.

In contrast to the situation in the schools sector to date, perhaps the major issue in the college sector since incorporation has been that of staff management. Pressures on costs, much more severe than in the schools sector, have focused attention on the staff resource in particular. The experiences of ‘downsizing’ and ‘delayering’ have been common, while major pressures have been exerted on teaching staff to increase the intensification of their work through the renegotiation of contracts. This has been a major factor in the distancing of
senior managers described earlier and has undoubtedly made it more difficult to maintain more open management styles. Nevertheless, differences have been observed among colleges in their approaches to this issue. Thus Bassett-Jones and Brewer (1997) link strategies of human resource management to broader college strategies. They contrast strategies which focus on cost leadership with those based on differentiation of quality, arguing that the former are associated with human resource strategies based on a core-periphery model with increasing reliance on part-time and contract staff, while the latter favour strategies based around the levels of commitment which having a high proportion of full-time staff provides.

Organizational planning

How have the ways in which decisions are taken and control established changed as a result of the reforms? One common feature in all sectors has been the institutionalization of planning – school development planning in the schools sector and strategic planning in colleges.

Although it is not a statutory requirement in the schools sector, strong government advice supported by the expectations generated by the inspection framework make it difficult for schools to avoid at least creating the appearance of planning. Indeed, as a minimum all schools are legally required to produce an action plan in response to inspection recommendations. It is clear, however, that the idea of development planning can be interpreted in many ways. Thus studies in the primary sector have found ‘different approaches to authorship, involvement and consultation from those [heads] who felt that it was simplest to prepare the plan themselves and then to persuade the staff and governors that it was right to those who sought a more interactive, developmental approach’ (Menter et al. 1995: 308). A major study of primary school planning (MacGilchrist et al. 1995) identifies four types of planning ranging from the ‘rhetorical’ to the ‘corporate’. Similar differences have been found in secondary schools (Sutton 1994, Glover et al. 1996b). However, while MacGilchrist et al. (1995) suggest that ‘corporate planning’ – which could be described as the most ‘managerial’ of the types they identify – is likely to be the most effective, Glover et al. (1996a, b) find that schools which are deemed to be effective differ in the degree to which they adopt centralized and systematized approaches or retain more open and organic models. In other words, approaches to planning can be consistent with a number of effective leadership and management styles.

In the colleges sector, strategic plans and planning appear to be both major expressions of organizational culture and an important means of influencing it. The funding councils require the production of strategic plans and have imposed specific requirements, both for the content of plans and for the outline planning process which colleges should adopt. Nevertheless, it is probably much more broadly true of colleges than of schools that ‘from a senior and middle management perception, adopting the FEFC planning framework is not just lip service
but [leads] to the creation of a better structured, more consistent planning process and thus a more effective service’ (Drodge and Cooper 1997: 47). There is some evidence that such planning is typically driven by ‘a broadly top-down approach to the mission of the college’ (Drodge and Cooper 1997: 38). However, as with schools, there is evidence of more variation in the planning process itself and in the types of strategies which colleges embody in their plans. Thus Drodge and Cooper (1997), for example, found contrasts between, ‘on the one hand, an approach in which strategic management realises the mission by fostering individual and collective learning and, on the other, a managerially directive approach in which the role of strategic management is to define college purpose and direction and then secure commitment to it’ (1997: 46).

Managerialism in schools and colleges: similarities and differences

In summary, the evidence, limited and sometimes ambiguous as it is, seems to suggest that policy developments in both the schools and colleges sectors have, indeed, been accompanied by a move towards a greater degree of managerialism within institutions. Figure 1 summarizes some of the main aspects of this change that are suggested by the empirical literature. Given the limitations of some studies and the complexity of the issues involved, these might more appropriately be treated as hypotheses for further testing rather than firm conclusions. Indeed, even allowing for these limitations, the evidence in not easy to interpret. On one hand, a number of ‘managerialist’ trends in the formal dimension of organizations and their management – tighter senior management teams, clearer middle management roles, more formal planning, agendas more dominated by measurable performance – seem fairly widespread. On the other hand the evidence in relation to the ‘softer’ aspects of management – levels and modes of participation, styles of planning – seem more ambiguous. Thus, while the managerial would seem to be challenging the bureau-professional order in both schools and colleges, it also seems to be the case that both the nature of the accommodation that is occurring between the orders and the form that the managerialist component is taking varies between and within sectors.

In part this divergence arises because, as was described earlier, there are significant differences among policy environments in different sectors despite superficial appearances of convergence. These different policy environments have potentially significant implications for the organizational and managerial responses which schools and colleges make to policy pressures. Thus, there seems little doubt that the severe funding pressures which have been placed on further education colleges have caused the efficiency objective to dominate over almost all others (Lumby 1996, Elliott and Crossley 1997) and a ‘hard’ approach being taken frequently to human resource management (Elliott and Hall 1994). In contrast, the government is establishing a climate in the schools sector which is essentially ‘effectiveness-focussed’, albeit on the basis of an agenda which is tightly
controlled from the centre and defines effectiveness in quite narrow ways (Gewirtz et al. 1995). Thus for many heads over the last few years inspection has been seen as ‘a major, possibly the most significant, test of their professional credibility’ (Hall and Southworth 1997: 158). Now the agenda seems likely to switch further to nationally-imposed processes of target-setting in relation to pupil performance.

Internal factors are probably at work as well in the schools and colleges sectors (as well as in different phases of the schools sector). Each sector has significantly different cultural characteristics, and these have no doubt caused or allowed many institutions to respond to external pressures in different ways. Size, too, may be a factor – a small primary school is a very different organization from an FE college. Nevertheless, consideration of the complexity of the

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Figure 1 Evidence of a shift towards managerialism.
change process which schools and colleges have gone through should lead us to be cautious about making easy generalisations about patterns of change. While sector differences seem to be important, a number of other points need to be made.

First, it is important not to idealize the situation before the reforms, as some of the more radical critiques of managerialism seem to do. For example, even before the 1988 Act, the ‘pivotal, proprietorial and paternalistic’ role of primary headteachers (Hall and Southworth 1997: 153) and the ‘extraordinary centrality of the Headteacher in British [secondary] schools’ (Torrington and Weightman 1989: 135) were noted. Similarly, while some writers on primary schools have found greater degrees of collaboration at an organizational level than would typically be found in secondary schools or colleges (Nias et al. 1989), it is also true that a culture of teacher autonomy and independence, certainly in relation to professional matters, was probably just as common. In this context, it would appear that, while in some schools the reforms may have threatened pre-existing collaborative relationships, in others they have encouraged the replacement of a culture of autonomy by more collegial relationships, albeit primarily of the ‘contrived’ rather than the truly collaborative type (Hargreaves 1994). Similarly in further education, it has been argued that the new managerialism often presented itself as a modernizing alternative, offering new opportunities for coherence and efficiency in college policies in contrast to the perpetual ‘Wars of Roses’ which arose from departmentally-based ‘feudal’ college structures (Ainley and Bailey 1997: 40).

Second, although the reform process began in 1988, the process of radical policy development and implementation is still continuing as was noted at the beginning of this paper. Thus the position at any point in time is likely to be an unstable one. For example, the findings about growing cultural distance between senior staff and others may be associated with the pressures of devolution which placed major new resource management responsibilities on schools at the end of the 1980s. These pressures have now been superseded in part by pressures that are much more tightly targeted on the quality of teaching and learning and educational outcomes. This may lead to further changes in school cultures, and it is far from certain that cultural distancing will be a permanent phenomenon. Similarly in the colleges sector, it is possible that the proposed introduction of benchmarking and target-setting approaches will shift the emphasis of institutional policies from cost-efficiency to educational effectiveness. As a final example, it remains to be seen how far the relative ‘softness’ of personnel management in schools continues when the Government implements its performance management proposals, including more structured appraisal and performance-related components in the pay structure (DfEE 1998b).

Third, it is extremely important to note that significant differences in responses to policy pressures have been observed within sectors as well as between sectors. Some examples have been noted earlier. One reason for this lies in the widely differing positions that institutions found themselves in with the introduction of devolution and marketization. For example, the experiences of individual colleges have been heavily influenced by their relative unit costs
and hence the scale of their required efficiency savings (Bassett-Jones and Brewer 1997). Individual school experiences, in contrast, have depended strongly on the relative competitiveness of the local market arenas in which they have found themselves (Simkins 1994, Bullock and Thomas 1997).

Finally, it seems clear that the response of individual managers to the situation with which they are faced can and does vary. For example, Grace (1995) distinguishes between categories of secondary school heads who have differed markedly in their responses to policy changes: ‘headteacher-managers’, ‘headteacher-professionals’ and ‘headteacher-resistors’. Such a distinction perhaps explains in part the finding by Gewirtz et al. (1995) that some secondary heads have ‘enthusiastically embraced the new language and culture of management’ while others – the majority – have been ‘reluctantly implicated’ and have maintained ‘[a] strong adherence to comprehensivism or bureau-professional modes of operation combined with a grudging acceptance of market imperatives’ (pp. 99, 101). In further education, the pre-existing culture is likely to have created fewer difficulties for many principals, although there, too, reservations about the new market-oriented culture have been noted (Jephcote et al. 1996).

Conclusion

The evolving policy environment which educational institutions have faced over the past 10 years in the United Kingdom has exerted a number of common pressures on those who lead and manage them. These pressures include:

• the need to ‘perform’ in the quasi-market and take a more ‘customer-focused’ approach to those whom they serve;
• the need to set and meet demanding targets in terms of measurable performance indicators which are set by central government or its agents;
• the need to exhibit ‘appropriate’ forms of management and organization which can be inspected and for which institutions can be held to account.

The argument that such developments are leading to increasingly ‘managerialist’ patterns of control in the public sector generally (Pollitt 1993, Clarke and Newman, 1997) have been echoed by those writing about primary schools (Webb and Vulliamy 1996), secondary schools (Power et al. 1997), and institutions of further (Elliott and Hall 1994) and higher education (Dearlove 1997). A review of recent studies in the schools and colleges sectors suggests that a number of managerialist trends are indeed discernible, especially in the more ‘formal’ dimensions of organization and management, and that these can be traced to changes in the policy environment. However, it also clear that the picture is a complex and evolving one, with considerable differences identifiable both between and within sectors, especially in relation to aspects of organizational culture and management and leadership style. This supports evidence from other parts of the public sector that suggests, not only that managerialism
can take many forms, but also that it can interact with existing organizational orders in a variety of ways to produce different outcomes in different contexts (Clarke and Newman 1997). The nature of these interactions and their outcomes are likely to be affected by a variety of variables including:

- the detailed policy framework which affects the sector within which the institution is located;
- the ‘relative positioning’ of the institution within the sector in relation to the specific market and policy pressures with which it is faced;
- the ‘cultural starting points’ of particular sectors and of individual institutions within them; and
- the preferences and styles of organizational leaders and managers.

It is dangerous, therefore, to draw sweeping conclusions about the replacement of the traditional bureau-professional organizational order in education by a managerial one. Rather, it is better to view the process as a dynamic one in which growing tensions between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ are worked out within particular policy and management arenas as different values systems and interests compete for influence. However, while there is clear evidence to support some differentiation in the impact of managerialist trends on particular schools and colleges, it is not possible to draw clear conclusions about the relative importance of the variables listed above in influencing such differences, let alone about the mechanisms through which such differentiation occurs. The ways in which sectoral, organizational and personal leadership factors interact to produce new cultural, organizational and managerial forms in particular contexts should be a major question for research and policy debate over the coming years.3

Notes
1 This paper is concerned with schools and with colleges in the further education sector. The latter, in England and Wales, broadly comprises all those institutions in the post-school sector whose primary purpose is not degree and postgraduate education (although they may offer some courses at that level). Higher (i.e. university) education is not the subject of this paper.
2 It should be noted that the Government, while increasing directive pressure in these ways, is also reducing the degree of prescription in the National Curriculum, and plans to increase the proportion of funding devolved to schools.
3 The research implications of the analysis in this paper are explored in Simkins (1999).

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435
FURTHER EDUCATION


A COUNTER-POLICY TO SUBVERT EDUCATIONAL REFORM?

Collaboration among schools and colleges in a competitive climate

Mike Wallace


The concept of a ‘counter-policy’ is articulated as a heuristic device for grasping the process of mediation whereby implementation of national policies may stimulate resistance and co-optation at other education system levels. The discussion is illustrated through exploratory research into initiatives promoting collaboration among English schools and colleges, some enjoying local education authority (LEA) support. The term counter-policy is defined and located within a local perspective on national policy implementation; the scope of the investigation is summarised; the national policy context stimulating counter-policies is sketched; how far the collaborative groups studied had developed a counter-policy is discussed; interaction between key players at different system levels impacting on these counter-policies is outlined, including reference to related counter-policies developed in some LEAs; and conclusions are drawn about application of the counter-policy concept to collaborative initiatives, utility of the conceptual orientation, an agenda for further research, and the potential of collaborative initiatives to subvert central government reform.

Introduction

The image of schooling underpinning the education reform policies and discourse of the recently overturned Conservative central government in the UK was that of the individual, largely autonomous—or self-managing—institution competing in the local market place, where parents as education consumers could choose amongst a diversity of state and private schools and colleges (Department for Education [DfE], 1992). To break the
mould of the post-war consensus between the main political parties over state education, an unprecedented range of powers was created to drive home these reforms.

All four ‘policy instruments’ in the typology of implementation strategies developed by McDonnell & Elmore (1991) were employed by central government. The major instrument was a comprehensive effort at system changing: shifting the balance of authority between teachers and headteachers, governors for each institution, local education authorities (LEAs), and central government. Other policy instruments were used to support this effort: from mandates, mostly in the form of legislation; through financial inducements to take up the opportunity for schools to be freed from LEA control; to capacity building where finance for staff development support was targeted on giving teachers and headteachers the knowledge and skills needed to implement reforms.

Yet enduring voluntary collaborative initiatives existed across the country where the schools and colleges belonging to these groups were close enough to compete for students (Lunt et al., 1994; Ranson & Tomlinson, 1994; Lomax & Darley, 1995; Macbeth et al., 1995; Bridges & Husbands, 1996). A defining characteristic of such initiatives was the promotion of collaboration—joint work for joint purposes—in one or more areas of shared concern, promoting mutual survival of member institutions with variable effort to reduce or avoid competition inside the group (Wallace & Hall, 1994a). Moreover, despite the central government thrust to reduce LEA powers so as to increase school and college autonomy, some LEAs where collaborative initiatives were situated responded by shifting from an educational leadership to a service role. Supporting collaborative groups offered LEA staff a means of promoting their survival as contributors to state schooling in the face of ministers’ declared intentions.

Central government reforms were met in these cases by a response at other levels of the education system which reflected neither the practices envisaged by ministers nor the spirit of their reforms. The image projected by these collaborating schools and colleges was more that of the interdependent and mutually supportive institution than the individual, aggressively competitive, autonomous organisation beloved of reformers. Explanations of this apparent anomaly are thin on the ground. Most investigations and practitioner accounts of collaboration have been descriptive, though a start is being made on modelling forms of collaboration (e.g. Husbands, 1996) and relationships between collaboration and competition (e.g. Glatter, 1995). These models have limited potential to answer generic questions to which this phenomenon gives rise: how was it possible for old or new practices antithetical to those envisaged by the architects of education reform either to continue or to spring up and flourish despite the use of such a battery of policy instruments to secure faithful implementation? How may we explain such unintended consequences of policy changes?

This article is concerned with exploring complexities of education policy implementation in a large, multilevel system. Its main purpose is to explore how
implementation may be affected by interaction between education policies reflecting contradictory values held among actors at central government and other system levels. The notion of a ‘counter-policy’ will be put forward as a heuristic device for analysing the mediation of national policies where their implementation may stimulate resistance and co-optation in target institutions at other system levels, leading to subversion of these policies (Hall & Wallace, 1993). A subsidiary aim is to ground the discussion through an illustrative account of exploratory research into initiatives to promote collaboration among schools and colleges in England, some with LEA support.

Attention is increasingly being paid to the complexity and contested nature of education policy (Boyd, 1988; Ball, 1994a), highlighting the importance of policy-related rhetoric in ‘manufacturing consent’ through influencing the discourse which shapes perceptions amongst those involved in implementation. Work remains to be done, however, on refining the conceptualisation of action and response both within and between system levels which commonly leads to emergence of some form of ‘implementation gap’ (Wallace, 1991a) between policy-makers’ stated vision of the impact of new practices and what happens in target institutions. It is now more widely recognised that policies vary in the leeway offered for reinterpretation during implementation, not merely in terms of discourse, but in terms of practice (Ball, 1994b; Hatcher & Troyna, 1994).

A theme common to the complementary education policy implementation (e.g. Odden, 1991; Weatherly & Lipsky, 1977); and the management of planned educational change (e.g. Fullan, 1991) traditions is the idea that policies and associated innovations are subject to a process of ‘mutual adaptation’ (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978). The intentions of initiators at one level in the education system are reinterpreted to a greater or lesser extent by those who are supposed to put them into practice, often resulting in a change in designers’ expectations. The explanatory power of this conceptual orientation is nevertheless restricted by its emphasis on single changes, neglecting the context for implementation (Bolam, 1982). The response of actors who are the target of an externally initiated policy tends to be viewed in terms of ‘strategic resistance’ (Corwin, 1965) to it. The possibility exists, however, that such actions could represent more than merely an attempt to block the imposition of an undesired policy. They could contribute towards the implementation of a proactive local policy agenda bearing only an oblique relationship to the initiative under scrutiny.

Second, focusing on single changes underplays the fact that, in a context of large-scale education reform, policies do not exist in isolation. A major reform effort generally involves the introduction of a bundle of interrelated policies which interact both within and across system levels, often in contrary ways (Coulby & Bash, 1991; Ball, 1994a; Wallace, 1996). Schools and colleges are likely to be faced with a multiplicity of externally initiated innovations at any time (Fullan et al., 1986), alongside and often squeezing out any originating within. Research indicates how reforms produce a flow of policies at different
levels which are frequently adjusted during their implementation, resulting in an evolving profile of innovations to be addressed by school and college staff (Wallace & McMahon, 1994). There is considerable interaction between powerful individuals and groups within and between central, local, inter-institution and individual institution levels of the education system, according to partisan interests which may reflect contradictory values. In a large system, this interaction also reflects the limited awareness that actors at one level may have of their impact on others at different system levels (Wallace, 1991b).

To embrace the complexity of the change process in a context of reform, Fullan (1993) has advocated a new paradigm for understanding educational change which embraces its ‘dynamic complexity’. Following Senge (1990), change is viewed as involving more factors than we can take into account whose interaction we cannot fully predict. Therefore only limited control is feasible at any system level. A major contributor to dynamic complexity is the interaction between policies created at different levels beyond schools or colleges and policies developed within them, affecting the profile of innovations being addressed at any time. In the spirit of this new paradigm, the present study is aimed at conceptualising one aspect of the interplay of policies across system levels, where powerful actors at these diverse levels hold contradictory values and subversive local practices emerge.

In the remaining sections, the counter-policy concept is elaborated as part of a local perspective on policy implementation, itself underpinned by a combined cultural and political perspective on interaction; the scope of the exploratory study is summarised; evolution of the national policy context stimulating development of counter-policies is briefly sketched; the extent to which the collaborative groups investigated may be conceived as having developed a counter-policy is discussed; interaction between key players at different system levels impacting on these counter-policies is outlined, including reference to related counter-policies developed in several LEAs; and conclusions are drawn about application of the counter-policy concept to the collaborative initiatives, the utility of the conceptual orientation, an agenda for further research, and the potential of collaborative initiatives to subvert central government policies.

**National policy and local counter-policy**

A counter-policy may be defined as:

> a proactive response by powerful actors in a locality to a policy initiated elsewhere that they perceive to threaten their beliefs and values, where they harness their institutional resources in a coordinated manner to mediate implementation of this external policy in ways that challenge or subvert its initiators’ stated aims.

A counter-policy may vary between the formal and explicit, perhaps enshrined in a public written statement, and the informal and implicit, articulated only in
private conversation. A counter-policy may be oriented primarily towards active resistance to the external policy, especially at first, by persisting with present practice expressing existing values in the face of external pressure for change. The research into collaborative initiatives portrayed efforts to ensure continuation of those which had been launched before the reforms. A counter-policy may become more subversive through co-optation: hijacking the external policy by adapting its implementation in such a way as to express contradictory values. An example of co-optation, to be discussed more fully later, was an external evaluation programme superficially in line with the central government emphasis on increasing external accountability of individual institutions, yet designed to enhance a local image of high quality education provided by all institutions in the collaborative group.

The notion of a counter-policy is located within a conception of policy-making and implementation as a continuous process, where official policy statements and the associated discourses are both created and reinterpreted during implementation as a result of interplay between individuals and groups within and between system levels (Bowe et al., 1992). At the heart of the policy process lies interaction, which may range between the deeply conflictual and the strongly synergistic. Interaction is interpreted, through a combined cultural and political perspective, as reflecting the differential use of resources by actors to achieve their desired goals according to beliefs and values which they share to a varying degree (Wallace & Hall, 1994b).

Within a pluralistic society subcultures are likely to exist, each reflecting allegiance to beliefs and values that may be only partially compatible with those of others. The pro-market competitive values underpinning central government reforms do not square well with the long-standing dominant professional culture in British schools whose discourse has conceived education as a public service for local communities rather than a marketable product. Activities reflecting contradictory beliefs and values may coexist without necessarily producing conflict if they are kept separate (Wallace, 1991b), as where actors collaborate to compete against a third party, or collaborate on some activities while competing in respect of others (see Levacic & Woods, 1994).

Following Giddens (1984), power is taken as ‘transformative capacity’: the capability to intervene in events so as to alter their course. It does not necessarily imply conflict: parties to interaction who work together synergistically have power to make things happen. Equally, each protagonist in a conflict situation may use transformative capacity to achieve contradictory goals. We may distinguish two forms of power (Bacharach & Lawler, 1980). Authority means use of resources legitimated by individuals’ beliefs and values associated with status, including the right to apply sanctions. System changing, as a policy instrument, therefore implies altering the distribution of legitimation to use resources and apply sanctions among people of different status: LEA staff have lost some authority to school governors and headteachers; these groups have lost some authority to central government. By contrast, influence refers to informal use of
resources where there is no recourse to sanctions linked to authority, although other sanctions (such as withdrawal of commitment or minimal compliance) may be available.

All individuals have access to some resources, however asymmetrical their relationship. Each party to interaction is implicated in a multidirectional ‘dialectic of control’ (Giddens, 1984) consisting of a flow of action and response. Conversely nobody has a monopoly on power: it is distributed throughout the system, albeit unequally. There is no sense in which central government ministers, despite having exclusive authority to alter the education system, have complete control over what others do or refrain from doing in response, let alone what they believe or value. Control is dialectical in the sense that it is shared among actors, each able variably to delimit—rather than simply direct—the actions of others.

This local orientation towards national policy implementation takes as its starting point those elements of the system-wide pattern of interaction most directly affecting individuals and groups in and around the institution level, where both central government and LEA policies constitute external influences on the use of power in these institutions according to particular beliefs and values. A model of implementation at this level is depicted in Figure 1. Since policies are never introduced into a vacuum, analysis begins with the situation into which an external policy is introduced. Here practice will probably reflect the beliefs and values of powerful actors, especially headteachers and principals who have substantial authority as institution managers.

The values reflected by the external policy, as articulated by its initiators, may vary along the dimension whose extreme positions are portrayed in the diagram: between contradicting and being congruent with dominant institutional values. (My present concern is primarily with the former case, as indicated by the solid arrows.) In the light of their reading of this policy, powerful actors will seek ‘room to manoeuvre’ (Wallace, 1991a), whether to protect practice expressing their existing values where the policy contradicts them, or to engage in activities which express, synergistically, the values of the external policy where there is congruence. The policy thrust in this study has the added spice of posing the threat of closure, should a school or college staff fail to attract a viable number of students. Here the search for room to manoeuvre may include a newly surfaced value placed on promoting the very institutional survival which was taken for granted until now. The outcome of this search is a response which varies similarly along a continuum: from counter-policy activity expressing values running counter to those underpinning the external policy; through acceptance of the policy, either where there appears to be little power to express contradictory values or where there is congruence of values; to synergistic activity which may even outstrip expectations of external policy initiators.

Subsequent evolution of a counter-policy could take various courses. It might wither in the face of enduring pressure from the external policy or successor policies, as consent is manufactured, reflected by a shift in dominant values. A sub-
sequent change in central government or its policy orientation might bring the values underlying what was a counter-policy into line with the new central government policy thrust, as might be the case if the newly elected Labour central government were to adopt policies fostering local collaboration. Whatever happens, the process cannot be regarded as simply cyclic: as past actions inform present practice, no actor can ever be in quite the same experiential place twice. In sum, the concept of a counter-policy addresses active and coherent bottom-up and lateral uses of power, where opportunities are sought to reinforce practices or develop new ones that reflect beliefs and values belying those promoted by initiators of an unwelcome external policy.

**Investigating inter-institutional collaboration**

The exploratory research was designed to assess the applicability of the counter-policy construct to an instance of education reform policy. Collaborative initiatives were identified through a national survey by letter of LEA officials and representatives of professional agencies and unions, complemented by a search through the education press for relevant articles. The criterion for inclusion in this opportunity sample was evidence of working together for mutual benefit despite being in a position where proximity between member institutions catering for the same age range of students meant they could have competed.
inter-institutional collaboration was operationalised in different ways, all activities meeting this criterion lay within the definition adopted of collaboration as joint work for joint purposes. The activities were reportedly designed to benefit all schools or colleges involved, so helping to create conditions fostering their mutual survival within the increasingly hostile environment engendered by reforms.

From this set, seven initiatives were selected, offering diversity according to:

- their origin before or after the advent of relevant central government reforms from 1988;
- the coverage of different compulsory and post-compulsory phases of state education, from primary to further education sectors; and
- the form of linkage between the group and the local LEA.

Qualitative methods were used to conduct focused, interpretive case studies (Merriam, 1988) informed by analytical techniques developed by Miles & Huberman (1994). Fourteen semi-structured interviews with headteachers or principals and initiative coordinators were conducted during spring 1995, supplemented by a document archive including press articles, position statements, bulletins and the handbook for a shared project.

These collaborative initiatives could all be interpreted as a counter-policy because they constituted, at least in part, a reaction against an external policy shift promoting competition between institutions. For many years, state schooling in the UK had constituted a ‘national service, locally administered’, where competition between schools was largely limited to situations where falling student numbers due to a decline in the birth rate left institutions with substantial spare capacity (Audit Commission, 1986). The organisation of state education as a public service, with LEAs enjoying a substantial measure of control over allocation of students, staff and finance, provided conditions for a stance of indifference or cooperation between the majority of neighbouring institutions.

The 1970s and early 1980s witnessed sporadic emergence of diverse grass roots and LEA initiatives promoting inter-institutional collaboration whose content varied. They included cluster groups of small primary schools, pyramid groups of secondary schools with their feeder primary institutions, and arrangements for liaison between phases of schooling. From the early 1980s, these initiatives were supplemented by congruent central government policies. Financial inducements were offered to LEAs for projects promoting clusters of rural primary schools through the Education Support Grants scheme (Wallace, 1988; Galton et al., 1991), and to secondary schools and colleges for consortia participating in the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) and its extension (Bridgwood, 1989). The General Certificate of Secondary Education examination was widely introduced through secondary school consortia. In so far as central government and LEA policies promoted inter-institutional collaboration, they were consistent with the dominant (but not uni-
versal) belief in state education as a local service, where neighbouring schools in the same phase were regarded more as partners than as competitors.

Central government reforms, heralded by legislation in 1980 and 1986, represented a policy U-turn from 1988. They reflected values of increasingly influential right wing advisers (Ball, 1990) contradicting those expressed in the earlier emphasis on collaboration. Interrelated policies were designed to create supply and demand sides of an education market and so foster competition between individual institutions. A reduction in LEA authority was required to free up schools and colleges to form this market. Policies to build the supply of a greater diversity of institutions with enhanced autonomy included:

- more open enrolment of students to facilitate greater parental choice, requiring school staff to accept students up to the limits of physical capacity, and removal of LEA authority to plan local provision through limiting schools’ intake to a level below capacity;
- delegation of finance to each institution through a local management scheme according to a formula based on the number of students, removing LEA jurisdiction over this money and the staffing level. The tighter link between student numbers and finance, with direct implications for staff jobs, provided an incentive to expand or at least avoid any decline in the number of students on roll;
- ‘incorporation’ of sixth form and further education colleges, removing them from LEA control;
- diversification of types of school and maintenance of surplus capacity. Financial inducements encouraged secondary schools to specialise in certain subjects such as technology, and primary or secondary schools to escape LEA control by becoming grant-maintained where they were now funded directly by central government, frequently to avoid LEA proposals for closure where student numbers were low (Halpin et al., 1993). City Technology Colleges were created with generous central government funding and industrial sponsorship, located in urban areas where there were already enough schools to serve the community; and
- an increase in the proportion of parents and local community representatives on school and college governing bodies, coupled with greater authority for oversight of individual institutions, giving governors more power over decisions affecting the market niche occupied by their school or college, including the hiring of staff.

Complementary policies informed parental demand for student places through:

- nationally imposed arrangements for assessing the teaching of the National Curriculum and publishing results, along with truancy rates, as league tables ranked according to raw scores, facilitating comparison between outcomes achieved by different institutions; and
In the teeth of such a policy shift, collaborative initiatives represented a local counter-policy where they impeded the development of a market based on competition between individual institutions by acting in concert.

**Inter-institutional collaboration as a counter-policy**

Each of the seven collaborative initiatives displayed counter-policy characteristics. Composition of the groups and content of their counter-policies are summarised in Table 1. Member institutions included schools within LEA jurisdiction, grant-maintained schools, sixth form colleges and colleges of further education. The groups engaged in diverse shared activities which contributed not only to resisting external pressure to compete but also to co-opting aspects of the reforms to serve collaborative ends. Such activities were designed to empower all participating institutions, placing a high value on synergy to be gained from mutual support (in line with central government policy before the reforms). The vision statement for Group D was ‘to present a model for a group of LEA schools acting voluntarily within a consortium to enhance the educational effectiveness of each member school for the benefit of all pupils in the area’. Several informants signified their awareness that engaging in collaborative activities reduced any competitive advantage their institution might have retained over others where, say, particular curriculum or management expertise was located in that school or college.

The first column of counter-policy content in Table 1 lists the main activities involved. The most common joint venture was curriculum and staff development work where funds allocated to individual institutions and expertise within them were deployed for mutual benefit. Next came collaboration over finances, from sharing of ideas and experience to joint purchasing agreements made possible under the local management scheme. In the latter instances a central government reform policy designed to forge conditions for individual competition was co-opted through its formal adaptation to advantage the entire group.

These activities were incorporated in a more comprehensive formal arrangement in Group D, where a group of primary and secondary sector schools was established in the same town to share financial advantages and greater autonomy accruing to grant-maintained schools, without losing support of the LEA or other group members. LEA officials agreed to explore how far finances withheld for services such as library provision could be delegated to these schools, and an LEA official was appointed as coordinator. Within the dialectic of control between headteachers and LEA officials, the initiative empowered LEA staff to use influence to support schools in a novel service role. The headteachers concerned found room to manoeuvre to exploit the opportunity reforms inadvertently allowed for co-optation through a joint enterprise which contradicted the
Table 1 Collaborative groups and counter-policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative group</th>
<th>Member institutions</th>
<th>Content of counter-policy</th>
<th>Main activities</th>
<th>Internal competition</th>
<th>Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>10 primary sector schools</td>
<td>Curriculum and staff development, newsletter for parents</td>
<td>Informal no poaching agreement</td>
<td>Headteacher as volunteer part-time coordinator, headteachers' meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>8 primary schools, 1 special school, 1 secondary school</td>
<td>Shared pre-school facilities, curriculum and staff development, shared resources including special needs teacher</td>
<td>Informal no poaching agreement</td>
<td>Part-time coordinator, headteachers' meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>14 secondary schools, 4 special schools, 2 further education colleges</td>
<td>Curriculum and staff development, joint position statement, working parties (e.g. on marketing)</td>
<td>Informal no poaching agreement</td>
<td>Part-time coordinator, headteachers' meetings, working parties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>13 primary sector schools, 2 secondary schools</td>
<td>Curriculum and staff development, joint purchasing, 6 schools run school-based initial teacher training scheme, governors' forum</td>
<td>Group identity minimises promotion of competition</td>
<td>LEA officer as coordinator, headteachers' meetings, working parties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>13 sixth form colleges</td>
<td>Curriculum and staff development, sharing financial and management expertise, joint institutional evaluation scheme</td>
<td>Acce</td>
<td>Principals' meetings, project groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
values behind policies enhancing school autonomy at LEA expense. When several schools in the group subsequently did become grant-maintained, they continued to be accepted as part of the initiative, enjoying informal support of the LEA despite severing formal ties.

Another co-optative activity was collaboration to develop a joint institutional evaluation scheme developed amongst a group of sixth form colleges (Group E). Staff from one college were invited to review areas of provision in another and to give a confidential report, in order to assist in improving provision in each member institution and also help prepare for external inspection under the new central government scheme. Curriculum expertise shared in this way contributed both to synergy in enhancing provision across the group and to all members making a good showing when externally inspected. The more inspection results turned out positive, the more their publication would help give prospective parents and students the impression that sixth form colleges generally provided high quality education.

Valuing collaboration was tempered by the contradictory value accorded to individual institutional autonomy. A balance was struck between commitment to joint ventures for the communal good of the group, accompanied by loss of some individual autonomy, and retaining the authority of governors and headteachers or principals to do what they perceived to be in the best interests of their own institution. The aim of collaboration in Group D was stated as being ‘to offset the element of competition and to allow closer cooperation between schools whilst allowing each establishment to maintain their own individuality and autonomy’.

In a climate where finance now followed students and empty institutions would face closure, individual institutional survival had become the bottom line

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**Table 1 Continued**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative group</th>
<th>Member institutions</th>
<th>Content of counter-policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Main activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>25 primary sector schools</td>
<td>Curriculum and staff development, joint purchasing, joint projects (e.g. road safety), joint negotiation with companies, lobbying of LEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35 companies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 support agencies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>2 secondary schools</td>
<td>Joint sixth form teaching, shared local campaigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
value. As one head in Group B put it: ‘You need as much support as you can get, especially in our situation as a small school . . . it’s going to be the only way that we will survive’. Commitment to the joint work of collaboration was therefore frequently instrumental, contingent on joint purposes being achieved in such a way as to continue yielding benefit to the individual institution. The present synergistic use of power within the dialectic of control between group members might be replaced by something more conflictual. Should a decline in student numbers mean that survival depended on competing against erstwhile collaborators, this alternative strategy might be adopted. A minority of respondents, however, indicated that collaboration was of intrinsic moral value. A headteacher from Group C stated:

I’ve always felt that there’s been great value, not just in collaboration, but in a friendship group. That’s the very basic bottom line of what should happen. It should happen between heads who are under tremendous pressure all the time from forces that are trying to make them cut-throat all the time . . . I’ve thought right from the beginning that this was the way to do it: corporate response rather than individuals trying to get extra money.

Internal collaboration for external competition

The collaborative initiatives did not empower their members to buck the education market, but did ameliorate its impact. Depending on the stance adopted in other local institutions, the joint purposes of collaborative activities could include strengthening group members’ ability as a cartel to compete against aggressive outsiders. Here the contradictory values underlying collaboration and competition could be entertained without tension because collaboration was directed inside the group while competition was directed outside. Cornering the market through a collaborative cartel was co-optative to the extent that, though group members might be forced to engage in external competition, their predicament as comrades in adversity could serve to reinforce their collaborative values while inhibiting parental choice and working to keep all member institutions in business. A headteacher from Group G referred to adopting a ‘siege mentality’ where the motivation for extending the scope of collaboration was driven by the need to resist an external threat.

Conditions favouring competition depend in part on a surplus of student places coupled with a push by parents to exercise choice. In four instances, there was little environmental pressure because either schools were full, few parents wished to move students between institutions catering for the same age range, or headteachers abstained from competing. In the remainder, collaboration within was a basis for resisting competition from without. Group C, near the centre of a large city, faced a haemorrhage of students to suburban schools around the city limits.
This threat prompted expansion of the group, as staff in nearby schools sought strength in neighbourly support, and the formulation of a joint position statement articulating this concern as a basis for negotiation with the LEA over its policy of accepting movement of students. One headteacher indicated how she seized opportunities to reverse the trend and bring in students from outside the group: ‘I’ve actually rung colleagues in other schools and said, “So and so are on the lookout for another school. It should be yours; chase them!”’

The schools in group D were in an area where a significant proportion of parents expressed interest in exercising choice and, by forming a group encompassing all the schools in one town, its headteachers hoped to minimise the impact of parental pressure. One indicated awareness of an emerging discourse of competition to be resisted:

I don’t know where it could have come from, this pressure [to compete]. I don’t think it could have come from the LEA. To get those pupils in there because they mean money—I think it must have been this postmodernism, in the water, in the air, at a national level. More pupils would mean more money and your school would be more viable, and you would have the best resources and the best teachers. This was very much the culture of the early 90s when we got our delegated budget.

The sixth form colleges (Group E) had closed ranks because of their principals’ mutual self interest in withstanding increasing competition from further education colleges inside the area occupied by the group.

**Collaboration to avoid internal competition**

Collaborative activities in five groups specifically designed to pre-empt internal competition are summarised in the second column of counter-policy content in Table 1. There was an informal, unwritten, ‘no poaching’ agreement between headteachers in three groups, where each would refrain from attempting to attract students from other member institutions. A headteacher from Group C pointed to undesirable consequences of successful competition where the supply of students was finite: ‘If you take pupils in here and appoint new staff, other people are losing their jobs. And you mustn’t do that; it’s a moral issue’. They would also try to dissuade any parent wishing to transfer a student to their school from another in the group.

In Groups D and G, identification of headteachers with the group was regarded as a buffer against the temptation to compete. One headteacher in Group D reported how, to sustain support of governors for the collaborative initiative, she claimed that her collaboration was a means of keeping informed about her competitors. A governors’ forum was set up to encourage governors
from all member institutions to identify with the group, rather than just their school.

Only in Group E was a measure of competition for students accepted, with the safeguard that most member institutions were located far enough apart for its impact to remain within manageable limits. Collaborative activities were separated from competitive activities like marketing, allowing the contradiction to endure without conflict. Under Group E’s joint evaluation scheme, arrangements for matching reviewers to the college commissioning the review acknowledged the need to keep collaboration and competition apart. The handbook stated:

the coordinator will need to be aware of possible sensitivities if a reviewer is drawn from a neighbouring, possibly competitor, college. It will be important to ensure that there is no actual or perceived conflict of interest. The college which is being reviewed should have the opportunity to reject a reviewer where they consider there is a conflict of interest, and they should be encouraged to do so rather than jeopardise the review itself.

Implementation of counter-policies

The final column of counter-policy content in Table 1 shows how implementation was achieved through the introduction of roles, structures and procedures for developing and sustaining collaboration. The existence of coordinated management activity underlines the status of the collaborative initiatives as counter-policies, since the intention to collaborate had been backed by resources to make it happen and to make it last. In all cases, headteachers or principals held regular meetings to orchestrate collaborative activities and group development. These meetings were extended in Group F to include representatives from the companies and support agencies which were also members. Most initiatives were administered by a part- or full-time coordinator, drawn from the staff or from outside. Their responsibilities for promoting collaboration varied from organising occasional staff development activities (Group A and B), through liaising with the LEA (Group D), to recruiting new members (Group F). In Group D, staff from each institution could opt in or out of any activity. A headteacher noted: ‘I think it’s amoebic really . . . groups form and then others take part in other things; all the time there are changing groups’. Here about half the group members had elected to participate in a school-based initial teacher training scheme.

Closest coordination was achieved in the smallest group (G), consisting of two adjacent grant-maintained secondary schools in a small town. Shared decisions connected with the joint sixth form were made by paired staff with the same management responsibility in each school, to ensure that staff from neither could dominate. In the words of one headteacher:
If you appoint somebody from inside [the group] then clearly he (sic) is one of them or one of us, and as soon as he makes a decision that happens to go against our school then we know he’s biased. We’ve always had two people who have done everything. The joint sixth form timetable is constructed by two timetabling officers, examination entries are supervised by two examination officers. The sixth form has two directors, and at the top of it you have two heads—and we have lunch together once a week . . .

**Action and response in the genesis of counter-policies**

As noted earlier, implementation of central government reforms also entailed a complex series of interactions across individual school or college, inter-institution and LEA levels. In this sense counter-policies, which could emerge at any level where the dominant culture of powerful actors was threatened, represented just one (possibly temporary) component of a perpetually unfolding policy process. Having illustrated how activity inside inter-institutional collaborative initiatives met the criteria of a counter-policy, we now consider how a flow of interactions gave rise to these counter-policies and related LEA activity, as portrayed in Table 2.

The columns in this table list key interactions and contextual factors that variably affected initiatives and responses among the collaborative groups and LEA staff, the first two of which summarise the origin of initiatives and the institution level response to central government reforms. Three groups (A–C) pre-dated the recent reforms and none of them had originally constituted a counter-policy. Group A was formed through an LEA initiative, where exchange of curriculum expertise in the primary sector was fostered by setting up a primary school development group in each locality. Traditionally relationships between schools and the LEA had been very positive. Group B was a grass roots initiative, where the secondary school headteacher had been the prime mover in developing a partnership with feeder primary schools. An LEA initiative promoting school self-evaluation had encouraged headteachers to work together for their mutual benefit, and LEA staff had supported development of the partnership. Schools making up the majority of the present Group C had previously been formed by their LEA into a TVEI consortium.

The 1988 central government reforms altered the climate for collaboration in these groups both as a result of the system changing redistribution of authority and because the potential threat to institutional survival was increased under local management. The main response was to reinforce the group, taking account of the reforms while rejecting their underlying values. An audit of resources was carried out in Group B schools to determine what their combined resources could offer. The LEA agreed to give financial support to this or any other partnership if member institutions matched it with funds from their individual delegated budgets under the local management policy.
The other initiatives (D–G) were created as a by-product of reforms, capitalising on the new room to manoeuvre they offered to support mutual survival of member institutions. Group D was set up with LEA support to explore a consortium approach to making best use of delegated and hitherto undelegated funding for LEA schools; Group E was formalised to share expertise needed to manage the novelty of incorporation where previously many management tasks had been the LEA’s responsibility; and Group F was formed to secure better value for money for participating institutions over purchase of materials and services that the LEA had been carrying out on an individual basis.

Looking along the columns of Table 2 relating to Group G, we can see how its formation provides a stark contrast to the other three post-reform initiatives,
underlining the importance of adopting a local perspective on interaction, here encompassing a negative response to an LEA operating in sympathy with central government. The reaction at LEA level to central government reforms had been strongly to endorse them, even to the tune of relinquishing control over state education in the area. According to the headteacher of one of the two grant-maintained schools in Group G:

There are a large number of grant-maintained schools because of self-protection. The Authority made themselves perfectly clear that they would encourage people to opt out on the one hand, and they were quite prepared to take a totally non-education line . . . [The LEA] would have been perfectly happy to see a school flounder and go down as a result of the application of market forces economics. You’ve got some fairly ultra right wing Thatcherites—or you did have—calling the shots, and getting out from under was a safe policy. With the exception of one school in [the LEA] we are all grant-maintained. Not because we have this burning desire to be grant-maintained; not because we accepted the philosophy; not because we believe in grant-maintained schools particularly. We genuinely did opt out to say goodbye to [the LEA].

The headteachers of these schools had engineered becoming grant-maintained together—ironically—as a pragmatic escape route from what they perceived to be a hostile, pro-central government LEA. They used resources made available by reforms to hijack the grant-maintained policy so as to facilitate collaboration, and continued to resist LEA efforts to promote competition. When an LEA proposal was announced to create a new school in the area, which would have competed for students, these headteachers successfully launched a campaign to prevent it being built. Their collaborative initiative represented a counter-policy directed against the unwelcome synergistic external policies introduced by the LEA and central government. They shared a common, institution-level professional culture which evaluated the LEA negatively. Accordingly, within the dialectic of control between these system levels, the two headteachers had grasped the opportunity central government reforms provided to increase their authority relative to the LEA so as to enhance their joint autonomy and chances of mutual institutional survival.

There had reportedly been strong congruence between dominant values in this LEA and those reflected in central government reforms. Room to manoeuvre was found to express these values at LEA level through a response of active endorsement to implement the central government policy (one option for response to an external policy which was highlighted in Figure 1).

The reaction was different in other LEAs. The third column in Table 2 indicates how the LEAs associated with Groups C and F were subject to a subsequent central government policy. A review of local government was carried out in the early
A COUNTER-POLICY TO SUBVERT EDUCATIONAL REFORM?

1990s and some LEAs either had boundary changes imposed or were abolished and new LEAs created to serve the region. The impending changes in two LEAs appear to have inhibited any effort to work with the collaborative groups concerned. Officials from the new LEA for Group C were reported as having expressed interest, but fieldwork was conducted before the LEA was firmly established.

**Action and response in the genesis of LEA counter-policies**

As the fourth and fifth columns in Table 2 reveal, staff in two other LEAs had developed new ways of supporting the pre-reform collaborative groups (A and B) within parameters imposed by central government reforms. As discussed above, the LEA for Group D was integral to the development of the initiative, even providing the coordinator. Establishing positive links with collaborative groups of schools through these supportive activities amounted to an LEA counter-policy connected with Groups A, B and D. Room to manoeuvre was found within the dialectic of control between LEA and central government to resist the potential loss of LEA power under central government reform policies. Influence was employed to promote LEA survival by finding a group service role valued by the headteachers concerned. These counter-policies were co-optative in that LEA staff were assisting the kind of mutually supportive group that had no place in the central government rhetoric about state schooling.

The LEA for Group E had little room to manoeuvre since central government legislation had cut all ties with sixth form colleges. Officials had apparently accepted the loss of these institutions and directed their attention elsewhere. In seeking to understand how proclaimed central government policy changes turn out in practice, as mentioned earlier, it is necessary to take into account how much leeway they may allow for those on the receiving end. Incorporation of sixth form colleges left LEAs with no formal link, whereas local management of schools could enable LEAs to develop a service role. In the LEA for Group F, similarly, there appeared to be acceptance of a diminished role, as prescribed by central government reforms, limited to servicing individual institutions.

**Mapping the flow of interaction affecting counter-policies**

On the basis of this detailed account of counter-policies, we can now build up a more comprehensive picture of the part they played in the policy process connected with implementation of central government reforms. The sequence of interaction within and between system levels resulting in the emergence of the different collaborative group and LEA counter-policies is summarised in Figure 2. Activity spanned four system levels where collaborative groups formed an intermediate tier between the individual institution and the LEA. Policies at these levels with implications for inter-institutional collaboration changed and interacted over the previous decade. Policies prior to 1988 at all four levels variably promoted collaboration at other levels. The central government reform
programme from 1988 impacted on and led to divergent reactions in the other three levels, as depicted by the long cross-level arrow:

- at LEA level, the response to central government reforms in some cases had been to develop a counter-policy of servicing collaborative groups whereas, by contrast, one LEA in this study even promoted opting out of LEA control;
- at collaborative group level, existing groups reinforced their activities and identity, several groups collaborated to compete against other local institutions, and one group tolerated a measure of internal competition;
- at individual institution level, schools or colleges in this study joined old or created new collaborative groups, while staff in other schools elsewhere had complied with reform policies by engaging in competition or opting for grant-maintained status, and college staff had capitalised on the opportunity for competition accompanying incorporation.

The subsequent piecemeal central government change in LEA boundaries had also, by 1995, made a cross-level impact on collaborative groups. A key outcome of this four level interaction, at the time of the fieldwork, was that the education system now contained both collaborative groups and LEAs supporting them despite a sustained central government reform effort with a rather different outcome in mind. Within the system-wide dialectic of control, actors continued to wield considerable influence on the local stage.

**Conclusion**

The collaborative initiatives presented in the case studies show how, despite the formidable array of policy instruments used by policy-makers at one level to secure compliance, faithful implementation across other levels, nationwide, was not a foregone conclusion. A central government effort to offer parents increased choice amongst a greater diversity of educational provision with LEAs taken largely out of the frame gave rise to the irony that powerful actors in the study schools, colleges and LEAs, subscribing to subcultures whose values were out of kilter with this shift, were still empowered to exercise negative choice in response. Their collaborative approaches to aspects of educational provision lay beyond the limits of diversity promoted within central government.

Despite variation in the content and context of collaborative activities, they shared two key characteristics which enabled them to develop and endure. First, they were all substantial and sustained efforts where considerable energy was put into coordination and they all featured ongoing negotiation among key players. Second, they represented more than mere resistance to central government reform policies. Rather, they constituted a counter-policy which was the foundation for synergistic responsive action by participants in collaborative initiatives and, in some instances, LEA staff in reinterpreting central government
A COUNTER-POLICY TO SUBVERT EDUCATIONAL REFORM?

Policy and moving to co-optation in achieving the contradictory interest either of looking after the group of schools or colleges, or of finding a new niche for the LEA.

Yet it would be naive to overestimate the degree of subversion achieved or the prevalence of these counter-policies. Even if they enabled such leeway to be fully exploited as reform policies promoting autonomous and competitive self-managing institutions and reducing the power of LEAs allowed, pressure to comply with the requirements of other polices in the reform package remained. The combination of policy instruments may not have secured universal implementation in line with ministers expectations, but it does appear to have delimited the range of local responses. Collaborative initiatives certainly did not leave their members untouched by reforms. Moreover, while the exploratory research was not designed to establish the spread of such counter-policies, the initial postal enquiry suggested that they represent a minority response.

The idea of a counter-policy appears to have wider potential as a heuristic device for exploring the policy process. It may be dynamically complex, but patterns can be found if analytical tools are developed for the job. The local perspective on policy implementation and the concept of a counter-policy can help answer questions of the kind posed earlier: they show just how practices may endure in
target institutions within a large multilevel system which run counter to the thrust of central government reform policies, even where a system changing instrument is employed over several years. If room to manoeuvre can be found to resist or co-opt an unwelcome external policy, it will be. Counter-policies come into play in those situations where reinterpretation is a possibility at the level of practice.

The counter-policy idea fits the purpose of analysing local mediation of education policies, but more detailed conceptual mapping is required to refine the notion so that different forms of counter-policy may be distinguished, and conditions under which they may emerge, endure or decline may be understood. The possibility of transition from a counter-policy to the more generally accepted norm requires conceptualisation, attending to local uses of power to produce the cultural shifts that may be engendered where co-optation catches on system-wide. The research also indicated how the combined cultural and political perspective on interaction could highlight the centrality of contradiction and congruence in beliefs and values in affecting the conflictual or synergistic use of power between actors at different system levels.

A substantial research agenda is suggested. Promising directions for investigating the policy process from a local perspective include:

- longitudinal studies, tracking the policy process contemporaneously over a period of years, whether focusing on a single policy and its associated innovations or an overall policy thrust;
- multilevel investigations focusing simultaneously on two or more system levels and tracking the interaction between them as it happens;
- projects exploring a variety of settings inside and outside education; and
- comparative research, in, say, centralised and decentralised systems, or large and small states where the number of system levels and the degree of interaction between them varies (see Jones, 1996).

Finally, we have seen how voluntary local collaborative initiatives constitute counter-policies that subvert, on a small scale, a national policy thrust promoting competition between individual educational institutions. As for the future, who knows? We have witnessed one policy U-turn away from inter-institutional collaboration towards competition. The dynamic complexity of the policy process suggests we might yet see another, where collaborative initiatives in UK schools and colleges become cutting edge exemplars of policies launched by the new central government, and new counter-policies emerge within the aggressively competitive autonomous institutions whose managers actively endorsed the past reforms.

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A COUNTER-POLICY TO SUBVERT EDUCATIONAL REFORM?

References


459


EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
This page intentionally left blank
CONTENTS

VOLUME III  EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Acknowledgements ix

PART 8
Leadership and headteachers 1

43 Letting go of outlived professional identities: a study of role transitions and role strain for principals in restructured schools
PAUL V. BREDESON 3

44 Grounding knowledge of schools in stakeholder realities: a multi-perspective study of effective school leaders
CHRISTOPHER DAY, ALMA HARRIS AND MARK HADFIELD 34

45 Headteachers’ knowledge, practice and mode of cognition
MICHAEL ERAUT 60

46 Headship
VALERIE HALL AND GEOFF SOUTHWORTH 73

47 The effects of transformational leadership on organizational conditions and student engagement with school
KENNETH LEITHWOOD AND DORIS JANTZI 94

48 Cross-cultural leadership development
JAN M. ROBERTSON AND CHARLES F. WEBBER 113
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Context and praxis in the study of school leadership: a case of three?</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PETER RIBBINS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Embedding leadership in task performance</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VIVIANE M. J. ROBINSON</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Leadership as pedagogy, capital development and school effectiveness</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THOMAS J. SERGIOVANNI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Instructional leadership in schools: reflections and empirical evidence</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GEOFF SOUTHWORTH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Lessons from successful leadership in small schools</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GEOFF SOUTHWORTH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Stages of headship</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DICK WEINDLING</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>PART 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning leadership</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>Enhancing school leadership: evaluating the use of virtual learning communities</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEGAN CRAWFORD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>Learning through leading or leading through learning?</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JENNIFER KERR AND DANNY MURPHY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>Preparation for the school principalship: the United States’ story</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JOSEPH MURPHY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Leadership, learning and systemic reform</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KATHRYN RILEY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>Technology-mediated leadership development networks: expanding educative possibilities</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CHARLES F. WEBBER</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS

60  Leadership for learning—reengineering ‘mind sets’ 331
    JOHN WEST-BURNHAM

PART 10
Middle leadership 347

61  Leadership of school subject areas: tensions and dimensions in managing in the middle 349
    HUGH BUSHER AND ALMA HARRIS

62  Distributed properties: a new architecture for leadership 363
    PETER GRONN

63  Heads on deputy headship: impossible roles for invisible role holders? 389
    PETER RIBBINS
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Part 8

LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS
Restructuring in schools has become one strategy for making significant changes in education. This article takes a preliminary empirical look at role transitions and role strain resulting from restructuring initiatives in schools in four districts. General support was found for role transition theory. The interview data provided evidence that these twenty principals had learned to deal with role transitions and the effects of role strain. Cognitive restructuring and environmental factors were important factors which moderated the effects of role strain. Experience, tenure in position, traditions of trust among staff, congruence of personal leadership style with role changes, school-level autonomy, and leadership and support from the superintendent and school board affected role strain intensity. The data also revealed that restructuring had resulted in a change in how these principals viewed their own leadership in schools: from managers in charge to facilitators on call.

Amid the flurry of educational reform activities aimed at improving education in general and student outcomes in particular, efforts are currently under way in schools and districts across the nation to make substantial changes in traditional structures and patterns of social organization in schools. There is a wide range in the scope and magnitude of change in experiments and practices representing this latest reform wave. Changes in structures and in the social organization of schools will have a major impact on the roles of individuals within those settings.

The traditional roles of principals and other educators in schools are changing and will continue to be reshaped, redefined, and renegotiated as restructuring
occurs. Timar (1989) notes that the ultimate success of educational reform efforts under the rubric of restructuring is fundamentally tied to changes in school cultures and social organization requiring dramatic changes in “the rules of behavior that define both the roles of individuals and their interaction” (p. 266). “Restructuring involves alterations in a school district’s patterns of rules, roles, relationships, and results. Anything less is not restructuring” (Corbett, 1990).

Substantial changes in identity with and understandings of tasks, behaviors, norms, and cultural values by principals in schools require a period of role adjustment. Shedd (1988) reported, “There are good reasons to believe that school managers and teachers’ unions are in fact, creating a new set of rules to govern their relationship—a set of rules uniquely tailored to their particular environment” (p. 407). Hart and Murphy (in press) conclude that as changes in role occur the principalship can be expected to change and principals “will be placed in transition, required to make sense of their new work lives” (p. 7). Chapman and Boyd (1986) reported that changes in decision processes and traditional notions of power and authority in Australian schools have resulted in altered social relationships, thereby forcing them to play new roles. Given the milieu of change in social role patterns, rules, values, and expectations, Duttweiler and Mutchler (1990) reported that educators in restructured schools are “having difficulty accepting changing roles and responsibilities, fearing the loss of power, lacking skills, lacking trust, and being afraid of the risks.” Allen and van de Vliert (1984) describe this period of change as role transition. In the transition process as principals and others in schools attempt to redefine and make sense of new role identities in restructured schools, they experience role strain. Role strain is intrapsychic—cognitive and affective disturbance manifested in varying levels of intensity of personal and professional tension.

**Purpose of the study**

A critical factor in role transition is role strain. Using interview data, this article takes a preliminary empirical look at role transition, role strain and reactions to it, and the impact of those reactions on principals themselves, on the role(s) of principal and others, and on the restructuring initiatives within those schools. The following questions guided the research and analysis of data. To what degree is role strain evidenced in the role transitions of these principals? How is role strain manifested in the lives of these principals? Are there identifiable individual and environmental factors that moderate the intensity of role strain and subsequent reactions to it? What are the reactions to role strain? What are the consequences of role strain and reactions to it for individuals, for the role of principal, for interrelationships among principals and various role senders, and for restructuring and reform efforts in schools?
Framework

Social role theory

Role transition as a social process is grounded in social role theory which argues that social behaviors are not simply random or meaningless events but that these social behaviors tend to be patterned, predictable, and have meaning for the actors and those with whom they interact. Social role theory is well-documented in sociological literature (see, e.g., Biddle, 1979; Biddle & Thomas, 1966; Mead, 1934; Merton, 1957; Sarbin, 1954; H. Turner & Colomy, 1988; R. Turner, 1962). The concept of role includes the related concepts of position, that is, “a designated location in the structure of a social system,” normative expectations, which are likely behaviors of persons in particular situations, and role enactment, that is, what a person in a particular position actually does given a set of role expectations (Biddle & Thomas, 1966, p. 11). Within complex social systems, individuals often occupy several positions and their individual behaviors are affected by role expectations and norms. Thus, in everyday life, an individual holds multiple roles, which are affected by role expectations from multiple role senders, and carries out many acts and behaviors given these complementary roles. Merton (1957) describes the totality of relationships among these complementary roles as “role set.”

Within the large body of literature on role theory, two basic perspectives have been dominant—structuralism and social interactionism. A structuralist defines role as a set of behavioral expectations associated with given social positions in the social structure. To structuralists, individuals are involved in the process of “role taking, which connotes the fact that expectations exist in the normative system and that an individual takes on and internalizes those expectations” (Ebaugh, 1988, p. 18). In contrast, social interactionists “focus on the way individuals negotiate emergent meanings in order to discover and enact new roles” (p. 18). Individuals in roles are in a dynamic process of “role making” in which they are constantly creating, redefining, and interpreting the roles they assume. Rather than choosing between these two approaches, the current study uses each of these perspectives to examine and describe role strain within the process of role transition.

Role transition

Embedded in social role theory, whether from a structuralist or an interactionist perspective, is the notion that social roles and their defining dimensions are mutable. A major assumption in this study is that the change process affecting the role set of the school principal can be examined as a social process much the same as investigators might study role socialization or role exit. “Role transition is used to refer to the process of changing from one set of expected positional behaviors in a social system to another” (Allen & van de Vliert, 1984, p. 3). This definition
suggests significant changes in tasks, behaviors, norms, and values for a given role holder. This often is the case when an individual moves from one position to another position (change in position set), say, from teacher to principal, from player to coach, or from educator to insurance broker. However, the role transition process described in this article differs in that individuals (principals) continue to occupy the same position, but role expectations, relationships, norms, and values associated with their position have changed substantially (change in role set).

Allen and van de Vliert (1984) offer a useful conceptual framework for understanding the role transition process (see Figure 1). The model depicts a dynamic and interactive social process encompassing the following components. Antecedent conditions are defined as potential causes of the transition. Role transition includes those change events for individuals and roles they occupy, which are affected by three conditions: the amount of discontinuity between two sets of role expectations, the degree to which the position (role) holder has control over the transition, and the extent to which the role transition is normatively governed, such as in ceremonial rites of passage. Role strain is a subjective state experienced by the role holder characterized by acute cognitive and affective disturbance such as discomfort, anxiety, perplexity, and uneasiness. Moderators are those “numerous individual (personality) and environmental (social context) variables which intervene between the initiation of the role transition process and subsequent reactions by an individual” (p. 14). Reactions to role strain are behaviors and activities an individual will engage in to reduce the intensity of role strain. Consequences include the totality of effects and impact of role holders’ reactions to role strain.

Several other authors have made valuable contributions to a general understanding of role transition processes and subsequent outcomes for individuals and for the roles they hold. Nicholson (1984) developed a theory of work role transition that links characteristics of people and organizations and modes of adjustment to role transitions (by replication, absorption, determination, and exploration) to varying sets of consequences for individuals and the role(s) they hold. The degree to which the modes of adjustment required by the organization (role dimension) and by the individual (personal dimension) match is moderated by various constraints and opportunities. As modes of adjustment between the two dimensions diverge, such mismatches become important sources of affective responses, such as anxiety and discomfort. According to Nicholson, role transitions also result in identity changes “in which new values, skills, and dispositions emerge in the search for new personal meanings to match new situational demands and behavioral outcomes in people as they make adaptations in their behaviors to new realities in their work life that are reinforced or transformed elements of the organizational culture” (p. 174).

Role theory has a rich history supported by dramaturgical metaphors. Fein (1990), examining role transition from a resocialization perspective, describes how changes in role require changes in “social role scripts,” those rules and
Figure 1. A model of the role transition process (source: From Role Transitions: Explorations and Explanations (p. 11) by V. L. Allen and E. van de Vliert, 1984, New York: Plenum. Copyright 1984 by Plenum Press. Used by permission).
structures that guide people during the performance of their behavior patterns and their interactions with others. He argues that as changes in role occur concomitant modifications are made in the external and internal components of “social role scripts” requiring negotiation between role holders and others because the “behaviors of one role are always integrated with those of others” (p. 21). The relinquishing of one social role script for another results in a variety of affective and cognitive responses by individuals and can be likened to the normal loss process. One needs first to recognize the dysfunctionalities of a current role, next, to let go of those role elements that impede change to new roles with new realities, and finally, to negotiate new and more satisfying roles to replace old ones.

Another useful process model for analyzing the social process of role transition is role exit. Ebaugh (1988) describes various properties of this transition process. Because role exit involves tension between an individual’s past, present, and future, it is an important dimension of the total role transition process. Ebaugh states,

In order to develop a comprehensive and adequate explanation of social roles, the notion of role exit must be as pressing and central as the traditional concept of socialization into new roles. Only then will we understand the process whereby we both learn and unlearn, engage and disengage, from the social roles that define who we are, especially in this rapidly changing world in which role exit is becoming commonplace.

(p. 206)

The dimensions of role identity and engagement are central whether one is entrying or exiting a role.

**Methods**

**Interview study**

Although there are limitations to interview data, one of the best ways to uncover evidence of individual role strain resulting from role transition processes affecting school principals is simply to ask them. Given the focus of the study on role strain, a subjective state experienced by a role holder typically characterized by acute cognitive and affective disturbances (e.g., discomfort, anxiety, perplexity, and/or uneasiness, manifest in varying levels of intensity), I chose the elite, structured interview as the research strategy.

A structured interview protocol was developed to query respondents about changes in their professional work life that, from their perspectives, were associated with restructuring efforts in their schools and districts. Open-ended questions were designed to permit each principal to interpret change processes taking
place under the rubric of restructuring. Throughout the inquiry, the investigator was careful not to impose his definition of restructuring and empowerment initiatives on respondents. Corbett’s (1990) notion of restructuring, that is, basic changes in school/district patterns of rules, roles relationships, and results, provided the initial definitional lens for examining these 20 principals and their schools. Given the lack of an agreed-on definition of restructuring in the literature and in practice, this understanding provided a useful preliminary framework, for investigating restructuring and role transition processes in these four school districts.

For the most part, restructuring in these schools was characterized by wider application of shared decision making, decentralized, school-based management processes, and greater professional autonomy expressed in redefined roles, rules, relationships, and responsibilities. In addition to these similarities, it is important to point out that each school and district had a unique biography that framed environments for, and definitions of, restructuring and empowerment.

When using the interview as the primary data source, there are always concerns about the reliability and validity of interview findings. Given the focus of the study, it would be difficult to find more reliable data than the principals’ own words on what they were experiencing in their professional work lives. Consistency checks were embedded in the study. Because these were self-report data, I employed structural corroboration using multiple interview items, each worded differently so as not to be obviously redundant but substantially asking for similar information from respondents. These multiple items were especially useful during stages of analysis. They permitted me to cross-check responses for consistency in how each principal articulated individual perceptions of work role changes and resulting role strains.

**Selection of principals**

The general purpose of this investigation was to examine the role transition process of principals in restructured schools. Theoretical sampling was used to guide the selection of school districts and principals in this large northeastern state. The selection of the four districts and 20 principals included in the study was based on the relevance of these sites and administrators to the dynamics of restructuring and work role transitions affecting principals. Principals were identified through a colleague nomination process. State department of education administrators, intermediate unit administrators, superintendents, and university professors who frequently worked with local school districts were asked to identify districts in which significant restructuring efforts were under way. The nomination process was facilitated by a recently enacted piece of legislation that mandated the development of local district plans for professional development and school improvement and that needed state department of education approval. The state mandate required each district to appoint a professional development team composed of teachers and administrators in relatively equal
numbers. These teams then proceeded to develop comprehensive ongoing professional development and school improvement plans that became expressions of, and vehicles for, restructuring in these schools.

Based on the list of nominees from these professional educators, four school districts were identified (see appendix). One district, Centremont, used a structured, problem-solving model developed in the private sector to address in a systematic way team-identified problem areas. The parameters of problem/opportunity finding, however, were limited to solvable school-based issues, not issues of school governance or policy-making. The second, Hillview School District, used a state-mandated curriculum review process as an opportunity to pilot and experiment with shared decision-making processes among teachers and administrators. Successful experiences in the districtwide curriculum review project using shared decision making processes were built upon as members of this original team fanned out to their schools to work on other critical issues at the building level. A third district, Westby, tapping into the visionary strengths of the superintendent, built its restructuring initiatives on trust, good morale, and significant changes in responsibilities and roles articulated clearly in practice and in contract language. The superintendent, school board, and teachers put shared governance up front. Together they worked to free up principals and teachers from organizational and structural shackles to move them to think and act for themselves professionally. Elk Mountain, the fourth district, had strong traditions of building-level autonomy, especially in curriculum planning and decision making. Professional autonomy, however, had very limited extension to district-level decision arenas.

Although not the only source of influence affecting restructuring efforts across these four districts, the superintendent was a major player and facilitator. Regardless of the framework or vehicle used to move ahead with school restructuring and empowerment initiatives, each of the respondents talked about the influence of the superintendent’s support and ideas. In addition, the superintendents used coaching and modeling of desired leadership skills and behaviors in administrative cabinet meetings with principals that were consistent with emerging understandings of shared decision making, empowerment, and professional autonomy. The leadership behaviors of superintendents were power mechanisms that helped to create and maintain cultures in which these experiments in restructuring could develop and flourish.

Sixteen of the respondents were principals and 4 were assistant principals. Two assistant principals carried out many of the traditional duties commonly associated with the role of assistant principal. The other 2 assistants described their role as that of coprincipal, dividing major functional responsibilities with the building principal. (For narrative convenience, all respondents will be referred to as principals.) The principals represented all levels of schools. There were 5 female and 6 male elementary, 5 male middle school, and 4 male high school principals. Although the four districts in which these principals worked were not completely representative of school district size and type in this state,
the interview data did provide evidence of how role transition processes were
being played out by principals and others in two medium-sized cities, a small
college town, and a rural/small town comprehensive school district.

**Data collection**

Interviews lasting from 45 to 90 minutes were conducted with principals and
assistant principals in their schools. Using conventional field study notations, the
researcher recorded all responses in field notes using a combination of symbols
and researcher-developed shorthand. All responses were transcribed onto the
interview schedule. To check for accuracy of recorded responses and to develop
transitions between questions, the investigator frequently repeated recorded
responses to the interviewee. After each interview, the researcher spent time
recording additional information in his field notes and checking for accuracy of
recorded responses. At the end of each day, the researcher transcribed all hand-
written field notes onto text files. These computer text files, with responses
recorded by item and by respondent, formed the data set that was amenable to
various analytical strategies including cross-checking for consistency of
responses within respondent sets, patternmaking across all response sets, iterat-
tive processes of theme identification, and analytical frameworks that provided
support for work role transition process models.

**Data analysis**

The research questions called for both deductive and inductive processes in the
analysis of interview data. The initial stage of data analysis was deductive in that
the researcher examined responses vis-à-vis Allen and van de Vliert’s (1984)
role transition process model. This model as well as that of Nicholson (1984)
were particularly useful for purposes of identification and description of work
role transition factors, processes, and outcomes. In the second stage of analysis,
the researcher examined the data set employing a constant comparative method
of analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Patterns and themes were then developed,
based on interview materials detailing role transition events and their effects on
individuals and schools in which they worked. The simultaneous deductive
processes, finding support for role transition theory, and the inductive processes
of systematic theme analysis enabled the investigator to develop themes from
the words of principals who were experiencing work role transitions with
varying levels of role strain intensity and who were employing various strategies
to cope with personal and professional doubts, fears, and anxieties.

**Presentation and discussion of findings**

A major assumption at the outset of this investigation was that significant
changes brought about by restructuring activities in schools would likely have a
major impact on individuals and the roles they held. The interviews focused on how principals currently involved in restructuring in their schools perceived those changes and the impact of various adjustments in their work life on their role as principals. The role transition process developed by Allen and van de Vliert (1984) serves as an organizer for the presentation of findings.

Antecedent conditions: environments of change
Role transitions for these principals were most often the result of social and political forces, unanticipated events, changes in role senders’ expectations, and/or changes in the characteristics, capabilities and motivations of the individual role holders. Helping to create environments for restructuring with a sense of ideological and political correctness were: the educational reform movement in general, calls for school improvement and higher student outcomes, the movement toward decentralized organization and decision-making structures in schools, the popularity of Theory Z (Ouchi, 1981) and Japanese management styles, and state legislation mandating school districts to prepare professional development and school improvement plans using teams of teachers and administrators. Changing expectations for principals by school boards, state departments of education, central office personnel, teachers, and parents also contributed to conditions fostering role transitions. To varying degrees, these antecedent conditions in general, as well as others which were unique to each district and school, were important causal factors of role transition for these principals.

Role transition: changes in role set
In this investigation, role transition is defined as the process in which an individual changes from one set of expected role-related behaviors in a social system to another set. The model of the role transition process depicted in Figure 1 illustrates a dynamic and interactive process of the major dimensions which underlie, occur and result from role changes. The degree to which expectations, norms, and values differed between old and new role sets greatly affected role transitions. Clearly, some changes in role expectations for principals had rather minor consequences for individuals and did little to affect their understanding of, behaviors in, or identity with a particular role. In any dynamic social system with complex role sets, such as those found in schools, there are always some alterations and adaptations of individual roles. These minor incremental adjustments were not the focus of this particular investigation. In this study, the changes that resulted from restructuring initiatives in 18 different schools were substantial and resulted in significant changes in expected patterns of behavior for principals and the people with whom they worked.

As noted in the appendix, role transition processes were driven primarily by initiatives from superintendents in each of the four districts. Teacher union
leaders in Westby and Centremont and teachers in Westby and Hillview were also identified as important forces in restructuring initiatives. Examples of significant changes in roles, rules, relationships, and responsibilities included reassignment of responsibility for budget allocations and spending, new decision-making configurations of teachers, principals, and other staff to identify and address important work-related issues, new patterns of collective bargaining between the local teachers’ association and the school board, petitions to the state department of education to seek release from rigid state curriculum mandates to enable greater professional autonomy at building and classroom levels and relinquishing of control by principals in professional work groups.

A second characteristic of role strain was the degree to which these principals controlled role transition events in their settings. The interview data revealed that individual principals were located along a continuum of control moderated by length of time in their positions, levels of trust established among their professional colleagues, personal leadership styles, school-level autonomy, supportive collegial environments, and leadership from the superintendent. As will be argued later in the article, the amount of control each principal exercised over role transition events and their timing was inversely related to role strain intensity.

To what extent were individual role changes normatively governed? For these principals there was little evidence to suggest that the transitions they experienced were part of established norms of passage. An elementary principal in Westby stated, “We’re making it up as we go.” An example of a normatively governed role change would be a classroom teacher moving into an assistant principalship. There is a typical pattern of socialization to new administrative roles, and thus it is likely that past experiences, existing expectations, and group norms would be more dominant in the socialization process. No such transitional or bridging positions were available to the 20 principals interviewed in this study. To be sure, organizational norms affected the role transition processes of each, but each role transition process could be best described as idiosyncratic, formative, and governed by emerging shared values rather than by established norms.

**Role strain: expressions of anxiety and disturbance**

Some role transition events occurred smoothly with minimal amounts of stress on role holders. Nevertheless, even under optimal conditions, shifts in role and in role expectations produced varying degrees of role strain, defined in this study as acute affective/cognitive disturbance for an individual role holder manifested as anxiety, discomfort, uneasiness, perplexity, and/or general distress. Role strain was distinguished from stress in that role strain was identified as individual subjective responses to causes of stress. Through stressors were noted, the focus of the investigation was on role strain and how it was evidenced in the worklife of principals.
The responses to interview questions revealed that each of these principals was experiencing many feelings. These included varying states and levels of anxiety manifested in feelings of having lost control, fear of failure, self-doubts about personal competence and ability to be successful, impatience and frustration, concerns about loss of professional identity, and increased feelings of uncertainty brought about by significant changes in their professional worklife. The notion of letting go of one set of professional functions and identities while learning others was described as risky, wearisome, and frustrating.

Loss of control

Loss of control due to role accretion was a major source of anxiety for these principals. A decade of education reform initiatives coupled with current efforts to restructure schools and the work of professionals in them left these respondents feeling as though they had been “dumped on.” Across the four districts and 18 schools, principals reported that their responsibilities as administrators had grown exponentially. Contributing to the feeling of being “spread too thin” were new responsibilities at district and community levels, increasingly specific demands from parents and other community stakeholders, the addition of countless programs to meet student needs in the areas of drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse, truancy, dropouts, and sundry other well-meaning projects to address specific societal ills affecting students. As one respondent noted, “The principal’s job is much more complex. We just keep adding to it, but never take anything out.” Loss of control also appeared in comments about no longer having to maintain the myth of principal omniscience. Role overload and increasing role complexity contributed to the belief that as principals they were no longer able to “keep a handle on what’s going on” in their schools. In Centremont and Westby, where restructuring activities included district-level committees and work teams, principals were further strained by requirements demanding time for teachers and for themselves away from their students and buildings.

As teachers assumed greater responsibility in decision arenas traditionally held by principals, such as in curriculum decisions, professional development programs, and community outreach efforts, the effect on principals was a mixed blessing. “It’s kind of interesting. The more you involve people, the more you can accomplish but the less you as principal can stay on top of things.” As teachers moved into decision arenas that principals once considered their personal forte, one principal captured the feeling of his administrative colleagues: “Sometimes teachers can do it better than me and that hurts.” One respondent described another problem: “Occasionally people outside the organization don’t understand the process of shared governance. For example, I might get a call from outside. A parent wants to know what’s going on. I’ll say I need to talk with the teachers about what they’re doing. They think, ‘Why the hell don’t you know what’s going on in your school?’ They think I’m not doing my job.” In part, the empowerment of others relieved some of the strain caused by role over-
load and helped to dispel the myth of principal omniscience while at the same time it resulted in other sources of strain.

Fear of failure

Fear of failure also resulted from role transitions. Anxieties about personal failure, mistakes, and misjudgment by others and nagging doubts about the long-term success of restructuring in their schools and districts characterized this source of role strain. Fear of failure was also tied to individual self-doubts about personal competence and ability to deal with newly empowered, professional colleagues. Many of these principals had misgivings about whether or not they could keep quiet and not intervene prematurely when teacher groups were experiencing difficulty in problem-solving sessions. They worried about being able to trust others to carry out newly assumed roles and responsibilities successfully. Principals were worried about their own capacity to be patient and to trust in others and in shared governance processes, to let things happen, and to permit others to go through growth processes. One principal stated, “That’s the one that kills me. It takes for me a lot of patience. I’m a Type A personality. I want for the committee to get something done. I have a tendency to overlead.” This is not to suggest that principals were completely out of the decision-making loop. However, they were well aware that even constructive, negative feedback to teachers and others during the nascent stages of shared governance might be misconstrued as heavy-handedness and reassertions of traditional authority. Concerns that teachers would inevitably make decisions that principals themselves would not have made raised the spectre of having to be supportive of people and restructuring processes through mistakes and misjudgments as well as in their successes. Finally, it was clear that not all teachers were enlisted in restructuring and shared governance processes. Not wanting restructuring initiatives to go the way of many perennial education fads, principals were also concerned about having adequate time, resources, and staff commitment over time. To allay some of their fears related to the long-term success of restructuring efforts, there were attempts to solidify gains achieved through empowerment and restructuring. In Centremont and Westby, restructuring was institutionalized in building- and district-level bodies (Alliance of Centremont Educators ACE, Building Liaison Committee BLC, and a Professional Issues Committee PIC). Ad hoc committees and less formal groupings of teachers and principals in Hillview and Elk Mountain entrusted restructuring energies and hopes in individuals who would carry out specific initiatives.

Loss of identity

Another aspect of role transition that created role strain was the process of disidentification, the process of ceasing to think of oneself in a former role. Role transitions required principals to unlearn normative expectations of previous
roles. At the same time they had to learn an emerging, ambiguous role. The shift to new role identities for principals was forged from past, present, and future role expectations and identities. Attempts to shift to new roles required incorporation of vestiges and residual aspects of former roles. Letting go of particular professional identities varied across respondents. For these 20 respondents, their self-identities had been built up gradually over the years by internalizing the meanings and expectations of the many roles they had played. Some roles were more important to self-identity than others. The greater the centrality of a previous role to individual self-identity the higher the amount of role strain experienced. Each principal was in the process of negotiating and reintegrating previous roles and expectations into new self-concepts of the principal’s role in a restructured school. The following responses are examples of role strain regarding identity of self in emergent principalship roles:

I am a member of the team. However, I sense there is still a differentiation on their [teachers'] part.

There is an expectation among many teachers that I should tell people what to do because of my role as principal. That I should be the final arbiter when they can’t reach consensus. That I should decide. The principal has real difficulty being a member of the group.

I was everything before. I did it all. Now, district professional development administration does a lot of what I used to do. Now I play a role in programs with new teachers, but I’m not responsible for it. I’m one of the committee in terms of empowerment.

Some principals are getting defensive [and they are] not really clear as to what their role is.

I tried to do everything at first. However, I quickly learned what I was most effective at.

A few respondents also talked about the difficulties of divesting themselves of residual roles while they negotiated a new role set for the principalship and reconciled an emerging sense of role with their own self-identity. More often, however, the principals, especially elementary principals, indicated that their own leadership style and working relationships with professional colleagues, which were quite compatible with restructuring and shared governance, predated current role shifts, and thus the transitions for them personally were not difficult. However, role shifts and self-identity were problematic for other principals they knew.

**Moderators of role strain**

The intensity of role strain produced by role transition varied from one role holder to another depending on the impact of individual and/or environmental
moderators. These moderators intervened at one or more locations between initia-
tion of role transition to reactions by the affected role holder. The effects of
individual attributional style, self-esteem, social identity, and emotional stability
were important personal moderators. Environmental factors included the struc-
ture of social networks, organizational culture, time and money, and existing
levels of trust.

**Personal moderators: leadership style**

Each respondent experienced role strain as a result of role transitions they
experienced in their unique setting. The intensity of role strain was moderated
by personal factors and environmental/structural influences. Personal factors
included the compatibility of personal leadership style with role changes, indi-
vidual tolerance for change processes, the principal’s capacity for growth during
role transition, strength of interpersonal communications skills, and facility with
group process. As predicted in role transition theory, the less role discontinuity
between old and new roles accompanied by greater individual control over role
transition events, the more likely role strain would be diminished. This was
clearly the case for these principals.

The following responses suggest a continuum for role discontinuity and
control over transition events among these administrators: “My role isn’t chang-
ing”; “As a leader I’ve always been working with teachers”; “This has been my
particular leadership style.” At the other end of the continuum, several com-
ments reflected recognition by principals that significant changes had occurred
in their leadership roles: “I’ve come a long way”; “Ten, 15 years ago, I wasn’t
like that”; “I don’t think 10 years ago principals worried about how teachers felt
about themselves, their work place.” Another respondent described the tension
between identification with old roles and emerging roles for the principal: “You
can no longer operate in an autocratic fashion. But you don’t just open the doors
and let others run it.” What the range of these comments suggests is that for a
few of these principals there was little role discontinuity and they felt as though
current restructuring initiatives (characterized primarily by wider applications of
shared decision making, site-based management strategies, and greater profes-
sional autonomy) were simply districtwide legitimation of their personal leader-
ship styles and long-standing professional practices in their buildings. However,
a number of respondents, especially female and elementary principals, noted that
some principals they knew, who had been used to acting as dictators or building
bosses, were feeling much greater role strain. Referring to her male counter-
parts, one principal commented, “I see the other guys’ role changing. I hear
comments from the fellows that reflect insecurity. It’s kind of hard for them to
swing over to new ways of looking at things.”
**Patience and tolerance**

Other moderators of role strain for principals were tolerance and patience. Individual tolerance for the slowness of shared governance processes, for the mistakes and limitations of colleagues, for role ambiguities, and for situational uncertainty tempered role strain and its effects. Thus exhibits of patience such as relinquishing control to others, avoiding unnecessary or premature intervention in group processes, and seeing the outcomes of restructuring in terms of long-term gains were moderators of cognitive and affective arousability, or role strain. The relationship was clear: Higher levels of tolerance and patience contributed to lower levels of role strain. Differences among these 20 principals were attributable more to individual leadership styles than to organizational characteristics and restructuring activities.

**Capacity for growth**

Each principal’s capacity for personal and professional growth also affected role strain intensity. One respondent stated, “I think principals go through growth phases just like teachers. I think initially I viewed things as ‘we-they’—not necessarily adversarial but differently. I’m not sure how much I’ve changed as a principal versus how much schools have changed. I’m much more process-oriented than 6 years ago.” The issue appeared to be one of perspective. For principals who viewed role transitions as opportunities for growth, role strain remained at fairly low levels of intensity. Another respondent added, “Some of the principals are getting defensive. Some principals are not really clear as to what their role is.” In Hillview and Elk Mountain, where superintendents coached and modeled behaviors supporting restructuring and where there were strong traditions of professional autonomy, principals saw more possibilities than problems in restructured roles and relationships. In Westby, a respondent noted, “Some principals are worried about losing control. If you’re still in charge, there’s no problem because you’re still pulling the strings.” Principals who perceived role transitions brought about by restructuring as threats to professional identity and to position security experienced greater role strain. However, only one principal, with most of his administrative experience in parochial schools, expressed concern about role changes. Individual growth was apparent in the responses of each principal. For a few, this growth required rather dramatic changes, such as breaking out of the seed hulls of traditional roles, rules, and relationships. For others, growth was less transformational and more developmental. The notion of growth supports the earlier discussion of strain brought about by role discontinuity. Dramatic spurts in growth for principals caused greater strain than did incremental maturation in nurturing, supportive environments.
Communications and group process skills

Individual strengths in interpersonal communications, delegation of responsibilities, facilitation of the work of others, and small group process skills also accounted for variance in role strain among these administrators. Across the districts, as changes occurred in their professional work life, highly developed communication skills were viewed as the most important leadership qualities for success in the principalship (Bredeson, 1989). As principals moved from more traditional, hierarchical school leadership to group-centered leadership, the capacity to listen, to deal with conflict, and to facilitate small and large group processes were these principals’ most important competencies for success.

Environmental moderators: traditions of trust

Environmental factors at school and district levels also moderated role strain. Primary among these factors was trust. As roles were being redefined for principals and other professionals, trust in one another, in restructuring processes themselves, and in the likelihood of positive effects on desired student and organizational outcomes was essential. Trust among principals, other administrators, and teachers had been established over months and years of these educators working together to accomplish mutually shared goals. High levels of trust at the building level permitted principals to more easily relinquish control, delegate responsibilities, take risks, share frustrations, and rethink their leadership roles without feeling threatened in terms of job security or their self-identity as principals. However, high levels of trust were not simply a function of years or experience in a school, although those principals with only a few years in their buildings had less history to connect them with their staffs. And in a few schools, the number of years the principal had been in the school appeared to have engendered more caution than trust. In schools where trust levels were high, traditions of trust were products of ongoing professional dialogues among principals and their staffs. Trust helped to build confidence in evolving processes, to suspend premature judgments, and to sustain enthusiasm for change, even when things went wrong. One principal noted,

> Initially everyone has a messianic complex that comes from a compulsion to do everything. One grows out of that because of necessity, one can’t do everything. You can’t be everything to all people. One’s success depends on the success of others. The only way to be successful is to help others be successful. I felt this at first, but now I know it’s so. I’m becoming more and more trusting of groups.

Trust necessarily had to be pervasive across all levels of the school system: “It [trust] continues not only here, but all the way to the school board level. It’s not we-they. It’s us.” The ability of teachers and other professionals to assume
facets of role and decision domains traditionally held by principals also affected role strain intensity and reactions to it. As rules, roles, and responsibilities were readjusted, collegial support was critical in moderating role strain anxieties.

*Time and money as moderators*

Two resources, time and money, were key environmental factors affecting the intensity of role strain. Having enough time to see change processes through, time to make adjustments to new role expectations, time for trust and comfort levels to be established, and control of the timing of role transition events greatly affected individual role strain. Time often translated directly into money. The data strongly suggest an inverse relationship between the amount of time and money and role strain. In Hillview and Elk Mountain, where substantial fiscal resources had been set aside to facilitate restructuring processes, role strain for principals and others was diminished: “I think the superintendent and the board set the tone. Other administrators in the district picked up on it.” The district, “is in good financial shape and this has allowed us to do some things. Finances are important because they enabled us to do things with facilities, with places for teachers to plan. For years they’ve not had space to work in and plan. All these things have turned things around. When teachers are involved, they have ideas. We can pay for those ideas.” In Centremont, time and money had been allocated primarily to train “opportunity finding teams” and to provide time for teams of professionals to work beyond the school day and year.

*System support*

There was evidence of general social system support across buildings and districts that moderated the intensity of role strain. In Westby, support was evidenced in the flexibility in interpreting and adjusting collective bargaining agreements between the school district and the teachers’ union without abdication of responsibilities and accountability. The other three districts were cognizant of the implications of restructuring on collective bargaining agreements, but they emphasized informal strategies for implementing changes in roles. In Westby, teachers and administrators confronted contract language and any other possible threats to local restructuring efforts directly. During the last two contract periods, contracts were reopened early to deal with problems. They would not permit collective bargaining calendars to interfere with significant progress in restructuring.

*Reactions to and consequences of role strain*

As described previously, the intensity of role strain was a product of antecedent conditions and characteristics of role transition, both of which were moderated by personal and environmental factors. Lower levels of intensity required only mar-
ginal adjustments by individuals. If high-intensity role strain existed, each principal reacted in particular ways to reduce the amount of anxiety and discomfort associated with work role transitions. Various reactions to role strain were evident in one or more domains. Reactions occurred in cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains: cognitive reactions—such as reinterpretations of events (the principal was pleased that teachers now called faculty meetings because this freed him up to attend to other priorities) and selective monitoring of the environment (cases where it was obvious that the principal could not know about every initiative in the school); affective reactions—fear of failure and fear of being overwhelmed by the pace of change or fears about loss of professional identity; and behavioral reactions—such as simply ignoring the stressors and the strain or acting to change one or more factors in the role transition processes. Role transition theory suggests that these types of reactions can be directed toward self (an internal reaction) or toward the environment (an external reaction). How did these respondents attempt to cope with role strain?

There was a great deal of similarity between moderating factors to role strain and reactions to role strain itself. Both consisted of environmental and personal dimensions that either moderated the intensity of role strain or were individual mechanisms for coping with existing role strain. Using the conceptual model of role transition processes, it was clear that feedback from reactions to role strain contributed to moderating dimensions of strain in subsequent role transitions. Reactions, however, were distinct from moderating factors in that the individual adjustments were resulting actions of strain, not factors that affected the intensity of role strain. Once role strain existed, each person dealt with it at one or more levels (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) and attempted to reduce discomfort and anxiety by altering aspects of self or conditions in the transition environment. Internal reactions (those directed toward oneself) and external reactions (those directed toward factors in the role transition environment) are briefly described.

Internal reactions to role strain

In general, these 20 principals primarily reacted to many of the pressures of role strain by looking inwardly. They listed a number of individual adjustments (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) related to changes in their sense of role and self-identity. The notion of locus of control is salient here. As these administrators attempted to deal with ambiguities and strains of role transition in restructured schools, it was clear to them that they could alter aspects of self more directly and with more impact than many of the broader, social system/environmental factors that most often appeared completely beyond their control or only indirectly mutable in their roles as principals.

Cognitive restructuring, redefining one’s understanding of and meanings ascribed to one’s role in the school community, was a common internally directed reaction to role strain. Within the context of highly publicized school
reform initiatives, these respondents were not resisting changes in their principalship role but were welcoming role transitions as opportunities to enhance leadership by tapping into the power and richness of human resources and dynamic processes in their buildings. Active resistance to changes brought about by restructuring was not reported. These respondents were seasoned professionals who knew the rhetoric and realities of change occurring in their settings. They had dealt successfully with organizational change before and would do so again. Given the fact that these are self-report interview data, one needs to be cautious. However, there was no evidence to suggest that these principals as a group were threatened by the role transitions or that any one was simply accommodating the rhetoric of reform by riding out this latest wave of educational reform. The credo “change is the name of the game,” as cited by one principal, appeared to be an operative situational reaction to role changes brought about by restructuring. Cognitive restructuring was also useful in ridding many of these principals of the burden of the “superprincipal myth,” that is, feeling as though they as principals had to be, know, and do everything. Changes in these schools were providing legitimated role-making opportunities in which principals could reassess their leadership roles, reflect on them, make choices among them, and set new role priorities.

Another internal reaction was the relinquishing of control over particular leadership responsibilities. Given the expansion of responsibilities for principals over the past two decades, role strain forced the issue of leadership priorities. To be successful, principals had to learn to delegate responsibilities and to rely on others. Relinquishing control over, and responsibility for, planning and organizing of staff development programs, special projects, and various tasks of professional work groups helped to reduce the intensity of strain from role transition and role overload. Most principals reported that relinquishing control was not easy even when they believed it to be imperative to successful restructuring efforts. They found themselves having to stifle their natural enthusiasm and tendency to intervene, to keep quiet as others puzzled through problems and assumed responsibility for outcomes, and on occasion they even purposely missed team meetings so that others could assume control and take responsibility.

Individual growth and changes in leadership behaviors were other reactions to role strain. Restructuring and empowerment of staff required these principals to enhance communication skills, especially the capacity to listen, to provide better feedback to professional colleagues, to be more sensitive and trusting, to model leadership behaviors for others, and to act more as facilitators than as doers.

External reactions: adjustments in roles and relationships

As principals made adjustments in their roles and responsibilities in school, they were also altering social relationships with teachers and others, that is, externally directed reactions. Many of the internally directed reactions occurred simultaneously with alterations in the school’s social system. As each principal
reexamined his or her understanding of role and created new meanings for principal leadership in the school, other role senders were affected. In an earlier report on these data, Bredeson (in press) described how these principals, to varying degrees, were readjusting sources of power in their schools as they moved from more traditional manager-oriented leadership behaviors to group-centered leadership behaviors. These adjustments included increasing attention to group needs, relinquishing control and responsibility for task completion to others, becoming consultants and facilitators, providing a climate of support, modeling leadership behaviors, and entrusting group maintenance and process problems to members of the group. These alterations in role and social relationships were not easily accomplished nor automatically accepted by others. Each principal was negotiating new roles, rules, and relationships within a particular school setting. Some principals felt uncomfortable with these changes as did some teachers. A few teachers even wanted their principal to simply make the decisions, set the direction, and “tell me what to do.” The data also indicated that in many situations teachers did not have the skills to assume particular responsibilities and therefore needed time to learn and refine requisite knowledge and leadership behaviors. Thus role changes and alterations in rules and responsibilities required incremental approaches in nonthreatening, supportive environments for both teachers and principals.

Conclusions

A major assumption at the outset of this article was that role transitions for principals were pivotal change events in organizations. Current initiatives in school restructuring and the empowerment of others in the school community were antecedent factors that contributed to work role transitions and role strain. Based on the data in this exploratory investigation, there are a number of implications for theory, research, practice, preparation of school administrators, and current educational reform initiatives.

Support for role transition theory

The role transition process model has utility as a conceptual, theoretical, and analytical guide in the examination of work role transitions for principals and others in schools. The model assumes a sequential, systems notion of role transitions focused primarily on intrapersonal psychological dimensions. These interview data provide preliminary evidence to support factors in the role transition process depicted by Allen and van de Vliert (see Figure 1). A key difference in work role transitions described in this study is that the changes were not in role position but in role set, namely, substantial changes in role expectations, relationships, norms, and values for individual holders. Although the interview questions did not focus on role transitions for other role senders and holders in schools, the responses from these principals suggest that role transition, role
strain, and individual modes of adjustment to social role change processes have important psychological, social, and political implications for teachers, students, and other professional staff in restructured schools.

The data indicated that not all role facets involved in work role transitions were equally important to professional role identity—what Stryker (1980) referred to as “identity salience.” Principals performed multiple roles in schools, some of which were more central to their sense of professional and personal identity than others. Blau (1973) noted that with each significant role change the integrity of self is jeopardized to some degree. These interview data provided evidence to support the hypothesis that the greater the role change, the higher the intensity of individual role strain. The ability of these principals to control specific facets of role transitions in their schools was moderated by their experience and length of time in their current position, traditions of trust among staff, congruence of personal leadership style with role changes, school-level autonomy, and leadership and support from their superintendent and school board.

Given the variability of moderating effects in role transitions for each principal, no one pattern of work role transition was discernible. Role transitions were idiosyncratic and not guided by normative organizational or professional processes. Some support for Nicholson’s (1984) theory of work role transition was evident in that each principal made adjustments to role changes through personal development (altering individual frames of reference, values, and relationships) and role development (proactive attempts by role holders to bring about a better match between individual needs, abilities and identities and their new role demands). Role innovation was affected by constraints and opportunities for discretionary behavior in the emergent role, novelty of role demands, reward systems, collegial support, and feedback from other role senders.

The variability of role transitions for these principals was matched by wide ranges of role strain intensity. The focus in this study was on the psychological dimensions of work role transition processes, defined as acute cognitive/affective intrapsychic disturbance. The analysis focused on role strain and its impact on individual social actors as they carried out and worked to redefine their social roles. Role strain was evidenced in feelings of having lost control over particular position responsibilities, fear of failure for restructuring processes and for their leadership efforts, self-doubts about personal competence and ability to be successful, impatience, frustration, loss of identity, and increased feelings of uncertainty about significant changes in professional work life. These manifestations of role strain are consistent with Ebaugh’s (1988) findings related to the process of becoming an “ex”: “Self-identity is built up gradually over the years by internalizing the meanings and expectations of the roles we play. Elements of the new or previous role have to be negotiated and reintegrated into one’s self concept before stability and security can be re-established” (p. 22). For some principals, reconciling past leadership identities, such as leader as boss, with newly configured ones created substantial role identity strain. For a few female
elementary principals, restructuring had resulted in the legitimation of long held beliefs about effective school leadership and practice rather than new identities.

The phenomenon of role strain resulting from role transition is not unique to school restructuring. Role strain can also result from factors such as role conflict, role overload, and role ambiguity. The very nature of the work life of school principals, as described by Kmetz and Willower (1982) and Martin and Willower (1981) provide ample evidence that role strain is a constant companion of principals. The degree to which work role transitions for principals resulting from restructuring efforts in schools can be understood in terms of their impact on individuals, on those with whom they interact, and on schools themselves provides role holders and role senders opportunities to employ personal and environmental factors as mechanisms to moderate and reduce role strain and concomitant dysfunctional reactions and consequences. Because there are many interactive dimensions to changes in work roles, it may not be possible to tease out just which aspects of role strain result from role transitions. The findings from this study do contribute to a better understanding of the psychological impact of work role transitions in restructured schools. As individuals and organizations come to understand more clearly the impact of role transition processes in schools, the more likely they will be to intervene effectively to influence the intensity of role strain and to minimize any dysfunctional reactions to role strain and its consequences.

From individual and organizational perspectives, moderators of role strain were key factors in role transitions. The ways in which individual role holders made adjustments to changes in role greatly affected the outcomes of transitions. Personal factors were the most powerful moderators of role strain for these 20 administrators. The notion of locus of control is relevant. Leadership style, capacity for growth, tolerance, patience, and interpersonal communication skills were personal factors under the direct control of principals. This is not to suggest, however, that these were easy to learn or to exercise consistently. In terms of personal moderators for reducing adverse effects of role transition strains, these respondents appeared to follow Blanton’s (1991) recommendation for successful leadership in restructured schools: “The essence of leadership is not to manage or change others; it is to manage and change oneself” (p. 9).

Principals reacted to role strain at cognitive, affective, and behavioral levels. Two categories of reactions were identified: internally directed reactions (directed at oneself) and environmentally directed reactions (directed at others, roles, and social relationships). Cognitive restructuring directed toward oneself and toward others was an important mechanism for reducing role strain. The ways in which principals perceived transition events in their work life greatly affected their reactions to those changes. None of the principals saw restructuring and the changes that came with it as threats to their leadership role in the school. Transition events were transformational, not threatening. Because “change was the name of the game,” the notion of active resistance to restructuring and role transitions was not a politically acceptable nor appropriate professional stance. These are self-report
data, so it should not be surprising that these seasoned administrators were adroit at dealing with external forces and events affecting their work life.

Environmental factors, which included traditions of trust, time, money, district support, and flexibility in collective bargaining processes, though equally important were less amenable to the individual principal’s direct control. The ability of the principal to provide time and money, two important sources to sustain restructuring efforts in these schools, was a key environmental factor. Many teachers and principals were reported as getting tired. Volunteerism was important but even the most altruistic of professionals were beginning to weary in environments of rapid social and organizational change. These principals saw the need to institutionalize mechanisms to moderate and facilitate role transition processes as they occurred. Institutionalization appeared to be accomplished in two distinct ways. In the two city districts, institutionalizing restructuring meant creation and formalization of structural components to solidify changes in roles, rules, relationships, and responsibilities. In Hillview and Elk Mountain, institutionalization was vested in individuals and their experiences and successes as empowered professionals rather than in formalized organizational structures.

Each principal listed many advantages to empowering others and restructuring roles and relationships in the school. Individual ability to reinterpret the nature and meaning of professional work roles and to embrace transition processes brought about by local restructuring efforts helped to ameliorate levels of discomfort and anxiety. In many cases, role transition events fostered individual professional growth, permitted long awaited redefinition of what principal leadership meant, helped some principals shed worn out images of the “super principal,” provided opportunities for adjustments in sources of power, and legitimated opportunities to experiment and model appropriate leadership behaviors for autonomous, self-managing, professional educators. Cognitive restructuring resulted in a fundamental shift in the way that principals defined, identified with, and carried out their leadership responsibilities.

The responses from these principals revealed that they were moving away from the image of principal as manager in charge to that of facilitator on call. Thus the reactions identified in this study support Nicholson’s (1984) theory of work role transition in terms of individual modes of adjustment to, and conditions for, significant changes in work roles. There was also ample evidence to support Zurcher’s (1977) and Ebaugh’s (1988) notion of the “mutable self,” which “represents a significant shift for the individual from orientation toward stability of self (self as object) to orientation toward change of self (self as process).” The mutable self develops as a response to the centrality and frequency of role change in the course of an individual’s lifetime” (pp. 22–23, emphasis in original). These principals were resilient social actors who were both role takers and role makers and who viewed their own professional identity as being integrally tied to an emergent self.

The role transition process model developed by Allen and van de Vliert (1984) is a very useful theoretical and analytical framework for examining pivotal role transition events for individuals and for organizations. Whether or
not such transitions are predictably linear and sequential is problematic and open
to debate. Nevertheless, it is clear that the model is comprehensive and has great
explanatory power. The model is also useful for generating hypotheses for future
investigations of work role transitions and their impact on social role processes.

Implications for further research

The findings from this investigation suggest important directions for future
research. These preliminary data indicate that personal/internally directed factors
are the most powerful moderators and strategies for lowering role strain intens-
ity and its effects. What are the differential effects of various moderators? In
what ways are moderators of role strain linked to organizational structures and
situational context? The psychological dimensions of work role transitions for
individuals as revealed in these interview data are critical factors to be addressed
as schools and districts across the nation experiment with decentralized
decision-making processes and restructuring. In what ways does role salience
vary across school settings and individuals? What meaningful relationship are
there among role salience, role transition processes, and role strain?

It is important to recognize that there are other equally salient units for exam-
ination of work role transition processes. The impact of role changes on social
networks, work groups, work flow patterns and norms, political systems, and
school, district, and organizational outcomes, such as student achievement, are
important dimensions that need to be addressed in future research. Given the
four districts with unique interpretations and enactments of restructuring, it is
important to address directly the relationship between structural dimensions of
restructuring and their effect on individual role strain. These findings strongly
indicate that both internal and external factors are important moderators of role
strain. Are there differences in the effects of these two sets of role strain modera-
tors based on unique characteristics of school/district setting and history?
Throughout the article I have reported a number of similarities of experiences
across schools and districts. Yet how restructuring was defined and enacted
locally was important to an understanding of role transition and role strain.
Research that examines restructuring and role transition processes from local
knowledge perspectives (Huberman, 1987) needs to be conducted.

Some limitations

There are a number of methodological implications from the findings in this
investigation. The self-perceptions of individual role holders are important data
to gather in an explanation of role strain anxieties and their impact on principals,
schools, and educational reform initiatives. Nevertheless, self-report data are
always limited in that they can be biased in ways that make the respondents look
and sound better than they actually are. It is possible for respondents to mask
role strain and consequently appear less perturbed and less resistant to work role
changes and their effects than they might actually be. These principals were seasoned professionals and clearly were steeped in the literature and political rhetoric of school improvement through restructuring. Even with the built-in checks for consistency of perception using multiple interview items, it is likely that role strain, reactions to it, and consequences have been underestimated due to socialized response sets. It is possible that these principals are so used to perennial educational reforms that their responses and behaviours simply reflect professional survival strategies more than substantive changes in work role identification and behavior. To address these issues, a follow-up study is currently under way. In this study, teacher perception data gathered at the school level on periodic statewide assessments instruments will be played against the interview responses of these principals.

Another limitation is that the data represent role transition processes in four districts in one state. There is a need to expand the data set for comprehensiveness and representativeness. Attention must also be given to interactive role transition processes. The primary focus of this study has been on the psychological dimensions of transition events. The effects of role strain on other dimensions of organizational life also need to be addressed. Finally, these data are temporally fixed and thus lack the advantages of a longitudinal perspective. Longitudinal studies or cross-sectional studies of work role transitions have the potential to contribute valuable insights into role change events for individuals, for schools, and for organizational goal achievement.

Implications for preparation programs and practice

There are also important implications for practice, for the preparation and professional development of school administrators, and for educational reform. Understanding work role transitions and their outcomes is beneficial to principals and to other educators in schools. Awareness of the potential negative consequences of role transitions is a fundamental step in planning for and acting to reduce role strain and to limit any deleterious effects on individual role holders and on organizational goals. Role holders who are aware and able to employ effective strategies to deal with multiple dimensions and implications of work role transitions are more likely to grow professionally and to foster healthy modes of adjustment to change and organizational adaptations to it as opposed to being resistant and calculating professional survivors who intend to ride out yet another wave of educational reform. Relinquishing traditional mechanisms for control and letting go of outlived professional identities are never easy. Thus understanding work role transitions can be helpful to individuals and to organizations as they think about and examine role exit and role transition as important psychological, social, and political dimensions in professional work life. As principals disengage and disidentify with former role expectations and role sets, the data suggest that school environments that are nurturing and supportive are important to principals and others as they attempt to redefine, negotiate, and internalize new meanings in their leadership roles in schools.
The findings from this study have implications for the preparation of school administrators and for their ongoing professional development. Work role transition theory grounded in social/psychological theories is an important preservice knowledge component for aspiring school leaders. The evidence presented in this study indicates that preparation for educational leadership should emphasize a blend of the two dominant traditions in social role theory development—role taking and role making. Preparation programs that view these perspectives as complementary and interactive provide learning experiences for principals and others to be active participants in learning and exercising organizational leadership roles. These learning experiences differ from the traditional administrator preparation curriculum that emphasizes proficiency in basic managerial competencies. Curriculum content incorporating the social/psychological dimensions of work role transition would highlight the importance of role definition and identity as interactive and dynamic processes of work role socialization, development, and professional expertise. Aspiring administrators would be trained to understand and deal with role transition and role exit processes. Professional craft knowledge needed to work effectively in rapidly changing organizational environments would include role learning, role taking, and role making.

The perspectives of these principals also suggest that preservice and ongoing professional development activities for principals could focus on helping administrators develop situationally appropriate responses and modes of adjustment to work role transitions in dynamic professional work environments. Training programs and activities would be designed to help individuals understand the processes of role transition and role evolution, both of which necessarily include letting go of particular residual role facets. However, the notion of loss might be framed as contributing to individual growth and role evolution and not as a threat to professional survival.

Finally, there are implications for restructuring initiatives at local school levels and for educational reform in general. Regardless of the definition or scope of school restructuring, work role transition is an important organizational change dimension that needs attention. The findings in this investigation help to inform educational stakeholders both inside and outside the school. As principals redefine and shape their leadership roles, they are at the same time informing others of changes brought about by restructuring efforts in schools. The notion of restructuring residuals in terms of outlived professional expectations and identities is salient for principals, other professional educators, students, and many other stakeholders in the school community. Failure to address the psychological, social, and political dimensions of role transition processes will likely negate improvements in educators’ work lives and in desired cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes for students. Given the central role of principals and teachers in bringing about educational reform with demonstrable measures of student achievement gains, attention to work role transition factors affecting those educators’ professional lives is critical to the future success of school restructuring initiatives.
# APPENDIX

## Characteristics of schools and districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Centremont</th>
<th>Westby</th>
<th>Hillview</th>
<th>Elk Mountain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School sites</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 elementary, 1 junior high</td>
<td>1 elementary, 1 middle school, 1 high school</td>
<td>2 middle schools, 1 middle school, 1 high school</td>
<td>2 elementary, 1 middle school, 1 high school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>District ADM</strong></td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principals</strong></td>
<td>2 female, 3 male</td>
<td>1 female, 5 male</td>
<td>1 female, 4 male</td>
<td>1 female, 3 male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative experience</strong></td>
<td>6.6 (in years)</td>
<td>15.5 (in years)</td>
<td>7.6 (in years)</td>
<td>16.5 (in years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years in building</strong></td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Training/development</strong></td>
<td>Outside team</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Ad hoc teams</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary motivating force</strong></td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restructuring activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formalization</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutionalization</strong></td>
<td>Problem-solving teams/ BLC/PIC contract</td>
<td>Ad hoc groups, special projects</td>
<td>Ad hoc groups, special projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other forces</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Metaphor for superintendent’s role</strong></td>
<td>Union pressure</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>none identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reorganizing activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Formalization</strong></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Ad hoc groups, special projects</td>
<td>Ad hoc groups, special projects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructuring focus</td>
<td>Site-level problems</td>
<td>Any issue: structural, procedural, personal, contractual, professional</td>
<td>Curriculum, staff development, facilities</td>
<td>Curriculum, staff development, facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local language describing restructuring</td>
<td>Collaborative opportunity finding, not shared governance</td>
<td>Shared governance, site-based management</td>
<td>Invitation to empowerment</td>
<td>Team-shared professional autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key descriptors</td>
<td>Shared ownership of matters that affect us, but no policy or governance</td>
<td>They have a stake in the cake</td>
<td>It’s not “we-they” but “us”</td>
<td>Teacher ownership is what makes it work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note**
ADM = average daily membership; ACE = Alliance of Centrement Educators; BLC = Building Level Council; PIC = Professional Issues Council.
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GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES

A multi-perspective study of effective school leaders

Christopher Day, Alma Harris and Mark Hadfield


Abstract

Leadership provided by the headteacher is widely acknowledged to be a crucial variable in determining the effectiveness of schools. However, the majority of leadership studies consist of either surveys or interviews which the researcher has conducted with head teachers or case studies written by the head teachers which draw heavily upon their own experience, and as such are essentially ‘autobiographical’ in the perspective they provide on leadership in schools (Ribbins & Sherratt, 1992). The objectives of this article are to: set out a new model of effective school leadership based on recently completed empirical research; demonstrate how the multi-perspective methodology adopted contributed to a critique of existing models of leadership and the development of a new grounded model and discuss the analytical issues raised by the multi-perspective methodology which involved all the stakeholders in a school community.

Theoretical framework

The emerging picture of school leadership in the late 1990s in all countries has become increasingly complex. In the UK the pace of change shows no sign of slackening as the Government continues to impose new demands upon schools and to expect results within relatively short time-scales. Much of the impetus for implementing successive national reforms rests primarily with the leaders
of individual institutions. It has been argued that the particular view of leadership which the nature, direction and pace of reform implicitly endorses as effective, has become increasingly managerialist (Gunter 1997; Slee et al., 1998). Ball (1987) suggests that the dominant discourse of leadership embodies direct control (‘old managerialism’) and people-centred management (‘new managerialism’). However, it has been claimed that the emphasis upon the ‘monitorial’ role of ‘managing directors’ has given headteachers less time to perform the role of ‘leading professional’ (Pollard et al. 1994). This claim directly contradicts the popular academic research view that the headteacher’s main role is to influence the quality of teaching and learning in the school through purposeful ‘transformative leadership’ (Leithwood & Jantzi 1990; Fullan, 1992), to articulate a vision and to promote shared ownership (Louis & Miles 1990; Blase & Anderson 1995; Starratt 1991). In this literature the search continues for a model of effective leadership which is suited to a postmodern context.

Recently, leadership studies have focused upon values—the ‘moral purposes’ and moral craft of leadership (Sergiovanni 1992; Tom 1984); the roles of leaders in creating a ‘community of learners’ (Barth 1990; Senge 1990); and the capacities of leaders to ‘make a difference’ through their ability to ‘transform’ (Sergiovanni 1995; Leithwood et al., 1999) or ‘liberate’ (Tampoe 1998) rather than simply ‘transact’. The most popular theories are located in the ‘transactional’ and ‘transformational’ models identified more than twenty years ago (Burns 1978) and lately reinvented through such terms as ‘liberation’ (Tampoe 1998), ‘educative’ (Duignan & Mcpheardson 1992), ‘invitational’ (Stoll & Fink 1996) and ‘moral’ leadership (Sergiovanni 1992). What is clear from these, and the effective schools literature, is that successful leaders not only set direction, organise and monitor, build relationships with the school community and are people-centred but they also model values and practices consistent with those of the school (Sergiovanni 1995: 119).

This research study (commissioned by the National Association of Headteachers) is one of the most recent studies of leadership in the United Kingdom. When work commenced on the project, few recent studies were in existence that had attempted to identify the key components of effective school leadership through the eyes of those who experience and witness it, whilst also relating analyses of multi-perspective grounded data to existing theoretical and empirical literature.

**Research methodology**

On the evidence of the literature it would appear that previous research has relied too heavily on headteachers to be the primary source of data on leadership in schools. However, there is evidence to suggest that when researchers turn their attention to alternative perspectives they prove to be rich sources of data. For example, studies of pupils’ views about school (Babad et al. 1991; SooHoo...
1993; Rudduck et al. 1996; Smees & Thomas 1998), reveal that they ‘can be both astute and articulate observers of the school environment’ (Smees & Thomas 1998). By failing to draw upon the different ‘perspectives’ provided by students, teachers and others, previous research has clearly ignored a plethora of evidence about both the ‘production’ and the ‘consumption’ of leadership in schools. Few studies have sought information from heads recognised as effective; fewer still have sought educated opinion from those who know most about them and who have experienced the realities of their leadership in times of change i.e., their students, staff, governors and parents. As a response to this, this research study was designed to consider effective leadership from multiple perspectives within the school organisation.

The project adopted the view that since the workings of the real world (even at the scale of a very small primary school) can be bewilderingly complex hence, no single observer, not even the most perceptive of head teachers, is restricted to viewing from a particular perspective or ‘angle of observation’ (Schatzman & Strauss 1973). The opinions of any individual, therefore, are inherently ‘biased’ by the position from which they have observed events in what Shimahara (1990) has called ‘contexts in process’. The research on which this report is based, therefore, was designed to capture the ‘silent voices’ (SooHoo 1993) of authentic sources of data about leadership in the case study schools on the assumption that new insights would inevitably arise if all too familiar situations were viewed afresh from ‘new angles’ (Schatzman and Strauss 1973; Morgan 1993). In addition to enabling the project to draw upon hitherto untapped and highly fruitful sources of evidence, the adoption of this multiple perspectives approach made it possible to compare data collected from different perspectives and sources for the purposes of triangulation (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983; Gill & Johnson 1991). The main objectives of the research were to:

- collect data in schools from a multiplicity of perspectives including those of head teachers, deputy head teachers, governors, parents, students, support staff and teachers;
- compare effective leadership in contexts ranging from small rural primary schools to large urban secondary schools;
- identify the personal qualities and professional competencies which are generic to effective leadership in schools;
- re-examine existing theoretical perspectives on school leadership through insights derived from new empirical research; and
- contribute to the wider educational debate on the relationship between leadership and school effectiveness and improvement.

It was acknowledged that the term ‘effectiveness’ when applied to the leadership provided by headteachers is both a contextualised and relational construct. Consequently, it was decided to investigate effective leadership by reference to a wide range of contexts and leadership challenges. This was achieved by the
selection of theory-generating case studies based upon three dimensions (Yin 1989; Maykut & Morehouse 1994). These dimensions were:

• schools of different sizes operating within different phases of education (i.e., the early years of primary schooling through to upper secondary and including special schools);
• schools located within a range of economic and socio-cultural settings (i.e., including rural, suburban and inner-urban schools as well as those with mixed catchment areas); and
• schools in which head teachers who were widely acknowledged as being ‘effective’ leaders had spent different amounts of time (i.e. ranging from relatively new to well-established head teachers with many years of experience).

Given the goals of the research, the most critical and problematic of these dimensions concerned the selection of schools in which the head teacher met the criterion of providing ‘effective’ leadership. The research team adopted a working definition of ‘effectiveness’ which enabled schools to be chosen on the basis of the following criteria:

• schools which had received a ‘positive’ Inspection Report by Ofsted, particularly with regard to the leadership provided by the head teacher;
• schools which, on the basis of test scores and examination results, could be shown to be performing better than local and national means; and
• schools in which their head teachers were widely acknowledged by their professional peers (through the local, regional and national networks of the NAHT) as being ‘effective’ leaders.

Once schools meeting all of the above criteria had been identified it was then necessary through a process of negotiation (in which the NAHT acted as an intermediary) for the research team to gain access to schools in which the head teachers were prepared to:

• subject themselves to intensive questioning during three interviews, each lasting for at least an hour;
• give the researchers access to deputy head teachers, governors, parents, students, support staff and teachers in order to conduct one-to-one and group interviews which would focus (perhaps critically) on the leadership which they had experienced; and
• organise and manage a programme of interviews and group meetings over a period of three days at a busy time in the school year (February–June).

The main methods used to collect data in the twelve case study schools were a short fact-finding questionnaire, one-to-one interviews and group interviews. Information about each of the schools appears in Appendix A and further details
of the research methodology can be found in Day et al. (2000). In addition to the collection of primary data, documentary evidence was obtained from such secondary sources as school development plans, school prospectuses, OfSTED Inspection Reports, newsletters and examples of media coverage. These sources were used to contextualise the empirical data as research has shown the importance of context in understanding approaches to school leadership (Leithwood et al. 1999).

The analysis

The analysis of 12 case studies by the team of five researchers followed a complex pattern of theory development and testing (Yin 1989). As a process it revealed the possibilities and problems inherent in combining researchers who felt more comfortable with a ‘grounded approach’ (Glaser & Strauss 1967) and those who wish to apply existing theoretical frameworks during the initial analysis of the data. This tension between researchers with fundamentally different approaches to data analysis was evident in each of the five-phase analysis of the interviews. It was inevitable that thirty six days of qualitative fieldwork in the case study schools which included e.g., a total of thirty six one-to-one interviews of a minimum of one hour’s duration with their head teachers would yield a rich abundance of data in the form of field notes, audio-cassette recordings and the researchers’ own recollections and impressions of their experiences. The principles and procedures of qualitative research as derived from ethnomethodology and phenomenology (Tesch 1990) were used in the analysis of this plethora of evidence.

Consequently, the analysis of the field evidence was not deferred until the end of the project. It began early and proceeded concurrently with the collection of data in schools so that the two became closely integrated (Glaser & Strauss 1967) to the extent that they began to inform each other (Miles & Huberman 1984). The simultaneous collection and analysis of data was a reflective activity, both individually and for the team as a whole. This process of reflection took a number of forms including periodic meetings of the project team at which progress was reviewed and ideas and opinions were discussed usually as a result of analytical notes (or ‘memos’) based on the reflections of individuals. These reflective documents and the discussions they prompted furthered the process of analysis by helping the team to move between concrete field data and conceptualisation. They also provide an accountable record or ‘audit trail’ (Lincoln & Guba 1985) which showed that the process of reflection and inductive data analysis not only occurred, but proceeded in a manner which, while being flexible and eclectic, was nevertheless orderly and systematic.

The sheer volume and diversity of the data collected by the team made it necessary to organise it into smaller homogeneous units of information in order to begin to make sense of it. Consequently, the project, by means of the reflective process described above, arranged the data into ‘segments’ of material based on an organising system derived from the data themselves. The process, therefore, was essentially one of inductive cross-case analysis (Miles & Huber-
man 1994), the main outcome of which was a two dimensional matrix with
issues and themes related to school leadership on one axis and the different
sources of evidence (i.e., head teachers, governors, parents etc.) on the other. In
the early stages of this process the organising categories, especially the issue and
themes, were regarded as being tentative and provisional and were subsequently
modified in the search for a more satisfactory system—though it would be diffi-
cult to disagree with Lofland (1971) who concluded that ‘no order fits perfectly’.
Manipulating the field work data in this way proved to be a time-consuming but
intellectually-exacting activity.

Having arranged the data for purposes of analysis in such a way, it was pos-
sible to compare what the different sources of evidence (i.e., head teachers,
deputies, governors etc.) had revealed about leadership in their schools, or what
a particular category of stakeholder had to say about different aspects of leader-
ship. In the event it was decided that the richness of the insights provided by the
analysis of the different perspectives of the various stakeholders interviewed
should be reflected in the way in which the research was reported. The aim was
to go beyond what Hyoner (1985) called a ‘composite summary’ and what
Patton (1980) has referred to as a descriptive account of ‘patterns and themes’.
Instead the final goal was to offer a critique of existing theories of effective
leadership in schools in the light of the project’s empirical findings and to
suggest some ‘provisional’ hypotheses (Turner 1981), new concepts or ‘theo-
retical categories’ (Lazarsfeld 1972) and some tentative thoughts on ‘substantive
theory’ (Glaser & Strauss 1967).

The analysis eventually developed along two distinct strands. Firstly, the
process of thematic induction began to build into a picture of the characteristics
and behaviours associated with effective leadership as viewed from the perspec-
tives of the key stakeholders. At the same time, the research team was searching
for ways of encapsulating the perspective provided by the headteachers them-

Dilemmas are not merely accidental and temporary difficulties which
arise in particular situations. Rather, social life itself is essentially
dilemmatic since it involves choosing between courses of action which
are to a greater or lesser extent mutually exclusive. Education is therefore characterised by a series of dilemmas which are endemic, though they may surface in different forms at different times and places.

(p. 170)

Tensions on the other hand reflected specific sets of pressures experienced by leaders which in certain contexts. Although different sets of tensions may ‘pull’ headteachers in different directions these did not necessarily involve leaders in having to choose between mutually exclusive courses of actions or decisions. Our attempts to uncover tensions and dilemmas which were endemic, and to a degree perennial, was driven by our desire to identify those which shaped or limited the leadership approaches of the headteachers we researched. Dilemmas and tensions, therefore, offered the prospect of gaining new insights into the difficulties which headteachers have in navigating their way through a complex matrix of expectations while maintaining their personal integrity.

In addition, the adoption of this approach allowed the team to bring together aspects of several of the case studies in a holistic format. No one headteacher encountered all of the chosen dilemmas but the field evidence showed that they had all experienced aspects of each dilemma. The analysis allowed these fragments to be drawn together around shared incidents, values and expectations, and in so doing it began to reveal how the headteachers were being positioned by those around them and were positioning themselves.

By presenting the analysis in the form of dilemmas, it was hoped that they would aid further reflection, not just on the nature of leadership, but on the experience of leadership. It’s impossible to adequately capture that experience in its totality and the dilemmas do not attempt to do so. Rather they provide a structure for considering how the experience of being a leader arises from the complex interaction of personal ideologies, relationships with staff and students, and the demands of the school situation.

However, given the insights which the interviews with headteachers gave into the impact which their professional work has on their personal lives it would have been worthwhile, on reflection, to have pursued this matter further by questioning those people who are closest to them personally—their partners and friends who know them well. The original research design did not anticipate that this particular perspective might be a valid and potentially-fruitful source of evidence.

**The leadership construct**

The methodology recognised that ‘effective’ leadership is both a highly contextualised and relational construct. Therefore not only did it need to be investigated by reference to schools selected on the basis of providing a wide range of contexts and leadership challenges but also with reference to multiple perspectives within the broader school community. This allows for a critical analysis of people-centred models of leadership in real ‘leadership contexts’ within which
school headteachers both establish themselves as leaders and in which they are judged by others. By viewing these relationships from the perspectives of those whose knowledge was based upon close or indirect and direct experience of them it was possible to identify not only the felt tensions and dilemmas of leaders but also the demands and aspirations of key stakeholders in the school community. These perspectives were investigated by individual and group interviews of key stakeholders. This was an attempt to develop a perspective on leadership which Ribbins & Gronn (1996) describes as 'post-positivist' approach to the role of contextual influences in defining and shaping personal agency, an approach which moves beyond a singular focus on the headteacher's self construction of themselves as a leader. It allows for a consideration of the interaction between the headteacher’s self construction, the shared social construction of leadership by the various stakeholders, and those aspects of leadership which are valued and demonstrated in their interactions.

The presence of a shared social construction of effective leadership amongst very different stakeholders is significant for three reasons. Firstly it helped us realise the extent to which what we were gleaning from the various stakeholders were not just characteristics of their headteachers that they had observed, but were also beliefs about how ‘good’ leaders should act. Such beliefs have their roots within shared social construction of what leadership is about and the way in which leaders should act. These formed a complex matrix of demands and expectations around the headteachers which they partially assimilated, always had to manage and occasionally challenged. Secondly, the analysis had begun to reveal patterns within the expectations of different groups of stakeholders who gave greater significance to certain characteristics because of their position within the school and its broader community. For example, honesty and openness in decision making was seen as particularly significant by teachers whose careers and working conditions were directly affected by them; parents placed particular value on their headteacher’s ability to communicate and draw them into the community of the school; and governors emphasised the strategic and micro-political skills of head teachers. Each headteacher’s work was, therefore, set within a matrix of needs and expectations which had to be navigated. Thirdly, this 360° matrix of expectations and demands placed on the headteachers by the broader school community formed the backdrop to a number of tensions and dilemmas. Not only did it play a part in their construction, but it also represented a number of critical audiences as the headteachers attempted to lead and manage them.

The results

(1) Beyond transformational leadership

The evidence is sufficient to suggest that existing theories of leadership do not adequately reflect or explain the current practice of effective leaders. Rather, they suggest a people-centred model of leadership we have termed ‘values led
contingency leadership’. They adhered to a ‘person centred’ philosophy that placed emphasis upon improving teaching and learning via high expectations of others. For them, the primary task of leadership concerned building and monitoring the conditions for professional, institutional and broader community growth (Leithwood et al. 1999). They were constantly engaged with the daily business of simultaneously managing inter-personal relations and challenging others to give of their best in the context of policy-driven imperatives which were not always universally welcomed.

(2) Values led—achievement orientated—people-centred

The findings from the research study demonstrate that effective leadership is defined and driven by individual value systems, rather than instrumental managerial concerns. Management and leadership were essential components of these headteachers’ roles and heads were able to do both successfully. They engaged in people-centred leadership, constantly creating, maintaining, reviewing and renewing the learning and achievement cultures for students, staff and the close communities of parents and governors whom they served; and they modelled this in the many thousands of daily interactions through which common visions, expectations, standards, relationships and definitions of effectiveness were formed, framed, supported and tested. Of equal importance was their ability to create and monitor organisational structures appropriate to the fulfilment of the legitimate interests and aspirations of both internal and external stakeholders. It follows that effective heads have a major responsibility both for the ongoing, evolutionary development of the schools in which they work and, within this, the more formal accelerated learning opportunities and challenges collectively known as ‘school improvement’ and ‘teacher development’. The headteachers communicated their vision and values through their leadership relationships. They had been able to raise the self-confidence, morale and sense of achievement of staff by using these relationships to develop a climate of collaboration and by applying within them high standards to themselves and others. Their focus was always upon the betterment of the children, young people and staff who worked in their schools. In this respect, they exercised ‘educative leadership’ (Duignan & Macpherson 1992). They were empathetic, warm, genuine in their love for children and concerned for their well being and achievement (Mintzberg 1994; Jackson et al. 1993; Noddings 1992). All valued and encouraged collegiality, a feature of ‘moving’ schools (Rosenholtz 1989; Hargreaves 1991), and all fostered climates of openness in their schools between students, staff and community, encouraging staff to participate in discussions about values and beliefs as well as in decision-making processes, emphasising mutual respect and providing supportive leadership for all their staff.

The heads in this study operated on the basis of both internally and externally determined measures of quality control so that their quality assurance criteria had a broader agenda in keeping with a holistic broader moral vision of a good school.
and good teachers, it involved everyone in the organisation seeking systematically, with evidence, to ensure that standards were constantly improving. It was contingent but within a framework of unshakeable core values. All the heads:

- were clear in their vision for the school and communicated it to all its constituents;
- focused upon care and achievement simultaneously;
- created maintained and constantly monitored relationships recognising them as key to the cultures of learning;
- were reflective in a variety of internal and external social and organisational contexts, using a variety of problem-solving approaches;
- sought, synthesised, and evaluated internal and external data, applying these to the school within their values framework;
- persisted with apparently intractable issues in their drive for higher standards;
- were prepared to take risks in order to achieve these;
- were not afraid to ask difficult questions of themselves and others;
- were entrepreneurial;
- were ‘networkers’ inside and outside the school;
- were not afraid to acknowledge failure but did not give up and learnt from it;
- were aware of a range of sources to help solve problems; and
- managed ongoing tensions and dilemmas through principled, values-led contingency leadership.

A number of writers (Shakeshaft 1989; Blackmore 1989) have argued for a paradigm shift in conceptions of leadership which start not from the basis of power and control but from the ability to act with others and to enable others to act. The heads in the study rarely used their personal rather than positional power to obtain the results they wanted. Yet at the core of their personal power resided a particular vision for the school shaped by a particular set of values. These effective headteachers saw themselves as the source of a vision for their institutions, working through their relationships with members of the school community. Centrally important in this new model of leadership is the co-operation and alignment of others to the leaders’ values and vision with those of the leader. The heads in the study communicated their personal vision and belief systems by direction, words and deeds. Through a variety of symbolic gestures and action, they were successful at realigning the school community to their particular vision.

In short, they led both the cognitive and the affective lives of the school, combining structural (developing clear goals), political (building alliances) and educational leadership (professional development and teaching improvement) with symbolic leadership (presence, inspiration) and human ‘principle-centred’ leadership (demonstrating care and support) (Bolman & Deal 1984; Covey 1990). It was the human resource management which occupied most of their
daily time and which created the most tensions and celebration. In this respect, their leadership approaches were heavily people-centred. They were both transactional—ensuring that systems were maintained and developed, targets were formulated and met and that their schools ran smoothly—and transformative—building on esteem, competence, autonomy and achievement, raising, ‘the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and the led’ (Sergiovanni 1992); and bonding, ‘by inspiring extraordinary commitment and performance’ (Sergiovanni 1992: 25).

Contingency driven: managing tensions and dilemmas

What seemed to really make the difference for the stakeholders was not only the persistence of vision and values with the simultaneous focus of the headteachers upon process and achievement (product) but also their ability to manage a number of tensions and dilemmas which characterised the human imperfections school contexts which, like classrooms, were by their nature, dynamic, complex and unpredictable.

In this section use is made of two linked concepts—tensions and dilemmas—which are grounded in the data as ‘lenses’ (Berlak & Berlak 1981) through which to focus in on leadership. The main distinction between tensions and dilemmas concerns the possibilities of choice and influence. The tensions identified in this study tended to be those over which headteachers had little choice or influence. In the case of the dilemmas, possibilities of choice and influence did exist, but the degree to which the heads exercised such possibilities varied considerably. A dilemma, in this sense, is a situation which presents at least two contradictory propositions. Whichever is chosen, however, will not be entirely satisfactory. Together these constructs of ‘tensions’ and ‘dilemmas’ capture the immediacy of the continuing conflicts faced by many of the heads in the study. They underscore the continuing dynamic between their core personal values, management functions and leadership demands. They capture their past, present and future pressures, challenges, and concerns and aspirations with which they are daily faced and which reflect the multi-faceted demands of the role. Heads are constantly juggling competing demands upon their time, energy and resources.

The data revealed seven key tensions and three dilemmas of ‘effective’ head teachers which focus upon their roles not only in maintaining and consolidating what they have already achieved, but also in managing the challenges associated with moving their individual schools forward. The tensions focus broadly on issues of leadership, personal time and professional tasks, personal and institutional values, maintaining presence, improving quality and developing staff, internal and external change, autocracy and autonomy and leadership in small schools. They reflect the concerns of a group of headteachers who are primarily concerned with achieving success for the teachers and pupils in their schools, for whom improvement is a permanent part of their personal and professional agendas.
(1) Leadership versus management

Leadership is essentially the process of building and maintaining a sense of vision, culture and interpersonal relationships, whereas management is the co-ordination, support and monitoring of organisational activities. To enact both roles successfully requires a careful balancing act.

Leadership is about having vision and articulating, ordering priorities, getting others to go with you, constantly reviewing what you are doing and holding on to things you value. Management is about the functions, procedures and systems by which you realise the vision.

(Infant School Deputy)

(2) Development versus maintenance

If I don’t develop others, the school won’t develop. So that’s my priority. Other jobs can be delegated but not this one.

(Primary Head)

There is a tension between the amount of time and energy devoted to system maintenance and that devoted to ensuring that staff were always more than competent and were challenged and supported actively in seeking higher standards.

(3) Internal versus external change

The pressure is from outside, but I have to manage the pressure inside . . .

(Secondary Head)

The growth in external scrutiny of schools creates its own tensions. Headteachers found themselves positioned uneasily between those forces outside schools instigating and promoting changes and their own staff who, ultimately, had to implement them. They demonstrated their leadership by the selection of which initiatives to take on; the relative support which they provide for their implementation; their knowledge of how others were tackling new initiatives and by the ways they adapted initiatives to their particular values and circumstances.

(4) Autocracy versus autonomy

Although we can work closely, there has to be a time when decisions are taken and she has to say whether we can or cannot do this . . .

(Primary Deputy)
In school cultures of collaboration in which decision making is no longer the exclusive preserve of headteachers, and yet heads remain responsible and accountable for the schools’ success (or otherwise), a key leadership skill that these heads displayed was their ability to manage the boundaries of autocratic and democratic decision making.

(5) Personal time versus professional tasks

Increasing external requirements upon schools had led many heads to commit more and more of their personal time to school-related business:

I work at least 60 hours a week . . . it worries me because I don’t know how long I can go on putting in the amount of energy.

(Primary Head)

Although most heads in the study had found ways of managing the demands of intensification the personal opportunity costs were universally high and, long term, potentially damaging.

(6) Personal values versus institutional imperatives

Whilst there was little evidence in the study of opposing sets of values within the schools, tensions did arise from externally generated pressures of rationalism, and definitions of efficiency and effectiveness which were perceived as challenging strongly held people-centred values.

He holds traditional human values—care for people and community and giving back to society the benefits of what you have been given at school. You are a better person if you achieve academically, but that is only part of being a balanced person.

(Primary Teacher)

(7) Leadership in small versus large schools

Heads in small primary schools were disadvantaged on two main counts. Because they had regular, significant class teaching responsibilities, they were unable to fulfil their strategic leadership roles satisfactorily:

. . . it’s all the stress of planning and preparing and co-ordinating as a class teacher which is too much . . .

(Primary Head)

The breadth of the curriculum which needed to be addressed also provided additional demands upon the small number of staff.
(8) Development or dismissal

For headteachers who have to make decisions about teaching standards, continuing poor teaching by a member of staff creates a leadership dilemma, cutting across the headteachers’ personal framework of values and beliefs, their ideological and educative commitments to the development of everyone in the school community.

You can support somebody who is incompetent for as long as you like, but there comes a point where you know that it is not going to make any difference, particularly if they have been doing it for a long time.

(Infant Head)

Engaging in dismissal procedures touches upon the culture of the school, staff morale, and the nature of the relationship between leader and led. The headteachers in the study, however, had not shrunk from taking such ‘tough decisions’, illustrating the clear if painful boundary that must be drawn at key times between the personal and professional relationships which are at the heart of the educational health of school communities.

(9) Power with or power over

The basis of this dilemma is the extent to which similar and dissimilar values can be reconciled. The headteachers in this study sought to achieve a balance between consulting and involving staff in their decisions whilst still providing a clear direction forward, but were aware that such involvement might well lead to demands for a bigger say in the direction and that this might well challenge their right always to make the final decision.

We are leaders in our own little domain and sometimes it’s hard to accept the overall leadership . . . because you think you have got a better way of doing it . . .

(Primary Teacher)

(10) Sub-contracting or mediation?

This final dilemma reflects the position of most heads in the study as they found themselves legally responsible for the implementation of externally imposed change some of which challenged their own moral purposes, sets of core values and practices, and analysis of the needs of their particular school.

At the end of the day the head has to have integrity and to stick to core
values and beliefs. It is important that the head can demonstrate integrity in the face of adversity . . .

(Infant Head)

The heads had not become ‘sub-contractors’, unthinking links in a chain leading from those who developed policy to those who received it. Nor were they subversives, attempting to undermine the authority of policy imperatives. Rather, they managed changes with integrity and skill, integrating them into the vision, values and practices of their schools.

Discussion

**A values-led contingency model: post-transformational leadership**

We in ‘mainstream’ educational management have become to preoccupied with what might be called the institutional side of leadership and management to the extent of disregarding, or at least under-emphasising policy and contextual factors. In doing so we may be playing into the hands of those who accuse educational management of being too technocratic and mechanistic and of paying insufficient regard to values.

(Glatter et al., 1996: 3)

The findings from the research study have demonstrated that effective leadership is defined and driven by individual value systems, rather than instrumental managerial concerns. They demonstrate also the important influences of socio, political, economic and personal and professional contexts on effective leadership. Moreover, they illustrate that there are alternative models to the bureaucratic, rational and entrepreneurial forms of leadership espoused in government policy and documentation which are more appropriate to leaders in the third millennium and more likely to lead to success. Thus, they pose a direct challenge to the current orthodoxy of such forms of leadership theory and leadership training which are based upon them.

Within the study, there was ample evidence that people were trusted to work as autonomous professionals, within clear collegial value frameworks which were common to all. There was a strong emphasis upon teamwork and participation in decision-making (though heads reserved the right to be autocratic). Goals were clear and agreed, communications were good and everyone had high expectations of themselves and others. These collegial cultures were maintained, however, within contexts of organisational and individual accountability set by external policy demands and internal aspirations. These created ongoing tensions and dilemmas which had to be managed and mediated as part of the establishment and maintenance of effective leadership cultures. These heads, for example, were able to live with the dilemmas of ‘development or dismissal’,
‘sub-contracting or mediation’ or ‘power over or power with’. They were not part of, nor did they encourage a ‘dependency’ culture (Fullan 1998). They were constantly engaged with the daily business of simultaneously managing interpersonal relations and challenging others to give of their best in the context of policy-driven imperatives which were not always universally welcomed. In these schools, a new kind of hierarchy had emerged:

... one that places purposes, values and commitments at the apex and teachers, headteachers, parents and students below in service to these purposes...

(Sergiovanni 1992: 27)

It seems that morality, emotion and social bonds provide far more powerful stimulants to motivation and commitment than the extrinsic concerns of transactional leadership in which leaders and followers exchange needs and services to achieve independent objectives. Sergiovanni’s (1995) concepts of ‘servant leadership’ and ‘stewardship’ and the ‘flexibility’ and ‘resiliency’ which he sees as key characteristics of effective leaders relate closely to the findings in this study, as does the work in England by Grace (1995), and Bottery (1992) which focuses upon the ethics of leadership:

Leadership in general must maintain an ethical focus which is oriented towards democratic values within a community. This has to do with the meaning of ethics historically—as a search for the good life of a community... Ethics here refers to a more comprehensive construct than just individual behaviour; rather it implicates us and how we as a moral community live our communal lives.

(Grace, 1995: 55)

The heads in the study were centrally concerned with developing their organisation through developing others. In Sergiovanni’s (1998) analysis they developed social capital by encouraging collegiality and collaboration. The data provided by teachers, pupils, parents and governors emphasised ‘building community’ as an important dimension of the leadership role. Furthermore, it was evident that within the various school communities there was a strong and clear commitment to academic achievement as evidenced by the heads’ high expectations of their staff. This academic capital was developed through a commitment to the success of all pupils and a shared belief in rewarding and praising pupils.

This new model of leadership which we are proposing takes leadership and management to be mutually reinforcing within a conception of leadership that is diffuse rather than hierarchical. The knowledge and skills that are required are both generic and specific, within and between phases and sectors. The kind of moral leadership that Hodgkinson advocates for example, is a generic feature of
effective leaders. Similarly, effective leaders must have the ability to read and adjust to the particular context or set of circumstances they face. In this respect, their leadership behaviour is contingent on context and situation. The choices that they make relate directly to their own beliefs, values and leadership style. Different contexts will present different challenges and will require different responses. In the turbulent and unpredictable climate of uncertain and changing challenges which characterise schools of today and tomorrow the room for manoeuvre is constrained and inevitable tensions arise. Consequently, effective leadership in the 1990s and beyond is essentially concerned with adapting strategies and tactics (but not values) to address unanticipated events and new demands.

The capacity of leaders to make a difference will, then, depend upon their interpretation of and responses to the constraints, demands and choices that they face. Goldring (1997) argues that effective leaders, like those in this study, must know how to span boundaries in order to promote information and resource control. At the same time as they negotiate the constraints of internal and external environments, they must capitalise on the many opportunities for making choices.

The concept of leadership proposed here, then, has a number of different dimensions which combine to represent the complexity of leadership. It includes a range of features, or characteristics that are not mutually exclusive.

Values and vision

Centrally important in this new model of leadership is the co-operation and alignment of others to the leaders’ values and vision with those of the leader. The heads in the study communicated their personal vision and belief systems by direction, words and deeds. Through a variety of symbolic gestures and action, they were successful at realigning both staff and pupils to their particular vision of the school. As Bhindi and Duignan (1996) have proposed in their visionary paradigm for leadership in 2020:

Organisations are not solely concerned with outcomes, processes and resources. They are also concerned with the human spirit and their values and relationships. Authentic leaders breathe the life force into the workplace and keep the people feeling energised and focused. As stewards and guides they build people and their self esteem. They derive their credibility from personal integrity and ‘walking’ their values.

(p.29)

Integrity

In many respects, the heads in the study did ‘walk the talk’. Through the consistency and integrity of their actions, they modelled behaviour that they con-
sidered desirable to achieve the school goals. This dimension of values-led contingency leadership incorporates, but is more than, what has been termed by Stoll and Fink (1996) as invitational leadership. This emphasises the way in which positive and negative interactions shape one’s concept of self. Invitations are messages communicated to people which inform them that they are able, responsible and worthwhile. Such messages are communicated through interpersonal action, but also through institutional policies, programmes, practices and physical environments. Invitational leadership is built upon four basic premises:

- **Optimism**—the belief that people have untapped potential for growth and development;
- **Respect**—the recognition that each person is an individual;
- **Trust**—the need to trust others to behave in concert and in turn, as leaders, to behave with integrity; and
- **Intention**—the need to be actively supportive caring and encouraging.

All of these were perceived characteristics of the heads in the study which has provided the basis for this book. The heads in the study did display invitational leadership in their day to day dealings with individuals. Their behaviour with others was premised upon respect and trust and their belief in developing the potential of staff and students commonly held. Their ability to invite others to share and develop their vision was frequently commented upon by staff and students alike. Alongside these qualities, however, were examples of heads being firm (in relation to values, expectations and standards), and, on occasion, ruthless. In many respects, the way they interacted with others was the common denominator of their success. The human qualities they possessed enabled them to lead others effectively and to establish confidence in others that their vision was worth sharing.

**Context**

Another important dimension of effective leadership is the power of context. The heads in the study were highly responsive to the demands and challenges within and beyond their own school context. In managing people and cultural change they managed external as well as internal environments. They had skills in communicating, in supporting colleagues’ development so that they felt confident in fulfilling expectations of their contribution to the achievement of strategic goals and in the management of conflict and negotiating positive outcomes. In this sense, they were ‘adaptive’ (Heifetz 1994). In adaptive leadership, first developed in a medical context, it is recognised that the leader’s task is to advance the goals of the organisation by designing appropriate strategies which others must carry out. However, ‘resolving problems’ and ‘tackling and tough decisions’ is seen as a context-related collective responsibility. Thus the role of
the leader is to engage in activities designed to raise awareness, ‘ripen the issues’ in order to mobilise groups to tackle the issues and to take responsibility for consequences of their decisions (Edwards 1999). The heads in the study were adaptive and through these processes were able to manage conflict in a way that achieved positive outcomes. They were also adept at keeping the balance between involving others and taking individual action. It is clear, then, that effective leaders are able, within competing values frameworks, to combine a moral purpose with a willingness to be collaborative and to promote collaboration amongst colleagues, whether through teamwork, or extending the boundaries of participation in decision making.

**Continuing professional development: power with and through**

The heads in this study adopted highly creative approaches to tackling the complex demands of implementing multiple change. The decision to work with and through teams as well as individuals was a common response to the management of change. Telford (1996) argues that collaborative leadership is the most certain way of ensuring the vision of the school is realised. Her model of collaborative leadership identifies ‘artistry’ as an additional key ingredient of successful school leadership. Such artistry is required to read the idiosyncrasies of each leadership context and to know how to exploit the situation to maximum advantage. Within the study the heads did operate a form of collaborative leadership and saw staff and students as central to achieving the school’s purpose. The heads used a number of strategies for bringing out the best in staff. In addition to formal development opportunities, these strategies included: the power of praise; involving others in decision making; giving professional autonomy; leading by standing behind, alongside and in front. Although the heads tended to concentrate on teaching staff in the first instance, they used similar approaches when dealing with governors, parents and, to some extent, students. All the heads invested in others in order to lead the school. From the perspectives of governors, deputies, teachers, parents and pupils the overarching message was one of the head building the community of the school in its widest sense i.e., through developing and involving others.

**Implications for leadership training and development**

The characteristics of successful leaders and their ability to be simultaneously people-centred whilst managing a number of tensions and dilemmas highlight the complexity of the kinds of **values-led contingency** leadership exercised by these successful heads. The study illustrates that there are no neat solutions to situations which hold within them so many variables; that successful leadership is defined and driven by individual and collective value systems rather than instrumental, bureaucratic, managerial concerns. Leaders in this study were
identified as being reflective, caring and highly principled people who emphasised the human dimension of the management enterprise. They placed a high premium upon personal values and were concerned more with cultural than structural change. They had all moved beyond a narrow rational, managerial view of their role to a more holistic, values-led approach guided by personal experience and preference. What, then, are the implications for the leadership training and development of aspiring and serving school leaders? Nations across the world are extending their provision of training and development programmes. In England, the establishment by the Teacher Training Agency of such programmes for aspiring and serving headteachers as Headteachers Leadership and Management Programme (HEADLAMP), National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) provide a testimony of the importance attached by government to effective leadership, and this has been further underlined by the establishment of a high profile, innovative National College for School Leadership.

Currently, even the most recent training programmes fail to address the key themes which have emerged from the study. Since values, it seems, are central to successful leadership, reflection upon these must be central to training. Alongside this must be a focus upon critical thinking, emotional and cognitive (echoing Roland Barth’s wise dictum that heads must be the ‘leading learners’ in their schools), and intra as well as inter personal skill development. Recognition of the intimate link in successful leadership between the personal and the professional, between the development of the individual and the organisation is paramount. Finally, problem solving and the management of ‘competing forces’ must be key components of leadership training for school improvement if schools are to become the high achieving learning communities espoused by government. The seven tensions and three dilemmas presented here highlight the complex and fraught nature of headship. They illustrate that effective heads, like others, must manage these whilst engaging in the central tasks of building cultures and promoting learning and achievement. Indeed, they are an inherent part of the context in which these occur. There are no easy or perfect answers. The worlds of schools, like those of classrooms, hold too many variables and few neat solutions. The concepts are useful because they reveal that effective leaders are not always successful at all times with all people and that a key characteristic is their determination and ability to continue to try to reconcile the irreconcilable.

Within governments’ overall strategic vision for education, in all countries the training, re-skilling, and certification of heads occupies a central place. The problem is that many of the training models focus upon managerial rather than leadership functions. In doing so they fail to build capacities of heads to reflect upon their own values and those of the whole school community and do not provide sufficient emphasis upon building the range of interpersonal qualities and skills necessary and appropriate to effective leadership. For governments’
rhetoric of lifelong learning, high teaching standards, pupil achievement and school improvement to become a reality, schools need to be led by headteachers who are not only knowledgeable and skilled in managerial techniques but also, like those in this study, people-centred leaders who are able to combine the management of internal and external change with a strong development and achievement orientation. Their practices need to be based upon clear and communicated values to which all in their community subscribe.

If schools are to become ‘knowledge creating’ in which ‘the knowledge of all the school’s members and partners is recognised’ and shared (Hargreaves 1998: 29), if teachers are to continue to be committed to making a difference in the learning lives of their students through skilful teaching combined with the ethics of ‘care, justice and inclusiveness’ (Hargreaves & Fullan 1998: 35), then effective headteachers may themselves be justifiably expected to demonstrate these qualities through the kinds of leadership which they exercise.

Power and politics will continue to provide the context and daily realities for life in all schools and it is the management of the tensions and dilemmas that these create which, within a strong values framework, is a distinguishing feature of effective leadership. The heads in this study were effective because they held and communicated clear vision and values. They empowered staff by developing a climate of collaboration, by applying high standards to themselves and others and monitoring these, by seeking the support of various influential groups within the school community, by keeping ‘ahead of the game’ through ensuring that they had a national strategic view of forthcoming changes and by managing their own personal and professional selves. They managed tensions between dependency and autonomy, between caution and courage, between maintenance and development. Their focus was always upon the betterment of the young people and staff who worked in their schools. They remained also, often against all the odds, enthusiastic and committed to learning.

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LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

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### Appendix A

**Schools’ summary table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Status of school</th>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Gender of pupils</th>
<th>Age range of pupils</th>
<th>Number of pupils on roll</th>
<th>Number of teachers</th>
<th>Catchment area</th>
<th>Geographical location</th>
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<td>Rural</td>
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<td>Boys</td>
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<td>Appointed from inside or outside school</td>
<td>Number of headships (including present post)</td>
<td>Years of service as a teacher</td>
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HEADTEACHERS’ KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND MODE OF COGNITION

Michael Eraut


Introduction

The term ‘knowledge’ carries several meanings in professional discourse, but for our purposes these can be reduced to two. Type A, which I shall call public knowledge,

is defined in terms of propositional knowledge, codified and stored in publications, libraries, databases and so on, subject to quality control by editors and peer review, and given foundational status by incorporation into examinations and qualifications. Under this definition, skills are regarded as separate from knowledge (although some of them, such as reading and reporting, are essential for acquiring knowledge and passing it on to others). Hence there is a potential problem when an educational system, which has evolved with propositional knowledge as its main focus, is also expected to deliver certain skills and competences.

(Eraut, 1997b)

Type B knowledge, which I call personal knowledge is defined as

what people bring to practical situations that enables them to think and perform. Such personal knowledge is not only acquired through the use of public knowledge but also constructed from personal experience and reflection. It includes propositional knowledge along with procedural and process knowledge, tacit knowledge, and memories of images, episodes, incidents and events. Under this definition, skills are treated as part of knowledge rather than as separate from it. This allows for
representations of competence, capability or expertise in which the use of skills and propositional knowledge are closely integrated.

(Eraut, 1997b)

I define the terms ‘professional knowledge’ and ‘management knowledge’ as forms of Type B knowledge. Thus, the personal knowledge of a headteacher includes both professional knowledge developed as a teacher and management knowledge, as well as knowledge acquired outside school contexts but still relevant to them, e.g. from living in the local community or through experience of being a parent, not to mention several years of experience as a pupil. To explore the nature of headteachers’ knowledge more deeply, let us consider three diverse examples.

1. The relationship with governors

Every headteacher and governing body have to develop or negotiate their own interpretation of their respective roles. This will be influenced by some members’ prior experience of governing bodies or similar kinds of group and by other members’ lack of such experience. Governors’ prior expectations may not match those of the headteacher; and the development of the group will also depend on the interests and personalities of its members. What knowledge, then, do headteachers bring to this situation? Their public knowledge will come from statutes, inspectors’ reports, books and articles. More private knowledge may be gained from their own experience and from hearing about other headteachers’ experiences. In addition they bring with them a range of relevant skills in listening, presenting oral and written reports and getting to know people and understand their viewpoints both as individuals and group members. Most of the skills of communication and acquiring situational understanding will have been acquired in a wide range of contexts, many of them unconnected with schools; but some newly appointed heads may not be well prepared in all these areas. This whole gamut of knowledge, personal experience and skills for communication and developing understanding is likely to be used by experienced headteachers in some integrated form, both reflectively in preparation and intuitively in response to unexpected events.

2. Relationships with individual teachers

In order to manage teachers appropriately, heads need to make judgements about their individual performance and potential, to understand their social and political situation in school, to have some understanding of relevant aspects of their life outside school and to relate to each teacher in a way that suits them both. How do heads acquire sufficient valid knowledge of individual teachers to do this? Their files will include job applications, appraisal reports and correspondence – all compiled for specific purposes. Any evidence of their students’
performance will rarely be of a value-added kind. Heads receive oral comments about a teacher from a range of sources, but usually as incidental comments rather than considered reports. Otherwise the information comes from a series of incidents: one-to-one conversations; group meetings; observations of the teacher interacting with pupils and colleagues in various settings. Apart from formal interviews for appraisal or appointment, few of these incidents will have had the intention to learn about the teacher concerned. Even incidental knowledge from direct contact tends to be regarded as more authentic. What is remembered will be determined by what was perceived at the time and stored in episodic memory as a series of impressions. Though not sufficiently processed by reflection to yield propositions, these observations and encounters will nevertheless contribute to heads’ knowledge of the teacher but without them being aware of how the selection, integration and reorganisation of knowledge in episodic memory had occurred.

These remembered episodes are likely to be a highly atypical sample of a teacher’s behaviour, partly because the head was present and partly because the most typical incidents are often the least memorable. Salient and recent incidents are the most likely to be remembered, and there will also be other sources of bias (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). For example:

a In order to sustain human interaction, rapid interpretations of the other person have to be made early in order to make a response: but this response itself affects the ongoing interaction and affects later interpretations, often in ways which tend to confirm the original and possibly inaccurate interpretation.

b Headteachers’ personal constructs, developed by experiences before they even met the teacher, will affect how that teacher is perceived.

c Preconceptions, gathered from earlier incidents, affect the interpretation of later incidents, so that the sample is not constructed from genuinely independent events.

In general, we may conclude that headteachers’ construction of their knowledge of individual teachers is often a mainly intuitive process, which is significantly affected by potentially biasing factors of which they are unlikely to be aware. Both a head’s current communication with each teacher and those past interactions which have constructed their relationship (including occasions when the teacher has not been a specific recipient but one of a larger group of staff) will depend on interpersonal skills developed over a lifetime as well as their ability to make appropriate use of their knowledge and prior experience of that teacher. Thus informally acquired skills are integrated in performance with knowledge of people which has been mainly acquired by informal and implicit learning. Without such knowledge, the skill dimension of a headteacher’s performance is likely to be of only limited effectiveness.
3. Understanding schools as organisations

This example has been chosen as an area of personal knowledge where theory makes a particularly significant contribution. The experience of myself and my colleagues in teaching masters level courses to mid-career teachers and public service managers has been that many theoretical concepts link easily with people’s experiences of working in organisations and provide frameworks which enable them to make sense of that experience and transform it into useful knowledge for decision-making. When combined with training in qualitative research, they acquire a capability to investigate the nature of organisations more quickly and at greater depth, using other people’s experiences as evidence as well as their own. Their own experience is likely to have been acquired informally and incidentally as in the previous example; but becomes far more useful when set alongside that of other people and when theoretical frameworks are available to help develop more considered and generally recognised analyses. Given the complexity of organisations, different theoretical perspectives are needed as well as multiple sources of evidence. My research on learning at work found strong support for mid-career management qualifications in the finance, engineering and healthcare sectors (Eraut et al., 1998) and several respondents noted without prompting that modules on organisational behaviour had been particularly useful.

We need to recognise, however, that acquiring this useful knowledge is not a simple process. Having relevant prior experience enables managers to quickly appreciate that theories of this kind may help them in their current work and future careers. They then need the time and opportunity to think and talk about it, and gradually expand their personal cognitive framework to accommodate it. They may note that others have interpreted the same theories in different ways and argued about their relative significance. After a while, those theories they find particularly convincing become part of their normal way of looking at organisations, a platform for their future learning. The total learning time involved will ultimately be much greater than that allocated to that particular course module.

Transfer, change and learning

This last example involved the transfer and personalisation of public knowledge about organisational behaviour from an academic to a school context. This was not an event in which managers applied (or failed to apply) a piece of recently learned public knowledge, but a lengthy learning process during which that knowledge was transformed through use. Transfer might also occur when a head of department becomes a deputy headteacher in another secondary school in a different part of the country. Given the change of role, school and location, how much knowledge of schools as organisations would be relevant to the new context and what would be involved in learning to use it? Research indicates
that a theoretical framework would help by suggesting ways of sorting out the similarities and differences between the two schools and reducing the risk of imprudent transfer (i.e. overgeneralisation). The new deputy will need to be aware of the challenge and prepared to learn a lot about the new school before making strategic decisions, then to reinterpret their prior knowledge – both theoretical and practical – in ways that suit the new organisational context. Similar considerations will apply to changes in the community context, pupil culture, individual colleagues and so on. When the contexts are very similar, for example from one governors’ or staff meeting to the next, little further learning may be necessary; but even then circumstances may have been changed by external events. Interpersonal skills, in particular, have to be resituated for every new encounter in the light of one’s best knowledge of the people and circumstances involved. Any performance or management process involves the integration of skill with knowledge of people and situations and often with conceptual knowledge. This knowledge has to be constantly updated, the skills retuned and the action sensitively monitored in case a change of direction is needed. Such integration is rarely recognised in the literature about headteachers’ knowledge, competence and expertise.

Another neglected aspect of change is the amount of unlearning which has to occur. We have already mentioned the inevitable acquisition of unbalanced perspectives of people and situations, as a result of the uncritical way in which informal information is collected, selected and aggregated. Unless this is periodically checked against more carefully collected evidence, inappropriate decisions and behaviour will result; and relationships and understandings will gradually become more difficult to adjust or modify. Routines and habits are even more difficult to change. They are needed to avoid information overload and to cope with busy contexts, so one comes to depend on them. As circumstances change, routines become dysfunctional; and people take shortcuts which save effort but reduce effectiveness, often without being aware of it. Yet abandoning them leads to disorientation and an inability to cope until new routines have been developed to replace them. The problem for headteachers is not only to evaluate and, where necessary, change their own practice but also to facilitate this learning process for all their staff.

The recently introduced National Standards for Headteachers uses the word ‘effective’ nearly 40 times in order to emphasise a commitment to improving pupils’ achievement. But having the will, contrary to popular belief, does not ensure finding the way. What expertise do headteachers need in order to be able to improve their schools? Evidence suggests that there is both a sociopsychological dimension, generic to all organisations, and a technical dimension specific to schools. The implication of my earlier discussion is that expertise is a dynamic capability which constantly changes and develops. Hence school improvement depends on all staff being committed to continuing learning focused on this purpose. My own research (Eraut et al., 1998) suggests that workplace learning arises mainly from the challenge of the work itself and
through interacting with other people (colleagues, customers and clients). Such learning depends on confidence, motivation and capability (knowledge and skills previously acquired), which in turn depend on how they are managed and on the microculture of their immediate work environment.

The key person is the local manager whose management of people and role in establishing a climate favourable to learning, in which people seek advice and help each other to learn quite naturally, is critical for those who are managed.

(Erout, 1998a)

Few schools are organised to support and facilitate this kind of teachers’ learning.

The technical dimension is highly dependent on theories of what constitutes effective teaching, an area where the Standards are not entirely consistent. Sometimes effectiveness appears to be treated as an absolute unproblematic judgement, as when heads are expected to have knowledge and understanding of ‘effective teaching and assessment methods’ (Section 3d) and to ‘secure and sustain effective teaching and learning throughout a school’ (Section 5b). Sometimes effective teaching is more contextualised as, for example, when teachers are expected ‘to employ the most effective approach(es) for any given context and group of pupils’ (Section 2b). In this latter case, the head could not reasonably be expected to know the group of pupils that well nor even the context of the lesson; and would not therefore be in a position to judge the most effective approach, although bad teaching might be more obvious. This distinction is important because the first interpretation implies that knowledge of effective teaching is public propositional knowledge, while the second suggests that it is mainly personal process knowledge. Significantly the contextual interpretation is accompanied by process criteria which could be applied to almost any teaching method: pacing lessons appropriately, using time and resources effectively, extending pupils’ learning and achievement through setting consistent and challenging homework.

The notion of ‘effective methods’ has great political appeal, especially when linked to ideas of evidence-based practice imported from the field of medicine. But not more than 20 per cent of medical decisions and virtually no teaching decisions can be made on the basis of ‘gold standard’ evidence from meta-analyses and randomised control trials. Educational ‘diagnoses’ and ‘treatments’ show so much natural variation that the construct of an ‘effective method’ is highly questionable. Elsewhere the Standards accompany statements about effective practice by discussion of standards of achievement, the use of benchmarks and setting targets; which suggests that effectiveness is to be judged only by the outcomes and not by the method employed. But it is difficult to tell whether it is the method or its application that is effective, which brings us back to a contextual interpretation of effectiveness. This depends more on teacher
expertise than prescribed methods, so heads have to work with teachers to continually develop that expertise. Agreed targets between headteacher and teacher or teacher and pupil may signify rising expectations and confidence in their ability; imposed targets may be perceived as threats and lower their sense of self-efficacy.

Headteachers’ practice and mode of cognition

During the last decade the nature of professional expertise has become increasingly an issue for debate. The traditional academic stance, by no means as dominant as often presented, defines the professional knowledge base in terms of Type A knowledge – public, propositional and grounded in established research traditions. In so far as it is theoretical, the relevant expertise lies with the academicians; in so far as it is empirical, the relevant expertise lies with researchers. The modernist stance, often described as hyper-rational, focuses on competences and achievements. Expertise is attributed to those who achieve good results even though the attribution of such success to individual merit may be highly questionable. Neither approach tells us much about how experts actually do their job. To do that we have to identify and deconstruct the various processes which constitute their practice, then find out what enables them to conduct these processes with (or without) quality and expertise.

Those processes which constitute a manager’s or a professional’s practice can be usefully analysed in terms of four types of sub-process, linked in a variety of sequences and combinations:

i Acquiring situational understanding through collecting and interpreting information about people and situations.

ii Deciding how to respond to this current representation of the situation, both immediately and over a longer period.

iii Activities required for implementing one’s own or other people’s decisions: routine actions, special techniques, giving advice, referral, delegation, further inquiry etc.

iv Meta-processes concerned with directing and controlling one’s own behaviour in accordance with one’s main purpose, whilst also monitoring one’s clients and their environment

(vide Eraut, 1999)

These sub-processes are most often described in the context of a deliberative process in which professionals assess a situation, think of alternative options and their implications, plan an appropriate course of action then modify it in the light of information from ongoing monitoring. This model of practice gives prominence to analytic reasoning; and is favoured both by academics, who see it as an essential framework for research-based practice, and by government who recognise that public defence of policy requires a reasoned approach which is difficult
to criticise. However, this approach is limited by the amount and quality of evidence available.

In a seminal paper, the McMaster University Working Group (1992) on evidence-based medicine argued that: evidence of all kinds should be gathered more systematically and interpreted more critically; the balance between patient evidence, personal experience, theoretical reasoning, research evidence and advice from local experts should be altered to give more weight to systematically gathered patient evidence and research evidence. More systematic observation and recording of patients is needed to construct a valid personal knowledge-base, alongside regular consultation and critical appraisal of the literature. Advice from local experts should be sought (rather than rejected) but used more critically. They also argue that clinicians must be ready to accept and live with uncertainty and to acknowledge that management decisions are often made in the face of relative ignorance of their true impact.

The Government and TTA now advocate this approach for teaching. However, as noted above, the research evidence on the respective merits of different classroom ‘treatment’ is neither available nor likely to become available in the future. While it is clearly desirable to attend to as much classroom-generated evidence as possible, the absence of valid and relevant research imperatives significantly changes the decision-making context from that found in medicine. There are also practical difficulties. Hospital doctors can concentrate on diagnosis and decision-making while relying on healthcare teams to look after their patients and imaging and pathology departments to provide scientific evidence. General Practitioners can refer more complex, urgent or critical cases to hospitals. Teachers are the equivalent of the whole healthcare team (doctors, nurses, scientist, therapists, porters); and there is nobody to mind their classes while they make individual diagnoses of pupils’ learning. Even at school level, where there are strong arguments for collecting evidence about critical issues before making decisions, the allocation of staff time has to be carefully considered when making pre-decisions about the scope and scale of such inquiries.

The alternative for professionals, but not necessarily for managers, is to locate prime authority with acknowledged expert practitioners. Such people become experts as a result of years of experience in a particular domain of professional practice, usually quite specialised. In some professions such experts may need to be very familiar with research, but it is their use of research knowledge rather than their creation of it, that characterises the expert practitioner. It would be wrong to suggest that experts do not use analytic reasoning; but their superior performance will have been primarily constructed through learning from experience and being able to call upon that experience quickly and appropriately. This perspective receives considerable backing from psychological research contrasting novices with experts. A particularly attractive model for many professional practitioners is that of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986). They define skill as an integrative overarching
approach to professional action and identify five stages of skill acquisition: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert. Their model’s early and middle stages involve:

- the development of situational recognition and understanding;
- the development of standard routines which enable one to cope with crowded busy contexts;
- the later abandonment of explicit rules and guidelines as behaviour becomes more automatic; and
- a peaking of the deliberative mode of cognition (not usually very analytic) at the competence stage.

Progression beyond competence is then associated with the gradual replacement of analysis by more intuitive forms of cognition. Their claim that experts make considerable use of rapid decision-making is well substantiated by research (Eraut, 1999); but they do not establish their claim that deliberation has become virtually redundant. Benner (1984) recognises two situations where analytic approaches by experts might be required: when confronted with a situation of which they have no previous experience or when they misdiagnose a situation and then find that events and behaviours are not occurring as expected. Thus it can be argued that the Dreyfus model neglects the self-evaluative dimension of professional work. The gradual development of experience-based intuition may enable a person to become an expert, but without a more explicit evaluative dimension it can become so self-confirming that it slips into decline. Is there not a danger that an almost wholly intuitive model of professional expertise will perpetuate the myth of an almost infallible expert? The problems of sharing intuitive expertise with colleagues or explaining the basis for their ‘expert opinions’ will severely constrain participation in collaborative endeavours, thus minimising their exposure to different, possibly critical, perspectives.

The term deliberation has been used hitherto in the sense of taking time to think about a situation, decision or problem. As Aristotle observed over 2,000 year ago, many practical problems in society require thought but cannot be resolved by logical argument and evidence alone. The ‘real world’ is too complex. Managers need to mull over problems, consult and discuss, then judge the probable best course of action; more likely, they settle for an option good enough for the purpose, even if it might not turn out to have been the best. According to the context, deliberative decision-making may vary from ‘just sorting something out’ to making ‘high stakes’ decisions after a period of careful consideration, consultation, predicting consequences then finally deciding. In this latter context headteachers would normally aspire to that maturity of judgement we sometimes call wisdom. Wisdom implies experience in making difficult decisions, access to multiple perspectives, a balanced viewpoint and an ability to situate the expertise of others in a broader social context. It conveys neither the analytic reasoning of the researcher, nor the confident, intuitive grasp of the expert practitioner, but an ability to deliberate about
issues and problems, to see how different people might be affected and to put them into longer term perspective. Part of the skill of a manager is to recognise which problems can be dealt with fairly quickly by satisficing strategies and which require prolonged attention and more evidence.

The most important variables affecting the time devoted to decision-making are likely to be the significance and complexity of the decision, the timespan during which it has to be made and other demands on the decision-maker’s time. The less the time available, the more headteachers will have to rely on more rapid, intuitive approaches. Figure 1 depicts the effect of time (and indirectly also complexity and busyness) on three of the four types of sub-process identified earlier (Eraut, 1995). Since thinking time is the focus, action itself has been omitted and the thought accompanying action treated as interpretation, decision-making or reflection.

The relationship between time and mode of cognition is probably interactive: shortage of time forces people to adopt a more intuitive approach, while the intuitive routines developed by experience enable people to do things more quickly. Crowded contexts also force people to be more selective with their attention and to process their incoming information more rapidly. Under conditions of rapid interpretation and decision-making, reflectiveness is necessarily intuitive, in accordance with Schon’s (1983) concept of reflection-in-action. But as the time scale expands, the role of meta-processes becomes more complex, expanding beyond self-awareness and monitoring to include the framing of problems, thinking about the deliberative process itself and how it is being handled, searching for relevant knowledge, introducing value considerations, etc.

Headteachers do not start as novices in quite the same way as beginning teachers; but neither, especially at primary level, do they have experience of the headteacher role before their first headship. Many important relationships will have been constructed and major decisions made before significant expertise has
been developed. By then, patterns of work will have been formed which may be considerably less effective than they might have wished, and changing them will require a significant amount of determination and effort. For headteachers to maintain critical control over their own practice they will need to be aware of their habits and routines and their ways of thinking about people and situations, even if they cannot easily explain them (Eraut, 1994). Otherwise they are, in effect, abdicating their responsibility for the outcomes that follow. This is why the self-evaluation dimension of headship is extremely important, as well as being a strong argument for facilitating constructive criticism within the senior management team and governors rather than seeking to avoid uncomfortable or time-consuming debate.

The relationship between capability and performance in a changing context

Another important consideration is the problem for new headteachers in both converting their current capability into competence in a new role and context and converting that competence into performance. When the expected level of performance does not result, there is a natural tendency to look for dispositional factors, such as drive and motivation. But often closer inspection reveals significant factors in the work context which constrain performance. Capacity to perform is affected by the total demands of the job, emotional as well as physical. Headteachers’ performance will depend not only on their expertise but also on their overall workload and the expectations of governors, senior managers, teachers and parents about access to them and about what they ought to be doing. It is easy to forget when formulating standards that the ‘whole job’ role is the most important of all.

This ‘whole job’ role, however, still needs to be seen in the context of the whole management function of the school. Ultimately it is the performance of the school’s management which counts. Some headteachers are much better supported by governors and their management team than others. This is partly their own responsibility but they normally inherit both groups and working conventions, and have little control over the loss of valued people through illness or promotion. Developing the capability of the management team as a whole has to be a major priority, even though it may be periodically upset by changes. Thus, depending on the senior management team’s expertise, the head’s personal role in many of the activities listed in the Standards may vary from ‘do it yourself’ to monitoring and occasionally advising capable colleagues, thus affecting their priorities for time management and professional development.

This emphasis on the ‘whole job’ role of the headteacher and the ‘whole team’ approach to the management function emphasises the over-riding importance of prioritisation and the deployment and development of management expertise. Thus the key requirements for a headteacher are to:

- make an accurate and balanced assessment of the school’s current state and of trends, risks and opportunities;
formulate, through consultation, short- and long-term priorities for action;
ascertain how staff can best attend to the priorities without causing negative
side-effects.

This may entail some staff, including the headteacher, developing new cap-
abilities; and this overall management development plan should determine the
head’s own professional development priorities.

Finally, it should be recognised that government and school policy and prac-
tice change. Views about the relative merits of different types of learning out-
comes will change. So also will views about the teacher’s role and how schools
should be managed. Staff will also have to change their roles or practices
because of internal reorganisation, promotion or new external mandates. What
constitutes competence or expertise today will not be the same tomorrow. Hence
it is important for people to have capabilities which extend beyond the confines
of their current job but may be valuable in future.

Conceptually it is important to distinguish between a head’s capability,
which is individually defined in terms of what that particular person can think
and do, given the appropriate context and opportunity, and the competence
required to be the headteacher of a particular school, which is socially defined
in terms of the performance expected from the holder of that post (Eraut,
1998b). That definition of competence will also change; and in responding to
that change the headteacher will need to call upon or develop additional capa-
bility. Equally important for headteachers in the modern world will be their
ability to redesign their own job in accordance with the changing needs of their
school; and this of course will change what counts as being competent in that
job. Should they not also expect such proactive innovation from others?
Rapidly changing organisations are not only dependent on the current compe-
tence of their staff but also on their additional capabilities and understandings.
These need to be continually developed in the interests of the school’s mission;
but they also need to be properly appreciated and used. Individual capabilities
and understandings relevant to group or whole school issues have to be incorp-
orated into the capabilities and understandings of the school as a whole and its
constituent sub-groups (Eraut, 1997b). Where there is synergy, the potential of
groups will be greater than that of their members; where there is division, strati-
fication or mutual isolation, the group potential will be less. That is what trans-
forms learning professionals into learning groups and learning organisations;
and what headteachers in rapidly changing contexts need to develop in their
schools.

Conclusion

My conclusions from the above analysis of headteachers’ knowledge, practice,
mode of cognition, job priorities and leadership role are that training for new
headteachers should concentrate on:
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

1. Aspects of the management role which can be undertaken only by the headteacher.
4. Understanding the school’s culture and sub-cultures and the symbolic impact of their behaviour and thinking about the promotion (if desired) of cultural change over a period of time.
5. Leadership of the senior management team and sharing duties among them.
6. Their own self-evaluation and continuing professional learning.
7. Supporting and developing managers, groups of staff and learning throughout the school.
8. Organising the administration of the school to give its professional staff thinking time.
9. Strategies for school improvement which take the above into account, and avoiding pressures from documents like the Standards to try to do too much.

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HEADSHIP

Valerie Hall and Geoff Southworth


Introduction

In common with education systems in other parts of the world, school leadership in Britain has gone through a quantum change in the last 10 years. This has been in response to the radical reforms embodied in central government education policies, from the 1988 Education Act onwards. The focus of this paper will be on school leaders in primary and secondary school in Britain. Our intention is to review the literature, particularly that which reports research, deriving mainly from Britain, but making reference to other contexts where appropriate. We will therefore use the terms ‘headteacher’ and ‘headship’ to describe the phenomenon with which we are concerned.

A review of the ‘state-of-the-art’ of headship in the 1990s in Britain has to take the 1988 Education Act as a watershed. In the 1990s, the scale of change throughout the education system makes a review of both primary and secondary headship crucial to our understanding of contemporary school leadership. They can or should no longer be considered in isolation from each other. If in the 1970s the expression of the transformation of the head’s role was in terms of ‘autocrat’ and ‘chief executive’ (Morgan & Hall, 1982), the issue now is, as we shall see, around the extent to which headteachers must choose to be or not to be entrepreneurs; and the extent to which a positive choice inevitably compromises their identity and activity as leading professionals, as well as their ability to be critical of the system of which they are a part. For those who question the desirability of entrepreneurialism in education (e.g. Smyth, 1989; Grace, 1995) an issue for school leaders now is whether they interpret their role as managerialist or emancipatory and how they can most effectively contribute to successful schooling.

The other striking feature in reviewing school leadership in Britain is the continuing absence of research-based analyses of headship in primary and secondary schools. Practitioner accounts and informed commentaries abound, but the empirical base is limited. We have ourselves had the privilege of carrying out extensive research into headship, allowing us the comfort of knowing that
many of our own conclusions are data based (Southworth, 1995a; Hall, 1996). Our intention in this paper is to allow our own and others’ research to lead the identification of issues and findings that can point towards future directions for school leadership as we approach the millennium. These will be considered alongside the continuing debate between academics, practitioners and others about the nature of headship now and in the future.

Although we will focus strongly on research and literature from the past decade, some historical perspective is necessary, not least because most headteachers today were nurtured in yesterday’s schools. Yet our review will show how one of the main challenges to headteachers and aspiring headteachers is in developing the capacity to adapt to an ever-changing scenario without compromising their own and others’ professional and educational values. In other words, they need to be ready for the future but draw on foundations established in their own personal and professional pasts.

The accounts which inform our own version of headship towards the year 2000 fall into three types: research inquiries, mainly using qualitative data collection methods, with a specific focus on school leadership; structured accounts either by or in dialogue with headteachers; research enquiries that include headship but did not have that as the main focus. Our discussion is framed by the radically changing context of schooling leading to a re-conceptualisation of the headship role and the tensions this creates for school heads. Our purpose is to present what can be learned from the accounts that will help us understand what is needed in school leadership come the Millennium. The focus will be first on primary headship, then on secondary headship, enabling us to consider how headship in both phases was conceptualised before and since the national reforms of 1988 were placed on the statute book and implemented.

**Studies of primary headship pre-1988**

The literature and research focusing on primary headteachers is almost entirely made up of small scale studies. The observation that ‘writing and research on the topic remains the province of individuals’ (Coulson, 1990, p. 101) remains as true for the 1990s as for the 1970s and 1980s, because no major funded investigations or national surveys have been conducted.

Prior to 1988, Coulson’s (1976) work on the role of primary heads was among the most important because he developed his ideas over time (Coulson, 1978, 1985, 1986, 1990) and his conceptualisations underpinned the ideas of others who took an interest in leadership in primary schools (e.g. Alexander, 1984; Campbell, 1985).

In the 1970s Coulson drew upon his experience as a deputy head in a large primary school, where he worked with three heads, and his simultaneous research into headship and deputy headship. He argued that the job title of headteacher signalled that they were to be thought of as teachers rather than administrators and that heads had a freedom to set the school’s aims and underlying
philosophy (Coulson, 1976, p. 275). Coulson saw headship as a blend of personal control and moral authority, derived largely from a Victorian conception of headship and which was implicitly gendered. Heads were the pivot and focus of the school and were expected to mould the school ‘in accordance with their own views’ (p. 276). While they acknowledged the teacher’s ‘zone of autonomy inside the class-room’, heads exercised ‘hegemony over matters of general school policy’ (p. 278). Furthermore, since heads often determined the shape of the curriculum, they were responsible for creating other posts of responsibility in the school and for the appointment of staff, heads were often able to determine singlehandedly the structure of the school.

Coulson accepted that heads affected a more benevolent image in the 1970s than they had in the 1950s and 1960s and were more consultative on some matters than formerly, but, nevertheless, the centralised pattern persisted:

At the root of the primary head’s paternalism lies the ego-identification which he normally has with the school. He tends to think of it as ‘his’ in a very special way and therefore to feel a deep sense of personal responsibility for everything and everyone in it.

(p. 285)

According to this interpretation primary heads were pivotal, proprietorial and paternalistic.

In his later work Coulson elaborated on these themes. He argued that in primary schools power and influence were generally seen as personal and individual. Consequently, schools were ‘particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of individuals’ and that the ‘head’s dominance in the school is inimical to the personal growth and professional development of individual teachers’ (Coulson, 1978, pp. 80–81). The issues of development and personal growth became strong themes in his subsequent work, where Coulson suggested ways of modifying the paternal model of headship by advocating a collegial approach to school management (Coulson, 1985) and by attending to the personal and professional development needs of headteachers (Coulson, 1990).

The centrality of headteachers within ‘their’ schools was also noted by Nias (1980). Her longitudinal research into a group of graduate teachers’ views on teaching as a career revealed that many ‘were often frustrated by what they perceived as inefficient management or alienated by dictatorial leadership’ (p. 256). Nias’ study offers a followers’ view of headship and shows that for many teachers, heads are positive or negative significant others. Nias analysed her data in a three-fold typology of leadership and found her teacher respondents favoured a head who set high standards, was involved in the school to high degree, was readily available for discussion, interested in teacher development, gave a lead on school aims and encouraged participation in goal setting and decision making. Such heads Nias classified as initiating in-school structures, being considerate to teacher colleagues and providing a measure of decision decentralisation (p. 260).
Lloyd (1985) used similar categories to investigate the role perceptions of 50 heads and concluded his data showed a move away from a ‘head-centred’ approach. While Lloyd acknowledged that primary heads remained influential and powerful figures in their schools, he reported that over half the heads in his sample saw this as no longer desirable. Yet he also noted that many found it difficult to combine high levels of decision decentralisation with high levels of initiating structure. Lloyd’s study, therefore, may only have shown heads becoming more aware of the need to soften their dominance, but finding it a challenge to achieve in practice. The rhetoric of heads had changed, but the reality of power relations in schools remained unaltered.

This theme of heads sustaining high levels of both staff participation and overall control of the school was evident in the writings of others who prescribed how headship should be conceived (e.g. Whitaker, 1983; Dean, 1987; Bell, 1988). However, what these texts most clearly revealed was the continuing lack of descriptive analyses of primary heads at work.

During the 1980s some studies were published which offered partial descriptions of headship and heads in action. Clerkin (1985) analysed heads’ time diaries and concluded that headship was:

more often about tackling a high intensity of tasks with frequent interruptions rather than a systematic ordering of curricular or organisational programmes based on agreed policies or clearly understood management structures.

(p. 298)

Harvey (1986) examined 32 heads’ intended and actual use of time and concluded that heads need to develop coping strategies to deal with the unexpected (p. 66). Davies (1987) used open-ended observation and diary methods to study four primary heads. He found that each head was at the centre of the school’s information network and that their work days were characterised by brevity, variety and fragmentation, with nearly one quarter of activities undertaken being interrupted (pp. 44–45).

Coulson (1986) also presented a narrative account ‘built firstly upon close knowledge and observation of how a number of heads conduct their work and secondly on what they and their closest colleagues say about what they believe they are doing’ (p. 5). Coulson developed a category analysis of headship, drawing upon Mintzberg (1973) and Hughes’ (1976) ideas. In the light of his analysis Coulson argued that heads and teachers believe that a head’s managerial behaviour should be integrated with and help to realise his or her particular educational and organisational vision (p. 84). Here Coulson applied Bennis’ (1984) notion that vision meant the capacity to create and communicates view of a desired state which induces commitment among organisational workers.

Coulson (1986) also presented his views on the characteristics of successful heads. Successful heads are: goal-oriented; personally secure; proactive; sensi-
tive to the dynamics of power inside and outside their schools; analytic; in charge of the job; tolerant of ambiguity (pp. 85–86).

The move to observational studies was also evident in the Primary Schools Staff Relationships project (Nias et al., 1989). This ethnographic study used the concept of organisational culture to analyse how heads and teachers in five schools worked together. The findings on leadership showed the heads to be central, proprietorial figures. The researchers characterised the heads as the ‘owners’ of their institutions because of their close association with the school and the ways they established a sense of mission for them (pp. 98–99). The heads were described as the founders of the schools’ cultures, since they exemplified and promoted particular educational, social and moral beliefs. Although these heads often behaved in ways similar to those depicted in the time studies and in Coulson’s (1976) work, the significance of the heads’ work lay not only in what they did, but also in the meaning of their behaviour.

In the follow-up research Nias et al. (1992) examined curriculum development in a different set of schools and noted that the heads ‘all worked hard in a variety of ways to secure their staff’s allegiance to their particular visions’ (p. 148). Subsequently, Southworth (1993), reflecting on these two studies, suggested that heads are often motivated to work hard because they are pursuing their own visions. Headship is the licensed promotion of an individual’s professional values (pp. 23–24). For heads this is personally empowering and, along with their positional authority, legitimates their exercise of power in the school.

Mortimore and associates’ (1988) findings on effective junior schools and departments largely support the picture presented so far. The research identified 12 key characteristics of effective schools, the first of which is purposeful leadership of the staff by the headteacher (p. 250). This means the head understanding the school’s needs and being actively involved in the school’s work without exerting total control. Effective heads influenced the teaching strategies of teachers and monitored pupils’ progress and teachers’ records. They ensured pupil records were maintained and were knowledgeable about what went on in classrooms (pp. 250–251). In other words, effective heads are centrally involved in the school.

This outline was congruent with several ‘official’ prescriptions for headship [e.g. Department of Education and Science (DES), 1978, 1985; Inner London Education Authority, 1985]. It also continues the pattern that headship involves two potentially opposed dimensions. On the one hand, heads are powerful and controlling figures. On the other, they need to involve colleagues and create a measure of organisational unity (Southworth, 1987). While the duality of participation and control was promoted, the fact that for some heads it can be a dilemma—pulling them in opposing directions or difficult to reconcile—was barely recognised.

Taken together these studies show four things. First, that headship was strongly concerned with organisational power, with heads being key players in their schools’ power relations. Second, apart from some limited attention to the
personal aspects of headship, the work was largely conceived in terms of functions and tasks. In large measure an instrumental view of headship prevailed which relied upon a bureaucratic and managerial rationality. Third, the great majority of the writing and research was conducted by males, so that a gendered construction of headship was sometimes implied or remained unexamined. Acker’s (1988) study of a female head at work is the only antidote to this trend. Nevertheless, Acker notes the centrality of this headteacher and how she performed ‘a key role in shaping the values of the school’ (p. 32). Fourth, in research terms, while some observational studies were beginning to be presented, no close-up, sustained studies of headteachers at work were conducted and published.

**Studies of primary headship post-1988**

Southworth’s (1995a) year-long ethnographic case study of a male headteacher at work during the 1988–1989 school year used data collected by participant observation and interviews. The study showed the head ‘at the centre of the school, personally involved and closely associated with almost every aspect of it’ (p. 148). The head was pivotal and powerful. Although he was considerate to others and consulted and encouraged staff participation, this was not at the expense of his control. Indeed, ‘his control pervaded the school’ (p. 150) and he dominated the school.

Southworth explains this head’s domination not in terms of role theory, or because of positional authority alone, but because power and domination were part of his professional identity (p. 150). At length (pp. 157–181) Southworth argues that organisational norms about power relations and decision centralisation become sedimented in teachers’ and heads’ professional practices and understandings and so become part of their occupational selves.

This case study is especially pertinent here because one of the reasons Southworth focused on identity was because the national reforms, which began to be introduced during the year of the fieldwork, were seen as threatening the head’s occupational self. This head saw his work as the transmission of his educational beliefs to the staff and he feared the arrival of the National Curriculum would cause him to lose control of his curricular vision, while Local Management of Schools would diminish his professional leadership and increase his administrative role (pp. 119–125). In short, the national reforms were a major challenge to this head’s approach to headship and a profound threat to his sense of self.

Other studies noted how the national reforms increased the tension between the head-as-teacher and the head-as-manager. Mortimore & Mortimore (1991) reported that primary headteachers were having to spend much more time on management (p. 125) and noted in the Chief Inspector’s annual report (1991), that Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (HMI) detected signs that management and administrative duties were beginning ‘to take their toll’ (p. 8, para 48) on the curricular leadership of primary heads.

Alexander et al. (1992) also acknowledged the changing nature of headship, but argued that heads should take a lead in ensuring high quality provision, mon-
itoring teaching and learning and providing ‘a vision of what their schools should become’ (p. 47).

Webb’s (1994) survey of 50 schools across 13 Local Education Authorities (LEAs), showed that headship had altered in some ways, but not others. While there was more to manage and administer (see also Bolam et al., 1993), the long standing ‘expectation at the level of national policy that heads should be curriculum leaders’ continued unaltered (see Webb & Vulliamy, 1996, p. 139).

The notion of continuity and change in the role is evident in two other studies. Southworth (1995b) interviewed 10 heads about their work in the 1990s. He used these experienced heads’ first hand knowledge of headship before 1988 to compare and contrast with their work in the mid 1990s. Three major role continuities were identified.

- The persistence of work patterns. The heads continued to deal with many things at once, interruptions, variety and fragmentation (p. 25).
- Ego-identification. These heads felt personally responsible for ‘their’ schools. If anything the increased accountabilities (through publication of results and inspection reports) had strengthened the heads’ sense of responsibility (p. 25).
- Power. The heads readily spoke about their influence, authority and control, clearly recognising they were powerful and describing themselves as resident inspectors of their schools’ performance (p. 27).

The role changes included:

- an intensification of the work;
- more management and school maintenance tasks;
- more politics and diplomacy because they were networking and liaising with parents and governors and dealing with more ‘players’ and stakeholders;
- more of a public role (pp. 25–27).

Overall the changes had altered the balance between being a head and being a headteacher, because the increase in management was apparently accompanied by a decrease in teaching. The changes generally took the form of quantitative shifts in the work. There was more to do: more players to liaise and consult with (e.g. parents, governors, agencies); more meetings; more administration because of increased site management and budgeting being devolved to the school.

However, one exception to this pattern was the introduction of a national system of school inspections. The 1992 Education Act established the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) to manage the inspection of every school in England and Wales over a 4 year time scale. Schools are inspected by a team of external inspectors who produce a public report for parents, governors and the staff on the quality of the school’s work and the pupils’ achievements. For the
heads in this study (and in our view for most heads whether primary or secondary phase headteachers) school inspections were the contemporary issue and change. They were the major preoccupation of these heads, whether they had been inspected or were preparing for one.

There are many reasons why inspections were the predominant issue for these heads. They were concerned about the validity of the inspectors’ judgements and how these would impact on the school’s reputation. Some were critical of the inspection process, regarding it as only a ‘snapshot’ of the school. However, it was also, the case that being closely associated with their schools these heads were acutely sensitive to how the school’s report would reflect on them individually. In other words, the inspection was not only an external audit of the school’s strengths and weaknesses, it was also, because of the head’s strong identification with the school, a professional and personal assessment of themselves. The school’s inspection was tacitly understood as a public examination of themselves as headteachers (pp. 22–23).

A major change in headship, therefore, is that in the 1990s heads are guaranteed that their schools will be inspected and the report published. The meaning of this exercise for primary heads is that directly and indirectly their school leadership, their ways of doing headship are now being judged and made public. Moreover, some heads see the inspection process as a major, possibly the most significant, test of their professional credibility. Furthermore, it is a test both in terms of how other colleagues and stakeholders see them and, most sensitive of all, how a head comes to regard her/his self. For many primary heads when the school is inspected it is not so much that there is a lot at stake as that the head sees her/himself as going to the stake. Accountability for heads has altered dramatically.

Menter et al. (1995) used data from 12 heads and also perceived headship in the 1990s to be a blend of old and new approaches (p. 309). Most noticeably, while there have been significant changes in working practices, the centrality of the head remained as clear as ever. Their conclusion that it is ‘heads who are still carrying the can’ (p. 311) echoes much of the foregoing.

While Webb’s (1994) research was among the first to highlight the theme of continuity and change, latterly Webb & Vulliamy (1996) have challenged the appropriateness of such a duality. They see it as unreasonable to expect heads to take on more and more executive tasks while simultaneously sustaining high levels of curriculum leadership (p. 139). Moreover:

Given this unrealistic and unmanageable workload, headteachers have to make choices about their priorities based on the size, staffing levels and expertise in their schools. An enormous variety in these contextual factors was revealed in our sample schools, suggesting the need for management advice to develop a range of approaches which recognise that the work of primary headteachers should differ in contrasting circumstances.

(pp. 139–140)
This call for a more differentiated awareness of headship is significant. Little account is made of the diversity of school contexts and circumstances in large sections of the literature focusing on headship. This is especially true of advice and prescription emanating from central government and its agencies. The differences which can exist because of variation in school size, type and location need to be emphasised and their implications more thoroughly examined, otherwise writing about headship may remain too general and become unconvincing to practitioners because it does not recognise nor reflect the individual contextual factors they face.

Another reason why headship research remains undifferentiated is the lack of attention paid to gender differences. Although awareness has been signalled in some studies, only Hall’s (1996) study of three women primary heads, alongside her enquiries into three women secondary heads, has begun to explore how they approached headship. Her research raises important questions about leadership, collaboration, entrepreneurship and ethics:

A picture emerges of women heads enacting strong leadership within a collaborative framework. In spite of this, the women heads (in common with men and women in the studies by Southworth and Grace) were firmly committed to the belief that sharing leadership still required them to take the lead when appropriate, including having a personal vision for the school. They saw themselves (and were seen) as key players co-ordinating, developing and using others’ efforts to the benefit of the school’s purpose.

Hall’s research suggests that we are at a relatively early point in understanding the subtleties of headship. Analysis through the lens of gender may help us to identify some of these differences and so too will other ways of looking at headship. While an outline of primary headship has now been drawn, the pattern and textures of headship need to be further explored and a richer set of portraits developed which capture the range of approaches with greater perspicacity than at present.

What we can say at this juncture is that primary headship in the 1990s has become more complex and challenging than formerly. There has been an increase in the number of tasks, the network of stakeholders and communications with them and others have expanded, while the responsibilities and accountabilities have sharpened. Heads appear to have responded to the changes by taking on more and more, hence their work has intensified and their work hours increased. Yet, while they are doing more, and in some respects doing some new things, there does not appear to have been a wholesale change of approach to headship, since they remain powerful figures in their schools. Although aspects of primary headship have changed, one of its strongest and most notable features endures.
Studies of secondary headship pre-1988

Writing in the early 1970s and drawing on his doctoral study of the role of the secondary head, Hughes kicks off the debate about school headship in transition by quoting suggestions that school headship is an obsolete institution which should be transformed, dismembered or abolished (Hughes, 1972, p. 34). Twenty five years on, headship is still centre stage, neither dismembered nor abolished but definitely transformed. Reviewing the research and debate over the past 25 years enables us to track the nature of that transformation and identify what headship looks like as the century draws to a close. Hughes concluded from his research that, however strong the push for more democratic, participative procedures, the head would continue to be ‘in a very real sense, the focus and pivot of his (sic) school’ (p. 40). Later Hughes elaborated his dual role model for leadership in professionally staffed organisations, in which the ‘chief executive’ is also considered the ‘leading professional’ (Hughes, 1976). Closely interdependent, the head as chief executive is primarily concerned with allocative and coordinating functions within the school and relationships with the governing body and others external to the school. As leading professional, the head’s concern is predominantly with the professional guidance of staff, teaching and counselling within the school and acting as spokesperson, with involvement in professional activities outside the school (Hughes, 1985, p. 279). Hughes saw the distinction between these two roles and the need for their integration as fundamental to a coherent, situated model of headship that took account of the tensions between the ‘instrumental’ (task) and ‘expressive’ (consideration) dimensions of the job.

In spite of the strong lead offered by Hughes, neither of these sets of tensions was fully addressed in the research projects that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s. Instead, research was concerned to establish the empirical base for understanding the tasks of headship, particularly as these informed first the selection of secondary heads, then their development as school managers. Lyons’ (1974) research into the administrative tasks of heads and senior staff in large secondary schools resulted in Heads’ Tasks: a handbook of secondary school administration (Lyons, 1976), which subsequently informed many of the management training programmes set up by the Department of Education and Science in the 1980s. From this point on, research into secondary headship in the 1980s had a conspicuously instrumental purpose. Simultaneously the boundaries between management in education and management elsewhere became increasingly blurred and the role of secondary headship increasingly defined in terms of the management competencies that are seen to characterise other leadership roles (Mintzberg, 1973; Boyatzis, 1982). Subsequent research by Early (1992) and Esp (1993) contributed towards the legitimation of competency-based approaches to headship, in spite of the narrowing vision of school leadership that these represented.

Continuing this theme, Jirasinghe & Lyons’ (1996) research-based analysis
of heads’ tasks and personality factors is the most recent attempt to use job analysis techniques to document the skills and qualities associated with effective headship, to enable an objective and accurate assessment to be made of a head’s job performance. Their sample of 255 heads across England and Wales, representing a variety of types of schools, phases of education and experience of headship, results in a profile of ‘the competent head’ as she or he needs to be at the end of the century (Jirasinghe & Lyons, 1996). The starting and finishing point for the authors is that school heads must develop the use of a range of management skills and behaviours if they are to deal effectively with current reforms. Challenging earlier views such as Hughes’, they claim:

the latter may be far removed from those headteacher attributes and skills that have emerged from much previous research into school management, e.g. the head’s functions polarized into professional and administrative leadership.

(p. 7)

Their research enables them to draw up a list of competencies, based on the use of two major questionnaires (Work Profiling System and Occupational Personality Questionnaire) and heads’ self-reports. They found as many differences within groups (e.g. of men) as between groups (e.g. of men and women), but at least their research embodied a specific gender focus and allowed them to make substantiated claims about similarities and differences between men and woman heads. They also found few differences between primary and secondary heads, leading them to conclude:

Thus the majority of dissimilarities observed are likely to be a reflection of gender differences between male and female heads and their preferred ways of managing rather than attributable to a fundamental distinction in the way primary and secondary schools are organized and run.

(p. 65)

Their findings reflect the continuing tensions embodied in the head’s role, which they express as dualities of being ‘strongly affiliative and not affiliative’, ‘strongly democratic and strongly controlling’, ‘caring and not caring’, ‘change oriented and not change oriented’, ‘relaxed and not relaxed’, ‘critical and not critical’ and ‘having emotional control and not having emotional control’. Such nebulous conclusions sit uncomfortably in a study that claims a positivistic approach to data collection.

However, both the focus of Jirasinghe and Lyons’ research and its conclusions show how far the understanding of heads’ tasks has come since 1983. Then the POST Project, funded by the DES to look at the selection of secondary headteachers, was forced to construct a theoretical job description in the absence
of job descriptions in all but one LEA. At that time there was no demonstrable relationship between the theoretical view of headship and secondary headship as practised. A subsequent study of Headteachers at Work (Hall et al., 1986) confirmed many of Lyons’ earlier findings about the brevity, discontinuity and people intensive character of heads’ tasks. Drawing on Mintzberg’s analyses of managerial work (Mintzberg, 1973) the intention of Headteachers at Work was to describe the head’s role based on what heads do rather than what they or theories say they do. Fifteen heads were observed at their daily work, four of them in depth on a regular basis for a year. The findings were reported in terms of commonalities in headship performance, contrasting interpretations of headship, LEAs and headship practice, secondary headship and public policy expectations and headship theory and practice. Referring to an earlier (single case) study of headship by Richardson (1973), the authors confirmed the continuing uncertainty about the boundaries of the head’s role and subsequent difficulties in the exercise of authority by those in leadership positions. By the 1990s, as we shall see, the demands of educational reforms led by the need for schools to become self-managing have forced heads to clarify the division of duties between themselves, their senior and middle manager colleagues and other staff.

Other research in the 1980s reflected the interest in tasks and competencies, which was itself a mirror of the increasing concern (backed by funding) with heads as managers as well as leaders and leading professionals. Jenkins’ (1985) study of the job perceptions of senior managers in schools and manufacturing industry also drew heavily on Mintzberg’s ideas and informed his later commentary on headship, Getting It Right: a handbook for successful school leadership (Jenkins, 1991). The fact that the majority of the research projects on headship before 1988 led to prescriptive handbooks indicates the predominantly instrumental purpose of the research, particularly where government funding was involved. Critical perspectives on secondary headship, examining its relationship to the policy framework within which heads operate were, in the UK at least, still to come.

Two other research projects which demonstrated a primary concern with the ‘reality’ of secondary headship, were completed before the 1988 watershed. Weindling & Earley’s (1987) study of newly appointed secondary heads had two components: large scale national surveys of new heads, more experienced heads and LEAs and 16 case studies in which a large number of interviews were conducted with the heads and their staff, over the heads’ first 2 years in post. In common with other studies at the time the conclusions were accompanied by recommendations, focusing on four groups: deputies wishing to become heads; INSET providers; new and experienced heads; and LEAs. Many of those recommendations are now part of the Teacher Training Agency’s rhetoric (improve preparation for headship, tailor training to management development needs, provide planned induction for new heads). Others, such as recognising the value of Senior Management Teams, have become part of most secondary heads’ repertoires, albeit with different manifestations. Recent research by Wallace &
Hall (1994) shows how secondary heads have as much to lose as gain when they commit themselves and colleagues to a team approach to managing the school. The Senior Management Teams in the study were the brainchild of the heads, who played a critical role in creating them and promoting a shared culture of teamwork. Inevitably there were clashes between this culture and the heads’ decisions at times to take over the leadership role.

Torrington & Weightman’s (1989) *The Reality of School Management* is based on the findings of a research project in 24 maintained secondary schools in eight local authorities. They interpreted the surprise they encountered at their intention to study managers other than the head as an indication of the ‘extraordinary centrality of the Headteacher in British schools’ (p. 135). Rather than reducing their puzzlement about this centrality, their research confirmed their belief about the head’s role as a main impediment to improving school organization (p. 136). Providing examples of heads’ power and good practices, they use the research to make prescriptions for school management that echo the management gurus so influential in the 1980s, such as Peters & Waterman (1982). These include the head as ‘the mover of the mission’ and ‘manager of the boundary’ (p. 143).

**Studies of secondary headship post-1988**

These attempts by researchers to clarify the role of the head in ways that would be useful to government and other paymasters were superseded after 1988 by the government’s own prescriptions for the role and functions of headteachers and the clear policy framework in which they and others were expected to operate (Hall, 1997b). Most of the studies appearing after 1988 have been undertaken in the spirit of collegiality and intellectual curiosity, their format justified by changing views of what is methodologically appropriate. Ribbins & Marland (1994) capture these changes well in *Headship Matters*, in which they report conversations with seven secondary school headteachers. In their view, what we know of headship from current accounts ‘relates to a bygone age’ and that knowledge is based on accounts that present headteachers as ‘one-dimensional creatures’ (p. 4). They conclude that to answer current questions about the role of the contemporary headteacher needs not just more research, but new methods of research. Most importantly, it needs to be contextualised in three main ways: as a situated perspective, i.e. give full access to the views and actions of the headteachers involved across a representative range of issues and events; as a contextualised perspective, i.e. within the context of the views of heads’ significant others and the community of the school; as a contextualised perspective in action, i.e. explore what heads say in the context of what they do (p. 6). Ribbins’ own research looking at the personal, professional and managerial attitudes of more than 30 secondary heads has involved him in all three levels described here. Working closely with the head of the largest comprehensive school in the UK, Ribbins has modelled an approach to understanding headship in which the
head becomes both the principal subject of the research and also a full partner within it (Ribbins, 1996, p. 258).

His is not the only study to emphasise the importance of the ‘meaning’ of heads’ behaviour for themselves and others, captured mainly through their own words. Mortimore & Mortimore (1991) allow eight secondary heads to present their account of their school and its community, how the school is managed and their unique and personal reflections on headship. Summing up the issues that arise from the heads’ accounts, they conclude on a positive note. These heads have survived the heat, developed their skills and are ready to take their schools into the new order (p. 172). They make a distinction between newer heads welcoming the freedom to use resources as they wish and established headteachers missing the security of an LEA taking care of financial and staffing aspects (p. 165). Similarly Hustler et al. (1995) have produced an edited volume of secondary heads and educational commentators in dialogue. Valuable though such inquiries are in representing individual heads’ views, their contribution to understanding headship is limited by the absence of theoretical perspectives and methodological rigour. The picture of headship that emerges is still predominantly first level. This shift in emphasis in our ways of knowing about headship from outside to inside or from characteristics to characters’, as Hodgkinson clearly quoted in Ribbins (1996, p. 260), echoes the organising principle in research in which we have ourselves been engaged. Hall’s in-depth study of six women heads and Southworth’s research-based account of a primary school head represent attempts to provide the kind of contextualised account in action that Ribbins has called for. The conclusions about headship in both studies are grounded in methodologies that involve the head as co-enquirer and theoretical frameworks that help both explain and challenge the findings. They are part of what Gronn (1996, p. 25) calls ‘a new world order in the study of headship’ which is about:

... more and better leader-watching or on-looking; longitudinal, naturalistic and biographical investigations, particularly the latter, to better enrich knowledge of where leadership comes from and to ascertain what leading and following look like when scrutinised in any depth.

Carried out between 1992 and 1995, Hall’s study represents the most recent attempt to research systematically the nature of heads’ responses to educational reforms. The description of headship that emerges shows how some heads are dealing with the constraints and demands of government policies and making choices about how these will be managed to ensure their schools are ‘successful’ by whatever criteria they decide are important.

A feature of Hall’s study was the attention paid to a wider range of factors than is usual, including life histories and gender, as well as the use of a wider range of methodologies including interviews and observation. A triple metaphor of power, culture and gender was used to frame the interpretation of research
findings. These were compared with those of Grace’s (1995) study based on interviews with 88 secondary and primary heads in England. Both studies found heads committed to the belief that sharing leadership still required them to take the lead when appropriate, including having a personal vision for the school. In Hall’s study, the women secondary heads’ actions for achieving these purposes were collaborative rather than directive, but within a conception of the head’s role that included clarifying the direction and ensuring people were reminded of where they had agreed to go. As women heads they shared most of the characteristics of Jenkins’ (1991, p. 164) ‘transforming post-heroic leaders’. Summing up in a word their own leadership styles, they talked of being ‘exemplars’, ‘motivators’, ‘interpreters’, ‘opportunists’, ‘reflectors’, ‘facilitators’. Like the heads in Evetts’ (1994) study of Becoming A Secondary Headteacher, the women heads’ formal careers are shown as intricately embedded in their private lives and earlier childhood and work experiences. Their ‘subjective’ careers are set alongside their symbolic leadership behaviour, approaches to managing staff, use of power generally and specifically with governors and senior colleagues.

Conclusions

In this section we shall highlight the major themes which are common to the studies of headship in the two school sectors we have reviewed. There are seven themes to note.

First, the central importance of the headteacher is a longstanding theme. It appears in a number of guises, but most compellingly in the school effectiveness research which claims to show that heads make a difference to the schools they lead. The idea that powerful and visionary heads enhance the school’s effectiveness (see Bolam et al., 1993) is thus a continuing belief in the research and the teacher profession generally. Yet beyond this assertion surprisingly little else is known. For example, it remains unclear in what ways heads actually influence and shape their schools. School effectiveness studies and more recently school improvement commentaries have offered some broad ideas about the nature of effective leadership, but these are relatively generalised and superficial. Longitudinal and observational studies of heads increasing the effectiveness of the schools they lead are presently lacking. Hence, we do not have a sophisticated understanding of how heads make a difference and how this might vary according to the school’s context, size, development needs and the head’s professional background, experience, skills and knowledge. Although the centrality of the head is widely acknowledged, it has not been examined in very much depth.

Second, while heads are central players, there are strong indicators that this is altering. The belief in heads monopolising leadership is at the very least softening. Heads now speak less of ‘my’ school and refer more commonly to ‘our’ school. Also, there is an increasing reliance on shared leadership, most evident in the rise in senior management teams, assistant headship, as against deputy headship, and with the promotion in some LEAs (e.g. Birmingham) of leadership at
all levels. This move to a more distributed pattern of leadership might also signal increased complexity in school leadership where the challenges are now so great no individual can meet the demands by her/himself. It might also imply that the volume of tasks has expanded so much that there has to be a corresponding growth in the number of leaders to deal with them. Furthermore, this trend might show that heads are now striving to develop more leaders in their schools. The use of management teams reflects heads’ attempts to improve the effectiveness of their schools by increasing the power of colleagues’ contributions. Such heads may be seeking to empower colleagues by transforming the nature of leadership in the school.

Notions of empowerment and transformational leadership suggest that heads and others interested in school leadership are still wrestling with the perennial challenge of establishing and sustaining a balance between, on the one hand, control of the organisation and, on the other, staff participation and involvement. It appears that there is presently a trend towards increased levels of participation, but whether this is because heads believe it is necessary for pragmatic reasons or because heads in the 1990s have increasingly strong principles about democratic organisation and wish to create schools which are communities is uncertain.

The value of the triple metaphor that informed Hall’s study was in raising issues that relate to the current pessimistic debate about the transformation of headship in response to government policies, into simple technical formulations for making schools effective as organisations (Grace, 1995, p. 26). For Grace, this transformation represents the reconstruction of headship over time from moral to market relation terms. Challenging Grace’s view that educational entrepreneurialism necessarily means managerialism, Hall proposes the possibility of heads being new educational entrepreneurs. As such, they demonstrate a model of educational entrepreneurialism that seeks to preserve the integrity of the educational enterprise by using rather than being used by government reforms. Whether this meets the demands of those who call for ‘critical leadership’ is still a matter of debate. Grundy (1993, p. 174) defines critical leadership in terms of ‘emancipatory praxis’. She says:

Emancipatory praxis is not a set of behaviours in which an educational leader can be trained. This form of praxis is grounded in a critical consciousness which will manifest itself in action that will always be becoming emancipatory. The question for the educational leader is not, ‘Am I emancipated and how can I emancipate my staff?’ but ‘How can I engage in forms of critical, self-reflective and collaborative work which will create conditions so that the people with whom I work can come to control their knowledge and practice?’

However headship is described from the perspective of critical theorists, the reality is that the task load has increased and the character of the work has
changed significantly in some respects. Heads have had to adapt to the ideology of an ‘educational market’. The increase in competition between schools for pupils has, in part, led to a concomitant need for heads to be entrepreneurial in promoting the school and securing resources for it. Without doubt, the ‘selling of schools’ has advanced.

At the same time, as this third theme shows, heads have become more overtly aware of their schools’ levels of success. Several factors have contributed to this move, including: the inspection of schools; the introduction of school league tables based upon test and exam results; value-added analyses of pupils’ learning gains; an upsurge in interest in using pupil achievement data and management information systems. All these have caused heads to monitor and evaluate trends in their schools’ performance.

Moreover, as heads begin to take a harder and increasingly evidence-based view of the school the character of their professional leadership changes. Some studies suggest that heads in the 1990s are finding it more difficult to teach, because of demands on their time. These heads do not see themselves as leading by classroom example, rather, they are now acting as the school’s resident inspector and leading school reviews. In effect, their professional leadership has been recast. They are apparently taking a stronger interest in outcomes and the school’s ‘product’.

These three themes combine and suggest a fourth, which is that heads are increasingly dealing with educational change. They are, of course, also responding to change in a wider sense, for example, the revolution represented by the explosion of information technology, the globalisation of corporations and markets and the influence of the European Union upon life and work in the UK. However, in terms of educational change heads have had to make quite considerable shifts in their assumptions. For instance, while many contemporary headteachers entered the profession and made their first career steps at a time when political intervention was relatively gentle and distant, over the last decade they have had to adjust to central government applying structural solutions through top-down regulations (Fullan, 1993, p. 2). In other words, educational change has changed. As Handy (1989, p. 5) says, change is not what it used to be. While change is now everpresent, in recent years it has, in education, become discontinuous. Discontinuous change means policy initiatives are unlikely to be ‘more of the same only better’ (p. 6). Thus, heads have become accustomed to policy developments disturbing established structures and creating turbulence in schools (e.g. the introduction of school performance league tables; the advent of school inspections). Moreover, such changes powerfully affect how teachers’ and headteachers’ work is organised.

Headship, therefore, is less to do with managing a steady-state school organisation and more to do with anticipating and responding to new initiatives, challenges and opportunities. Some regard such change as learning (Brighouse, 1996, p. 77) and connect it to notions of learning organisations and life-long learning for all (see also Fullan, 1993). Presently we are only on the brink of
exploring, let alone understanding, how leaders establish and sustain learning schools. However, the constancy of change in schools and society and the acceleration of educational developments means that headteachers need to be: future-oriented; capable and sophisticated managers of multiple changes; able to live with change in proactive and productive ways; aware of the professional learning needs of themselves and the school’s staff; active in orchestrating development activities which support staff and which advance the school’s capacity to improve.

Fifth, there is a lack of differentiation in the studies examining headship. Although there is some appreciation of differences between school sectors, there is little awareness of differentiation within them. Yet there are important issues to explore in terms of the effects of differences in school size and school type (e.g. country, denominational and grant maintained schools; nursery, infant, first, junior, primary, middle, comprehensive, high, upper, grammar) within the same phase of education.

The other important area of differentiation relates to gender. Understanding the ways in which women and men headteachers interpret and enact school leadership is not about highlighting differences and identifying the characteristics of one gender as superior to the other. As Hall (1997a) argues elsewhere, understanding the impact of gender on life in schools and colleges is an essential component of our ways of knowing about educational leadership. Using a gender perspective creates new possibilities for exploring the lives of men and women who teach, manage and lead in education. As researchers into headship we have both concluded that educational leadership is firmly rooted in professional identity. Gender, in turn, is a crucial component of that identity. Future research into headship that fails to take this and the gendered nature of schools and colleges into account is likely to be incomplete.

Sixth, we have yet to fully understand the development of headteachers. For example, what are the lessons to be learned from experienced heads? What are the key ingredients of the process of headteacher maturation? Longitudinal studies are needed to begin to uncover the changes that occur as heads move from their first headship into their second and third headships. We also need to map what are the critical incidents and epiphanies in their professional development and understanding. If it is true that heads are central players in their schools’ success, then we urgently need to embark on studies which illuminate how they can be supported, challenged and developed into highly effective headteachers.

These six themes in the literature add up to a seventh. While there has been some sustained interest and research into headship over the past 25 years, the research has been limited in both scale and scope. We have some interesting and insightful studies on which to draw, but the absence of larger surveys and longitudinal studies means that there is much more to investigate. Furthermore, as the character of headship changes, the earlier studies will become redundant. In terms of research into headship in the UK, we are probably, at best, only approaching the end of the beginning in our understanding of headship. We need more research.
into the topic, new methodologies and more sophisticated reflections and understandings.

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THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOL

Kenneth Leithwood and Doris Jantzi


Abstract

Most school restructuring initiatives assume significant capacity development on the part of individuals, as well as whole organizations; they also depend on high levels of motivation and commitment to solving the substantial problems associated with the implementation of restructuring initiatives. Transformational approaches to leadership have long been advocated as productive under these conditions, and evidence suggests that transformational practices do contribute to the development of capacity and commitment. Much less evidence is available, however, about whether these socio-psychological effects actually result in organizational change and enhanced organizational outcomes. Survey data from an achieved sample of 1,762 teachers and 9,941 students in one large school district were used to explore the relative effects of transformational leadership practices on selected organizational conditions and student engagement with school. Results demonstrated strong significant effects of such leadership on organizational conditions, and moderate but still significant total effects on student engagement.

Most school reform initiatives assume significant capacity development on the part of individuals, as well as whole organizations. Efforts to reform instruction encompassed in the “teaching for understanding” movement (e.g. Ball and Rundquist, 1993), for example, often require teachers to:
... think of subject-matter content in new ways ... [be] much more attentive and responsive to the thinking of students ... and [become] more adventurous in their thinking.

(Putnam and Borko, 1997, p. 1229)

Initiatives such as this one also depend on high levels of motivation and commitment on the part of school staffs to solving the often complex problems associated with their implementation. “Reform documents”, Putnam and Borko point out, “stop short of offering concrete images and prescriptions for what this new reformed teaching should be like”. This assertion could be made for most reform initiatives. As a consequence, whether a reform initiative actually improves the quality of education or simply becomes another “fatal remedy” (Seiber, 1981) hinges on the work of implementors. And the extent to which they do this work depends a great deal on their commitments and capacities.

Transformational approaches to leadership have long been advocated as productive under conditions fundamentally the same as those faced by schools targeted for reform (Yukl, 1994; Leithwood, 1994). Considerable evidence suggests that transformational practices do contribute to the development of capacity and commitment (e.g. Yammarino et al., 1998). Much less evidence is available, however, about whether these socio-psychological effects actually result in organizational change and enhanced organizational outcomes, especially in school contexts (for a recent review of this evidence, see Leithwood et al., 1996): exploring this question was our purpose in this study.

Framework

This is the third in a series of studies concerned with the effects of different forms and sources of leadership using two comparable, relatively large data bases (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998, 1999). Each study in the series has been guided by a framework consisting of the same mediating and dependent variables but focused on a different independent (leadership) variable. According to this framework, the influence of leadership on student engagement with school is mediated by both school and classroom level conditions. School conditions influence student engagement directly, as well as indirectly through their influence on classroom conditions. Family educational culture is a variable which directly influences not only student engagement, but school conditions, as well.

Transformational leadership

Part of a cluster of related approaches termed “new leadership” by Bryman (1992), transformation leadership only recently has become the subject of systematic empirical inquiry in school contexts. As has been pointed out, this approach to leadership fundamentally aims to foster capacity development and higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals on the part of
leaders’ colleagues. Increased capacities and commitment are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985).

Authority and influence associated with this form of leadership are not necessarily allocated to those occupying formal administrative positions, although much of the literature adopts their perspectives. Rather, power is attributed by organization members to whomever is able to inspire their commitments to collective aspirations, and the desire for personal and collective mastery over the capacities needed to accomplish such aspirations.

Current educational leadership literature offers no unitary concept of transformational leadership. Kowalski and Oates (1993), for instance, accept Burns’ (1978) original claim that transformational leadership represents the transcendence of self-interest by both leader and led. Dillard (1995, p. 560) prefers Bennis’ (1959) modified notion of “transformative leadership – the ability of a person to reach the souls of others in a fashion which raises human consciousness, builds meanings and inspires human intent that is the source of power”. Leithwood (1994) used another modification of Burns, this one based on Bass’ (1985) two-factor theory in which transactional and transformational leadership represent opposite ends of the leadership continuum. Bass maintained that the two actually can be complementary. Leithwood identified six factors that make up transformational leadership. Hipp and Bredeson (1995), however, reduced the factors to five in their analysis of the relationship between leadership behaviors and teacher efficacy. Gronn (1996) notes the close relationship, in much current writing, between views of transformational and charismatic leadership, as well as the explicit omission of charisma from some current conceptions of transformational leadership.

The model of transformational leadership developed from our own research in schools, including factor analytic studies, describes transformational leadership along six dimensions: building school vision and goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; symbolizing professional practices and values; demonstrating high performance expectations; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood et al., 1999). Each dimension is associated with more specific leadership practices and the problem-solving processes used by transformational leaders also have been described (Leithwood and Steinbach, 1995).

Most models of transformational leadership are flawed by their underrepresentation of transactional practices (which we interpret to be “managerial” in nature). Such practices are fundamental to organizational stability. For this reason, we have recently added four management dimensions to our own model based on a review of relevant literature (Duke and Leithwood, 1994). These dimensions, also measured in this study, include: staffing, instructional support, monitoring school activities, and community focus.

There is a small but compelling body of empirical evidence concerning the effects of this form of leadership on a wide array of organizational and student outcomes when exercised by principals (Leithwood et al., 1996). Our study con-
tributes to this literature in two ways. First, the study examined the effects of transformational practices exercised by those not only in administrative roles, potentially a distributed form of transformational leadership. Second, the study focused on an especially important student outcome, student engagement, for which there is no prior evidence of leadership effects.

School conditions

Studies that inquire only about the direct effects of school leadership on student outcomes tend to report weak or inconclusive outcomes, whereas studies that include mediating and/or moderating variables in their designs tend to report significant effects (Hallinger and Heck, 1996a). Because the largest proportion of school leadership effects on students are mediated by school conditions, a significant challenge for leadership research is to identify those alterable conditions likely to have direct effects on students, and to inquire about the nature and strength of the relationship between them and leadership. In their 1996 review, Hallinger and Heck reported evidence of only one mediating variable, school goals, consistently interacting with principal leadership. One reason for such limited results may be insufficient importance attributed by researchers to their choices of mediating variables (Hosking and Morley, 1988).

Building directly on prior work by Leithwood (1994) and Ogawa and Bossert (1995), and using evidence from their two 1996 reviews, Hallinger and Heck (1998) have proposed four school conditions through which leadership may exercise its influence. These conditions include purposes and goals, school structure and social networks, people, and organizational culture. Our choice of school conditions for this study included three of these four variables along with several others not identified by Hallinger and Heck. In a factor analysis carried out as part of our previous study (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998), all of these conditions loaded on the same factor.

“Purposes and goals”, one of the school conditions included in our framework, includes what members of the school understand to be both the explicit and implicit purposes and directions for the school. It also encompasses the extent to which such purposes and directions are believed to be a compelling and challenging target for one’s personal practices as well as the collective school improvement efforts of staff. Evidence from our reviews suggested that such purposes contribute to school effectiveness, for example, to the extent that members are aware of them, and to the extent they are perceived to be clear, meaningful, useful, current, congruent with district directions, and to reflect important educational values. This variable bears close similarity to what Stringfield and Slavin (1992) refer to as “meaningful goals” and what Reynolds et al. (1996) label “shared vision and goals”. It is the only mediating variable that Hallinger and Heck (1996b) found consistently interacting with principal leadership across the 40 empirical studies included in their review.

Although conceptually part of Hallinger and Heck’s (1998) purposes and
goals variable, we treated “school planning” as a separate school condition in our study. It includes the explicit means used for deciding on mission and goals, and on the actions to be taken for their accomplishment. Planning processes contribute to school effectiveness, for example, to the extent that they bring together local needs and district goals into a shared school vision (Mortimore, 1993; Hargreaves and Hopkins, 1991).

“Organizational culture” is a third school-level mediating variable included in our study. Hallinger and Heck (1998) suggest that this variable focuses on the importance of developing shared meanings and values. For purposes of our study, organizational culture was defined as the norms, values, beliefs, and assumptions that shape members’ decisions and practices. The contribution of culture to school effectiveness depends, for example, on the content of these norms, values, beliefs, and assumptions (e.g. student centred). It also depends on the extent to which they are shared, and whether they foster collaborative work. This variable shares elements of Reynolds et al. (1996) “learning environment” and the “consensus and cooperative planning” to which Scheerens (1997), and Creemers and Reetzig (1996) refer.

“Structure and organization”, the fourth school condition included in this study, was defined as the nature of the relationships established among people and groups in the school and between the school and its external constituents. As Hallinger and Heck (1998) argue:

... leadership is linked to organizational roles and the networks of relations among roles because it is this network that comprises the organizational system.

(Hallinger and Heck, 1998, p. 173)

Such relationships contribute to school effectiveness, for example, when they support the purposes of the curriculum, and the requirements for instruction. Structure and organization also contribute to school effectiveness when they facilitate staffs’ work, professional learning, and opportunities for collaboration. This variable includes elements of what Reynolds et al. (1996) include in “shared vision and goals”, as well as in school ethos or “learning environment”.

Information collection and decision making was the final variable included among the school conditions in the framework guiding our study. This variable includes the nature and quality of information collected for decision making in the school, the ways in which members of the school use that information and how they are involved in decisions. Schools benefit, for example, when information for decision making is systematically collected, varied, and widely available to most school members for decisions. This variable is reflected in the importance attached to “monitoring student progress” (Reynolds et al., 1996; Mortimore, 1993) as well as the extensive support now available for the contribution to organizational effectiveness of employee participation in decision making (Lawler, 1986; Conley, 1993).
Classroom conditions

The inclusion of classroom conditions in this study goes beyond the set of mediating variables suggested as important in principal leadership studies by Hallinger and Heck (1998). While there is considerable evidence that classroom conditions make a substantially greater contribution to student achievement than do school conditions (Bosker et al., 1990), the strength of the relationship between such conditions and student engagement is unknown. If student engagement is as important a variable as we argue it is below, a comprehensive understanding of the avenues through which leadership influences it is called for.

Two classroom conditions were included in this study, instructional services and policies and procedures. These conditions loaded on the same factor in our previous study (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998). Instructional services were defined as interventions by teachers with students aimed at stimulating their educational growth. Practices associated with this variable included, for example, instructional planning, the consideration of learning principles, clarification of appropriate instructional goals, decisions about curricular content, selection of instructional strategies, and the uses of instructional time. A large literature supports the important contribution to student achievement of these and closely related variables (Reynolds et al., 1996; Creemers and Reetzig, 1996).

Policies and procedures, was defined as guidelines for decision making and action in the school. Although not referring directly to practices in the classroom, when policies in the school are student oriented, encourage continuous professional growth among staff, and encourage the allocation of resources to school priorities without stifling individual initiative, their contribution to classroom practice is expected to be significant. At least indirect support for this variable can be found in evidence concerning the influence on school effects of “high expectations”, “consistency” and “control” (Mortimore, 1993; Creemers, 1994).

Student engagement with school

Student engagement with school has both behavioral and affective components. Extent of students’ participation in school activities, both inside and outside of the classroom, is the behavioral component. The affective component is the extent to which students identify with school and feel they belong. As it was defined and measured in this study, student engagement is quite similar to the “social cohesion” variable used by Oxley (1997) as a dependent measure for her test of the effects of community-like school qualities on students.

Student engagement was chosen as the dependent measure in this study for several reasons. Expanding our understanding of leadership effects beyond basic math and language achievement was one of the reasons. Such achievement measures have served as dependent variables in the vast majority of school leadership studies, to date, not because they are the only, or always the most
suitable, measures but because they are available for research at little or no cost to the researcher. Since the research team had to collect any outcome measures to be used in this study themselves, a measure was chosen which would extend the knowledge base concerning the scope of leadership effects.

The choice of student engagement is warranted on four additional grounds, as well. First, for many students, dropping out of school is the final step in a long process of gradual disengagement and reduced participation in the formal curriculum of the school, as well as in the school’s co-curriculum and more informal social life. Reversing such disengagement is a necessary requirement for achieving the ambitious outcomes advocated by most current school reform initiatives. Variation in schools’ retention rates are likely to be predicted well from estimates of student participation and identification (Finn, 1989). Second, some factors giving rise to students becoming at risk are to be found very early in the child’s pre-school and school experiences. Patterns of student participation and identification are sensitive to the consequences of these factors as early as the primary grades. Change in a student’s participation and identification is a reliable symptom of problems which should be redressed as early as possible (Lloyd, 1978). Finally, at least a modest amount of evidence suggests that student engagement is a reliable predictor of variation in such typical student outcomes as social studies, math, and language achievement (Finn and Cox, 1992; Bredschneider, 1993; Dukelow, 1993).

Our orientation to understanding and measuring student participation and identification began with the work of Jeremy Finn. In his paper “Withdrawing from School” (1989), Finn offers a model explaining continuing engagement in school as a function of participation in school activities which, along with other influences, results in successful performance. Such performance is esteem building and fosters bonding or identification with the school. One central construct in the Finn model is identification with school. The terms “affiliation”, “involvement”, “attachment”, “commitment” and “bonding” encompass the two ideas which, Finn (1989) suggests, constitute a good working definition of identification:

First, students who identify with school have an internalized conception of belongingness – that they are discernibly part of the school environment and that school constitutes an important part of their own experience. And, second, these individuals value success in school-relevant goals.

(p. 123)

Such identification and engagement with school, an internal state, has been found to mediate a wide range of achievement and behavioral outcomes among students, as mentioned above.

The second construct central in the model is overt behavior – students’ actual participation in school activities. Finn identifies four levels of such par-
participation and suggests a strong positive relationship between these levels of participation and the extent of students’ identification with school. Level One participation involves acquiescence to the need to attend school, to be prepared for school tasks, and to respond to teachers’ instructions. At Level Two, students take initiative in the classroom, are enthusiastic, and may spend extra time on school work. Level Three involves participation in school activities outside of the formal curriculum – the social and co-curricular activities of the school, in addition to extensive participation in academic work. Participation in school governance is the fourth level of participation in Finn’s model. In the present study, the mean of these four levels was used as the measure of participation.

Finn conceptualized the participation-identification model in the form of a developmental cycle which included other variables. Participation in school is essential to successful school performance, although such performance is also influenced by students’ perceptions of the quality of their instruction and their own ability (perhaps better understood as academic self-efficacy). Quality of instruction is also an influence on participation. Successful performance influences the students’ sense of belonging and valuing of school-related goals. Such identification, in turn, has a position effect on participation. While evidence was collected about those variables in the model in addition to participation and identification, that evidence was not used in this study.

**Family educational culture**

In this study, family educational culture, a moderator variable, was used in place of more commonly used socio-economic status (SES) measures to represent contributions to student outcomes from home and family sources. Historically, SES has been the most powerful predictor of student success at school (e.g. Coleman, 1966; Bridge et al., 1979). It also has been shown to influence the form of leadership exercised by principals (Hallinger et al., 1996) – hence the arrow in Figure 1 signifying influence flowing from family educational culture to school leadership. But SES is a crude proxy, masking a host of family interactions which have powerful educational consequences. These interactions vary widely across families, often without much relation to family income, for example, and this is why we prefer family educational culture over SES as a moderator variable in this study.

The content of family educational culture includes the assumptions, norms, values, and beliefs held by the family about intellectual work, in general, school work in particular, and the conditions which foster both. Six literature reviews were used as the sources of eight dimensions of either the family’s educational culture or resulting behaviors and conditions demonstrably related to school success (Bloom, 1984; Walberg, 1984; Scott-Jones, 1984; Finn, 1989; Rumberger, 1983; 1987). Taken as a whole, these dimensions represent what Walberg (1984) referred to as the “alterable curriculum of the home”. This curriculum, twice as predictive of academic learning as SES according to
Walberg’s analysis, includes family work habits, academic guidance and support, and stimulation to think about issues in the larger environment. Family culture also includes the academic and occupational aspirations and expectations of parents/guardians, the provision of adequate health and nutritional conditions, and a physical setting conducive to academic work in the home (see Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998, for a more detailed description of these variables). Based on this framework, our intention in carrying out the study was to identify: the proportion of variation in school and classroom conditions explained by teachers’ perceptions of the extent of transformational leadership practices exercised in their schools; the total direct and indirect effects (explained variation) of transformational leadership on student engagement; the amount of variation in student engagement explained by school and classroom variables; whether transformational leadership explains comparable amounts of variation in each of the two dimensions of student engagement (participation, identification); and the proportion of variation in both transformational leadership and student engagement explained by family educational culture.

**Methods**

**Context**

Data about leadership, school and classroom conditions, student engagement, and family educational culture were collected through two surveys in one large
school district in a province in eastern Canada. The district served a population of approximately 58,000 urban, suburban, and rural elementary and secondary students. Data for this study focused on the 2,465 teachers, and 44,920 students in the district’s 123 elementary and junior high schools.

At the time of data collection, all schools in this district were confronted with expectations for change from both the district and the provincial government which clearly called out for the exercise of school-level leadership. For example, just two years prior to the study, the district had been newly formed through the amalgamation of three much smaller administrative jurisdictions. This gave rise to the need for considerable district-wide culture building, policy realignment, and structural reconfiguration. During this period, as well, the provincial government was proceeding with a host of other changes affecting schools – changes in curriculum, student assessment and funding formulae, for example. Comparable changes were being in many educational jurisdictions across Canada at the time of the study.

**Instruments**

Two survey instruments were developed, one to collect data from teachers on school and classroom (organizational) conditions, and transformational leadership, the other to collect evidence from students on their engagement with school and their families’ educational cultures.

The “Organizational Conditions and School Leadership Survey” contained 214 items measuring five sets of school conditions, two sets of classroom conditions, and the perceived influence of teacher and principal leadership in the school. Items measuring school and classroom conditions were stated in the form suggested by the research literature to be most desirable, and were rated on a five-point Likert scale (“strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) that the statement was true for their school, with a “not applicable” response option available, as well.

The “Student Engagement and Family Culture Survey” contained 61 items measuring student participation in school activities (34), student identification with school (17), and students’ perceptions of their family educational culture (10). Students responded to each item on the same five-point scale used by teachers (“strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) that the statement was true for them, with a “not applicable” response option also available.

**Sample**

All elementary and junior high school teachers in the school district \( n = 2,465 \) were asked to respond to the “Organizational Conditions and School Leadership Survey”. Because of the extensive number of items, however, two forms of the survey were developed. Each form collected data about at least three sets of organizational conditions and all leadership items. All schools with fewer than
ten teachers were asked to complete both forms of the survey, preferably at two different times to prevent fatigue. Each form required an average of 20 minutes to complete. In all other schools, each teacher was randomly assigned either Form A or Form B. A total of 888 teachers completed Form A of the survey and 874 teachers completed Form B for an overall response rate of 71 per cent.

The “Student Engagement and Family Educational Culture Survey” was administered to all students in one class in each of the three highest grades. In order to protect student anonymity, principals rather than teachers supervised the administration and subsequent collection of these surveys. A total of 8,805 students responded in the 110 schools in the sample.

Data for all variables in this study were complete for 110 of the 123 elementary and junior high schools in the district.

Data analysis

Responses of individual teachers and students to the surveys were aggregated to the school level. SPSS was used to aggregate individual responses by school and then to calculate means, standard deviations, and reliability coefficients (Cronbach’s alpha) for all the scales measuring the variables. As in our previous study (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998), principal components extraction with varimax rotation was used to analyze the seven school and classroom conditions to estimate the number of factors measured by the specific conditions and assess the extent to which our conceptual distinctions among the seven organizational conditions could be verified empirically.

LISREL was used to assess the direct and indirect effects of leadership on student engagement. This path analytic technique allows for testing the validity of causal inferences for pairs of variables while controlling for the effects of other variables. Data were analyzed using the LISREL 8 analysis of covariance structure approach to path analysis and maximum likelihood estimates (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993). Hierarchical linear modelling is the analytic technique of choice for some researchers exploring databases such as this one. For a variety of practical reasons, however, we were unable to collect our data in a way that allowed us to link the responses of individual student with their teachers, a prerequisite for HLM.

Results

Table 1 reports means and standard deviations, aggregated to the school level, of teachers’ ratings of transformational leadership and all school and classroom conditions. Comparable information about student responses to items included in the three scales of the Student Engagement and Family Culture Survey appear in the last three rows of this Table. The far right column indicates that the internal reliabilities of all scales were acceptable, ranging from 0.74 to 0.95.

Results of the factor analysis, reported in Table 2 indicate that only one factor
was extracted from the seven organizational conditions, rather than two factors (a school factor and a classroom factor) as in one of our previous studies using comparable data (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998). Five of the conditions loaded at 0.83 or higher, whereas the relationship of structure and organization to the factor was somewhat weaker at 0.72. Instructional strategies had the weakest relationship at 0.70. Table 3 demonstrates a similar, single factor outcome of the

---

**Table 1** Teacher ratings of organizational conditions and student ratings of family culture and engagement \( (N = 110 \text{ schools}) \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher ratings of school conditions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Reliability^b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conditions (Aggregate)</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes and goals</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional services</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information collection/DM</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy and procedures</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and organization</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher ratings of transformational leadership**

Transformational leadership 3.76 0.48 0.90

**Student ratings of family educational culture**

Family educational culture 4.10 0.24 0.79

**Student ratings of engagement with school**

Identification 3.93 0.30 0.90

Participation 3.62 0.25 0.74

**Notes**

a Rating scale: 1 = disagree strongly; 5 = Agree strongly  
b Cronbach’s alpha

**Table 2** Factor matrix resulting from teacher ratings of conditions within their schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Purposes and goals 0.85  
| Culture 0.90  
| Planning 0.83  
| Structure and organization 0.72  
| Information collection 0.88  
| Policy and procedures 0.89  
| Instructional services 0.70  
| Eigenvalue 4.77  
| Percent of explained variance 68.21 |

---
Table 3  Factor matrix resulting from teacher ratings of leadership within their schools ($N = 110$ schools)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor loadings</th>
<th>Staffing</th>
<th>Instructional support</th>
<th>Monitoring school activities</th>
<th>Community focus</th>
<th>Building school vision and goals</th>
<th>Providing intellectual stimulation</th>
<th>Providing individualized support</th>
<th>Symbolizing professional practices and values</th>
<th>Demonstrating high performance expectations</th>
<th>Developing collaborative structures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue: 7.38  Percent of explained variance: 73.81

Table 4  Relationships among leadership, organizational conditions, family educational culture and student outcomes ($N = 110$ schools)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Conditions</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational leadership</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational conditions</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family educational culture</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.88**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.87**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

factor analysis of the ten leadership and management dimensions of our model of transformational leadership. Results of both these factor analyses are reflected in the path model tested below.

Table 4 reports correlation coefficients among all variables included in the path model. All relationships are statistically significant except the relationship between transformational leadership and family educational culture.

Figure 1 reports the results of testing (using LISREL) a version of the initial framework for the study adapted in response to the factor analyses, reported in Tables 2 and 3, in which all items measuring school and classroom conditions loaded on the same factor and all items measuring leadership and management loaded on the same factor. Although the model also tested relationships between
family educational culture and leadership as well as between conditions and participation, to facilitate interpretation only the significant paths are shown in Figure 1. The model is an acceptable fit with the data ($\chi^2 (2, N = 110) = 1.91, p = 0.38$; AGFI = 0.95, RMR = 0.01; NFI = 1.00, PGFI = 0.13) and, as a whole, explains 84 per cent of the variation in student participation, and 78 per cent of the variation in student indentification. Family educational culture has the strongest relationship with student engagement as reflected in its significant total effects on participation (0.88) and identification (0.87). Family educational culture has significant effects on organizational conditions, and these conditions have significant, although modest, total effects on both student participation (0.11) and identification (0.15).

Transformational leadership has strong, significant direct effects on organizational conditions and weak but significant indirect effects on student participation (0.07) and identification (0.10).

Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study was to inquire about the effects of transformational leadership practices on organizational conditions and student engagement with school, taking into account the potentially large effects of family educational culture. Results of this study are consistent, in many respects, with evidence provided by other large-scale, quantitative studies of principal leadership effects, as well as several of our own earlier studies of transformational leadership (Leithwood, 1994). With student engagement in school as the dependent variable, results of the study indicate that transformational leadership effects are significant although weak on the affective or psychological dimension (identification) and the behavioral dimension (participation) of student engagement. The size of these transformational leadership effects are approximately the same as those found for the effects of leadership provided specifically by principals in two of our previous studies (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998, 1999) which also used student engagement as the dependent variable. It is possible, of course, that respondents in the present study primarily had principals in mind as they responded to questions about the extent to which they experienced transformational leadership in their schools.

Whether the focus is on leadership from principals, in particular, or on transformational leadership practices whatever their source, two quite different interpretations of these results are possible. The most obvious interpretation is that principals, in the case of our earlier study, and transformational leadership practices, in the present study, make a disappointing contribution to student engagement. Had the dependent variable in the study been basic math or language skills, this interpretation would be seen as fundamentally in contradiction with the assumptions of most school professionals, normative assertions about the role of leadership in schools (e.g. Hudson, 1997; Foster, 1989), and the results of many school effectiveness studies (e.g. Mortimore, 1993). In fact, student
engagement is an outcome not nearly so obviously tied to teachers’ classroom practices as are more conventional outcome measures, and so potentially more susceptible to influence by those outside the classroom. Our results, for this reason, might be considered doubly disappointing. This might be termed the “romance of leadership” interpretation, after Meindl’s (1995) argument that leadership is a convenient, phenomenologically legitimate, social construction which, nonetheless, masks a complex, multi-sourced bundle of influences on organizational outcomes.

A second interpretation of these results, after Hallinger and Heck’s (1996b) analysis of principal leadership effects, cautions against dismissing, as not meaningful, the admittedly small effects of leadership on, in this case, student engagement. Transformational school leadership practices, after all, do explain a large proportion of the variation in organizational conditions, those features of the school to which leaders have direct access and which are, conceptually, the means through which school effects are exercised.

To put this interpretation in a broader context, recent reviews of empirical research on school effectiveness suggest that educational factors for which data are available explain, in total, something less than 20 per cent of the variation in student cognitive outcomes; very little evidence is available concerning such non-cognitive outcomes as the one used in this study. Reynolds et al. (1996) suggest 8–12 per cent for research carried out in the UK, while Creemers and Reetzig suggest 10–20 per cent for studies carried out “in the Western Hemisphere . . . after correction for student intake measures such as aptitude or social class . . .” (1996, p. 203). Variation within this range across studies may be explained by such variables as school size, type of student outcome serving as the dependent measure, nature of students, and department and subject matter differences.

While these relatively small amounts of explained variation are now considered to be both meaningful, and practically significant, a school is not a single variable. It is an aggregate of variables, the “correlates” of effective schools, or the organizational conditions used as mediating variables in this study. Some of these variables most likely contribute more strongly than others to school’s effects, although they have yet to be unpacked empirically, except for distinguishing between classroom and school level factors (Creemers and Reetzig, 1996; Scheerens, 1997). Efforts to do the unpacking, however, realistically begin with very modest amounts of variation to be explained, especially if it is assumed, as seems reasonable, that at least a handful of factors contribute to explained variation. This was Ogawa and Hart’s (1985) argument in claiming importance for their finding that principal leadership explained 2–8 per cent of the variation in student performance, similar to the results of this study. Under such circumstances knowing the relative explanatory power of a variable will be at least as interesting as knowing the total amount of variation it explains.

Results of the study involving family educational culture are significant for three reasons. First, most school effects studies acknowledge a central role for
SES in accounting for variation in student achievement. In this study family educational culture replaced SES on the grounds that it more precisely targeted those elements subsumed by, typically, very global SES measures (e.g. percentage of students in school eligible for free lunches) contributing to student success at school. Our results support the validity of this concept and its measurement in future school and leadership effects studies. Family educational culture behaved statistically in a manner comparable to the behavior of SES in most previous school effects studies.

Second, the exceptionally large proportion of variation in student engagement explained by family educational culture raises the possibility that different student outcomes may range considerably in their sensitivity to family, as compared with school, variables. This is apparent already in studies attempting to explain variation in mathematics as compared with language achievement, for example (Thomas et al., 1997). It seems likely to become much more apparent as evidence from school and leadership effects studies accumulates across a wider array of student outcomes, especially across important but “non-standard” outcomes such as student engagement. These outcomes, while reflected hardly at all in current school effects research, are an important feature of most curriculum policy, and are central to many parents’ assessments of their local schools (Townsend, 1994). This suggests that future school and leadership effects studies ought to conceptualize family variables more centrally in their designs: they also might do well to reconceive themselves as “school and family effects” or “leadership and family effects” studies. Our understanding of school effects in general, and leadership effects in particular, is unlikely to progress much further without systematically inquiry about how schools and families co-produce the full array of outcomes for which schools are responsible.

Finally, effects on student engagement of transformational leadership practices were substantially weaker than those of family educational culture. This pattern of effects was especially strong for teacher leadership in one of our previous studies (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998). A plausible implication of these findings is that high levels of student engagement reduce teachers’ perceived needs for either teacher or principal leadership. Student engagement could be conceived of as a substitute for leadership (Howell, 1997), as well as a student outcome.1

Note

1 We are indebted to Karen Seashore Louis for this insight (personal communication).

References

THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP


Further reading


There has been much debate about the types of leaders needed in tomorrow’s schools and about the optimal forms of leadership preparation. This study examined the applicability of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model to a cross-cultural travel study programme for Canadian and New Zealand graduate students in educational leadership programmes at two universities. The Canada–New Zealand travel study exchange was designed to foster participant understandings of educational issues that are prevalent in education internationally. Grounded theory data analysis techniques were used in the study. The information contained in the journals, field notes, reflective commentaries, and surveys was sorted and re-sorted into related categories until four broad groups of findings emerged. The categories focused primarily on the effects of the cross-cultural exchange on the graduate students’ learning. The categories were the emotional experience of learning, the culture of critical enquiry, moving beyond self, and developing agency. The study of the use of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model demonstrated and reinforced several key points. Firstly, in-depth reflection by students on their personal educational contexts is enhanced through examination of other educational contexts, both locally and internationally. Secondly, the breaking of boundaries between theory and practice, between university professors and students, between two nations, and between self and others, can foster the development of critically enquiring leaders. Finally, the article concludes that these leaders are likely to be critically reflective about the quality of education in their schools and to demonstrate the belief that they are able to make a difference to the quality of education offered.
The need for cross-cultural leadership development

The nature of school reforms internationally, over the past decade, underscores the need for cross-cultural leadership development initiatives. Educational leaders now must respond proactively to a wide range of pressures. For example, governments in the Western world are looking increasingly to schools to promote the economic competitiveness of their nations. Clear links between levels of education, long-term employment, and income (Statistics Canada 1996) along with a variety of international comparisons of student achievement (Le Metais and Tabberer 1997) have led policy makers to promote educational reforms that include site-based management, increased accountability measures, charter schools, and school choice. Further, educational reforms have been accompanied in virtually all Western nations by budget cuts and various forms of privatization as governments strive to reduce their debt load, decrease taxes, promote investment by business, and create an entrepreneur-friendly environment. In fact, the almost ubiquitous move toward budget reductions and some variation of a market model for programme delivery led to the criticism that school reform has been more economic than educative in nature (Aronowitz and Giroux 1993, Barlow and Robertson 1994, Radnor et al. 1998).

Despite criticism, school reforms are perceived as successful in some ways by significant numbers of school community constituents. For example, studies of charter schools in the United States report that, along with good levels of satisfaction among students and parents, charter schools have forced greater accountability upon other public schools (Horn and Miron 1999). Also, higher levels of parent involvement in school decision making are apparent in Western Australia following government policies requiring schools to involve parents substantively in school matters (O’Donoghue and Dimmock 1998). As well, decentralization policies in New Zealand, in conjunction with a relevant programme of partnering of principals, have encouraged some principals to develop an increased sense of agency, or ability to change their practices (Robertson 1998). Clearly, there is a need to enhance the ability of principals in Western nations generally to change their professional practices constructively.

School reforms internationally have been accompanied by significant problems with which school leaders must be familiar. For instance, Cobb and Glass (1999) cautioned that charter schools in Arizona may be promoting ethnic segregation. Timperley and Robinson (1998) and Webber and Townsend (1998) highlighted the strong tensions that exist between educators’ accountability to public authorities and professionalism in New Zealand, Canada, and Australia. In addition, Apple (1998) articulated the dangers of schools spending energy on marketing rather than on ‘curricular substance’ (p. 25).

Finally, school reforms of the past decade have been primarily a Western phenomenon (O’Donoghue and Dimmock 1998, Whitty et al. 1998). Reforms in Western nations are characterized by their almost simultaneous occurrence, speed of attempted implementation, economic focus, and devolution of authority.
to school communities, which collectively led Webber and Robertson (1998) to call for strong leadership development programmes that include international perspectives.

This article describes an effort to use a specific leadership development framework, called the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model (Webber and Robertson 1998), as the basis for providing graduate students in two universities in Canada and New Zealand, with learning opportunities through which to better understand school reforms common to their two nations.

**Framing the study**

The study that we had conducted the previous year with our graduate students examined the utility of an electronic mail discussion group called the *Change Agency*¹, in the context of university leadership courses at the University of Calgary in Canada and the University of Waikato in New Zealand. The electronic mail discussion group consisted of teachers, principals, superintendents, trustees, parents, Department of Education personnel, preservice teachers, graduate students, and professors. We studied the cross-cultural and cross-role dialogue that occurred on the *Change Agency* in terms of the listserver’s usefulness as a leadership development tool. The results of the exploratory study supported the tentative proposal of a leadership development framework called the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model (Webber and Robertson 1998). We described the model as ‘boundary breaking’ because we believed the data gathered in our research demonstrated its capacity to move learning beyond the boundaries normally imposed by cultures, roles, institutions, economics, and nations. Further, we proposed that the framework moves some way towards closing the gaps between theories-in-action and espoused theories of the participants involved.

The study described here examined the applicability of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model to a cross-cultural travel study programme for Canadian and New Zealand graduate students in educational leadership programmes at two universities in the following year. The cross-cultural exchange was designed to fit closely with all the attributes of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model, a key component of which is the provision of international perspectives. Therefore, we designed the Canada–New Zealand travel study exchange to foster participant understandings of educational issues that are prevalent in education internationally, for example, parent and community involvement, self-managing schools, school choice, charter schools and accountability and the Boundary-Breaking Model was used as the framework of our pedagogy. We wanted to research whether this model did provide an effective pedagogical framework to enhance graduate student learning experiences.

In the first part of the study, three New Zealand and sixteen Canadian graduate students plus one researcher from the United Kingdom participated in a series of classes, meetings, seminars, and school visits in Calgary, Alberta. Then, ten
Canadian graduate students went to Hamilton, New Zealand, for a series of parallel activities. The graduate students in the study tour were either teachers or principals, with a depth of teaching experience. Other participants included over one hundred guest participants in public seminars and field trips in Canada and New Zealand; these participants comprised teachers, principals, superintendents, trustees, parents, Department of Education personnel, graduate students, and professors.

Study data were gathered from a variety of sources.

- Reflective journals kept by graduate students throughout the Canadian and New Zealand events.
- Field notes compiled by the two researchers, who also designed and facilitated the cross-cultural exchange.
- Evaluative and reflective notes written by the graduate students during their daily coursework.
- Survey instruments, based on field notes and observation data, administered to the Canadian and New Zealand graduate students.
- End-of-course evaluations (administered by an outside agent).

Findings

We used grounded theory data analysis techniques (Glaser and Strauss 1967) in this study. The information contained in the journals, field notes, reflective commentaries, and survey data was sorted and re-sorted into related categories until four broad groups of findings emerged. We were conscious of being in the role of researcher and professor and shared this with the students throughout the study. We told them when we were gathering particular information as ‘data’ and we openly declared our intentions and what we were studying and actively sought this reciprocity. The students carried out an activity for us where they filled in a blank Boundary-Breaking Model Rubric where they reflected on their learning experience in relation to the model and to our perceptions. We shared findings with them as they arose and the students were also given the article on the previous study as part of their coursework. The students knew that they were part of theory building during this study tour. This again was intentional to purposely model ways in which to ‘break the boundaries’ between theory and practice, and researcher, professor and learner.

The categories which emerged from the analysis focused primarily on the effects of the cross-cultural exchange on the graduate students’ learning. The categories were: the emotional experience of learning, the culture of critical enquiry, moving beyond self, and developing agency.
The emotional experience of learning

Four major propositions were evident in this category of findings.

• The construction of meaning requires active listening as reflection on own practices, beliefs and values takes place.

• The juxtaposition of self and others highlights and evokes different emotions—jealousy, humility, pride.

• Experience of public self-expression requires risk-taking and self-evaluation. This can be affirming and self-validating as well as disquieting.

• The asynchronous communication through electronic networks can complement face-to-face experiences and vice versa.

The type of experiences the students were involved in during their cross-cultural exchange facilitated the construction of their own learning. They began to realize the importance of listening to others and to understand that learning was not a passive process but one that required their active involvement. Through the classroom and cultural activities, students realized that there were many different practices, values and beliefs within a class that they first thought was relatively homogeneous. One student described her learning like this: ‘I understand the discomfort I put my students through . . . I have had to learn too—to listen.’ Another said, ‘I was very aware of how the participants in my group were struggling with constructing meaning. I was reminded of the importance of entry points to new learning and about the power of the group talk to help with personal construction of meaning.’

Students experienced a depth of emotion that, although apparent to the researchers during the travel study experience, was much more apparent through an analysis of narrative within the data. As Hargreaves (1998: 324) stated, ‘Professional development, where colleagues learn from one another’s differences, therefore necessarily involves moments of discomfort and anxiety, of challenges to the self.’ Here are examples of how students described the emotions associated with their learning:

They still amaze me at the things we still have not discussed . . . I am in awe . . . the work has been invigorating . . . My mind is muddled with wonderful levels of learning . . . Today’s class has been, as usual, mind-bending . . . I was mortified to realize . . . I am humbled by the . . . I have very much appreciated and enjoyed the . . . the richness and diversity of the course is amazing (and exhausting) . . . the depth of the dialogue has left me mentally drained . . . I worry that tomorrow’s session will be strenuous . . . My concern . . . It’s like a treasure hunt!

The intensity of ‘total immersion’ into the travel study learning community was mentioned by the majority of students. They felt that the experience provided
‘powerful insight’. For one, it seemed quite painful. She said, ‘You are squeezing my brain—it is now tapped out!’ For others, the study tour exchange was too intense and suggestions were given to adapt the assessment requirements for those billeting overseas visitors and providing cultural activities as they felt they could not fully do justice to either. Others felt that the programme was too rushed and that they did not get enough ‘down time’ for reflection. However, students commented that they also had experienced positive feelings of pride, of affirmation and of confidence. Students also felt more comfortable speaking about their values and beliefs. A student said, ‘At the end of the day my mind is muddled with wonderful levels of learning but I often have more questions, wishes and wants than knowledge. However, I do not feel alone.’ Another student said, ‘The activities used in class . . . allowed me to make sense of and affirm my learning of not just this course, but my entire grad experience.’

The Change Agency listserver supported the travel study experience in several ways. It provided the participants with an asynchronous forum for discussion where responses could be made at times that suited the respondent. The Change Agency listserver also helped to network the graduate students before the study tour began. About two months before the exchange started, one student started an online dialogue about the course topics with most of the New Zealand and Canadian graduate students. She later related how the participation of all exchange graduate students in the Change Agency discussions made her ‘feel connected to a learning group even though the classes had not started.’ Other students agreed that the face-to-face meeting of colleagues had given new meaning to their electronic community. A student said, ‘Having met, it will be easier to be direct and informal over the electronic links,’ and another said, ‘I will rely on this “community” again in future.’ Most students felt that ‘the face-to-face meetings and discussions gave greater depth to our interactions’ but that ‘the Change Agency postings [during the course] created a second forum for discussion with an even wider audience.’ Interestingly, some students preferred the asynchronous nature of the electronic forum: ‘I felt much more inclined to contribute to the Change Agency than to participate in large group discussions. With the Change Agency I had time to formulate my thoughts and do some research in the area.’ Another student reflected, ‘I now have the desire to develop my e-mail skills and to put my school on the web. Before, I got into e-mail because Jan said to. NOW I am empowered to continue my own personal/professional development.’

This empowerment and responsibility for learning was an important part of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model. The next category of findings explores this further.

Creating a culture of enquiry: developing a critical perspective

The following four propositions were developed from the data that formed the second category of findings:
The flexible course structure allowed for active involvement of the students in the directions the course of study took and, therefore, some responsibility for their own learning. This in turn required less intervention from instructors and a trust in the process.

A generative approach to learning allowed opportunities for shared leadership from within the group. Their leadership extended beyond the Canada–New Zealand experience to include additional professional activities that the students initiated at a later stage.

Facilitating generative learning increases the depth and scope of a course curriculum, but developing a culture of enquiry and critical perspectives takes place over time.

The critical analyses created dissonance at the international as well as national level as students actively explored their own practices, values and beliefs.

The flexible course structure, or ‘flexibility with an agenda’ as one student described it, was generally appreciated by the students. The fact that so many noted the flexibility suggested that students did not perceive this to be the usual style of graduate study. However, some students needed to work through the issue of ‘generative learning’. For example, one student pondered in this way:

Not sticking too much to readings, but OK, because as graduate students we should be able to make interpretations and connections to literature. But in two weeks we lose the ‘friendly resource’—at least in person, so best to maximise that resource now . . .

Another student commented that, ‘the flexibility and the variety in the sessions make this a special place to be,’ while another said, ‘I personally liked the fact that we were not “tied” to the text.’ Students also commented on the richness of this process for them: ‘I would say that this has been one of the most powerful courses that I’ve taken so far as collaboration and respect for others is concerned. I have come away with many thoughts and am anxious to implement ideas.’ Another said, ‘This class had a life of its own and it was allowed to live it.’

Although students perceived the summer institute and the travel study units as rich with dialogue and debate, the students also felt their study was rich in theory. They felt ‘It has put a “face” to the readings’ and that ‘It will broaden our understanding of education in tangible ways due to contextualizing others’ lived experiences.’ Students were also cognizant that they were ‘creating theory’ and ‘being researched’. One participant felt that ‘the opportunity to hear how policy “plays out” in the practice and lives of school leaders really made all the reading, writing, thinking I’ve been doing all year come alive, make sense.’

It was only natural that the students reflected on our facilitation roles as we had encouraged them to do so to gain their involvement in theory building in
this study. The most common observation was the ‘trust’ that was apparent: trust in the process, trust in the group, trust in the model. One student said, ‘I have been amazed at how generative this course has been given that it is such a short time line. It shows great trust on the part of the two instructors.’ Another said, ‘This model allows us to “take off” on areas of interest and yet there are gentle reminders and time lines which keep us focused towards a big picture.’

Many of the students referred to our ability to draw the class back on track to attain the course objectives; for example, ‘Many thanks for providing the situation which allowed me to learn. It all looked effortless and laid back—but I realize that the casual look takes a great deal of work.’

The opportunities for shared leadership and informal leadership added to the depth of the learning process. One student said, ‘I found myself learning and questioning more about our educational practices, by having to explain them to others.’ This leadership and ‘explaining to others’ also went beyond the cross-cultural experience. For example, one student (a principal) wrote two articles for professional magazines on her experiences, and another student (a teacher) combined with others to give a seminar on international perspectives on policy issues.

Some students worried about their ability to ‘deal’ adequately with all the topics that were raised. For instance, one student worried, ‘New information . . . have I understood correctly? . . . Am I trying to acquire too much data—should I just let some of it go and focus on key stimuli to exploring issues?’ Another said, ‘I know my course requirements will not reflect the true scope and dimension of this learning experience.’ A third student said, ‘At what point do lists of counter arguments make the work just unmanageable? Should I change jobs? My word, doesn’t this add to the burden, to the feeling of inadequacy!’ By day eight she was more accepting: ‘I realize even more what a luxury it is to have two weeks with informed, committed people when each answered question raises half a dozen more for which there is no time to get answers.’

Our style of teaching was generative in that it challenged students to question and critique within this course. This did not always sit comfortably with the students. One student explained this discomfort: ‘As a young person I was taught that “the experts knew” and [learners] only listen and perform. Even today I find it hard to look at articles and question . . . but I did see in chapter 10 . . . aren’t the “big issues” the students really or am I just too bottom line to see through the fog?’ However, students also understood the importance of questioning. One said, ‘I wonder whether we make basic assumptions so basic that we do not question them. They are almost innate . . . we do take things for granted.’ Another said, ‘Thank you to you both for helping me to open doors to questioning.’ As course professors, we often also experienced discomfort as the students struggled with their construction and generation of new knowledge.

Another comment was:

I was surprised that, considering how similar many of the reforms of
Alberta, NZ, and England are, there were significant differences in interpretations of policy, attitudes towards and practices (that is, the way we see the implications of accountability in different areas, such as curriculum).

The graduate students from both New Zealand and Canada began to examine more carefully their local contexts and the differences and similarities apparent within the same policy guidelines. One student said: ‘There were countless times throughout the discussions and readings where a process of reconfirming occurred in regards to the earth beneath my feet. It was reconfirmed that my beliefs and values are rooted deeply in the soils of learning.’ Another said, ‘Clearly bottom-up discovery maximizing contextual participation. Very much the entire experience challenged me to question my beliefs.’ As well, the variety of perspectives in the class was noted. One student on day two said ‘Today’s class was a wonderful opportunity to talk, learn, explore and listen to new perspectives and ideas.’ Another on day eight said, ‘So many different directions in people’s reading and areas of interest. I feel very privileged to be part of such a “culture of inquiry”.’

However, the exploration of personal and professional values and beliefs through the many forums for discussion, also created a level of dissonance within the group, particularly at the national context level where there had been the assumption of being more homogeneous than at the international level. A student described this process in this way: ‘I would agree heartily with today’s comment that we see our own system in a new light when in the company of others.’ Another said, ‘It has also been interesting to watch the local tensions play out in the group, e.g. Catholic/public in Alberta.’ Another reflection from a student who had been ‘on the other side’ of the debate about Catholic/public school systems said, ‘I was mortified to realize my strong negative feelings about the separate board versus public board . . . I had better get over this.’ Another ‘local’ student also was challenged to examine values and beliefs and said, ‘the visit [to a Canadian private school] forced me to face some preconceived ideas I have about private schools.’ Yet another stressed the ‘need to continue to explore my own prejudices and biases and how I have come to hold them . . . If my perspectives become the truth, then I cannot develop—I simply stagnate.’

A reflection in one researcher’s field diary captured growing explorations of ‘power’ and leads us into the next category of findings:

There is an amazing use of ‘we’ and ‘they’ that needs exploring further. When as educational leaders/citizens are we ‘we’ and when are we ‘they’?
Moving beyond self

The following italicized statements captured the propositions that developed from the data in the third category.

- Through a culture of enquiry, with multiple perspectives, the graduate students began to see the bigger picture of education. This required new learning for many who also felt that this was only a beginning of their journey of learning.

- The graduate students began to reconsider the politics of accountability within their local contexts which led to an analysis of power and the use of ‘we’ and ‘they’.

- The graduate students began to challenge ‘whose’ voice was being heard in education and asserted their right as leaders able to make a difference and be heard.

- The graduate students felt less opposed to change.

The multiple perspectives offered in the Canada–New Zealand exchange led students to see the bigger picture in education, something that they commented had not always been apparent to them. One student said, ‘Last night I went over the presentation material with my wife. Our discussion focused on the “big picture”—this view often eludes us as educators and citizens.’ Often this ‘big picture’ focus left students feeling somewhat overwhelmed. For example, one student reflected on day two:

Perhaps my biggest challenge is that I have been focused for so much of my teaching career on my own ‘school context’ that I feel somewhat ‘BEHIND’ or ‘IGNORANT’ on issues that are discussed from a broader perspective. The international perspectives, discussions, presence of international educators, reading, etc. is helping me to learn a lot in a very short period.

A few days later the same student said, ‘Again today I feel as though I acquired a couple more pieces of the puzzle in my understanding of the BIGGER PICTURE.’ Another said, ‘I find the complexity of the topic of accountability somewhat overwhelming! It is excellent for me to gain awareness of the broad issues on accountability.’ Many other students realized that they were only just beginning their learning on an international level:

I believe that this course is only the beginning to provide opportunities to create an international bridge/link. When will there be another course that can link Britain, the United States and others?

Power and who holds it was an interesting issue for debate when the graduate
students explored the politics of accountability. One student said, ‘Through my listening I found myself thinking about “power” . . . and the exasperating need for it in certain political levels all around the world . . . I have always felt that those truly with the most “power” are the ones who do not even know they have it.’ The graduate students argued about the ‘ownership’ for the reforms and made comments such as, ‘When are we “we” and when are we “they”?’ Another said ‘We (oops, pronoun) meaning “all those involved in education” have to share the most common purpose—“the students”—what is going to be best for the children.’ Another explored why we categorize people into ‘we and they’ and how it won’t get us anywhere. She said:

We can’t be afraid of stakeholders. We can talk among ourselves forever, and put every other stakeholder on the ‘other’ side but we will never grow and develop. We can’t stay with our own truths—we have to listen to everyone. Still, with perspectives from the international visitors, it makes me truly value what I have and what I have to fight for.

Further, students began to see that perhaps change was inevitable: ‘The international perspective had led me to be less oppositional towards change. Change and reform are happening—so if I don’t want to be left behind I may as well embrace it.’

The graduate students began to challenge whose voice was being heard in educational reform, and to experience a ‘lack of their teacher-voice’ nationally and internationally. They also recognized the dissent at the local level among different stakeholders:

There is so much division amongst teachers and administrators, schools and business, government and educators, public and Catholic teachers that is based on misinformation, innuendo, rumour, hearsay—that it becomes apparent why we as educators become deprofessionalised. We don’t (or maybe I don’t) understand and know or internalize the facts.

Another student mentioned the division between teachers’ views even within schools. She asked,

Why are people distrustful of the teaching profession . . . But this distrust seems to be there and in fact grows within individual schools: Staff worry that one class would outdo another/schools [would] outdo each other. Where does our collaboration fit in? How can we ‘just get at’ the work we have to do?

Finally, a willingness to act as educational advocates, even activists, was apparent by the end of the course:
We need to look at articulating what is important in our schools in ways that our communities really understood and can buy into... A positive outcome of reform is that we are much more willing to share exactly what we are doing in our school... We need to have a serious look at what we value as a society of Albertans and Canadians, global persons, because we have come through an I/me situation to a community situation—and who decides on the agenda and values?

This developing sense of agency, or the belief that one can make a difference (Robertson 1998), is explored further in the next section.

**Developing agency**

The following six propositions summarize the general content of the fourth data category.

- Scrutiny of students’ prior assumptions led them to realize that differences are possible and that they had the ability to make a difference—they shared increased feelings of efficacy and confidence.
- A study of ‘counter culture’ was important to the development of possibilizing and recognition that things could be different.
- The graduate study helped these graduate students to lift their heads from their classrooms and schools to global political issues and back again to the purpose of education.
- The students always contextualized their learning with reflection and anecdotal examples.
- A critical examination of values and beliefs led to some affirmation of their beliefs as well as an alleviation of concerns they held. Hence some students experienced greater confidence.
- There was also much evidence of changes in and challenges to values and beliefs over the period of the travel study exchange.

Scrutiny of the graduate students’ prior assumptions within this international framework led the students to examine what was meant by ‘counter culture’. They came to the conclusion that perhaps what was counter, or thought to be counter, was not, and what was homogeneous, was not. A student said, ‘Does our same skin colour and language mean we initially judge ourselves to be homogeneous?’ Another student pondered this and wrote:

What is ‘counter culture’? As soon as you think you are a part of one, aren’t you part of a culture? Perhaps the only true counter culture is what we rest with each day inside our own minds, which is truly unique, individual and maybe ‘counter’.
Students found it interesting that ‘we are all following along the same path of accountability’ and felt perhaps that ‘the politicians are all reading from similar sources. Is it a package?!’ They found the similarities between countries frightening. For example, they stated, ‘We are going down your road and it’s scary’. They questioned each other: ‘I’m interested in the assumption that change in NZ has had very little effect on teaching and learning. What does this really mean?’ ‘There is no question that authentic assessment pushes teachers into more creative teaching, greater use of materials, experiments . . . [but] accountable to whom and for what purpose?’

A study of differences in international trends took the students to the bigger questions such as: What are the purposes of schooling? Who decides? What should accountability be? This led them to perhaps the most important questions, to asking, ‘What should the purposes of schooling be? What could the purposes be?’ As one student said, ‘Our educational tinkering is not enough. Somehow we have got to be prepared to shed what is no longer working.’

This imaging of alternatives or ‘possibilizing’ became an important part of the learning process, for example ‘So then what could it, should it be like?’ A student reflected,

Why do we need ‘either this or that’ conversations in education. There may not be a need to approach educational problems as if there is always a paradox present. There are two agendas operating—a pedagogical agenda and a political agenda that are not always the same. Important to have discussions from both pedagogical and political agendas.

As the graduate students discussed professionalism in their respective countries, one student said,

We need to reflect on the percentage of teachers who leave early in their careers. Why aren’t we critiquing that problem? Perhaps we need to make teaching a profession. It’s lost a lot of its professionalism. Society’s perception of educators must take some of the blame.

While students examined the larger picture for education, they found that their thoughts always brought them back to the school or classroom level, or, as one student described it, to their ‘heartwork’. A student said, ‘I constantly want to put what I am learning back into my own context . . . by asking . . . What does that mean to me as a teacher in a high school with 80 students per day?’ Another said, ‘Is it time for teachers to stop resisting assessment and get on the boat and influence that assessment so that it is fair to everyone?’

One student described their abilities to refocus on students’ learning:

I am finding it interesting how often emergent patterns continue to
spiral out of our informative discussions . . . almost as if the branches of these patterns are ‘rooted’ in the soils of our common foundation . . . yet we travelled a full circle back to our main purpose as educators . . . that being, the meaningful and purposeful learning opportunities we create with students.

Students were challenged on a number of leadership issues throughout the exchange. Some of the issues were appraisal, accountability, self-managing and charter schools, public and private education, and the purpose of education. One student demonstrated how the multiple perspectives and experiences had changed her thinking when she said in the second week:

Today I am thinking about how much my thinking has evolved since the beginning of this experience. I began by considering the idea of competing forces, or dilemmas or paradoxical situations . . . I think that my idea of democratic accountability and professional accountability has moved from an ‘or’ to an ‘and’. I am feeling more comfortable with the idea of democratic accountability now, as we have had time to talk about our varied experiences.

The graduate students found that the experiences during the course with other educational stakeholders gave them ideas that alleviated some of their concerns and dissonance. One said, ‘My cognitive dissonance was as follows . . . I was impressed by some of the strategies used by administrators in our group.’ Another said, ‘Administrators are “stuck” with policies they often must do their best to “deal” with. It is these administrators who effective “deal” with these reforms maintaining “healthy positive” school communities who have lessons we can learn from.’ They also worried that they, as teachers, did not always understand the bigger picture: ‘Someone needs to reframe the issue so that teachers understand that their knowledge of assessment has a direct impact on their professional autonomy and interactions with students.’

**Discussion**

On one level, the study data provided valuable guidance for the management of future cross-cultural exchanges. For example, we learned to keep in the mind the intensity of the experience for both graduate students and professors. That is, expectations for student assignments should be realistic within the time available to students in the exchange, particularly in the light of the high value the graduate students placed on the informal aspects of the experience. As well, students need to be allowed some flexibility in terms of when they are able to do the reading and written assignments associated with the exchange. For instance, it is important to allow students to do presession independent study for partial course credit and to extend deadlines for final assignments. As planners of such experi-
ences, we also need to allow exchange participants sufficient time to debrief their experiences. Also, reciprocal billeting arrangements need to be flexible enough to allow some students to make their own arrangements for local accommodation and transportation. It needs to be safe for students to decline the opportunity to host visiting colleagues because of family, work, or personal needs. It is important to structure extended travel time between sessions in each country to allow the graduate students to recover from the intensity of the work and to adjust to local time zones. Equally important is the need for visiting students and professors to have opportunities to participate in social and sightseeing events that provide valuable opportunities for collegial dialogue and participant bonding. Finally, as the professors who were delivering the travel study units, we had to grapple with university semesters in opposite hemispheres that overlapped only slightly. Thus, university registrars and office staff had to allow the two professors wide latitude in terms of when marks were submitted, while one of the professors had to arrange for colleagues to cover her teaching assignment during the out-of-country component of the exchange.

On a second level, the data that were collected reinforced the validity of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model as a pedagogical framework for the provision of graduate learning. According to the graduate students from both countries, the cross-cultural exchange was a pivotal experience in their graduate programmes in educational leadership. Certainly, various components of the model played a larger role in the Canada–New Zealand exchange than they did in the earlier study that suggested the leadership development model. For example, the international nature of the model was much more powerful in the present study than in the earlier online study. As well, it could be argued that the model could be collapsed from eight components to six. That is, others may find the model less cumbersome if two of the components—construction of meaning and generative approach to learning—were collapsed into one category. Further, the model might be as useful if two other categories were integrated—provision of a forum for discussion and sense of community. However, the overall differences among the model components, although at times relatively subtle, certainly merit consideration by those responsible for leadership development programmes. For this reason, the results of this study do not argue convincingly for substantive changes to the descriptions of the attributes of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model.

What the data do suggest, which was perhaps at best implicit in the previous study, is that the leadership development model has an additional dimension. Certainly the model should include its eight attributes and descriptors for learner and facilitator practices. However, the present study also highlights the fact that Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development seems to have a clear set of desired outcomes:

- emotional engagement with learning,
- development of a critical perspective,
The eight model attributes and the degree to which they are implemented appear to have a direct influence on the learning outcomes. These four outcomes and their relationship to the original Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model are portrayed in Figure 1. Increasingly, it is these very outcomes of our pedagogy and work with students which are the focus for ongoing critique and discussion.

**Conclusion**

There has been much debate about the types of leaders needed in tomorrow’s schools and about the optimal forms of leadership preparation. Although this study does not purport to settle the debate, it does go some way toward challenging planners of leadership development programmes to think about their pedagogy, why they teach the way they do, and what the impact of their teaching is on learners.

In addition, this study of the use of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model of teaching in a cross-cultural exchange demonstrated and reinforced several key points. First, in-depth reflection by students on their personal educational contexts is enhanced through examination of other educational contexts, both locally and internationally. Second, the breaking of boundaries between theory and practice, between university professors and students, between two nations, and between self and others, can foster the development of critically inquiring leaders who may not only have more questions than answers, but, more importantly, know that there are still more questions to ask.

![Diagram of Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model](image.png)

*Figure 1* Dimensions of Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development.
Finally, perhaps these leaders are likely to be critically reflective about the quality of education in their schools and to demonstrate the belief that they are able to make a difference to the quality of education offered in their settings. Certainly, the wide scope of school reforms in Western nations requires leaders who can respond proactively and effectively to change. The Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model could be a powerful leadership development tool that contributes to clear and desirable learning outcomes.

Note


References


49

CONTEXT AND PRAXIS IN THE STUDY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

A case of three?

Peter Ribbins


First thoughts

At a key point in Educational Leadership: The Moral Art, Hodgkinson ‘having considered at length the general theory of value’ and the relationship of theory to practice concludes ‘we can proceed to examine their workings in the practice, or, more correctly, praxis of educational administration and leadership’ (1991, p. 110). His analysis of ‘value praxis’ and account of ‘prescriptions and practicalities’, offers much leaders will find thought provoking. However, as he is the first to acknowledge, his approach is essentially abstract. I am aware that there is nothing so practical as a good theory, but my interests have been rather more concrete. As such, my research over the last 25 years has focused mainly on trying to understand how a number of educational leaders at a variety of levels within the educational systems of the United Kingdom and elsewhere describe, justify and enact their leadership. Much of this has been, and continues to be, ethnographic in character, but I have come to supplement this with life and career history based approaches. In doing so with Ron Best, Peter Gronn, Christine Pascal, Steve Rayner and Brian Sherratt, I have tried to work out the theoretical implications of doing so. In what follows I will say something about this approach and its implications for context and value in the study of administrative praxis. I will seek to illustrate the possibilities of the approach drawing on a case study of three successive regimes of headship enacted at a comprehensive school in England.

Appreciating context

I believe that studies of leaders, leading and leadership need to be contextualized. What does this mean? I begin from the idea that the world of the institution
is a complex one in which, in an important sense, there are as many ‘realities’ as individuals. To accept this is to be committed to an approach which makes the study of the person and his or her subjective interpretation of reality a ‘foundations block’ of any satisfactory account of social life (Ribbins, 1986). In taking this view, I have been influenced by Greenfield’s subjectivist critique of educational administration (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993). Greenfield acknowledges the influence of Weber on his thinking but, unlike his mentor, concentrates on human agency to the virtual neglect of social structure. I take Weber’s view (Best, Ribbins, Jarvis and Oddy, 1983). Accordingly, Gronn and I, following Seddon (1994) and others, propose a ‘contextualized perspective’ for the study of leaders (Gronn and Ribbins, 1996). In doing so, we advocate the need for approaches which have a concern for both agency and structure viewed within a context seen to be shaped by the interaction of one or more of macro (the societal), meso (the institutional) and micro (the individual) levels of relationship. Reconceptualized as the sum of the situational, cultural and historical circumstances that constrain leadership and give it meaning, context can be regarded as a vehicle through which the agency of particular leaders in specific situations may be empirically understood. Amongst other things, this would have the advantage of refocusing attention away from an overconcentration on leadership, characteristic of traditional approaches, and towards leaders and leading. Applied to education what might such an approach look like?

**Regarding context: a three-level approach**

I have developed a framework with five propositions which taken together comprise a prolegomenon (a preliminary and tentative sketch for a yet to be produced fully worked out theory) for the study of leadership during periods of radical reform (relevant to steady-state conditions) which has yet to be produced. Applied to the case of the headteacher, such an approach would need data on:

1. the reforms in their specific historical, social, economic, cultural and values framework;
2. the contemporary scope, dimensions and character of the reforms;
3. the interpretations of, and responses to, the reforms of key national/local stakeholders;
4. the interpretations of, and responses to, the reforms by key institutional stakeholders as seen from the perspective of particular schools;
5. the interpretations of, and responses to, the reforms by individual headteachers within the schools identified in 4 above.

Propositions 1 and 2 constitute macro-level, longitudinal and comparative elements of the relational context; 3, 4 and 5 cover actors operating in a variety of interpretive contexts and at a variety of levels. In what follows, I focus on
propositions 4 and 5 and will argue for meso- and micro-level ethnographies of educational leaders. Three main elements of interpretive contexts are implicit: I have termed these situated, individual portrayals; multi-actor perspectives; and multi-actor perspectives in action.

A situated portrayal

Such an approach would present the reader with sets of portraits of individual heads, and of their views across a representative range of issues, each reported in some depth (Mortimer and Mortimer, 1991a, 1991b; Ribbins and Marland, 1994). It can take various forms. I know of no study which replicates for headteachers the kind of approach Gardner (1995) has used. His portraits of leaders are his, and presented in his words, rather than theirs and in their words. In contrast, the studies listed above are largely in the words of the heads involved. Even so, they differ in important ways.

The Mortimers, for example, invited seven primary and eight secondary heads, to respond in writing to issues specified by the researchers. My work on headship has emphasized the need for greater spontaneity and a more open process of agenda negotiation. As such I have derived my various accounts from face-to-face interviews and have used the same broad format. A group of heads/other educational leaders are invited to take part. Those who agree are sent a list of topics and asked to indicate any they would not wish to discuss and/or to add any they felt might be helpful. In an interview it is usually possible to renegotiate the agenda as the conversation progresses. Interview schedules have varied between projects in terms of agenda and the level of detail set out for individual themes. All were interviewed once, some twice, for about two hours. They knew the discussion was ‘on the record’. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and edited. The editing sought to create a text which was authentic and readable. Censorship was restricted to the deletion of likely libels. Each respondent was sent a full transcript of the edited interview and invited to propose such additions and amendments as he or she wished to see included. The original letter of contact usually made clear they could pull out at any time and that should their interview be published there would be regard to their wishes for revision. Some have made considerable use of the right to propose revisions, others very little. It is possible that the advantage of allowing respondents to have sight of the interview schedule and enabling them to propose revisions to the draft text might entail some loss of spontaneity or authenticity. This was a risk worth taking and in any case was the price of an on-the-record interview. I do not believe the published texts lack colour or authenticity.

Multi-perspective

Traditional reports of headship decontextualize in the way described above but also insofar as they do not attempt to locate what headteachers say within a
context of the views of significant others (staff, pupils, parents, governors) in the community of the school. A multi-perspective gives the reader some access to such information.

**Multi-perspective in action**

Relatively few studies explore what heads say in the context of what they do. To achieve this the researcher must do five things: collect relevant documentary evidence which touches upon the role of a specific headteacher in a particular school; observe such a head as he or she enacts his or her role in practice in relevant situations; discuss with the head what he or she is trying to do and why; set this account against the views of significant others; and, compare and contrast the available evidence. Ethnographic research of this kind can offer an enhanced understanding of the headteacher and headship in a variety of settings. The following examples are classified into three categories according to the extent to which the headteacher is the principal focus and his or her status in undertaking the research.

**Category 1** research treats the head as one among a number of actors at the school to be studied. Since the case study reported in the latter part of this paper is just such a case in point, I will not discuss the issues which this category raises until then.

**Category 2** studies are characterized by their concentration on the perceptions and actions of particular headteachers. Insofar as Elizabeth Richardson’s on-the-record study of Nailsea Secondary School focuses on the views and actions of Denys John, its headteacher, it is an exemplary case (Richardson, 1973).

Southworth has recently published an interesting ethnography of a primary school. In it he studies ‘a headteacher by observing him at work inside the school . . . I investigated the idea of producing a portrait of the subject and saw parallels with biography’ (1995, p. 1). The book is a ‘case study of Ron Lacey, head of Orchard Community Junior School’ (p. 2). He is described as ‘the informant’ and Southworth emphasizes that ‘Ron was the native I was studying and the research was aimed to elicit his vision of his world’ (p. 38). Lacey is the subject of the research, not a partner in it. As such it is a Category 2 study of headship, albeit a full and interesting one.

**Category 3** studies identify the headteacher as co-researcher. Since 1989 I have been involved in third level research at Great Barr GM School in Birmingham. At first, this study was informed by ideas developed at Rivendell and refined elsewhere. It was planned to investigate how a large urban comprehensive school was responding to the reform agenda initiated by the 1988 Education Act and, in this form, was Category 1 research. As the work progressed I became increasingly interested in the role of the head as an interpreter and enactor of change. As a portrait of Brian Sherratt at Great Barr, during this phase, it had much in common with Southworth’s study of Ron Lacey at Orchard and could be classified as Category 2 research.
Since 1992, however, with Sherratt’s active involvement, I have been trying to develop a novel third level approach to the study of headship. In this version the head is both the principal subject of the research and a full partner within it. As such the research in which we are jointly engaged is autobiographical, insofar as it enables the head, as internal researcher, to reflect systematically and critically on his praxis during a period of intense reform. The study is also biographical insofar as I, as external researcher, have talked to him and many others at Great Barr and have observed a wide variety of events related to the exercise of his leadership in practice. We have recently called a halt to the field research and have begun to think about writing it up. This is not proving straightforward; we know of no close precedents upon which to draw in resolving some of the difficult theoretical and methodological problems entailed.

What has been fully written up is the kind of Level 3, Category 1 research which has been discussed above. To an example of this, I will now turn. In doing so, I will focus in particular upon the issue of leadership praxis in action.

**A case of Level 3, Category 1 research: three heads for Rivendell**

*Values, power and the administrator*

In a conversation I once had with Thomas Greenfield, he talked movingly about Boethius:

> a Christian who stood at the hinge between the Roman World and the Middle Ages. He is an administrator, one caught between the Emperor and the Pope, or as it turned out, the wrong Pope. He is condemned, and as he awaits his death he thinks back on his career and writes, thus bringing us new insights into the administrative task. Few of us will face the horror that Boethius did, but I am convinced that potentially there is that same dimension in all administrative rule, a kind of horror. The wielding of power is terrible, and the more power, the more terrible it becomes. If there is to be a kind of humanizing of that power a contemplative, philosophical dimension must and should be brought to it.

(Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993, p. 262)

Acton has said ‘all power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely’. Less famously, and in less politically correct times, he went on to claim that ‘almost all great men are bad men’. I have met many fine educational leaders who I could not describe as bad. Even so, I have long been interested in the potential which leadership can have for corrupting those who seek to exercise it and of the ways in which its horrors can be humanized.

Applied to the study of leaders, leading and leadership in education this can
entail many different things. In this chapter, I will restrict myself, among other things, to a comparative examination of the more or less coherent and consistent framework of educational and managerial values of each of three successive headteachers at one school, ‘Rivendell’, and of the ways in which this shaped their actions in terms of the strategies and tactics of management they sought to apply.

**Contextualizing the case**

Rivendell, at the time of our research, was a fairly large, coeducational, comprehensive located within the south-east of England. Our intention had been to engage in an ethnographic study of pastoral care at the school (reported fully in *Education and Care* – see Best et al., (1983). We soon found it was necessary to engage in a wide ranging examination of education, order and welfare at the school if we were to hope to understand pastoral care in context. Thus our ‘three year study’ took almost six years from start to finish, but that is another story. However, we were fortunate enough to encounter three headteachers at Rivendell and this encouraged us to attempt an account of the characteristics of three successive regimes of headship over a 25-year period at the school. In undertaking our research we drew upon a model which postulated that individuals within social settings of all kinds can be located along a continua of power and authority and in terms of their policies by the degree of their attachment to, or rejection of, the status quo. This means that the extent to which headteachers can manage either continuity or change along lines which they prefer, is to an important extent dependent upon the accuracy of their appreciation of these configurations and on their ability to mobilize support and minimize opposition. In analyzing these three regimes of headteacher we wished to explore the educational and managerial values espoused by ‘Mr Barber’, ‘Mrs Sewell’ and ‘Mr Lucas’; the extent to which and how they sought to enact these in practice and with what outcome; and, the responses which this engendered in other members of the school community.

**Mr Barber**

At the time of Barber’s appointment, Rivendell did not exist. What was to become its site was occupied by two schools, one for boys and the other for girls. His first task was to put them together into a secondary modern. Ten years later he presided over its comprehensivization. At the time of his retirement, ten years later still, Barber’s period of tenure tended to be described by himself and staff as characterized by its commitment to egalitarian, democratic and curriculum-centred reform. In fact these policies were associated with his second, and not his first, decade in office. Shortly after comprehensivization, Barber’s philosophy of education underwent a major transformation. Why this happened need not trouble us here, but a consequence was that under his driving influence
Rivendell came to have a coherent policy which underlay a set of largely consistent policies on key features of its provision.

Teachers’ accounts demonstrated the depth and breadth of this philosophy and of its effective implementation in practice. As a deputy head put it, ‘It is unusual to find a school with a cohesive philosophy across the whole spectrum of its work. Barber’s philosophy underlay everything that went on in the school. The philosophy went back to the 60s and the provision of a well-rounded person.’ The policies which flowed from his conversion represented a radical reform agenda which was generally believed by staff and others to have fundamentally altered the whole ethos and practice of the school. At the time, other schools were also attempting to introduce similar reforms. Usually with much less success. Why was Barber successful?

There were several factors which worked in his favour. First, since his policies were broadly in tune with the drift of educational thinking towards more informal-progressive, open, egalitarian and child-centred methods, some staff would have been receptive. Second, his initial attempts to achieve change coincided with comprehensive reorganization and the increase in resources which this made available to the school. This made staffing and resourcing his innovations practicable. Third, the very fact that in his early years he had been seen as an effective and successful conservative helped when he wanted to implement change. Fourth, some teachers who did not favour aspects of his reform agenda nevertheless felt, as they told us, it would have been unprofessional to have opposed him. Even so not all staff, initially at least, were willing accomplices. What strategies did he use to secure at least their acquiescence? Some he seems to have won over by securing their commitment to his educational values. How he did this was not always clear, but several commented on his ability to articulate and justify his policies in terms of a coherent and watertight philosophy. Attempts to better him in debate rarely succeeded. He came to be seen by staff as far-sighted, even visionary. Many attested to the power of his argument. By good and determined argument and appeals to certain normative values, Barber, it seems, re-educated his staff to see their work in a new light and in doing so to accept the policies entailed in such a redefinition. By fostering the same kind of enthusiasm he felt himself, he gradually gained the support of more and more staff. For some this ‘was very exciting. It was just like being back at college. The atmosphere was one of continual debate and discussion’. For others, ‘You could almost describe some (teachers) as brainwashed.’

This last comment hints that there was a darker side to Barber’s strategies of reform and to his values as a manager. There is evidence that there was some more-or-less blatant coercion of staff who did not easily accept his policies. According to one ‘If you did not toe the line, Barber would come round and thump the table and boot you in the pants’, although another suggested ‘he tended to ask opponents to go elsewhere’.

Conversely, he was good at assembling allies through appointment. He was also skilful in giving potential allies a stake in the innovations as they
progressed and in doing so promoting them to positions of greater authority within the school. How he did this can be seen from the way in which he implemented mixed ability and integrated humanities throughout the school. A member of the humanities team described it as follows

Barber set up the system year by year. He, the deputy and head of humanities began with the first year, when they had worked through the year left ‘Jane Rayner’ in charge and moved to the second year. When they had devised the 2nd year work and worked through that they left ‘Roslyn Parker’ in charge and moved on to the 3rd year...

By such a process converts were systematically and gradually located in key positions.

This seems to have been a feature of his approach generally to the system of meetings and teams he established to make key decisions within the school. Here he used powerful allies to instigate and defend the changes dictated by his broad philosophy, and through his personal membership of almost all these groups, he was able to monitor progress and if necessary to veto proposals which ran counter to his policies and values. Many staff considered the deliberations of these groups and committees to have been systematically rigged. It would have been possible to offer numerous examples of this view but I must be content with two or three:

In Barber’s day he had a ‘Cabinet’ meeting... of between 15 and 20 people... It did not work formally through agendas, resolutions and minutes, rather through the discussion of issues brought to it, an informal agenda under the control of the head and deputy.

The School Council met monthly, chaired by the head... it was meant as a vehicle for children to influence democratically the working of the school, but he was an authoritarian not a democrat so it didn’t work in practice. There was a lot of verbiage from him which meant that he restricted the questions...

Barber was good at manipulating people to get them to do what he wanted.

Not surprisingly, Barber was widely described as a ‘totalitarian’, an ‘autocrat’ and a ‘ruthless manipulator’. Yet, overwhelmingly, staff also spoke highly, if grudgingly, of his qualities. They commented on his ‘visionary powers’, his impressive ability to articulate and defend his values and philosophy, and his powers of leadership. Even those who did not prosper under his regime acknowledged his immense ability to work and his dedication and involvement in the work of the school. As one put it ‘he was always around the school, he attended
pretty well every team meeting and there were a lot of team meetings’. Barber was seen as devoting his working hours to the real work of the school, only beginning his administration after school and always working late. We met no teacher who believed that he or she or any other member of staff worked as hard as Barber. Moreover, several acknowledged that ‘With Barber, if you agreed with his philosophy, or at least attempted to apply it, he would back you to the end.’ Finally, as time went on, the visible success of his policies in the public arena, expressed in growing numbers of visitors to the school and increasing and often flattering media attention, made it more and more difficult to stand against him. However, all good things come to an end and after 20 years in office Barber finally, and reluctantly, reached an age when he was required to retire.

Mrs Sewell

By the time of his retirement in the late 1970s, the circumstances of the school had changed substantially. Public expressions of a conservative backlash on many of the developments he had fostered such as mixed-ability teaching, ‘soft-option’ integrated studies course, liberal exam methods were becoming more frequent and trenchant. In addition, there were those within the school for whom discretion had been the better part of valour during the Barber years, who began to express disenchantment with aspects of the existing regime. The new head therefore took up her appointment in a situation which had a strong and established pattern of policy and practice, but which was also moving out of a period potentially ripe for change. As it turned out, her values, policies and strategies differed in a number of important ways from her illustrious predecessor. We, and many staff, found it difficult to decide if her overall policy either in general or in terms of Rivendell was conservative or radical. Sewell seemed to approve of the overall philosophy of education which Barber had tried to implement, and she seemed to have wanted to conserve much of the best of his era. Yet she also seemed to believe that some structural change was necessary to make their implementation more effective. One thing was clear. She recognized the potential difficulties of succession. As she put it:

I knew it was going to be a hard act to follow . . . the very fact that he had made such an outstanding and such a morale-boosting success of the school’s recognition to comprehensive education by his avowed policy – which I thought was absolutely the right one of not imitating the grammar school but of becoming a different kind of school – this seemed to be absolutely the right thing to have done.

However, on specific issues, notably attempting to raise the profile of science and technology and diminishing the overwhelmingly privileged position of the humanities, she clearly wished to encourage some change. In attempting these and other innovations she seems to have tried to employ a strategy of
assembling allies in a way substantially similar to that used with such success by her predecessor. As she told us, ‘It was very much with the sort of object I had in mind that one of the deputy head appointments was made.’ Again, she used a similar approach in appointing staff to new positions in the revised pastoral structure of the school. For whatever reason, these strategies were not effective in strengthening her position within the school. Those she chose as allies and sought to promote by no means always reciprocated. This was recognized by a senior member of staff who quickly became an important opponent. As he put it, ‘It is worth remembering that some staff gained from her coming. Some of them reneged on her afterwards. They had no right to do so.’

This is an interesting comment in various ways, not least because it demonstrates that this member of staff recognized the ‘rules of the game’ of these appointments and promotions for what they were: a strategy for gaining loyalty and support. If this is what they were, too many were unsuccessful. This was notably the case with the appointment of two relatively young teachers to deputy headships within the school. Both found the struggle to make their own position within the school too demanding to have much time for lending support to the person who had appointed them. In addition, some members of the old guard felt they had been passed over for unacceptable reasons for inexperienced people which the new head had known and brought in from outside the school. However, as she recognized, some, at least, of the resistance which she encountered owed something to rather less rational reasons: ‘I think there was bound to be ... an element of suspicion and a little bit of antagonism in that a relatively inexperienced teacher was appointed to what was obviously a very coveted headship ...’ How, then, did she try to exercise this coveted headship?

Reflecting in retrospect, she described her values and management style in the following terms:

I tended to be a consultative head ... and probably in the upshot found that there were certain decisions which everybody expected a head to take and that if you spend too much time consulting about them you just end up offending everybody ... If you didn’t make the consensus of opinion type decisions ...

Certainly, she fostered discussion on a number of highly contentious issues and established working parties of various aspects of organization and management of the school. In doing so she sought to involve as many staff as possible on these groups and committed herself to having their reports being presented to the governors. In the early days of her regime, quite unlike her predecessor, she even tried to make full staff meetings opportunities for full, free and open discussion. As far as we could tell from our conversations with her and our observations, her policies on decision making, the committee structure, and her role as a consultative head did not seem to have been conceived or employed as a means of manipulation and control. However that may be, they were not well received.
Within a few months of her appointment, a growing number of staff became highly critical. Some argued that her management was undirected by any clear philosophy of her own. As one senior teacher put it to us, ‘She had no real philosophy of the comprehensive school and saw her job as dealing with day-to-day things.’ Others shared this view and concluded that as a result, the school lacked leadership: ‘the school is falling into the trap of too many people doing what they want without any real direction . . .’ Yet others criticized her policy and practice on all aspects of staffing, including establishment, appointment and promotion, suggesting that decisions were made on inappropriate grounds and this had led to the institutionalization of unhelpful bureaucracies. There were certainly some grounds for the latter claim. During her term of office Rivendell developed a pastoral structure of such impenetrable complexity that it was commonly described by staff as a ‘bureaucratic nightmare’. Finally, there was also much censuring of her alleged failure to support the teachers she had appointed and her use of these appointments as a means of evading her responsibilities. I can only illustrate the vigour with which these and other criticisms were made:

She made an absolute mess-up of things. She had a thoroughly bad effect on the school. Despite all you hear about how good she was, she didn’t back her teachers . . . She gave rapid promotion to people she knew outside the school. All this had a very bad effect on the school.

Mrs Sewell has introduced a series of faculty, year and house meetings partly in order that she can farm out responsibility to the people involved. If a criticism came she could say, for example, I am sorry, I have to consult my head of faculty, house, etc. She would not let the ‘can’ come back to her.

There was also a good deal of resentment over the distinction which she was purported to make between administrative and other posts, and, especially worrying for those of us who teach the subject, her enthusiasm for the jargon of educational management:

Under Barber there was no talk of administration, you did your administration in an odd minute here and there. Barber didn’t start his administration until after 5 o’clock. During the day he was always around the school. So when ‘Madam’ came, she was talking ‘a language that nobody understood’ . . . Of course, now I have been on courses and heard people talking about ‘top management’ and ‘middle management’ and realize that I have been in a backwater.

A few staff did speak with approval about what she was trying to do and compared her favourably with her predecessor but they were very much in the minority. Most saw her brief term of office as a bad thing for the school. Yet, as
I have tried to show, she claimed to have approved of much of her predecessor’s values and philosophy, she sought to conserve the best features of the school as she had found it and, in particular, she encouraged consultation and attempted to replace manipulation and coercion with more open and democratic methods. But she failed to carry staff with her. She came to be seen as a head who lacked clear values and a discernible philosophy, who gave little leadership and shuffled off responsibility whenever she could, and who had presided over a sharp decline in the quality of life and schooling at Rivendell. Where did she go wrong?

Several possible explanations are possible. We did consider if gender was a significant issue and did find some limited evidence in support of this. But Sewell herself did not seem to regard this as important. Rather it was her youth and relative lack of experience and, therefore, of understanding of how to proceed which seems to have been much more critical. That both she and others understood this is evident in some of the quotations presented earlier. In conversation with us she talked about the kind of head that she would like to have become in time, rather than the kind of head she actually was. This led to a lack of certainty on how to handle difficult matters. As she says, ‘It’s very difficult, I think, to know just how properly to manage such things . . . I hope I would have had the wisdom and insight to have done (what her predecessor did) had I been, you know, that much older . . .’

In the face of such inexperience and uncertainty, a policy of consultative and democratic decision making might seem a logical response, but in practice it led to a mixture of ad hoc management on the one hand, and a large measure of laissez faire on the other. In retrospect she believed she did have significant policies on a number of matters, but these were not given coherence by the kind of overall philosophy which Rivendell had enjoyed under the previous regime, or if they were, this was not clear to the staff. In seeing her predecessor as a hard act to follow, she was more correct than she knew. First, because at a macro-level the climate of opinion which had supported Barber’s core innovations was becoming more hostile. Insofar as she sought to preserve key aspects of his legacy she did so in markedly less favourable circumstances. Second, not only did she seem to lack a philosophy as coherent as her predecessor, she also lacked his capacity to win and strengthen allies and to lose and neutralize enemies. Third, she was unwilling or unable to press home the kind of strategies of manipulation and control which Barber had used so ruthlessly and effectively. She soon came to see herself as a failure and this view was shared at Rivendell. In little more than two years she left headship and moved to another post.

Mr Lucas

Perceived failures of the previous administration meant staff morale was generally thought to be low, with many hoping that the new head would give some sort of lead to fill the vacuum left by Barber’s retirement. But there were also
misgivings. Some were concerned that the new head might ‘initiate even more changes from the Barber philosophy’. Others feared the prospect of some dismantling of the structures of posts which had mushroomed during Sewell’s brief period in office and from which they had benefited. One even threatened to resign if this took place. In the event some restructuring did take place but he proved to be a major beneficiary. No more was heard of this threat.

Sewell had been 34 when she took up the headship at Rivendell. She had been a teacher for some 10 years. Her first and only prior post had been as a Deputy Head to which she had been appointed directly from a managerial post in publishing. On appointment Lucas was in his early fifties, had spent his working life as a school teacher and, before he came to Rivendell, had been for many years the head of another, if smaller, comprehensive school within the same local authority. He had some knowledge of what had happened at Rivendell under his predecessor and came determined to achieve rapid change. He saw the innovations he wished to make as a rational response to change in the light of perceived constraints. He was also clear about the potential advantages of the new systems that he wished to put in place; we at the time, as researchers, saw these as being primarily to do with achieving a smoother and more streamlined administration in which better use might be made of the resources invested in various positions of responsibility.

The changes were driven through very rapidly and with little general consultation. Lucas once told us he believed that ‘any meeting for more than 20 minutes is useless’. He tended to be as good as his word on this. Staff meetings became 10-minute weekly meetings ‘for the dissemination of information’, mainly in a top down format. When major meetings took place they were usually carefully stage managed. At the key meeting at which staff had the ‘opportunity to discuss’ the structural changes he was intending to implement, they found themselves filing in faced by a semicircle of people seated at the front of the room who represented the new order and who had most to benefit from the reforms. Lucas opened his remarks by making it clear that he did not welcome debate on the broader principles and concluded that, ‘I will be happy to end this meeting at 10:20 but would definitely want to finish by 12:00; I don’t want to dwell on the reasons for these changes’. He used much the same approach when introducing the proposed changes to a meeting of the Parent–Teacher Association.

Although there was a good deal of support, along with some opposition, to the structural and other reforms Lucas proposed, there was strong objection to the way in which these changes were being introduced. There were numerous references to the fait accompli, to inadequate or non-existent consultation, and to the various discussion documents which were being produced at the times as the pronouncements or the edicts. Perhaps because of all this, a number of staff quickly concluded that, like his predecessor and unlike Barber, Lucas had no educational policy and was not much interested in trying to develop one. Yet for us it seemed that there was a clear, if implicit, philosophy behind the quite
radical educational changes he sought to implement at Rivendell. Conversely, there was a widely shared understanding that a major change in the rules of the game had taken place in terms of the values which underpinned management and decision making at the school. Everyone was clear, including Lucas, that the authority resides in the head and, by their inclusion in policy formulation, in his deputies. The new system was at best hierarchical and at worst overtly autocratic.

However one evaluates the changes Lucas introduced, or the methods he used to achieve them, there can be no doubt that within his first year at the school sweeping educational and managerial changes were made and more were on their way. It is also beyond doubt that these changes were by no means welcomed by all. Yet the actual level of resistance, despite the heated rhetoric sometimes heard within the school’s staff rooms and elsewhere, was relatively small. Why was this?

In part, this was because Lucas was skilful in buying or squaring off those who might have been most disaffected. He was also successful in ‘building in’ senior and influential staff into key positions within the new structures and in making them clearly accountable for key aspects of the work these entailed. This gave the structures an aura of power and officially-legitimated authority in the eyes of most staff. In some respects, for example, in his attempts to restrict the scope of staff meetings, Lucas might be thought to have been using an approach which reflected the kind of more-or-less manipulation which had characterized the Barber regime. On balance we felt that this was not an appropriate interpretation since given the overtness of his autocratic style of management, Lucas did not seem to require manipulation of any subtlety. Conversely, given the absence of opportunities for debate, discussion and consultation, he left himself little room to employ some of the strategies that Barber had used with such telling effect. The opportunities for advocating the normative grounds for the changes he wished to make were simply not there, and without them the kinds of attachment to his philosophy that Barber secured from many of his staff through strong moral appeals were almost impossible to achieve. If Barber surrounded himself with disciples at all levels amongst his teachers, the best Lucas could hope for were loyal line managers and an acquiescent staff. Insofar as this is what he wanted, the evidence suggests that he was successful both during an initial brief period of intense reform and in the many years of his regime that followed.

Conclusions on a case
As an illustration of the praxis of three educational leaders some may find the case of Rivendell makes for uncomfortable reading. It tells us of Mr Barber, who espoused a coherent and comprehensive set of egalitarian and democratic egalitarian philosophies that were at variance with the often calculating and manipulative managerial strategies which he employed with such telling effect.
to achieve his purposes. It also tells us of Mrs Sewell, who had no coherent educational philosophy or was unable to make clear what this was, lacked the will or the ability to be manipulative. Thus, while Barber merely espoused democratic managerial ideals, Sewell made a real effort to introduce democratic structures and processes, only to be accused of a lack of leadership and a poverty of philosophy. Seen as unsuccessful, she came to share this view and gave up headship. Rivendell teachers, it seemed, preferred strong leadership and a semblance of democracy, even when they knew this to be largely a sham. From their third head, Mr Lucas, they got strong and honest leadership without much manipulation and little attempt at even a facade of democracy. Again, they were not satisfied. Lucas was in a hurry and successfully drove through many major changes during his first year at the school yet, despite much passionate talk of opposition, very little came of any of this.

**Final thoughts**

In this chapter I have outlined a three level approach to the study of leaders, leading and leadership. I have sought to illustrate the merits of this approach in one of its third level ethnographic forms with reference to three successive, and very different, regimes of headship at a secondary school in the United Kingdom. I believe that this approach can be applied to good effect to research into the praxis of leaders and led within a wide variety of educational and other contexts and would wish to take this opportunity to call for more such studies. Those who are mad enough (Wragg, 1995) to want to be leaders, but who have no desire to be corrupted by the exercise of this ‘moral art’, need them. Hodgkinson (1991) notes that one of the functions of his book is to ‘ground action on better theory, on the best theory available’ (1991, 111). I believe it is also necessary to attempt to ground theory in action.

**References**

LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS


WRAGG, T. (1995) ‘You don’t have to be mad to try this . . .’, TES, 20 October, p. 60.
EMBEDDING LEADERSHIP IN TASK PERFORMANCE

Viviane M. J. Robinson

In his recent review of research on leadership in the Handbook of Organization Studies, Alan Bryman (1996) writes that ‘Leadership theory and research have been remarkably and surprisingly uncoupled from the more general field [organization studies] in which they are located’ (p. 259). Much leadership research floats ethereally above the humdrum of organizational life, abstracted from the tasks that leaders are alleged to help others accomplish. When leadership is disconnected from tasks we pay too little attention to their structure and to the resources required to progress them. We may also misunderstand the skills and capacities involved in leadership, focusing too much on decontextualized processes of interpersonal influence and too little on substantive task-related expertise.

These are the themes I explore in this chapter. I begin with a brief review of leadership research, and show how it disconnects task performance from leadership. I then propose a way of reconnecting the two by describing leadership as exercised when ideas or acts are recognized by followers as capable of progressing tasks or problems that are important to them. The argument involves describing what it is to progress a task or problem, through an account of problems and problem-solving. Since most educational problems are solved by interacting actors and not isolated individuals, I then show how this account constrains the type of interpersonal influence process involved in leadership. Finally, I contrast this view of leadership with the recent emphasis on leadership as visionary and transformational.

The disconnection of task and leadership performance

The following definition of leadership is typical of those which dominated the field until the mid-1980s: ‘Leadership may be considered as the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement’ (Stogdill, 1950, p. 3). The inclusion of goals and goal
achievement in this definition suggests that task performance is an important aspect of leadership, but despite this acknowledgment little of the research within this rational tradition has theorized the processes that contribute to task performance. For example, in the search for the holy grail of leadership effectiveness, hundreds of studies have correlated leaders’ traits and styles with task outcomes, but there is doubt about even whether the results reflect the causal impact of leaders on task performance, or the inclination of followers to attribute task outcomes to their leaders (Lakomski, 1998).

The contribution of leadership to task performance has also been clouded by the assumption that leadership is adequately studied by the study of leaders, that is, those who occupy formal leadership positions. By contrast, when leaders are identified by the effects of their acts on others, rather than by the fact of their appointment, attention is drawn to the processes by which influence is exercised, the emergence of leadership in the course of interaction, and the way different individuals exert varying influence across situations (Hosking, 1988). Furthermore, when acts of leadership are distributed across individuals, studies of leaders will capture but a small percentage of the contributions that advance the relevant tasks.

When rational approaches to leadership were overtaken by New Leadership in the mid-1980s, there was even less focus on task accomplishment. The term New Leadership, which embraces a variety of approaches including transformational, charismatic and visionary leadership, treats leaders as ‘managing meaning’ rather than goal achievement, and motivating followers through a variety of symbolic activities. Alan Bryman (1996) describes the common ground between the various New Leadership approaches as follows:

Together these labels revealed a conception of the leader as someone who defines organizational reality through the articulation of a vision which is a reflection of how he or she defines an organization’s mission and the values which will support it. Thus the New Leadership approach is underpinned by a depiction of leaders as managers of meaning.

(p. 280)

Leaders in this approach need to be charismatic and inspirational and they need to know how to motivate followers. What knowledge they need of the work of the organization is unclear. The disconnection between task and leadership is seen in the following definition of James MacGregor Burns whose study of political leaders produced the distinction between transactional and transforming leadership – a distinction that has been very influential in educational administration literature. For Burns (1978), ‘Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers’ (p. 18).
On this account, leaders access resources to satisfy the motives of followers, which in the case of transactional leadership is achieved through rewards and sanctions, and in the case of transforming leadership is achieved through the articulation of vision and values. The requisite leadership skills include the accurate reading of follower psychology, so that one knows how to motivate and inspire. Task-relevant knowledge and skill play little role in this conception, so that one gains the impression that leaders can motivate, engage and inspire regardless of task demands. If followers are motivated by task demands, then leadership through satisfaction of motives will be compatible with task performance – if not, then leadership and task performance will be disconnected. These themes remain influential, for in his 1996 review of ‘New Leadership’, Peter Gronn (1996) proposes that ‘leading’ is best defined as ‘the framing of meaning and the mobilization of support for a meaningful course of action’ (p. 8). While Gronn’s reference to a ‘course of action’ implies a task dimension, his review makes clear that what is problematic is the mobilization of support, not framing the meaningful course of action. Leadership is analysed as an influence process that is disconnected from, rather than embedded in, task accomplishment.

**Embedded performance**

While leadership research, or at least large portions of it, have ignored the task contexts in which leadership is exercised, the practice of leadership is inextricably woven into the fabric of task performance. The following scenario provides a typical enough picture of how school staff go about accomplishing tasks together. The question I raise about the scenario is ‘What, if anything, does the scenario have to do with leadership?’

*Mei, the Head of Science, is chairing a meeting in which her staff are reviewing the results of the assessment of the last unit of work. She circulated the results in advance, with notes about how to interpret them, and asked the team to think about their implications for next year’s teaching of the unit. The team identifies common misunderstandings and agrees they need to develop resources which help students to overcome them. Jushan, a second year teacher, was pretty unhappy with the assessment protocol used this year, and suggests revisions which he thinks will give more recognition to students who have made an extra effort. Most of his suggestions are adopted. Lee, who teaches information technology as well as science, shows the group how the results have been processed on the computer so they can be combined with other assessments, and incorporated in reports to parents and to the Board. Several team members express nervousness about reporting to the Board so they decide to review a draft report at the next meeting.*

If we were to believe some of the more popular accounts of leadership, the above
scenario would not be recognised as relevant to the topic. Mei is not in the driver’s seat, articulating a vision, motivating the troops or satisfying their needs. What she is doing is structuring the task, doing it, revising how it will be done next time and simultaneously completing related tasks. Her contributions articulate with those of others, whom she influences through her talk or actions, but Jushan and Lee also influence her. In this scenario leadership has gone underground because it is embedded in the task rather than floating above it as a meta-level commentary. I try to capture the way leadership is embedded in organizational action in the following definition:

- Leadership is exercised when ideas expressed in talk or action are recognized by others as capable of progressing tasks or problems which are important to them.

The recognition does not require a verbal endorsement from followers. Leadership is detected by its effects, that is by identifying those contributions around which other contributions are coordinated. Mei structures the task of reviewing the science results by providing guides to their interpretation and suggesting an agenda. Her staff indicate agreement with this influence attempt, by simply doing as she has suggested. Jushan makes a similar contribution, and so we see that leadership occurs wherever and whenever such contributions arise, whether or not the contributors hold formally designated leadership roles. The notion of leadership as distributed across work groups contributes to the democratization of leadership by decoupling leadership from rank and focusing attention on who is doing the work and how it gets done.

If leadership is about making contributions through actions and words that are accepted by others as progressing an important task, then we need to focus on the nature of tasks and what it is to progress them. Clarification of these issues will enable us to make progress on understanding the skills, knowledge and attitudes that might be associated with making leadership contributions. Our research will then be grounded in the detail of task contribution rather than in assessments of the personal qualities of those who are designated as leaders and who may or may not make such contributions to any given task.

**Task performance as problem-solving**

In previous writing I have proposed an account of problems and problem-solving that I believe is useful in understanding what it is to progress a task (Robinson, 1993, 1998). It draws on the work of Thomas Nickles (1981), a philosopher of science who defines a problem as ‘the demand that a goal be achieved, plus constraints on the manner in which it is achieved’ (p. 111).

Nickles argues that problems arise through demands that they be solved and that such demands arise within particular historical and cultural traditions. What counts as a problem changes over time and across social and cultural contexts.
The shift to school self-management, with its associated emphasis on accountability, has increased the demand that schools address a number of problems of finance, property, personnel and curriculum, that were either not previously seen as problems, or were the responsibility of central agencies. Whether these particular problems ought to be on schools’ agenda raises more general questions about the political processes creating the demand that particular problems be solved. Precisely because these processes are political, the problems through which leadership is exercised are not uncontested, both in the sense of how a particular problem is formulated and in the sense of whether any particular problem ought to be on the agenda at all. It is important, therefore, that the above definition of leadership can be developed into an account that demonstrates how leadership contributes to task performance through both the emergence of particular issues as problems, and through the resolution of contested formulations of those problems that are on the agenda.

In the following, I explain Nickles’s somewhat abstract account through the example of a hypothetical school trying to solve the problem of how to monitor and report on the collective achievement of students. Let us imagine that some staff in this school do not accept the problem demand, which has largely come from regulatory agencies, and other staff accept that the problem should be on the agenda, but are wary of how it may be formulated.

The problem of how to monitor collective achievement in the context of an individual school, like many problems in education, can be described as ill-structured because there is uncertainty about the information and methods needed to solve it, and about what counts as a solution (Simon, 1973). In education, such problems are controversial as well as uncertain because people develop emotional and value-based commitments to different understandings of the problem, and it is unclear whether they can be adequately reconciled. Ill-structured problems are solved by making them more well-structured, that is, in Nickles’s terms, by specifying the constraints on the solution. Constraints narrow the solution alternatives by specifying the conditions that are to be satisfied. Constraints could include relevant values and beliefs, regulatory requirements, material conditions such as available financial and human resources, and other school practices with which any proposed solution must articulate. The more constraints that are specified, the more well-structured the problem, which means that there are fewer degrees of freedom available about how it may be solved, and a narrower problem space in which to search for the solution.

This account can now be applied to the example of collective assessment as follows. Imagine that the comments in Table 1 are a summary of the main concerns that have been raised in staff’s preliminary discussions about the type of collective assessment they wish to develop. On the right hand side of the table are the positive and negative constraints on any proposed solution that are implicit in the associated staff comment. For example, the comment that the information will be used against teachers implies opposition to any assessment practices which may be used punitively; advocates of this constraint may not
accept any solution if they believe that it is not possible to solve the problem without violating this constraint to an unacceptable degree. If sufficient staff shared such a view, the problem of collective assessment would remain irresolvable until this constraint was formulated in a more flexible manner. Alternatively, the demand for its solution could be dropped until a more trusting political climate emerged – this amounts to taking the problem off the agenda, at least for the time being.

Problems are solved by discovering or designing practices which adequately integrate the proposed constraints. For our assessment problem, this involves developing procedures which, as far as possible, provide reliable information, have utility for both classroom teaching and programme evaluation, satisfy external accountabilities, protect teachers from possible misuse of the information and are efficient.

It will be obvious to anyone familiar with current debates on collective assessment that there is considerable tension between staff’s various solution requirements – indeed, some would argue that the constraints in Table 1 are irreconcilable. The tension inherent in this example can be appreciated by evaluating various assessment practices against the listed constraints. Achievement data that are easily aggregated and reported to external stakeholders may tell teachers that improvement is needed, but provide little diagnostic information about students’ difficulties. If more detailed diagnostic data are collected, the requirement to assist classroom teachers will be better satisfied, but the efficiency constraint may then be violated to an unacceptable level. While this example may be extreme, tension between constraints is precisely what makes so many educational problems intractable, and subject to repeated reform attempts, as different stakeholders advocate new solutions which give greater weight to their preferred constraints.

Table 1 Implied constraints on collective assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff comments</th>
<th>Implied constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘The Board will misinterpret the information’</td>
<td>Accuracy of interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘It must be useful for my teaching’</td>
<td>Useful to classroom teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘As Director of Curriculum, I need to know whether our programmes are effective’</td>
<td>Useful for programme evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘We are legally required to inform the Board and the government’</td>
<td>Accountability to external stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘In this political climate the information will be used to further bash teachers’</td>
<td>Protect teachers from misuse of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘It must be computerized to be manageable’</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS
The degree of tension between constraints is a function of both their formulation and the objective relationships between them. For example, if the comment that ‘the Board will misinterpret the information’ implies that it should not receive the information, then the problem may be irresolvable, for this constraint contradicts any legal requirement to provide such information. If, on the other hand, it represents a plea for accurate interpretation, then these two constraints are not incompatible, because certain sorts of reporting to the Board could reduce the risk of misinterpretation to acceptably low levels.

The process of constraint specification and integration are concurrent rather than sequential, for in attempting to integrate constraints, problem-solvers adjust their meaning, their relative weighting and their proposed solutions until they are satisfied with the degree to which they have been integrated. Satisfaction does not, of course, indicate an absolute level of integration, only that problem-solvers see the solution as good enough for now. For example, staff who are concerned that individual teachers will be held accountable for their students’ results might accept a system which aggregated results across a whole year level, but not one which aggregated and reported results by class. The latter system would make it too easy, they would argue, to target allegedly under-performing teachers.

In summary, problems do not arise until there is a demand that they be solved and both the demand itself, i.e. the claim that there is a problem, and its formulation may be uncertain and contested. Problems are solved, however inadequately, when problem-solvers adopt practices which sufficiently integrate their proposed constraints on the problem. When I say ‘their’ constraints, I mean those they take into account, whether they reflect their own preferences or not. In other words, the constraint set proposed for a particular problem is likely to originate in both the preferences of the problem-solvers and in features of the environment controlled by others which they believe must be taken into account. Practices which solve problems have short- and long-term, intended and unintended, and positive and negative consequences. Since many such consequences are neither predicted nor predictable, the solution may subsequently be judged inadequate and trigger a new demand that the problem be re-solved (Nickles, 1981).

From task structure to leadership

Most educational problems are formulated and resolved not by isolated actors, but through the coordinated understanding and action of multiple actors. Earlier, I defined leadership as exercised when ideas or actions are recognized by followers as capable of progressing tasks or problems that are important to them. Now that we have an account of what it is to progress a task, we can turn to the influence processes that promote the collective accomplishment of problem-solving. In turning to social considerations at this point, I am not outlining a two-stage theory of leadership in which problems are solved in the heads of
leaders who then engage with followers in order to convince them of his or her solution. What I am doing is exploring how problem-solving constrains the social dimension of leadership activity.

Problem-solving constrains leadership by suggesting the relevant aspects of social interaction. The word ‘social’ rather than ‘interpersonal’ is deliberately chosen, for the latter implies influence through face-to-face interaction which is only one of various ways in which influence over others may be exercised. For example, followers may value ideas that are conveyed through written descriptions, demonstrations, or that are implicit in the observed actions of others. A teacher may notice how a curriculum leader is able to use individual assessment records to give teachers useful feedback about particular students, and to use those same records, along with those of the remaining children at that level, to evaluate the teaching programme. Leadership is exercised in this case, not because the teacher holds the position of curriculum leader, but because her assessment practice shifts her colleague’s belief that information collected for the purpose of programme evaluation cannot provide useful information about individual students.

Some clues to the nature of the influence processes that constitute leadership are found in the earlier definition of leadership as ‘exercised when ideas expressed in talk or action are recognized by others as capable of progressing tasks or problems which are important to them’. First, leadership is identified by the reaction of followers, not, in the first instance, by the position, character or style of particular individuals. The latter type of investigation becomes useful when it focuses on those who have been independently identified, through the reaction of others, as making more than the usual number of contributions. Second, the influence is accepted because the ideas and actions are attractive, not because of coercion, fear or a sense of duty or obligation (Fay, 1987). The basis of the attraction is the belief, which may or may not turn out to be true, that the contribution will progress the task or problem in a manner consistent with one’s own understanding of it. This means that others sense an alignment between the values and interests through which they understand the problem, and those implicit in the contribution. Or, to put it more technically, the contribution is accepted, because it incorporates and gives appropriate weighting to those constraints which are important to followers.

The processes of leadership

What knowledge and skills are involved in influencing others through making contributions that are recognized as progressing relevant tasks or problems?

Gaining and utilizing knowledge relevant to the task or problem

Experience with similar problems and tasks provides information about the constraints that may be relevant, their inter-relationships, and the possibilities for
their integration. The deeper one’s knowledge of a problem’s constraints, the more possibilities open up about how they may be integrated because they are understood at the level of underlying principle rather than surface detail. To return to our former assessment example, whether or not school-wide assessment practices can be informative for teaching as well as management purposes, and still be efficient, depends on the subtle detail of their design. Staff who have a superficial rather than a detailed knowledge of assessment are unlikely to recognize or make the distinctions needed to craft practices that can satisfy all three requirements.

People with prior relevant experience are more likely to anticipate unintended consequences of certain patterns of constraint satisfaction, to accept more complex constraint sets because they are more confident of their integration, and to avoid crafting constraints in ways that set up opposition between them. Like expert problem-solvers, their experience with similar tasks enables them to perceive a possible structure through the detail of the initially ill-structured problem (Chi, et al., 1982).

**Skills in constraint integration**

Whilst this process is closely related to that of gaining and utilizing task-specific knowledge, it is treated separately, for it is possible to influence others’ understanding of specific constraints without contributing to the process of their integration. Indeed, partisan leadership achieves just that, by emphasizing the importance of one aspect of a problem while neglecting, if not opposing, other dimensions or perspectives. Integrating constraints requires relevant knowledge, attitudes and skill. Dewey’s (1922) notion of imaginative deliberation captures what is involved:

> The aim in deliberation should be to devise an action in which all [competing tendencies] are fulfilled, not indeed in their original form but in a ‘sublimated’ fashion, that is, in a way which modified the original direction of each by reducing it to a component along with others in an action of transformed quality.

(p. 194)

The competing tendencies, or constraints, are fulfilled, not by crass compromise or trade-offs between them, but by understanding their underlying principles and values so that more possibilities are revealed about how they may be satisfied. Inseparable from this knowledge is an attitude of commitment to the whole problem, which motivates problem-solvers to search for solutions that as far as possible satisfy the whole constraint set rather than maximize those they initially favoured. Such integrative contributions are more likely to be made by those who are skilled at recognizing and creating common ground, than by those who more readily perceive conflict and opposition.
Gaining and utilizing knowledge of actual or potential followers

When actors know what is important to potential followers, they are more likely to craft ideas and actions in ways that are recognized as contributions, not simply because they are trying to ‘win them over’, but because they have learned more about what the problem involves. Because this knowledge is contextualized in terms of particular tasks or issues, it is not necessarily gained by what is sometimes described as ‘getting to know’, or ‘getting alongside’ others. Someone in a formal leadership position may not have such knowledge, despite friendships and years of shared experience, because they have assumed that they know what is important, or because they have not had an opportunity to learn how others understand a particular problem.

Hosking (1988) describes how knowledge of others’ interests is gained through networking – the process of making contacts and building social relationships. Networking promotes collective problem-solving through learning what is important to others and building relationships which can be channels for influence.

Ideas and actions may gain recognition from groups that have had no contact with their originator because understandings gained from engagement with similar groups are widely applicable. Leadership is thus always social (confirmed by the response of a follower) without being necessarily interpersonal (it does not always occur in a face-to-face context).

Like all of the processes described in this section, utilizing knowledge of followers implies both cognitive and attitudinal dimensions. Gaining knowledge of how others frame problems implies that one cares about others, especially when their beliefs and values differ from one’s own. Respect for difference produces ideas and acts that take into account the interests and values that others bring to the problem, so, as a result, more people with initially different positions will identify with the resulting problem formulation. Thus gaining knowledge of followers increases the likelihood of being influential through negotiating a problem formulation that is sufficiently shared to allow a solution to be reached.

In summary, I have suggested three leadership processes that increase the likelihood of making contributions that others recognize as progressing problems that are important to them. Two of those processes, gaining relevant knowledge and integrating constraints, emphasize the role of task expertise in leadership, and the role of experience in gaining such expertise. The remaining one, gaining knowledge of followers, recognizes the contested and political nature of educational problem-solving and the value of an empathic and respectful understanding of the differing interests and values that inform alternative problem formulations.

Leadership, vision and task performance

When leadership is embedded in task performance, it becomes more mundane and less dramatic than portrayed by those authors who write of leaders as inspir-
ing and transforming followers through their vision for the organization (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Senge, 1990). What are we to make of this popular conception of what it is to lead? Do these leadership attributions bear any relationship to the actual work of leadership as we have described it here?

The articulation of a vision draws attention to what is important and what is important ought to shape the way ill-structured problems are formulated. A vision expresses those constraints that are intended to guide all organizational problem-solving and if this is achieved, there will be overlaps between the constraint structures of many organizational problems. Let us say that ‘serving its community’ is part of the vision articulated by a school leader. This espoused constraint shapes the school’s theory-in-use to the extent that it is incorporated within the constraint structure that informs relevant school practices (Argyris, 1982; Argyris and Schön, 1996). In the assessment example referred to earlier, this ‘vision’ would require dialogue with parents about the type of assessment information they seek, and sufficient weighting of their preferences to influence the eventual problem solution. Vision becomes meaningful when it makes a difference by ruling in some alternative actions and ruling out others.

Vision gets a bad name when it is represented in words, rather than in words and deeds. Some words cannot be represented in deeds, because the words do not recognize the constraints that will determine the deeds regardless of what the new words are. That is why Karl Weick (1993), who has made a brilliant career out of turning things on their head, advises leaders that rather than learn how to ‘walk the talk’ they should learn to ‘talk the walk’. Workable visions are developed by those whose intimate knowledge of the past makes them wise about what can be accomplished in the future, rather than by those who engage in elaborate planning disconnected from evaluation of current practice.

Discussion and conclusions

If task-relevant expertise is critical to the resolution of complex educational problems, then leadership that accesses expertise, wherever it lies, makes sense. The phrase ‘wherever it lies’ requires careful consideration, however, for expertise lies in the tools and resources that are the products of previous problem-solving efforts, as well as in the heads of individuals. These resources lie both within individual self-managing schools and in the wider educational environment. One of the mistakes that may be made in the move to school self-management is to misunderstand how the problem-solving capacity of individual schools is partly dependent on the capacity of the system as a whole (Hutchins, 1995). For example, the capacity of a school to grapple with the problem of designing school-wide assessment policies and procedures is dependent on the resources available in the wider educational environment. While each school must solve the problem for itself, this does not mean that each one should start afresh. The state has a leadership role in supporting school self-management, not just by increasing the demand that certain problems be solved, as it has done in
the case of school-wide assessment in numerous OECD countries, but also by offering a menu of resources, including a variety of solution possibilities. Such solution possibilities increase confidence that the problem is soluble, provide a concrete reference point against which envisaged threats and opportunities can be assessed, and provide a basis from which schools can formulate their own solutions.

If leadership is linked to task-relevant expertise, then is there such a thing as generic leadership? When leadership is disconnected from task performance it is reduced to a decontextualized interpersonal influence process which lends itself to generic analysis. It may be the case that some people make contributions which are recognized as progressing a wide range of tasks, but the basis of their apparently generic leadership is their wide ranging substantive expertise. If I am right about this, we should be wary of claims that there is little difference between managing a school and a supermarket. My proposal of a theory of a problem and problem-solving should not provide comfort to advocates of generic leadership, for while that theory identifies a generic problem structure, it makes clear that fleshing out the structure to formulate and solve any particular problem requires task-specific knowledge.

The more one embeds leadership in task performance the more it disappears from view – which raises the question of whether the concept is needed at all (Mintzberg, 1998; Ogawa and Bossert, 1995). Is it possible that leadership research is marginal to the wider field of organization studies because organizational action can be explained without appealing to the concept? This question deserves a paper in itself, but here are some initial thoughts. Leadership disappears when tasks are well-structured, because the knowledge that progresses the task has been structured into the technologies and routines that are involved in its completion. When tasks are well-structured, their solutions are known, so the problem is solved automatically rather than through conscious deliberation. It is the conversion of ill-structured to well-structured problems that requires leadership, because the routines that would otherwise coordinate action have not yet been devised. Over time, well-structured problems may return to being ill-structured as changed circumstances create a demand that the problem be re-solved. As discussed in the earlier example, the science staff had solved the problem of how to assess the science unit, but became dissatisfied with their solution as they learned more about the pattern of grades it generated. The assessment problem then became more ill-structured, and leadership more visible, as team members contributed to its reformulation.

As schools become more self-managing, they encounter dozens of ill-structured problems, ranging from property maintenance to personnel management. The resolution of these problems provides countless opportunities for leadership from administrators, parents, teachers and students themselves. One of the jobs of leaders is to make such leadership opportunities accessible to all those who have or would wish to develop expertise which is relevant to the formulation and resolution of these problems.
EMBEDDING LEADERSHIP IN TASK PERFORMANCE

References

This article proposes pedagogical leadership as a more effective alternative to bureaucratic, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership in improving schools. Pedagogical leadership invests in capacity building by developing social and academic capital for students, and intellectual and professional capital for teachers. This emphasis on human capital development provides the conditions necessary to improve levels of student learning and development. Pedagogical leadership develops human capital by helping schools become caring, focused and inquiring communities within which teachers work together as members of a community of practice. To understand pedagogical leadership one must understand the story of community. This story includes unique ways of thinking about connections and human nature that run against the grain of conventional thought. In traditional schools connections are understood using the narrative of social contracts and human nature is understood using the constrained narrative. In schools that are striving to become communities, connections are understood using the narrative of social covenants and human nature is understood using the unconstrained narrative. Examples are provided that show how these narratives are embodied in leadership practice.

How can we bring about change that will result in higher levels of student performance, enhanced social development and improved levels of civility in schools? This question, uppermost in the minds of policy makers and school leaders throughout the world, is usually answered by advocating one or more of the following strategies:

- Provide bureaucratic leadership that mandates certain things for schools to
do and mandates certain outcomes for schools to achieve. Support this leadership by providing management systems that emphasize supervision, evaluation and incentives.

- Provide corporate style *visionary leadership* that provides a powerfully spoken sense of what must be done. Support this leadership by motivating and inspiring schools to change.
- Provide *entrepreneurial leadership* that applies market principles to schools. Support this leadership by encouraging competition, providing incentives for winning and disincentives for losing.

Despite their widespread use bureaucratic leadership, visionary leadership and entrepreneurial leadership have not improved schools in ways hoped for. Unfortunately, if we continue to do what we are now doing – even if we do it better – we will continue to get what we are now getting. Better results for all students, I argue in this article, will not be achieved until we emphasize a new conception of leadership and a different set of school improvement strategies. Instead of continuing to place bureaucratic, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership at the centre, I propose the following alternative for this centre position:

- Provide *pedagogical leadership* that invests in capacity building by developing social and academic capital for students and intellectual and professional capital for teachers. Support this leadership by making capital available to enhance student learning and development, teacher learning and classroom effectiveness.

Pedagogical leadership differs from bureaucratic, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership in that it is capital intensive but not in an economics sense. Instead of increasing material value, pedagogical leadership adds value by developing various forms of human capital.

Capital refers to the value of something that when properly invested produces more of that thing which then increases overall value. This emphasis on capital development provides the conditions necessary to improve the level of student learning and development. Capital expansion is, therefore, the key mediating variable that stands between pedagogical leadership and school results. These relationships can be depicted as follows:

\[
\text{Pedagogical Capital \rightarrow Development \rightarrow Students}
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Critics can point to numerous instances where students are learning and developing at high levels even though the schools they attend pay scant attention to capital development. Chances are these students are bringing to school the capital they need from home and other places. But society is changing. For many students, families are less stable and supportive. Neighbourhoods are
disarray. And traditional institutions such as the extended family, the YMCA and YWCA, the church, the social club and the community itself are not able to provide the support they once did. These students experience a society that is capital poor.

Community building is a powerful way for school leaders to develop capital. The value of capital generated as schools become communities is more important in determining a school’s success than are its physical and financial assets. Pedagogical leadership develops capital by helping schools become caring, focused and inquiring communities within which teachers work together as members of communities of practice (Sergiovanni 1997).

**Developing social capital**

Schools develop social capital by becoming caring communities (see for example, Bryk and Driscoll 1988, Battistich et al. 1989, Sergiovanni 1994). Social capital consists of norms, obligations and trust that are generated by relationships among people in community, neighbourhood or society (Coleman 1988, 1990, Gamoran 1996).

When students have access to social capital they find the support needed for learning. But when social capital is not available, students generate it for themselves by turning more and more to the student subculture for support. The result, too often, is the development of norms and codes of behaviour that work against what schools are trying to do. This seeking of support elsewhere often takes its toll on both academic performance and social behaviour.

**Developing academic capital**

Schools develop academic capital by becoming focused communities that cultivate a deep culture of teaching and learning. The rituals, norms, commitments and traditions of this culture become the academic capital that motivates and supports student learning and development. Teaching and learning, for example, provide the basis for making school decisions. Leaders in focused communities are committed to the principle that ‘form should follow function’. They strive to embody this principle as decisions are made about organization, staff, time, money, space and other resources; curriculum focus, content, implementation and assessment; teacher development, supervision and evaluation; and other matters that impact the quality of teaching and learning (Sergiovanni 1996).

In a focused community there is a strong and clear commitment to academic achievement as evidenced by rigorous academic work, teachers’ personal concern for student success, and the expectation that students will work hard, come to class prepared and complete assignments (see for example Sebring and Bryk 1996). This commitment to academic success is more likely to be achieved when the curriculum is narrowly focused and common for all; assessment is
authentic and linked to purposes; standards of achievement are explicit and public; and students are encouraged to do their best.

Teaching and learning in focused communities are characterized by assignments and teaching strategies that encourage students to create knowledge for themselves; to anchor what they learn in frameworks, theories and disciplinary structures; and to link this learning to real world problems (Newman et al. 1995). Schools with a strong and deep culture of teaching and learning know what they are about and communicate this to students in a way that increases their academic engagement and performance.

**Developing intellectual capital**

Schools develop intellectual capital by becoming inquiring communities. Intellectual capital is the sum of what everyone in the school knows and shares that can help the school be more effective in enhancing the learning and development of students. As the amount of intellectual capital increases, the school’s capacity to add value to the lives of students increases. The school gets smarter as a result.

Pedagogical leaders realize that the link between what happens to teachers and what happens to students is direct (see for example Elmore 1996). They know that inquiry in classrooms is not likely to flourish where inquiry among teachers is discouraged. A commitment to problem-solving is difficult to instil in students who are taught by teachers for whom problem-solving is rarely observed. Where there is little discourse among teachers, discourse among students will be harder to promote and maintain. Aspirations to transform classrooms into learning communities for students will remain more rhetoric than real unless schools become learning communities for teachers too.

Getting students academically engaged at higher levels and improving student performance in today’s world requires teachers to develop new capacities for understanding the subjects they teach and the pedagogical decisions that must be made to teach effectively. The practices of effective leaders reflect the belief that teachers learn best when learning is focused on the issues they consider to be important; is situated in their classrooms; is supported by adequate resources; is continuous; and is valued. Further, this learning emphasizes not just the development of new knowledge and understandings but the skills and dispositions needed to actually practice differently. And finally, learning occurs in a social context that enables teachers to learn from each other, support each other and care for each other.

**Developing professional capital**

Good schools take collegiality seriously – so seriously that they strive to create a single practice of teaching in the school that is shared by many. They cultivate communities of practice as a way to generate professional capital. One hallmark
of an established profession is the willingness of its members to be concerned not only with their own practices but with the practice itself. Professional capital is created as a fabric of reciprocal responsibilities, and support is woven among the faculty that adds value to teachers and students alike.

Though membership in a community of practice can be a powerful source of expanding professional capital for teachers and the school, it is still under-valued and under-developed in most schools. Communities of practice, for example, are more likely to emerge in small schools, schools within schools, family-grouped schools, teams that stay together for more than one year and other configurations found in learning communities that provide for continuity and that promote sharing. But policy makers and school leaders, particularly in North America, remain committed to larger scale schooling and the formally organized management systems needed to ensure that schools run properly.

Leadership in school communities

In communities, leadership and learning go together. So does leadership and sense-making. Leaders and followers reflect together, learn together and inquire together as they care together to construct a reality that helps them to navigate through a complex world. This process of reciprocal influence is guided by shared purposes and involves accepting roles that are connected to moral obligations. Just as teachers, parents and students have roles linked to moral obligations, principals too are expected to meet the obligations that come from their role responsibilities as leaders.

It is through morally held role responsibilities that the principalship becomes a profession in the more traditional sense of what a profession is and means. Principals are bound not just to standards of technical competence (I know how to do it well) but to standards of public obligation (I know what is good to do) as well (Bellah et al. 1995). Standards of public obligation always override technical standards when the two are in conflict. It is in the principal’s role responsibilities that we find the roots of pedagogical leadership – a commitment to administer to the needs of the school as an institution by serving its purposes, by serving those who struggle to embody these purposes, and by acting as a guardian to protect the institutional integrity of the school.

Pedagogical leaders take their ministerial roles seriously. But how do they embody these roles? What are the tasks that they emphasize in their practice? The following ten tasks are central (Sergiovanni 1996):

**Purposing** – Pedagogical leaders bring together shared visions into a convenant that speaks compellingly and with a moral voice to principals, teachers, parents, and students.

**Maintaining harmony** – Pedagogical leaders build a consensual understanding of school purposes, of how the school should function, and of the moral connec-
tions between roles and responsibilities while respecting individual conscience and individual style difference.

**Institutionalizing values** – Pedagogical leaders translate the school’s convenant into a workable set of procedures and structures that facilitates the accomplishment of school purposes, and that provides norm systems for directing and guiding behaviour.

**Motivating** – Pedagogical leaders provide for the basic psychological needs of members on the one hand, and for the basic cultural needs of members to experience sensible and meaningful school lives on the other.

**Problem solving** – Pedagogical leaders mobilize others to tackle tough problems and help them to understand the problems they face.

**Managing** – Pedagogical leaders ensure the necessary day-to-day support (ie. planning, organizing, agenda setting, mobilizing resources, providing procedures, record keeping) that keeps the school running effectively and efficiently.

**Explaining** – Pedagogical leaders give reasons for asking members to do certain things, and give explanations that link what members are doing to the larger picture.

**Enabling** – Pedagogical leaders remove obstacles that prevent members from meeting their commitments, and provide resources and support to help members to meet their commitments.

**Modelling** – Pedagogical leaders accept responsibility as head follower of the school’s convenant by modelling purposes and values in thought, word and action.

**Supervising** – Pedagogical leaders provide the necessary oversight to ensure the school is meeting its commitments, and when it is not, to find out why, and to help everyone do something about it.

Most of these tasks are straightforward. The ‘supervising’ task, however, may need some explaining. The word *supervision* has a negative tinge that conjures up factory images of ‘snoopervising’ foremen checking up on workers. But supervision was originally a virtuous word that referred to the carrying out of one’s stewardship responsibilities. Traditionally, stewardship meant the overseeing and caring for an institution such as a university, church or school.

As supervisors, principals act *in loco parentis* in relationship to students, ensuring that all is well for them. As supervisors, principals act as trustees in relationship to parents ensuring that all is well for them too. And as supervisors, principals act as stewards, guarding and protecting the school’s purposes and structures.

With supervision as an expression of stewardship at the core, the tasks of leadership are brought together when school leaders practise leadership as a
form of pedagogy. The term pedagogy has deep historical roots and meanings. As Max van Manen (1991: 37) explains,

The term *pedagogue* derives from the Greek, and refers not to the teacher, but to the watchful ... guardian whose responsibility it was to lead (*agogos*) the young boy (*paides*) to school ... The adult had the task of accompanying the child, of being with the child, of caring for the child. This is a kind of ‘leading’ that often walks *behind* the one who is led. The ... pedagogue was there *in loco parentis*.

Teachers practise pedagogical leadership directly since in schools they stand first and closest in a caring relationship to children. They have the major responsibility for guiding children academically, socially and spiritually through the world of childhood to adulthood.

Principals practise pedagogical leadership by facilitating this process, and by ensuring that the interests of children are served well. A key part of this practice is the ability of the leader to mobilize people and community to face their problems, and to make progress in solving them (Heifetz 1994). In this sense, the pedagogy they practise is understood as a form of authority. Pedagogical authority ensures that people make good decisions and face up to their responsibilities, and that things work right for children. Its legitimacy comes in part from the virtuous responsibilities associated with the principal’s role, and in part from the principal’s obligation to function as the ‘head follower’ of the school’s shared purposes, ideals and commitments. This followership represents a moral compact that transforms the school into a moral community.

Moral communities generate leadership capital. Leadership in moral communities is idea-based. The source of authority for leadership is found neither in bureaucratic rules and procedures nor in the personalities and styles of leaders but in shared values, ideas and commitments. Those who identify with this idea structure are members of a community of mind. This membership both empowers them and requires them to accept responsibility for providing leadership and for helping the leadership provided by others to work. As leadership capital expands, leadership density in the school increases. Leadership density increases the likelihood that social, academic, intellectual and professional capital will all expand.

**The story of community**

Why do many policy makers and school leaders have doubts about the efficacy of pedagogical leadership, preferring to improve schools by sticking exclusively with bureaucratic, visionary or entrepreneurial leadership? The answer, I believe, is that pedagogical leadership requires them to accept the story of community as a valid theory to guide policy and practice.

The story of community includes unique ways of thinking about connections
and human nature that run against the grain of conventional thought (Sergiovanni forthcoming). In schools that are traditionally organized, connections are understood using the narrative of social contracts and human nature is understood using the constrained narrative. In schools that are striving to become communities connections are understood using the narrative of social covenants and, human nature is understood using the unconstrained narrative.

The narrative of social contracts guides the practice of the principal of the Locke Elementary School. He promised the student body that if 2,000 books were read during the month of October, on Hallowe’en night he would dress up like a witch and kiss a pig on the roof of the school building. This goal was achieved and, to the apparent delight of the students, the deed was done. The Locke principal believes that contracts are important motivational devices and that unless students get something tangible for their efforts they will not be motivated. You can’t expect a manager to manage well, a worker to be diligent, or a football player to play hard unless there is something in it for them. So, he asks, how can we expect teachers to teach well, students to learn well and schools to reform themselves without incentives? How can we expect them to display proper behaviours without providing long lists of rules and regulations or long lists of outcome requirements that are linked to clear consequences for non-compliance?

This narrative is about calculations involving trades that offer incentives in exchange for compliance. Self-interest is presumed to be paramount and ‘let’s make a deal’ is the order of the day. Social contracts, however, are maintained only as long as each of the parties gets what it wants. When teachers no longer receive the contracted amount of money, health benefits, fulfilment and security they are less willing to hand over to the school time, muscle and brains. And when students no longer get gold stars, attention and grades, they are less willing to endure the rituals of schooling.

The narrative of social covenants guides the practice of the principal of the Rousseau Elementary School. She encourages teachers and students to develop together a description of how everyone in the school should lead their lives together. Connected to a larger vision of school purposes, critical values and pedagogical beliefs, this ‘covenant’ provides the basis for an ongoing discussion about how teachers, administrators, parents and students can meet their commitments to each other and to the school. Students at Rousseau, for example, expect teachers to work hard, to be caring and to teach well. Since relationships are reciprocal, teachers expect students to respond similarly. Students are given considerable latitude in deciding important things at Rousseau. They help decide how learning goals will be achieved and help make decisions about how they will spend their time. But decisions must be responsible ones that embody and advance the school’s covenant. Both teachers and students work hard to make reading fun and useful while also increasing mastery.

The Rousseau principal believes that when given the opportunity to make important decisions about school goals, purposes, values and other important school matters, teachers and students will respond by being morally obliged to
embody these decisions in their actions. Further, the bonding of school members and their binding to shared ideas and ideals provides a normative environment that encourages moral responsiveness. Social contracts, the principal reasons, have important roles to play in the real world. But so do social covenants. The school is the place, she argues, to learn about social covenants, to practise developing them, and to use them in a practical way to govern affairs.

In comparing the two narratives, Sacks (1997) argues that a social contract is maintained by the promise of gain or the threat of external force. A social covenant is maintained by loyalty, fidelity, kinship, sense of identity, obligation, duty, responsibility and reciprocity. A social contract, he points out, ‘gives rise to the instrumentalities of the state’ both corporate and political. ‘A covenant gives rise to quite different institutions – families, communities, traditional and voluntary associations. It is the basis of civil society’ (Sacks 1997: 16). Social contracts are at the core of what connects people in communities and social covenants are at the core of what connects people in more formally organized traditional schools. The former are rule-based and the latter are norm-based (Sergiovanni 1994).

The nature of human nature

Related to the social contract and social covenant narratives are two narratives about the nature of human capacity and will – constrained and unconstrained (Sowell 1987, Etzioni 1988, Hertzberg 1996). The constrained narrative is aligned with the selfish side of human nature, rooted in physical needs satisfaction and psychological egoism. The unconstrained narrative is aligned to the altruistic side of human nature rooted in moral conceptions of goodness. The altruistic side includes our capacity to practice such virtues as moral bearing, self-sacrifice and cooperation aimed at the enhancement of the common good. The selfish side includes our propensity to put self-interest first, to compete to win, and to strive to accumulate advantages such as wealth and power aimed at enhancing our individual pleasure and position.

The major story line in the constrained narrative emphasizes controlling the impulses of self-interest thought by Hobbes (1950) and others to dominate human nature. According to this narrative, people are self-centred, competitive, devious, addicted to gratification and even unscrupulous as they seek to maximize their own gains with little regard for the common good. The constrained story avers, that principals, teachers and students must be ‘constrained’ if they are to overcome these brutish impulses and instincts. Without constraints they will not be inclined to do the right thing. Society therefore must use rewards and punishments to provide the necessary constraints that will channel human behaviour in the right direction – be it paying taxes, communing with God, providing leadership, preparing lessons, being collegial, or studying and behaving at school.

The major story line in the unconstrained narrative emphasizes the capacity
of people to embody such virtues as altruism, moral bearing and cooperation aimed at enhancing the common good, even if doing so occasionally requires sacrificing one’s self-interest. Instead of viewing people as being cost-benefit machines who make individual choices rationally in an effort to win, the unconstrained narrative includes the emotive, normative and altruistic side of people. Motivation, in this story, is not only a result of the complex interaction between our emotions, values and beliefs, but between these and our ties to others (Etzioni 1988). Connections, in the unconstrained narrative, are normatively derived and have moral overtones (Sergiovanni 1992).

Policy makers and school leaders who subscribe to the unconstrained narrative believe that principals and teachers can be trusted to act morally, and therefore should be provided with the freedom to optimize their moral propensity to do what is right. Principals and teachers, for example, have both the capacity and the need to sacrifice their self-interest for causes they believe in and for conceptions of the common good that they value. As professionals, they willingly accept responsibility for their own practice and they commit themselves to the learning needs of their students above other concerns. A similar tale is told for students.

Within the constrained narrative, by contrast, it is believed that principals and teachers will act selfishly if given the chance. Their primary concern is to maximize their self-interest. Thus constraints in the form of incentives and penalties must be provided to force them to do the right thing. Principals and teachers may have the capacity to do the right thing, this narrative concedes, but this capacity will only be motivated if constraints are provided. A similar tale is told for students.

Undoubtedly the truth lies somewhere in between the extremes of social contracts versus social covenants and constrained versus unconstrained views. The intent of this article is not to argue for the replacement of bureaucratic, visionary or entrepreneurial leadership with pedagogical leadership. It is, instead, threefold: to recognize the importance of pedagogical leadership to the development of social, academic, intellectual and professional capital; to recognize the importance of capital development in improving schools; and to move pedagogical leadership to the centre position as the primary basis for developing school improvement strategies, policies and practices.

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INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS
Reflections and empirical evidence

Geoff Southworth


Abstract
This paper examines the notion of instructional leadership. The paper opens with a review of current work on school leadership, arguing that more inclusive, differentiated, holistic and learning-centred accounts are needed. Next the paper examines definitions of ‘instructional leadership’. In the third section the discussion looks at the empirical evidence we have about such leadership, drawing upon work in the USA and England. The latter study was conducted into leadership in small primary schools. Parallels between the studies are drawn and links made with the definitions of instructional leadership. The concluding section highlights the importance of leaders being learners, the implications for leadership development and the importance of creating and sustaining certain organisational conditions which facilitate instructional leadership. The paper ends with the point that instructional leadership is becoming more significant with the growing emphasis on organisational learning.

Introduction
In this article I examine the notion of instructional leadership. Instructional leadership has become increasingly popular in North America and is attracting interest in Britain. However, writers and researchers in the UK have usually preferred to talk about ‘educational leadership’ or ‘pedagogic leadership’. None of these three labels—instructional, educational or pedagogic—seems very satisfactory to me, but rather than try to find a better one, I will use ‘instructional’ for this article.

My discussion is organised into four sections. In the first section I will set out some of my reflections on the current state of our knowledge and understanding of school leadership. In the second section I will review definitions of instructional
leadership. In the third I will examine two empirical studies and relate them to the literature reviewed in section two. In section four I will set out my conclusions. Here I will argue that we need to create ‘learning and teaching schools’ as environments most amenable for instructional leadership and for the development of instructional leaders.

1. Reflections on school leadership

I want to raise four overlapping and interrelated points in this section. The first is that leadership is socially constructed. When I interview practitioners or discuss with scholars their ideas about leadership it is obvious that each is using a set of concepts they have adopted or created to portray the phenomenon they call ‘leadership’. These constructions vary in many and subtle ways. For example, there is presently a growing interest in how leadership is influenced by cultural values (Dimmock & Walker 2000), while contingency theories of leadership have for some time explained how leadership varies from organisation to organisation or system to system. The importance of leadership being a social construction is that it suggests that it will vary from setting to setting. Therefore, instead of searching for an over-arching theory we may need a more pluralistic approach to take account of the inherently variegated nature of leadership.

Furthermore, it is important that we take a more generous view of leadership than has been the case until very recently. Much of the empirical data on school leadership has explored what headteachers have to say about school leadership, particularly in primary schools. I do not doubt the importance of this work, but it also needs to be accompanied by studies into deputy headship and other leaders. Sadly, there has been too little empirical work on school leadership at other levels (although heads of department in secondary schools seem to be now attracting some attention). For example, as Ribbins (1997) says, it seems ‘heads are interesting and deputies are not’ (p. 295). This fascination with headship means that we have, generally speaking, developed a leaders’ view of leadership. We have not explored enough the followers’ perspectives and expectations of their leaders, although the study of Bolam et al. (1994) into effective school management surveyed teachers’ perceptions and Day et al.’s (2000) recent study of effective leadership provides one of the most comprehensive enquiries because it included the perspectives of teachers, students, ancillary staff, parents and governors, as well as head teachers. As Leithwood states in his introduction to Day et al.:

Data collected from teachers about effective heads’ leadership tells us something about how well the heads’ practices conform to teachers’ mental models of what leaders do: their leader prototypes.

(p. xiii)
We cannot know what effective leadership means unless and until we include the stakeholders’ perspectives and their constructions of leadership. If leadership is a social construct then we need to make it truly social and not a singular construction. Recent developments such as Day’s study are therefore most welcome.

Second, school leadership theorising has suffered from a lack of differentiation. It seems to me that we need more differentiated accounts of leaders working in different ways and contexts and over time. Currently, we have concentrated on how poor performing schools, and schools in disadvantaged circumstances improve. We have yet to consider leadership in other settings, or how differences in school size influence the nature and character of educational leadership. We also know too little about how leaders and leadership changes over time as individuals mature and increase their experience (Weindling 1999).

Neither should we forget that the field of leadership and management study has been dominated by male writers. Nor that we need to know more about how gender influences school leadership, particularly as there are increasing numbers of women in leadership positions and because many schools are almost or entirely staffed by women. Recent work in England by Hall (1996) and Coleman (2001) has contributed to our understanding of women’s experience and conceptions of leadership and builds on the work of other researchers outside the UK (e.g. Shakeshaft 1989; Blackmore 1989; Acker 1994).

In my own work I have always made it plain that I have (largely) studied leadership in primary schools. This is not to be sectarian about the work, but to acknowledge that I have focused on some school leaders and not all. Generalisation in educational research is difficult enough without conflating leadership, or indiscriminately extrapolating findings from a sample of leaders in one type of school to all schools. Instead of striving for generalisations that homogenise leadership, we might be better advised to work towards more heterogeneity.

Third, writing and research about ‘leadership’ in education has often concentrated on what leadership entails. Scholars have been very good at producing lists of what leaders do or should do, but we are far from the creation of a taxonomy of school leadership and management because leadership is a contested notion. Moreover, these lists are usually lengthy and atomised because they particularise and fragment the work of leaders into categories and elements.

Lists, of course, have useful analytic and heuristic purposes. However, too many list-producers fail to distinguish between theory for understanding and theory for action (Hoyle 1986). Lists may help develop understanding, but that does not mean they are theories for action. Moreover, the utility of listing characteristics is reduced when they become over long. National standards for head teachers can be useful to help develop, train, recruit and assess colleagues, but few head teachers or deputies when talking about her/his work refer to the national standards, probably because they see them as ‘lifeless lists’ (Bredeson 2000).

Another difficulty with ‘list logic’ is that the work of school leaders, particularly
heads, is polyphonic. Leaders do many things at once, often at rapid speed so that their work is characterised by simultaneity, inter-connection and holism. It seems that leaders are often trying to develop and sustain a view of their work and the school which is a ‘gestalt’ and not a set of particularities. A challenge to researchers then is to portray leadership in a more inter-related and sophisticated way than has so far been achieved.

Fourth, school leaders commonly regard their work as involving tensions, dilemmas and dualities (Southworth 1995; Dimmock 1996; MacBeath & Myers 1999; Day et al. 2000). According to these researchers the dilemmas take many forms and include the exercise of power, ethical issues, conflicting expectations of stakeholders and satisfying internal and external demands. The interest in the dilemmas of school leadership supports the argument that there is unlikely to be a ‘golden rule-book or recipe for effective leadership’ (MacBeath & Myers 1999, p. 67).

One of the major dilemmas of school leadership centres on the fact that heads in England are expected to be both organisational managers and leaders of effective teaching and learning. This duality has been most clearly articulated in Hughes’ (1975) classification of secondary headship which he saw as consisting of two roles: the chief executive role and the leading professional role. Coulson (1986) has applied this classification to primary heads and demonstrated its relevance across the sector boundaries. The chief executive role includes liaison and communication, resource handling and entrepreneurial activity, while the leading professional role covers goal setting, supervision, evaluation and the exemplification of professional values and beliefs. Both roles are important and following a period in the early 1990s, when the chief executive role was enhanced as a result of devolution of resources to the school (site-based management), the leading professional role has latterly been placed at the very heart of school leadership:

There is now much more clarity and agreement about the core tasks of teaching and schooling and, therefore, about the tasks of school management. As we have seen, this has come about because of the introduction of such major policy changes as the National Curriculum and assessment and the national inspection system. One does not have to agree with every aspect of these reforms to recognise that they, together with the research and development work on effective schools and improvement, all place increasing emphasis on effective teaching and learning . . .

(Bolam 1997, p. 277)

In short, despite leadership and management involving a diverse number of activities and processes and although it is differentiated in its character, instructional leadership is central to successful school leadership. Hence it becomes important for researchers and scholars to focus on the concept and to describe what it looks like in action. The latter is particularly necessary because the
contemporary literature appears to be far stronger in prescribing such leadership than in describing it.

Given these concerns and criticisms of our current knowledge base, I now want to examine definitions of instructional leadership before moving on to consider the empirical evidence about instructional leadership. Moreover, I want to look at instructional leadership in the light of the reflections I have discussed in this section. For example, how is it socially constructed? Has it been and can it be differentiated by context, gender or school size? Does contemporary theorising embrace both theories for understanding and theories for action? What are the dilemmas and tensions of this approach to leadership? However, before addressing these questions it is necessary to develop some clarity about instructional leadership and that is the purpose of the next section.

2. Instructional leadership

To find definitions of instructional leadership it is necessary to turn to the North American literature. I will discuss three relatively recent reviews of instructional leadership by Leithwood et al. (1999), Hallinger and Heck (1997) and Blasé and Blasé (1998).

Leithwood and his colleagues (Leithwood et al. 1999) recently reviewed six approaches to school leadership. They searched four representative English-language educational administration journals (two from North America, one UK-based journal and one reflecting perspectives from Australia and New Zealand). Given the reputations of these journals it was assumed that it was ‘likely that most significant contemporary conceptions of leadership in the English-speaking world would find some expression in their contents’ (p. 7).

One of the six approaches to school leadership this review identified was instructional leadership which:

Assumes that the critical focus for attention by leaders is the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students.

(p. 8)

The emphasis on teacher behaviours which affect the growth of students is clearly the key issue, as Leithwood’s italics demonstrate. It was also noted that some versions of instructional leadership focus, additionally, on other organisational variables such as school culture because these are believed to influence teacher behaviours as well. Therefore, it is possible to distinguish between ‘narrow’ and ‘broad’ views of instructional leadership (Sheppard 1996). Broad forms encompass organisational and teacher culture issues, whereas narrow forms restrict themselves to leadership which focuses only on teacher behaviours which enhance pupils’ learning. This distinction between broad and narrow forms also implies that it is possible to differentiate between ‘direct’ and
‘indirect’ instructional leadership (Kliene-Kracht 1993). Leithwood et al. also note that principals alone cannot fulfil all of a school’s need for instructional leadership.

Instructional leadership is portrayed as occurring along multiple dimensions and incorporating a number of practices. Leithwood believes that the most fully tested model of instructional leadership is the one developed by Hallinger and his associates and consists of three broad categories of leadership practice (p. 8):

- Defining the school mission
- Managing the instructional programme
- Promoting the school climate

Hallinger has subsequently developed these ideas (Hallinger & Heck 1997). They review research between 1980 and 1995 exploring the relationship between principal leadership and pupil achievement and developed a three-fold classification of principal (headteacher) effects:

1. **Direct effects**—Where the principal’s actions influence school outcomes.
2. **Mediated effects**—Where principal actions affect outcomes indirectly through other variables.
3. **Reciprocal effects**—Where the principal affects teachers and teachers affect the principal and through these processes outcomes are affected.

(Hallinger & Heck 1997, pp. 162–163)

Reviewing this classification Hallinger and Heck are critical of the first insofar as those researchers who use it do not typically seek to control for the effects of other in-school variables such as teacher commitment, or curricular organisation (p. 163). The lack of attention to other factors creates a simplistic view of headteacher action and effects. The mediated effects model hypothesises that leaders achieve their effects on outcomes through ‘indirect paths’:

Leadership practices contribute to the outcomes desired by schools but the contribution is always mediated by other people, events and organisational factors such as teacher commitment, instructional practices or school culture. This conceptualisation is consistent with the proposition that leaders achieve their results primarily through other people.

(p. 167)

The reciprocal effects model presents heads as ‘enacting leadership through a stream of interactions’ (p. 168) through which they address the salient features of the school, such as pupil outcomes, staff morale or commitment. However, in so doing they adapt to the organisation in which they work and change their thinking and behaviour over time. As Hallinger and Heck argue, this model regards leadership as an ‘adaptive process rather than a unitary independent
force’ and allows for the possibility that ‘causal relationships may be multi-
directional, change over time and even be non-linear’ (p. 168).

Hallinger and Heck conclude that mediated effects studies yielded more con-
sistent findings than did the direct effects studies. They argue that the general
pattern of results drawn from their review supports the belief that principals
exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and pupil
achievement (p. 186). They also note that researchers in the early years of
research in this domain focused on answering the question: ‘Do principals make
a difference?’ More recently they have transcended the bounds of this question
to try to understand ‘not only if principals have effects on school outcomes, but
more particularly the paths through which such effects are achieved’ (p. 187). In
their review Hallinger and Heck conclude that a primary avenue of influence
appears to be in shaping the school’s direction through vision, mission and
goals.

This work suggests that instructional leadership is likely to be more effective
when it is conceptualised as ‘broad’, rather than ‘narrow’ because the former
includes both direct and mediated (indirect) effects and increases the scope for
other leaders to play a role as well as the principal or headteacher. Moreover, the
broad approach implicitly recognises how social organisations operate (e.g.
interpersonal and group dynamics, micro-politics, cultural norms, values and
beliefs). By contrast the narrow approach relies heavily on the individual
leader’s influence and may sustain more heroic notions of leadership.

Blasé and Blasé (1998) start from the idea that instructional leadership has
long been viewed by practitioners as a blend of supervision, staff development
and curriculum development. They draw on Sheppard’s (1996) synthesis of the
research on instructional leadership behaviours, ‘especially those linked to
student achievement outcomes’ (p. 11), which take a broad perspective wherein
both leaders’ and followers’ beliefs are regarded as important. Sheppard
itemises the following principal behaviours as being connected to teachers’ pro-
fessional growth and performance:

- framing school goals†
- communicating school goals
- supervising and evaluating instruction
- co-ordinating the curriculum
- monitoring student progress
- protecting instructional time
- maintaining high visibility*
- providing incentives for teachers
- promoting professional development†*
- providing incentives for learning

(Key: * = most influential behaviours, elementary school; † = most influential behaviours, high
school (Sheppard 1996: 327, 339)) (see Blasé & Blasé 1998: 11)
Blasé and Blasé emphasise that promoting teachers’ professional development was the most influential instructional leadership practice at both elementary (primary) and high (secondary) school levels (p. 11).

These three reviews outline the nature and character of instructional leadership. They show, unsurprisingly, that it is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth. While distinctions can be made between broad and narrow formulations and between direct and indirect influence, all three favour a broad configuration which includes the use of direct and indirect effects. However, as both Blasé and Blasé and Leithwood et al. recognise, there is a dearth of description which ‘makes it difficult to assess the extent to which such leadership means the same thing to all those writing about it’ (Leithwood et al. 1999: 8). The lack of descriptive and empirical evidence is compounded by the reliance of these reviews on lists of characteristics and behaviours because, as argued in the previous section, lists tend to facilitate theoretical understanding, but not necessarily theories for action. In other words, we need to look at the empirical evidence we have concerning instructional leadership, then compare and contrast the two sets of ideas and try to develop some theories for action.

3. Empirical evidence

There are two sources of evidence I shall draw upon in this section. The first is work on ‘how really good principals promote teaching and learning’ (Blasé & Blasé 1998). The second is a study I conducted into successful leadership in small primary schools (Southworth 1999a).

Blasé and Blasé (1998) are aware that until recently, we had little knowledge about the behaviours of effective instructional leaders in the literature (p. 11). They therefore conducted a survey of:

Over 800 teachers working in elementary, middle and high schools in the South-eastern, Midwestern and Northwestern United States. Teachers completed open-ended questionnaires on which they wrote detailed descriptions of principals’ positive and negative characteristics and exactly how such characteristics affected them and their performance in the classroom.

(p. 5)

The Blasés’ (1998) findings suggest there are three interrelated aspects to effective instructional leadership behaviour. These findings are valuable, although given the cross sectional design of their research, they do not make it clear whether these findings applied equally to elementary, middle and high schools, or whether there were contextual differences. The three aspects of effective instructional leadership are:
Talking with teachers (conferencing)
Promoting teachers’ professional growth
Fostering teacher reflection

These three aspects are tied to three other head teacher behaviours that can have positive or negative effects:

- Being visible—versus interrupting and abandoning
- Praising results—versus criticising
- Extending autonomy—versus maintaining control (see p. 18 for summary)

Positive effects were associated with the use of visibility, praise and autonomy, while ineffective principals use abandonment, criticism and control (p. 156).

Conferencing is regarded as lying at the ‘heart of instructional supervision’:

Principals who are good instructional leaders develop a deep appreciation for the potential artistry of an instructional conference with a teacher . . . Such principals realise that most teachers expand their teaching range only with carefully designed support and assistance. (p. 19)

The latter point is important because the Blasés believe that some principals assume that when given minimal information and assistance, most teachers can analyse their own teaching and formulate and act on it to develop their pedagogy (p. 20). Such an assumption is over optimistic and many teachers can benefit from formal, explicit support structures and systems such as conferencing.

Conferencing is described as involving knowledge and skill in the following areas:

- Classroom observation and data-gathering methods
- Teaching methods, skills and repertoires
- Understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning Data analysis
- Knowing how to make the conference reflective and non-threatening
- Communication skills (e.g. acknowledging, paraphrasing, summarising, clarifying and elaborating on information)
- Awareness of the stage of development, career state, levels of abstraction and commitment, learning style, concerns about innovation and background of the teacher (p. 20)

This list alone suggests that instructional leadership requires high levels of professional knowledge, skill and understanding about pedagogy, pupil learning, adult learning and human interaction. These skill and knowledge demands
become even more evident when the processes of conferencing are identified. The Blasés set out five conference strategies:

- Making suggestions
- Giving feedback
- Modelling
- Using enquiry
- Soliciting advice and opinions (pp. 28–43)

Blasé and Blasé go on to analyse staff development and teacher reflection in similar ways. Staff development includes the study of teaching and learning, support for teacher collaboration, peer coaching, action research and the ‘application of the principles of adult growth and development to all phases of the staff development programme’ (p. 156). The development of teacher reflection included behaviours such as:

Modelling, classroom observation, dialogue, suggestion and praise. The essence of reflection, as we found, was associated with collegial enquiry, critical thinking and expanding teacher repertoires.

(p. 156)

Three points emerge from the Blasés’ study. First, instructional leadership is complex and demanding. It requires high levels of professional knowledge, skill and understanding which we cannot assume all headteachers or other leaders will possess. As other studies show, developing evidence-informed approaches to leadership, management and school improvement require concomitant developments in leaders’ skills in handling data, colleagues (Dudley 1999; Southworth & Conner 1999; Saunders 2000) and teaching and learning (Hill 2001). Second, because this study is based on teachers’ perspectives, the findings are especially potent since they provide not only insights into what helps teachers to grow, but also, what followers want and find helpful from their leaders. This construction of instructional leadership is based on what teachers say works for them. Third, it appears that such leadership needs to be designed as part of the school’s organisational structures and processes rather than left to chance. This last point becomes apparent when the Blasés conclude their study by arguing for schools to become learning communities (pp. 155–167).

The second study was an investigation I recently conducted into successful leadership in small primary schools in England. The study focused on a sample of ten primary heads (8 women 2 men) working in schools with less than 150 pupils on roll and used qualitative methods. The research used a purposive sample drawing upon heads nominated by their local education authorities (LEAs) and validated by school inspection data. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the head, two teachers and one school governor in each of the schools about the head’s leadership. I adopted a multiple perspect-
ive approach for reasons discussed in section one and because the collection of evidence from three sources was intended to reduce any bias and widen the ‘angle of observation’ (Schatzman & Strauss 1973). The interviews focused on several issues, including: interviewees’ views about the characteristics of successful headteachers; how the heads led the schools’ improvement efforts; and whether and how the heads’ influenced the quality of teaching and pupils’ learning.

The study has been reported in a number of ways (Southworth 1999a,b; Southworth 2002) and forms part of a larger project that I have been working on over the last four years. This larger project aims to develop a more differentiated view of primary school leadership by examining leadership in schools of varying size. Hence following studies of leadership in small and medium sized schools I am presently investigating leadership in large and very large primary schools to complete the research triology.

The small school study found a high level of agreement among the heads, teachers and governors as to the nature of successful headship and the findings trace the outlines of the heads’ instructional leadership. From my analysis of the three data sets (heads, teachers, & governors) I identified a number of common themes, six of which are pertinent to this discussion:

1. Working hard
2. Determination
3. Positive dispositions
4. Approachability
5. Teamwork
6. School improvers

Working hard concerns the nature of headship in small schools today. It is clear from the testimonies of the heads, their teacher colleagues and the governors that headship is very demanding. Respondents from all three groups made this point time and again. The heads acknowledged they worked hard, but did so in an uncomplaining way. They regarded it as a fact of headship, rather than something they might be able to avoid or change. As the House of Commons Education and Employment Committee of Inquiry into the role of headteachers reports, the average working week for primary heads is 55.7 hours and heads in small schools, have a teaching commitment in excess of 80 per cent of the week (House of Commons 1998, paras. 24–25). The ten heads in my study of small schools estimated they put in similar hours and sometimes much more.

However, it seems that hard work is not only unavoidable but necessary because of what the teachers and governors said. These respondents regarded their heads as having the capacity to deal with a lot of work and that this was a symbol of the headteachers’ care, concern and commitment. Hard work is not simply about being prepared to put in the hours, it is also an emblem that the leader is devoted to the school.
Second, these heads were determined individuals. They were resolute about the schools doing well, and appeared to work tenaciously towards increased levels of success. When the heads gave me a tour of the school it was apparent they had developed the quality of the school as a learning environment for the children. Their efforts were noted by the governors and mentioned by many of the teachers. Sometimes their ability to secure additional learning resources was seen as another sign of their commitment to the school. Certainly the governors and teachers recognised that their heads were ‘fighters’ because they had battled for new or better buildings and the governors and teachers valued their heads’ perseverance and courage.

Moreover, improving the schools’ physical environments demonstrated that the heads were not prepared to tolerate poor teaching and learning conditions and this too had symbolic significance. Their wish to improve the learning environments conveyed their unwillingness to accept second best. Many teacher colleagues took this to mean their head had a low threshold of tolerance for poor quality provision.

Third, all ten heads were positive people. Each believed the school could improve and achieve more because the children and the staff deserved to be successful. They were quick to acknowledge successes in the school and usually described them as resulting from the children’s or the staff’s efforts. The heads were also remarkably optimistic about the future and their schools’ prospects.

Fourth, the teachers and the governors valued the fact that their heads were approachable and accessible to them. The frequency with which this attribute was mentioned suggests that teachers in small primary schools approve of heads who are not remote, are willing to talk and listen to them and who share their ideas and plans with staff.

Fifth, the heads knew that their schools’ successes were dependent on everyone pulling their weight, supporting one another and working together. This applied to all staff, including office and classroom support colleagues, but more than anything, improving the performance of the school rested on the teaching staff functioning as a combined teaching unit. Developing a team of teachers who were characterised by professional openness, a unity of purpose, clear and shared goals and educational values, consistency in teaching and planning, continuity in the curriculum and agreed and implemented classroom practices were both the means and the ends of teamwork in these schools.

Consequently the heads were keen to involve deputy heads, if there was one, and/or senior teachers. The teachers too saw benefits from participating and acknowledged how effective their heads were in orchestrating teacher and staff collaboration. The heads believed that positive inter-professional relations were critical to the school’s success and that dealing with staff, parents and others were the key skill areas of leadership. In short, teamwork was a vital ingredient in improving the school.

Sixth, all of these heads were improving their schools. For some it was because the school was under-performing. For others it was a case of enhancing
already high levels of success. Whatever the context, none of the heads were satisfied for the school’s performance levels to remain as they were. Hence they spoke about wanting to avoid complacency within the school, of pupil results rising, of under-achievement being eliminated, the children’s attitudes to learning becoming more positive and of the schools’ ethos changing for the better. All of the heads wanted to improve on their previous best.

Although each head used a number of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, three stand out from what the heads, teachers and governors said:

• Modelling
• Monitoring
• Professional dialogue and discussion

Modelling meant the heads used their teaching as an example of what and how to do things, worked alongside staff in their classrooms, coaching staff and consciously used assemblies as occasions when they could promote and reinforce educational values and practices. As the National Primary Headteachers’ Association (NPHA) said in their evidence to the House of Commons Education and Employment Committee (1998) ‘headteachers must set standards of performance by their personal example’ (para. 21). All the heads in this study understood this and to judge from their own and colleagues’ statements, plus their school’s Ofsted inspection reports, they all did it.

Monitoring involved the heads looking at teachers’ weekly plans, visiting classrooms, examining samples of pupils’ work, observing the implementation of school policies, reviewing test and assessment information and evaluating pupil, class and school levels of performance and progress.

Professional dialogue was developed through staff meetings, preparing curricular policies together, reviewing practice, looking at pupil learning data, joint planning meetings and general teamwork. The heads also followed up visits to classrooms with informal discussions with individuals, or used questions to probe teachers’ assumptions and to promote ideas and ways forward. Sustaining teacher talk and using it as a vehicle for teacher and staff development underscored these heads’ efforts.

Complementing these three strategies were a number of school structures and systems the heads had put in place. For example, all the schools had development plans which provided direction and a focus for staff efforts. School policies and schemes of work were used as reference points for curriculum and lesson planning. Similarly, policies for teaching and learning were common and appeared to be actively used by staff. These structures and systems were both support mechanisms and different forms of media that conveyed the educational messages the heads wanted to see adopted in the schools.

Together, the leadership strategies, organisational and curricular structures and systems were the processes by which shared educational goals were
developed, high expectations established and the means by which improvements in pupils’ learning outcomes and progress were realised. They were major ingredients of the heads’ instructional leadership because all of them understood headship to be about developing the quality of the pupils’ learning and enhancing pupils’ progress.

These findings complement those reported by Blasé and Blasé (1998). There is a high degree of consistency between the two studies even though they were entirely independent of one another. Professional dialogue figures prominently in both since the Blasés stress the centrality of conferencing, while within conferencing they note the importance of monitoring and modelling. The significance of organisational structures and systems is also identified in each study. Instructional leadership can occur informally, but heads and principals also supported it with formal organisational processes. Another common thread is that there was a broad approach to instructional leadership because each study portrays leaders influencing teachers directly and indirectly.

In the case of small schools it is reasonable to assume that heads will have stronger direct influence than those in much larger schools, where mediated effects are more likely to be at work. However, the ten heads I studied also seem to have been very effective in how they indirectly influenced pupil outcomes. For example, it was noted that these heads were approachable, skilled in talking and listening to staff, monitored classrooms, teaching and pupils’ learning, and evaluated pupils’ achievements and progress. Given they applied these skills consistently and continuously they may have been able, perhaps to an unusually high degree, to bring their influence to bear on those who had to implement and carry out planned changes and desired improvements. Expressed another way, these heads worked directly on the indirect pathways to effectiveness. They deployed both forms of influence knowing that when applied in combination they were more powerful. They also ensured that in their detail they promoted the same values, goals and end results and by co-ordinating their influencing strategies they increased their impact in the school.

Therefore, it is possible to argue that this particular study, alongside the work of Blasé and Blasé (1998) points to a theory of leadership effects whereby a school leader’s success is to some degree, and possibly a significant degree, attributable to the heads’ direct effects but particularly their mediated effects. Also, because the heads engaged with the mediating factors, and often in a direct and personal way, they were particularly powerful in making a difference inside their schools. The force, frequency and effectiveness of their encounters with staff made their influence pervasive. Their dealings with staff were regarded as warm, fair and open and they valued individuals and groups, praised them and worked in teams themselves. In these ways they tempered what may, in some other circumstances, become oppressive conditions. Nevertheless, over time, these heads appeared to be irresistible in moving, directly and indirectly, the schools along paths they and the staff and governors wanted.

The effect of their direct and indirect effects also creates a teacher culture
characterised by professional collaboration and professional learning. Such a
culture has long been associated with school improvement (Nias et al. 1989,
1992; Rosenholtz 1989; Fullan & Hargreaves 1992) and has led many
researchers and scholars to regard such a culture as enabling schools to become
learning organisations (e.g. Fullan 1993; MacBeath & Myers 1999; Southworth
2000; Silins & Mulford 2002).
Lastly, both studies point to instructional leadership requiring individuals to
be highly competent in a number of knowledge and skill areas. These include
knowledge of curricula, pedagogy, student and adult learning and skills in
change management, group dynamics and interpersonal relations and communi-
cations. Also, certain personal qualities and individual attributes may be import-
ant, such as high energy levels, resilience, determination, empathy and
optimism. These all have implications for the development of instructional
leaders.

4. Conclusions
The two empirical studies reviewed do not constitute a robust evidence-base for
developing instructional leadership. We therefore need many more studies of
instructional leaders to meet the demands of differentiation, as discussed in
section one, as well as those of sample size and generalisation.
In terms of the questions raised by my reflections on leadership, one was: has
instructional leadership been differentiated by context, gender or school size?
The two empirical studies show that some work has been done in this realm, but
by no means enough. Yet they do make a contribution to understanding how
instructional leadership is socially constructed by teachers in American elemen-
tary and high schools and by heads, teachers and governors in small, English
primary schools. Furthermore, the studies suggest that there are many simil-
arities despite cultural and other contextual differences.
Beyond these observations there are three other conclusions I want to high-
light. One of these centres on how instructional leadership is developed. When I
asked the 10 primary heads how they had developed their leadership and man-
agement practices they all said, in line with other heads, that they learned most
by doing the job. Such role learning on-the-job raises two implications.
First, it may be important that anyone appointed to a headship needs to be able
to demonstrate they are a continuing professional learner. That is, someone who is
able to solve the myriad ‘problems’ they encounter, is sufficiently flexible to think
their way round difficulties and can work things out for themselves, as well as
with others. Heads need to be reflective learners who can independently work out
how to deal with all the problems, issues and challenges they encounter in the
course of their work. In this way, their work is a ‘course of study’ and they need to
be students of their work.
Second, if leaders’ professional development is characterised by on-the-job,
osmotic learning, then new heads may benefit from activities which deepen their
knowledge and understanding of their context specific learning. Instead of trying
to train new knowledge into them, it may be better for them to reflect on and
analyse their implicit, even tacit professional knowledge and make their work
experiences the content of their professional learning. Such a way of creating
new knowledge might be facilitated less through content driven courses and
more through group and one-to-one activities which invite participants to share
and to develop key ideas and insights from the work they presently do and the
tasks which currently are a puzzle to them.

During the heads’ discussion of their professional development it emerged
that at least half of them had found being a deputy headteacher a frustrating role.
This is consistent with Ribbins’ research in this area (1997). Part of their frustra-
tion stemmed from the lack of opportunities to exercise leadership or to develop
their skills within the school. Such feelings points toward the need for prospective
heads to be mentored and coached by skilled and successful leaders and for
those who are about to take up their first headship to be offered an internship
with able, instructional leaders. We can neither assume individuals are well pre-
pared for their first headship, nor believe they know how to be instructional
leaders simply because they were deputy heads.

There is one other aspect of leadership development I want to highlight.
Instructional leadership requires individuals to have high levels of knowledge
and understanding of curricula, pedagogy, student and adult learning. This
observation has implications for the nature of leadership programmes and sug-
gests that they include such material, alongside whatever technical knowledge
they provide about management and leadership processes.

Hill (2001) has also focused on this topic stating that the ‘instructional
leadership orthodoxy implies that principals should have very specific know-
ledge related to teaching and learning’ (p. 2). He also states that, for a variety
of reasons, school leaders may lack sufficient knowledge of teaching and learning
to provide adequate, let alone successful instructional leadership. Despite prin-
cipals and headteachers being recruited from the teaching profession, their know-
ledge of teaching and learning is:

> Often tacit or dated knowledge, based on increasingly distant memories
> of a former life in the classroom. As a consequence, it is possible that
> the knowledge of teaching and learning possessed by many principals
> is more a hindrance than a help in informing the role of modern school
> leader.

(Hill 2001: 1–2)

Also, leaders’ professional learning has frequently been directed towards a range
of other management tasks. These include: managing change and generic skills
in goal setting, planning, budgeting, marketing and human resource management
and development in order to exercise operational responsibility for tasks govern-
mental reforms have devolved to schools. Hill concludes that:
The last 15 years have thus been times of great change in which more and more has been expected of principals as leaders of complex organisations, but as leaders who may be less, rather than more, connected to core business of schools, namely teaching and learning.

(p. 3)

However, Hill believes this cannot continue for two reasons. First, as educators and school leaders respond to the emerging demands of knowledge societies and learning organisations they will need to re-focus on learning. Second, as educators accept and fully internalise socially constructivist views of learning, and aim to develop in-depth learning and the acquisition of high-level, thinking skills and problem solving abilities, new conceptions of teaching and learning will be needed:

The principal and other key members of the leadership team will need to disseminate this new knowledge and become intimately involved in rethinking the curriculum, in creating larger blocks of time for in-depth learning, in reducing the emphasis on content coverage but increasing the amount of time given to thinking skills, in promoting inter-disciplinary studies of issues and problems and in exploring ways in which new information and communication technologies can be integrated into regular classroom practices.

(p. 5)

It is now imperative that school leaders develop and sustain high levels of knowledge and understanding about teaching and learning. The implications of this for leaders’ professional learning and development are profound. At first sight it appears to mean that even more is expected of leaders. Whether this turns out to be true will unfold over time. What is quite clear, is that leaders’ professional development needs to be very carefully examined and possibly re-conceptualised. In part, this will in England, be a major task for the National College for School Leadership, not least because the college will have to play a leading role in reviewing and, if necessary, re-shaping leadership development.

The second conclusion I want to note is that instructional leadership looks to occur when certain organisational conditions are present. These are characterised by Blasé and Blasé (1998) as those associated with learning communities. I also came to the same view in my study of heads in small primary schools. Elsewhere (Southworth 2000), I have begun to articulate what a ‘learning primary school’ involves, drawing upon research in primary schools over the last 20 years. This work has convinced me that learning schools must facilitate teachers’ pedagogic growth, since the development of their teaching skills and repertoires seems to me to be the major content area. The curriculum of learning schools should be pedagogy (Southworth 1996; 2000).

However, schools which are learning organisations are relatively advanced
institutions because of the kind of teacher culture they need to flourish. They require a teacher ‘culture of collaboration’ (Nias et al. 1989; Fullan & Hargreaves 1992) in which formal and informal professional dialogue is the norm and which includes challenge, debate and a willingness among all staff to address their professional differences in a calm and mature manner (Nias et al. 1992). Also, learning schools enquire into pupils’ perspectives on their learning and use these data to guide development in pedagogy and learning (Fielding et al. 1999). Such schools will also provide many opportunities for teacher mentoring, coaching and school-based professional development. There will be explicit efforts to manage professional knowledge in the school through audits of teacher strengths, skills and needs (Hargreaves 1996). The development of pedagogy will feature strongly in this and it will be both an individual and collective responsibility to enhance everyone’s teaching knowledge, skill and understanding.

Such a culture not only creates the organisational conditions for schools to become ‘teaching and learning schools’ (Southworth 2000), it should also provide the most hospitable environment for the exercise of instructional leadership. Culture formation has to be led (Schein 1985; Nias et al. 1989, 1992). When school leaders work towards establishing a collaborative, learning culture they simultaneously create the climatic conditions for instructional leadership because professional cultures characterised by openness, trust and security appear to be the ones where teachers feel confident to become learners (Southworth 2000). Instructional leadership is, as the empirical studies show, about leading teachers’ professional learning.

Finally, I want to argue that instructional leadership needs to be given even greater emphasis than previously. Given the global interest in learning organisations, school leaders as educators and leaders are uniquely placed and qualified to contribute to this development. Heads could undoubtedly teach business leaders a thing or two about running a social organisation in which staff learning is a major priority and investment. Moreover, such leadership is possibly what makes school leadership a distinctive branch of leadership practice and theorising. Far from educators being the recipients of expertise from elsewhere, now may be the time to reverse the flow and instead of being importers of expertise from outside education, we can become exporters of it as well. However, such a development will need researchers and practitioners to forge new partnerships and alliances and for researchers to learn with and from practitioners, rather than treating schools as sites for our studies and the individuals as the objects of our enquiries. Thus, the promotion of instructional leadership has implications for practitioners, researchers and policy-makers alike and for each group to use it as an opportunity to develop and enhance their understanding, knowledge and leadership actions.

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LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS

Geoff Southworth


Introduction

One of the most robust findings from leadership research is that context matters. Situational theories demonstrate that leaders’ actions are often contingent upon environmental and contextual factors. As Leithwood, et al. (1999) say, ‘outstanding leadership is exquisitely sensitive to the context in which it is exercised’ (p. 4).

Yet, despite this knowledge, empirical research into school leadership lacks similar levels of sensitivity to context. Writing about educational leadership too often describes or prescribes what leaders do, or should do, in a general manner without acknowledging contextual differences. Thus, some of the literature about school leadership is undifferentiated and indiscriminate. If we accept that context matters, then research must begin to develop a more fastidious and refined appreciation of the relationships between actors and their theatres of operation.

I am not saying that we cannot generalise about school leadership, nor am I arguing for uniqueness and particularity. I am, though, counselling against universality and suggesting that researchers need to take greater account of context than has so far been the case. Indeed, in my own work I have always made it plain that I have studied primary school leaders (e.g. Southworth, 1987; 1995; 1998) in order to respect school sector differences and to avoid what might otherwise be an imprecise discussion of school leadership. More recently I have embarked on a series of three empirical studies which aim to compare and contrast leadership in small, medium and large primary schools. These studies are intended to refine our understanding of school leadership by examining differences within the primary sector.

This chapter focuses on the first of these three studies, an investigation into headship in small primary schools in England. Small schools in England (and usually elsewhere too) are largely found in rural settings and given policymakers’
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

pre-occupation with the challenges associated with urban schooling, small rural schools are not given a high priority. Consequently, many staff in small schools feel overlooked and under-valued. The same is probably true in other school systems such as in the USA and South Africa. Perhaps it is only where there are very large numbers of small schools, as in New Zealand and Wales, or where recruitment to small and isolated schools is a challenge, as in parts of Australia and Scandinavia, that they are afforded a higher profile. The research had two main aims: to explore how headteachers led their schools’ improvement efforts; and to identify the characteristics and strategies the heads associated with effective school leadership.

This research was necessary for six reasons. First, no major study has been conducted into primary school headship in England and Wales. Although there are approximately 18,300 primary schools in England and Wales, no substantial investigation has been mounted to examine the work and skills of those who lead them. Moreover, not only do primary schools comprise the largest number of schools, but they are also the most diverse in nature. However, the educational leadership research literature does not reflect this diversity. Thus, in line with my opening remarks, there is a real need to examine leadership in different settings and contexts.

Second, in the absence of any large-scale studies, our understanding of primary headship relies on two types of study. First, there have been a number of descriptive studies usually investigating how heads use time in school (Clerkin, 1985; Harvey, 1986). Yet, there is only one, close-up, observational study of a primary head at work in his school for an academic year (Southworth, 1995). Second, there are numerous prescriptive commentaries focusing on how heads should approach headship (Whitaker, 1983; Dean, 1987; Day, et al., 1998). Both types of accounts have yielded limited perspectives on headship. The first type looks at only one aspect of the role, while the second often does not differentiate between school contexts.

Third, such studies as have been conducted into primary headship are now dated (e.g., Coulson, 1986; Mortimore & Mortimore, 1991). Likewise, the insights into school leadership gleaned from school effectiveness research are rapidly ageing. Moreover, studies conducted during the 1990s (e.g., Southworth, 1995a; Webb & Vulliamy, 1996) tended to focus on how heads responded to implementing national reforms (e.g., the National Curriculum and the introduction of self-managing schools), but less on how heads were improving their schools. Also, these studies are based upon heads’ perceptions of their roles and while they provide valuable insights into their practical theories and experiential knowledge, they do not focus on the leadership of school improvement, nor on what this looks like to those headteachers who are accomplishing it with success.

Fourth, it is widely recognised that school leadership matters. One of the most robust findings of school effectiveness research is that purposeful leadership by the headteacher is crucial to the school’s high performance. This finding is now
LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS

supported in England by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted, 1999) inspection data. In England all schools are inspected by external teams of accredited inspectors who judge the quality of the school and the effectiveness of the leadership and management. Inspection evidence influences national policy making and has played a part in guiding central government’s work on identifying and preparing aspiring heads, the development of experienced headteachers and the establishment of a national college for school leadership. However, although school leadership is now accepted as centrally important, we lack contemporary insights into what successful primary headship involves. Nor have we investigated with any rigour what effective practitioners have to say about their leadership, or analysed the key characteristics these leaders associate with improving their schools. In short, although leadership matters, we have yet to learn from those who are effective leaders of improving or high performing primary schools how they actually conceptualise their work.

Fifth, because we have not studied primary headteachers in much depth we do not know how some heads have become successful leaders. We urgently need to know how their leadership skills were acquired and developed and which professional learning experiences were of critical importance to them. Insights into these areas would enable two dimensions of leadership preparation to be developed. In the first instance, it is very likely that the accounts of successful heads’ professional development will enable the identification of leadership potential to become clearer. In terms of the second dimension, leadership training could identify the workplace, on-the-job, professional learning experiences prospective heads should be offered and outline how they might be mentored, coached and their leadership repertoires extended and enhanced. Furthermore, given the diversity of primary schools, attention to headteachers’ professional development needs to be related to the effects of context.

Sixth, only when we have undertaken and reported detailed, close-up studies of heads and principals, which are developed cumulatively, synthesised and related to the findings of large scale surveys, will we have robust national perspectives. Once we have articulated national studies, conducted in the light of research in other countries, we can then orchestrate sensible and sensitive international comparative projects. Such a systematic project is necessary because too much of the current interest in educational leadership is based on too little evidence. The evidence-base needs to grow, building on previous work in order to create valid national images of leadership which can then be compared and contrasted internationally.

Given these reasons and with funding from the Teacher Training Agency, which at the time had responsibility for headteacher training and preparation, I embarked on a study of successful leaders in small primary schools. In this chapter I will report my findings and discuss the significance of them to our understanding of school leadership. However, it is not my intention simply to make this chapter a report of this research. Rather, I want to use this particular enquiry into leadership in small schools to produce an evidence-based picture
from which emerging issues can be identified and grounded theories about school leadership developed.

**Literature review**

A literature search of both national and international databases was conducted. The national search used the British Educational Index (BEI) and the international survey concentrated on ERIC and the international ERIC since the latter included coverage of Canadian and Australian sources. There were two major predetermined search parameters: the phase of schooling (primary/elementary); and school size. The time scale for the search was set at 10 years. However, the latter parameter was breached because the initial searches yielded so little material. I extended the time scale by a further ten years to see if there was earlier relevant work. Once sources were identified I also scanned reference lists of relevant articles. This tactic helped to identify further studies for consideration and can suggest new keywords and authors (Evans & Benefield, 2001). Key journals were also manually searched to identify articles that might have been missed in the database searches.

These searches produced studies which reported on small schools in a number of countries, including: Australia, Canada, England, Greece, Iceland, New Zealand, Scotland, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the USA (Appalachia, Alaska, Nebraska, Texas) and Wales. Other studies referred less specifically to areas of South America, the Caribbean countries and rural Africa. The searches showed that the literature on small schools is largely concerned with two sets of related issues:

- viability;
- educational effectiveness.

*Viability* concerns were demonstrated by articles focusing on the following topics: sustainability; school closures and survival issues; cost-effectiveness and value for money; the impact of national and/or local policies on small schools; overcoming perceived disadvantages of remoteness and isolation (e.g., twinning, clustering, federations, networking). *Educational effectiveness* concerns largely covered: curricular provision (manageability, coverage, breadth, implementing national reforms), and school size effects on achievement; and dealing with mixed-age classes of pupils.

These two themes are constant in the literature and continue today. For example, following the completion of the first four year cycle of inspections of schools in England (1994–98) by Ofsted, inspectors have used the data to compare the achievements and quality of education of small schools with larger ones. Small schools were defined as those with fewer than 100 pupils on roll. The inspectors are aware that bald comparisons are problematic since the majority of small schools are in relatively affluent areas, with above average socio-economic indicators. They note that small schools are strongly represented in the
top 100 performing schools (in English, mathematics and science tests) between 1996 and 1998:

A significantly greater number than might have been expected on purely statistical terms have been in the top 100 each year . . . By contrast, there was also a higher than expected proportion of very small schools in the lowest scoring schools between 1996 and 1998.

(HMI, 1999, p. 14)

Small schools were judged to provide the full range of knowledge, skills and understanding required by every subject in the National Curriculum. Also, with the exception of the provision for under-fives, the curriculum of small schools is generally at least as broad and balanced as that of larger schools (HMI, 1999, p. 14). As inspectors state elsewhere:

Pupils in small schools are not disadvantaged in comparison with those in larger schools simply because of the size of school. Small schools are capable of providing an effective education and many are among the most successful schools in the country.

(OfSTED, 1999, p. 81)

This finding is consistent with earlier research which showed that small schools are not significantly different from their larger counterparts in the content of their curriculum, nor in how they teach it (Galton & Patrick, 1993).

Inspectors also report on the quality of leadership and management in schools. Of these matters the inspectors said that headteachers of small schools provided clear educational direction for their schools, although in line with schools in general “there are weaknesses in the leadership in about one school in seven” (HMI, 1999). Furthermore:

Good management and good teaching are, understandably, the two most significant characteristics of successful small schools. These two characteristics are uniquely combined in the role of the small school head so that his or her influence is a more than usually important factor in determining the quality of the school.

Where the head is effective in both the teaching and the management roles, a virtuous circle of benefits accrues to the school: change and development can be achieved more quickly, the head is able to lead by example with any new initiative and is well placed, from first hand knowledge, to assess priorities for training and spending. This circle can easily be broken, however; a weak or absent head can quickly trigger a downward spiral with consequent loss of morale and reduced quality of education.

(HMI, 1999, p. 16)
The inspectors conclude that the head of a small school is of paramount importance to the success of the school because of her/his more than usual direct influence on the quality of teaching and standards achieved. Overall, the inspectors say of small schools that higher unit costs notwithstanding, “a good case emerges for the place of small schools in the education system as a whole when the quality of their educational performance is added to the broader contribution they make to their communities” (p. 16).

The English school inspectors’ comments are congruent with research in North America. Cotton’s (1997) review of US research into school size, school climate and student performance deals with whether small schools are better than larger ones. Although the review is complicated by the fact that researchers in the US have not agreed what constitutes a small or large school, Cotton’s summary of findings suggests that:

- academic achievement in small schools is at least equal – and often superior – to that of large schools;
- student attitudes toward school are more positive than in larger schools;
- student social behaviour is more positive in small schools;
- levels of extra-curricular participation are much higher in small schools;
- students have a greater sense of belonging in small schools;
- teacher attitudes to their work and their administrators are more positive in small schools;
- students and staff generally have a stronger sense of personal efficacy in small schools.

(Cotton, 1997, p. 12–14)

Interesting and important as these findings are, they do not explicitly tell us whether and how principals of small schools influence such outcomes. Indeed, there were relatively few articles that directly and strongly focused on school leadership in small schools. Moreover, those studies I found which focused on school leadership tended to dwell on the challenges of being a leader of a small school and not what makes them, or their schools, ‘successful’. For instance, Dunning (1993) focused on the ‘double load’ problem of the teaching head. The concept of heads of small schools carrying a ‘double load’ was first expressed by the Gittins Report (CACE, 1967) which focused on primary schooling in Wales, where a third of all primary schools have less than 100 pupils on roll. Dunning examined how educational reforms had impacted on the double load. He observed that, as a consequence of national reforms in the 1980s and 1990s, teaching heads in small schools had experienced an expansion of their responsibilities. Teaching heads now have to demonstrate a much more sophisticated technical competence in their teaching, while dealing with the same teaching load and new management commitments which are as demanding as those of non-teaching heads in larger schools (p. 82).

Dunning essentially makes two points. First, that neither the special
circumstances of small school heads, nor those of the schools they manage have usually attracted much sympathetic attention on the part of reforming politicians or central administrators (p. 79). Second, despite the early identification of the problem of the ‘doubly loaded’ teaching head, 30 years later the bipartite role remains a characteristic phenomenon of most small primaries and little has been done to alleviate the ‘demanding task’ which Gittins (CACE, 1967) recognised teaching headship to be (p. 80). Given all the educational reforms which have occurred since then, Dunning (1993) concludes that it is questionable whether heads of small schools should still be expected to work under many of the ‘double load’ factors which were recognised as major encumbrances so many years ago (p. 87).

These points are echoed in two other studies. Hayes (1996) interviewed six primary heads in England and found that they were attracted to small school headship because it offered the opportunity: to go on teaching; to be their own boss; to fulfil a vision; and to ‘make a mark’ (pp. 381–3). However, the realities of headship were that the pressure of work threatened even the job satisfaction gained through continued interaction with children. After a time in post, each head accepted that it was impossible to maintain high standards in every area of the job (p. 386). Despite their common belief about what a small school headship could offer, they had to concede that they were sometimes unable to cope with its many demands.

Hayes then explored what this meant for the heads and argued that while trying to achieve success, they also had to hide their shortcomings from parents and other stakeholders outside the school, in order to avoid harming the school’s, and their own, reputations. In fact, these heads appeared to work so hard to conceal their shortcomings that they sometimes became exhausted. In turn, this exhaustion created dissatisfaction, due to fatigue and a diminished ability to cope. They then worked even harder to restore their elusive sense of success, until they were unable to offer anything more to the job (p. 387). According to Hayes, they felt good about themselves only when they did everything well, but the strain of doing everything well reduced the extent to which they experienced a sense of self-esteem. Feeling positive about themselves as teachers became increasingly difficult; the heavy demands of being a teaching head meant they sometimes had to sacrifice a central aspect of their professional identity – being an effective teacher – in order to cope with the managerial side of the job (p. 388).

In short, teaching heads sometimes have the worst of both worlds. In trying to do both aspects of the role well, they sometimes do neither and thus experience a profound sense of dissatisfaction with their efforts. Thus, Hayes’ analysis transcends previous thinking about the ‘doubly loaded’ head. He argues that the workload pressures and expectations can be so acute that they become a source of professional strain and personal dissatisfaction with one’s professional self.

Waugh’s (1999) study of 11 headteachers aimed to examine how heads in primary schools of different sizes responded to educational changes. All of the heads experienced a conflict between their desire to teach and the need to under-
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

take administrative duties (p. 22). Yet, this was experienced more strongly by
the small school heads than those in larger schools. The heads of small schools
tended to maintain that they did not have sufficient time to manage their schools
properly, given their heavy teaching loads. As one respondent said:

‘When I grow up I want to be a headteacher’

This person did not think he was a headteacher at the moment, but rather a ‘class
teacher and an administrator’ (p. 30).

In common with the Ofsted inspection evidence cited above, Waugh states
that heads of small schools have certain advantages over large schools when
implementing change, notably:

* the fact that the head is responsible for teaching a large proportion of the
children means that s/he can implement curricular change directly;
* the limited size of staff means that few people need to be persuaded of the
need for change and all can easily be involved (p. 32).

Waugh also acknowledges that heads of larger schools have certain advantages,
for example, they can share their workloads and delegate responsibilities and are
better able to monitor change in the school because they do not have class teach-
ing responsibilities (p. 32).

Together these studies suggest that although heads of small primary schools
may have no unique management tasks to perform, nevertheless, their manage-
ment and class teaching tasks are generally affected by factors which in combi-
nation may be unique to small primary schools (Wallace, 1988, pp. 16–17). The
job of headship in a small primary school seems to be distinctive insofar as the
context in which management tasks have to be carried out is specific to small
schools (p. 18). This context creates the organisational conditions whereby ten-
sions exist between heads’ teaching commitments and leading the school (Day,
et al., 2000, p. 162) and these tensions can often be acute and corrosive to an
individual’s sense of professional efficacy.

While these are significant findings, it should not mask the fact that remark-
ably little work appears to have been conducted into school leadership in small,
primary/elementary schools. When this material is categorised into articles,
which are research-based, and those which are commentary oriented, the amount
of empirical work into leadership in small primary schools becomes very
meagre indeed. Clearly, there is a lack of research into the role and work of
heads and principals, particularly in terms of leading school improvements and
the systematic reporting of leaders’ perceptions and concerns.

Furthermore, as I argued in the introduction, unless and until the data on
school leadership, and in this case headship and principalship, expands then we
will have only a limited, if not impoverished base on which to draw comparisons
between schools of different sizes within any school system, let alone between
systems on an international scale. Indeed, the growing interest in comparative studies in educational leadership (e.g., MacBeath, 1998; Dimmock & Walker, 2000; Hallinger & Kantamara, 2000; Cheng, 2000; Bredeson, 2000) argues for more painstaking and careful studies, while also revealing how much differences matter. For example, Riley and MacBeath (1998) state that it was because of the international nature of their project that differences in context and culture came to the surface (p. 140). These differences sharpened their awareness of how leadership is shaped by socio-economic and political forces and explains why they are critical of the notion of leadership ‘recipes’ because there is “no one package for school leadership, no one model to be learned and applied in unrefined forms for all schools, in all contexts” (p. 141).

If there are grounds for rejecting a formulaic approach to leadership, then policy-makers and practitioners alike should find it useful to look at teaching principals in several countries and compare how their different organisational contexts influence their role conceptions and actions. For instance, do principals in, say, rural Australia, Canada, New Zealand or Norway have similar or different amounts of non-contact time with pupils? How do they use their discretionary time when not required to teach? These are obvious questions, but they may reveal significant resource issues.

However, international comparisons need to be treated with care. Dimmock and Walker (2000) argue that while internationalism in education is desirable, caution needs to be exercised to avoid superficial comparisons being drawn. As they say: “such comparisons can be fatuous and misleading without thorough understanding of the contexts, histories and cultures within which they have developed” (p. 144). They make a good case for comparative studies, noting that educational leadership lags behind conceptual and epistemological trends and events already taking place in business management and cross-cultural psychology. Also, comparative studies should reduce the “ethnocentricity underlying theory development, empirical research and prescriptive argument” in educational leadership because “Anglo-American scholars continue to exert a disproportionate influence on theory, policy and practice” (p. 145). Yet they also warn about the dangers of “cultural borrowing” (p. 147). Policy-makers are increasingly adopting policy blueprints fashioned in different countries without giving consideration to their cultural origins or fit with their intended implementation context. In other words, we need to go “beneath the veneer of similitude” (Bredeson, 2000, p. 3) and consider differences as well.

Much the same arguments are advanced by comparativists themselves. Watson (1998) in his presidential address to the British Comparative and International Education Society sets out his view of the field, describing it as a form of “social cartography” (p. 20) and concludes that truly international studies will not simply compare nation states with one another, but might introduce:

Other categories for grouping countries and societies, for example, Buddhist, Christian (Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox), Hindu,
Watson notes that what is happening at the grass roots in educational systems is often overlooked because many comparative and international studies really only deal with macro-level issues. Watson believes one should undertake contextualised research at the lowest possible level by observing schools and individuals within those schools in relationship to the local community (p. 24).

It seems, then, that comparativists and leadership researchers alike are arguing for greater differentiation and more sophisticated awareness of contexts and cultures. Furthermore, increased sensitivity to these concerns needs to take place at the macro and micro levels. These lines of thinking not only justify qualitative studies of leadership in different settings and types of schools, but they also provide a rationale for developing portraits of leadership which can then be contrasted nationally and compared internationally.

Therefore, in addition to establishing in this section that there is a shallow pool of knowledge about leadership in small primary schools and thus a case for conducting further empirical work, such studies should not only enhance the knowledge-base within the country of origin, but also across national borders. Globalisation of education and of educational leadership should increase not diminish understanding of contexts and local settings.

Given these ideas, I now turn to my study. In the next section I outline the research methods and sample, then I will present the main findings and follow this up with a section discussing the emerging issues, before offering my conclusions.

Research methods and sample

This particular study focused on a sample of ten primary heads (8 women, 2 men) working in schools with less than 150 pupils on roll and used qualitative methods. The research used a purposive sample drawing upon heads nominated by their local education authorities (LEAs) because they were seen as successful school leaders. This was validated by school inspection data. Nominated heads were invited to participate and, given their agreement, I spent one day in each of their schools conducting the fieldwork.

Fieldwork consisted of an initial tour of the school with the head so s/he could highlight any context specific issues they wished to be noted and for me to familiarise myself with the school as a setting for their leadership. The tour was followed-up by a semi-structured interview with the head lasting approximately one and a half-hours. I next interviewed two teachers and one school governor in each of the schools. Following these interviews I met with the head again to see if s/he had anything further to add, or to follow-up lines of enquiry which had emerged during the day. I adopted a multiple perspective approach because too
much of existing research has relied too heavily on heads as the primary source of data (Day, et al., 2000). Collecting evidence from three sources was intended to reduce any bias and widen the ‘angle of observation’ (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

Immediately after each visit I made detailed field notes about the school, my impressions of the head, staff and governors, the points they had made, the tone of their comments and the emphases they had stressed. As the fieldwork progressed I also drafted research memos to myself setting out my reflections and ideas. When all the data were collated I proceeded to formally analyse them. The questions provided one framework for analysing the data and I sorted the comments accordingly. Emerging themes were identified, re-analysed and validated. In the following section I will report the major findings.

Main findings

When we toured the school site and buildings the heads described the school as a context for their work and explained past and present challenges and successes. Each school was different. For example, one was located in a very isolated rural area; one was a ‘listed’ (i.e., historical) building dating from the 15th century; another was surrounded by high rise apartments in a densely populated urban area characterised by unemployment and poverty; while others were in suburban settings, or village locations. The sample of schools also reflected a range of socio-economic circumstances.

As the heads showed me around I saw new or refurbished entrance areas, halls, and classrooms they had created. Their attention to the physical state of the schools revealed that they wanted the best possible learning environments for the pupils. Hence I was shown alterations to teaching areas, new libraries, computer suites, playground facilities and told about imaginative uses of teaching spaces. The heads also made it plain they were keenly aware of the school as a setting for their leadership. They told me about the school’s history and how it had come to be what it was today. Each described in detail what the school was like when they started their headship. All of them demonstrated that their priorities and actions depended on the school’s circumstances. In other words, the heads tacitly recognised that leadership was contingent upon where you are and who you are working with.

During the tours the heads showed how aware they were of colleagues’ and helpers since everyone was noticed and acknowledged. Interpersonal relationships were a major feature of their work and they executed them with a transparent sense of care and consideration for others. Also, every school relied on extra contributions from voluntary helpers and the heads were plainly able at enlisting and orchestrating this additional support. This was recognised in the schools’ Ofsted inspection reports, which stated that leadership and management in the schools were good, very good or excellent, that professional relationships were positive and that there was much evidence of teamwork. Also, the heads had
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

well-founded views about learning, clear visions for the schools’ futures and a good grasp of the critical actions necessary to improve the schools.

_Becoming a headteacher_

Asked why they became heads most acknowledged that they wanted the responsibility headship offered. In common with the heads Hayes’ (1996) studied, they typically liked the idea of ‘running their own school’. They wanted to see for themselves if they could meet the challenge of being a successful school leader and whether they could implement and achieve their educational beliefs.

They saw the role as both empowering and a personal challenge. Empowering because they had the authority and power to determine what their schools should be like and the direction they should be heading in. Challenging because now the responsibility was theirs and they must prove to the schools’ stakeholders that they really could make a difference. Equally, they also had to prove this to themselves and now operationalise what they believed in.

_What is headship like?_

When asked about their experience of headship each mentioned at some point that headship was very hard work. On occasion they found the role tiring because of dealing with so many people and tasks. However, the most demanding feature of their work were the simultaneous and dual demands of being head and teacher:

> It is exhausting teaching and headteachering.

(HT 10)

Also, given their reasons for wanting to become heads, they were striving to meet their own goals, to their own standards and on two counts – when teaching and when leading the school. They had high expectations of all teachers, including themselves and wanted to be successful as heads. Given what they said and the passion with which they spoke, they were driven by their own high expectations of themselves and their strong needs to succeed. Therefore, the role may be demanding for three related reasons:

- they had to meet the expectations of all they served and led;
- they were doubly loaded, being both heads and having teaching duties to perform, which for some were very substantial class teaching responsibilities;
- they had to meet their own high expectations and ambitions.

Thus they were under pressure from a series of sources – the dual situation of head and teaching, from stakeholders and themselves.

202
LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS

The best features of headship – the job satisfiers – were seeing the children achieve and make progress, plus working with adults and teamwork:

The best bits (of headship) are the children . . . Seeing children’s progress and also seeing the staff’s satisfaction.

(ht 4)

The best bits are going into classrooms, sharing the children’s successes.

(ht 5)

It is all about the children, the growth of the school and the collegiate feel in the school.

(ht 6)

The job dissatisfiers were:

The long hours and continuous nature of headship – there is a never-endingness to headship. There used to be a time when there were ‘busy periods’ during the year, but now it is all year long.

(ht 1)

Not enough time, not enough money and the external agenda. Dealing with someone else’s agenda is difficult.

(ht 8)

The fact that there is never enough time to do things properly – you have to run to keep up – shifting the paperwork.

(ht 9)

When asked to characterise headship each offered a few key words which graphically summarised what it felt like to be a headteacher:

Diverse – rich, varied, fragmented.

(ht 1)

You are in the middle of things – at the heart of things – there is an immediacy about it.

(ht 2)

Juggling time, money, and loyalties – between home and school.

(ht 3)

It’s way of life.

(ht 6)
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

It’s a living process . . . headship is constantly developing.

(ht 7)

These comments are consistent with other studies into primary headship and, indeed, headship in general. For example, another recent qualitative study into headship in primary, secondary and special schools found that heads characterised the role as:

Highly variable, involving them in covering a wide range of issues and topics, which they often dealt with in rapid order and they had become accustomed to switching from one thing to another . . . They also understood that the work was never-ending and required dedication and commitment. The role was stressful and sometimes exhausting.

(Southworth, Pocklington & Weindling, 1998, p. 105)

Professional development

Asked about their professional development six stated that over their time in headship they had grown in confidence. Five of them had been provided with formal mentors, but this process was not rated as highly beneficial. Instead benefits arose from ‘informal’ mentors or professional friends, while five spoke about the value of belonging to local headteacher support groups, school clusters and membership of LEA headteacher networks.

Although all of the heads had one or more colleagues to whom they could turn for advice, or use as a ‘sounding board’, they acknowledged that most of their professional and role learning was done on the job:

Most of my learning has been doing the job, living it. Meeting problems and working through them.

(ht 5)

I learned on my own.

(ht 9)

All of them had an implicit belief in self-development. They saw themselves as developing and valued professional learning. Many valued off-site courses and in-service programmes, but mostly their development as headteachers was through experiential learning. What characterised their growth as school leaders was how much they had learned from doing the job, meeting the challenges thrown up by their schools’ circumstances and dealing with whatever they encountered. Learning the role was very largely an osmotic process.

Perhaps then it is not surprising that for at least half of these heads, one of the significant developments that had occurred was the growth in their confidence
and sense of self. The ability to cope and survive the trials and challenges of being a leader developed their self-esteem and self-image as a headteacher.

**School improvement**

All the heads believed their schools were improving and they employed a range of strategies to achieve this growth. All spoke about using their teaching as an example:

> Throughout I have drawn heavily on my teaching and that has been hugely important with the staff. They know I have done in my teaching what they are being asked to do.  

(ht 2)

Another strategy common to all was monitoring. This took a number of forms including formal and informal approaches, headteacher and peer observation of classrooms, examining pupils’ work and learning outcomes and scrutinising teacher plans:

> I go around nearly every single day. I’m monitoring a lot – informally mostly, but sometimes formally. I’m looking at what the pupils are doing. I make lots of mental notes and follow these up. For instance, today I saw an SEN group without assistance. I’ll see if that happens again on Monday. I teach on Fridays and the staff like that, they see I am still a teacher colleague. Every week I take in teachers’ plans, I check these are being implemented, or find out why not. We look at pupils’ reading ages twice a year.  

(ht 5)

I do a lot of classroom observation. At least once a week I observe a classroom. I also get formative feedback from the teachers’ weekly plans and summative information from tests. All this helps us to detect trends and concerns. My role is listening, watching, identifying issues and taking these to the staff and deciding together what to do.  

(ht 10)

From much that was said it was clear the heads prized professional dialogue. Staff discussions were viewed as valuable ways in which teacher expectations could be raised, pedagogic assumptions challenged, greater consistency between classrooms developed and a common vision for improvement in teaching and learning established and sustained. However, while professional talk was understood to be necessary to improve the school, it was not seen as sufficient. These heads claimed to have devoted a lot of time and effort to putting in place and
developing a series of organisational and curricular structures and systems to support improvement efforts and to ensure quality in teaching and learning, including:

- School development planning
- Target setting
- Analysis of pupil learning data
- Evaluation of pupil, cohort, key stage and school performance levels
- School policies for learning and teaching
- Curriculum policies
- Assessment and marking policies
- Monitoring of policies
- Weekly planning by teachers who set out clear, explicit learning objectives for the pupils
- Staff meetings
- Curriculum managers'/leaders’ roles

All the heads during their interviews mentioned teamwork. They were keenly aware of the importance of teacher collaboration, of the staff becoming a cooperative group in which individuals supported one another and of them acting as a combined teaching unit. As one said:

> Relations are critical.

(ht 7)

Their comments about school improvement illuminated a number of themes. All regarded school improvement as the major part of their role. As each interview drew to a close no one suggested that the emphasis placed on school improvement during the interviews was an inappropriate one, or one which misrepresented the role. Tacitly all of these heads understood that first and foremost headship was about developing the quality of the pupils' learning and enhancing pupils’ progress.

No head relied on a single approach to school improvement, rather they adopted a variety of strategies to influence the practice of teachers and classroom support staff. Most commonly they monitored what was happening in the classrooms and across the school. They were very keen to gather information about what was happening inside classrooms and concentrated on the received curriculum, as well as the planned and the taught curriculum. In other words, all of the heads were using an evidence-informed approach to improvement.

They had also put in place a range of other structures and systems to support school improvement. Most telling, however, seemed to be the introduction and adoption of policies for teaching and/or learning. These took on central importance in most of the schools. Some of the heads had used them as the foundation for improving their schools and others had made them their touchstones for eval-
Evaluating quality since the policies established criteria for effective teaching and learning.

Integral to policy development and planning processes were staff discussions. Sustaining teacher talk and using it as a vehicle for teacher and staff development underscored almost everything these heads were doing. Talk enabled shared understandings to be developed, levels of awareness and expectations raised and common approaches to become established. The heads presented themselves as skilful at questioning colleagues’ assumptions and in probing complacency if they encountered it.

As far as the heads were concerned much of the policy and planning work undertaken in each school was intended to help staff. What the heads described can be interpreted as putting in place a series of support systems for teachers. Moreover, several had obtained additional teaching resources for staff, be it new classrooms, materials, or equipment, such as computers. Undoubtedly, they were very concerned to ensure that the teachers had the necessary tools to do the job well.

**Leadership**

Their responses to being asked what lessons they had learned about school leadership fell into four categories. Overwhelmingly the most important set, in terms of the number of times the heads mentioned it was working with others, teamwork and sharing leadership. Second, was the need for heads to be forward looking. Third, was being knowledgeable and leading by example. The fourth set was composed of a diverse range of points made just once or twice by respondents (e.g., there are various ways to lead, headship is lonely).

As far as their strengths as leaders they emphasised the need to work hard, to be resilient and committed. They also spoke about their communication skills, including listening, as well as dealing diplomatically and patiently with adults and children. Invited to say what they saw as the key characteristics of successful leaders they said:

- Relationships [4]
- You have to be a good teacher and lead by example [4]
- Having a vision [3]
- Respected [2]
- Determination and strength [2]
- Committed [2]
- Positive [2]
- Knowing what is going on across the school
- Reliable
- Adaptable and flexible
- Good communicator
- Know where you are going
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

- Must think of the children
- Deal with and manage change
- Willingness to work “bloody hard”

Taken together, these points show that the respondents regarded headship as a role in which you needed to be enthusiastic, positive, determined and hard working. Yet, because they worked with colleagues and regarded teamwork as vital to the school’s success and organisational health, they were alert to staff needs. Therefore, they had learned that leaders must be sensitive to others, value and involve them, as well as encourage them to take a lead. Consequently, leadership was understood as multi-faceted because the role covered many professional and organisational issues.

What also emerged was a range of leadership ‘orientations’ which portrayed headship as being concerned with maintenance, relations, change, and survival:

- **Maintenance** relates to the heads’ comments about being organised, using time wisely and establishing common practices, systems and structures in the school. They clearly recognised that things had to be managed and that transactional leadership mattered.

- They were acutely aware that leadership was relational – it was about working with people. Creating and sustaining productive, professional relations within a small group of staff who worked in close proximity alongside one another was always uppermost in their minds. In small schools no one could be detached from anyone else and everyone was reliant on others. Professional interdependence was vital to establish and sustain because it created organisational resilience, vitality and growth.

- Yet while positive relations had to be sustained, staff also needed to change and hone their practices. Sometimes this had involved major changes; more commonly it involved incremental development. Nevertheless, continuity was less acceptable than change because the heads knew that successful schools were both moving and improving ones.

- The survival image originates from headship being hard work. Words such as determination, strength, struggle, fight and battle were used by several interviewees. There was a general recognition that you had to be tenacious, as well as sometimes direct and frank with colleagues. Moreover, given that these schools did not have lavish funds, many of the heads had fought for additional resources for the school. All this effort took its toll on them and all, at some stage, acknowledged they became fatigued and needed to pace themselves. The survival image is both about the school struggling through to success and the heads personally coping with the many and varied challenges they encountered. Thus, there are some echoes of Hayes’ (1996) research findings about dealing with the demands of the job.

- Leadership itself was largely understood as involving three interlocking aspects. First, it is about looking forward as the heads’ comments on vision demonstrate. Leaders provide a sense of direction for the school. Second, leaders...
manage change; they are school developers. They saw themselves and their schools as moving forward, recognised that this process had to be led and managed, and wanted the children and staff to achieve as much as they could. They knew they needed to maintain the school and manage it, but they were mostly concerned with developing and improving the schools. Third, the process of leading rested on the power of example. Leading through one’s professional example, be it as a class teacher, drawing on their knowledge of the curriculum and children, or through their attitudes to change, improvement and leadership, lay at the core of their work.

The lists of characteristics also show that leadership according to these headteachers was neither mono-dimensional nor monochrome. Leadership involved many qualities and skills and no single style was favoured by the heads, nor thought to be appropriate.

Many were aware that their leadership had to suit the circumstances they faced at any one time. Also, leadership was not only varied, but richly so. It was about working with others, which could be fun, frustrating, challenging and rewarding. It involved dealing with teachers, support staff, governors, parents and community representatives. Yet the heads were most strongly anchored by their responsibilities for the pupils. At the very heart of so much that they said was a relentless concern for the children and their progress.

**Teacher data**

No teacher dissented from the view that their headteachers were successful school leaders. They attributed much of the schools’ success to their heads’ stewardship. They described their heads as hardworking, approachable, collaborative, determined, knew what was going on, were good listeners, organised, dedicated and led by example. The teachers’ comments also showed that they believed their heads to have influenced their own classroom practices through a combination of:

- the heads’ monitoring and knowledge of what was happening around the school and inside classrooms;
- the heads’ own teaching practice, behaviour and attitudes towards the children, which were seen as a model of what to do;
- discussion and talk with colleagues, including the head, since this developed ideas and teaching knowledge.

**Governor data**

The governors also believed their heads’ were doing a good job. They spoke warmly and positively about the heads throughout the interviews. They appreciated their efforts, their appetite for hard work and their achievements. While the
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

general tenor of their comments was consistent with what the teachers said, the
governors laid greater stress than the teachers on two specific aspects of the
heads’ work:

• how the heads had enhanced the schools’ reputations and standing with
  parents;
• how well the heads worked with the governors.

Therefore, the governors were aware that external and community relations were
important elements of running a successful school.

When asked why they thought the heads were successful leaders four gover-
nors emphasised that it was because they never lost sight of the children, others
mentioned the heads’ care and concern for the pupils and how the heads put the
children first. The governors also believed that the heads’ capacity to work hard
was an important factor. More than the teachers, the chairs of governors were
aware of the administrative load headteachers had to shoulder. The volume of
paperwork – forms, documentation, finances, correspondence etc. – was men-
tioned by several governors, along with their appreciation of the heads’ abilities
to deal with all of this and everything else as well.

Discussion

This section is divided in two. First I identify and discuss the emerging themes.
Second, I contrast and compare these themes with the literature and current the-
orising about school leadership.

Emerging themes

There are five interrelated themes that I will focus on in this section:

1. Working hard

The first theme concerns the nature of headship in small schools today. Respon-
dents from all three groups made this point time and again. The heads acknow-
ledged they worked hard, but did so in an uncomplaining way. They appeared to
regard it as a fact of headship, rather than something they might be able to avoid
or change. As evidence presented to the House of Commons Education and
Employment Committee of inquiry into the role of headteachers shows, the
average working week for primary heads is 55.7 hours and many heads, espe-
cially in small schools, have a teaching commitment in excess of 80 per cent of
the week (House of Commons, 1998, paras. 24–25).

Indeed, it is also clear that these ten heads had an appetite for hard work.
They plainly enjoyed the responsibilities of headship. More than this, though, it
seems that hard work is necessary if heads are to be successful. For one thing, in
small schools, which by definition have fewer staff (in particular support staff covering administration and finances) heads do not have many colleagues they can turn to. They did not have personal assistants, nor many of the other trappings of executive life in commerce and industry. Rather, each school employed a ‘secretary’, who often worked on a part time basis and who managed most aspects of school administration and finance. However, what was not done by the secretary was left for the heads to do.

The other reason why hard work is necessary centres on what the teachers and governors said. It was very clear from their comments that when they acknowledged the time and the effort the heads put in, they understood this to mean not only that the heads had a capacity to deal with a lot of work, but that the heads were committed to the schools. Dealing with all the demands and not shrinking from all the requirements of the role were indicators, indeed, symbols of the headteachers’ care, concern and dedication. Therefore, hard work is not simply about being prepared to put in the hours, it is also a powerful emblem that the leader is committed, dedicated even, to the school.

2. Positive people

All of the heads shared one characteristic – they were strongly positive individuals. Their optimistic outlooks were particularly apparent in terms of their beliefs about the school, the staff and the pupils. All believed that their schools would improve and become more and more successful. Although they knew they had challenges to face and resolve, more than anything they viewed the schools’ prospects with hopefulness.

Throughout the time I was in the school it was clear that these heads were positive forces in their schools. There was no sense of despondency or pessimism, even though some were stern critics of the national educational reform process and several believed small schools were under-valued. Rather, the heads were enthusiastic about their schools and the future.

3. Team builders and players

Teamwork was frequently mentioned by the heads and noted by the teachers, governors and in many cases by the Ofsted inspectors in their reports. This emphasis is no surprise given that in recent times teacher collaboration has become a norm in primary schools, along with collaborative staff cultures and ‘whole school’ policy-making (Nias, et al., 1989, 1992; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1993). Ensuring that the school is a cohesive organisation, that there is staff cooperation, that plans are co-ordinated, communications work well and staff share ideas, resources and support one another, are now common expectations of heads and those who inspect schools.

However, in small primary schools the emphasis on teamwork may be particularly important. Many respondents believed that if the school was to be
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

successful, then staff had to work together. Collaboration was not an option in small schools, it was a professional obligation. The teachers too saw benefits from participating and acknowledged how effective their heads were in orchestrating staff collaboration. The heads viewed positive inter-professional relations as critical to the health of the school. Interpersonal relationships – dealing with staff, parents and governors – were the key leadership skills.

The heads’ contribution to teamwork followed two paths. First, the heads were team builders. Second, they were team players. All demonstrated that they had been active in creating teams in their respective schools. Their comments showed that they recognised and valued individuals and encouraged participation in planning, policy-making and school decisions. The governors valued heads who were accessible to them and it appears that staff did too. The frequency with which this attribute was mentioned suggests that teachers approve of heads who are not remote, are willing to talk and listen to them and who share their ideas and plans with staff. Therefore, the notion of the heads being approachable is probably a shorthand for heads being expected to be communicative and receptive leaders, who acknowledge others and interact on a personal and professional level with them. The emphasis they placed on professional dialogue is another hallmark of their concern to develop and sustain collaboration. They also, however, valued the staff as a group. They were quick to attribute success to the group’s efforts, rather than their own. In this way they suggested that they were also team players; success was not ‘mine’, but ‘ours’. The heads knew that while they played a leading part in the school, they could not achieve very much single-handedly and whatever success the schools had made was the result of everyone’s efforts.

The heads believed that their schools’ successes were dependent on everyone supporting one another and working together. While this outlook was an inclusive one and applied to all staff, improving the performance of the school rested on the teaching staff functioning as a combined teaching unit. Developing a team of teachers who were characterised by a unity of purpose, shared educational values and goals, consistency in teaching and classroom practices, continuity in the curriculum and professional openness were both the means and the ends of teamwork in these schools. In short, teamwork was a key ingredient in improving the school.

4. School improvers

All of these heads were improving their schools. For some it was because they had been appointed to move the schools forward because they were under-performing organisations or in decline. For others it was more a case of enhancing already high levels of success. Whatever the context, none of the heads were satisfied for the schools to remain as they were. Hence the heads spoke about wanting to avoid complacency, of under-achievement being eliminated, pupils’ rates of progress accelerating, children’s attitudes to learning becoming more
positive and of the school’s ethos changing for the better. All of the heads wanted to improve on their previous best.

Each head used a number of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, but three strategies in particular stand out from what the heads, teachers and governors said:

- Modelling
- Monitoring
- Professional dialogue

Each of these strategies relied on a range of tactics. For example, modelling involved the heads using their teaching as an example of what and how to do things, working alongside staff in their classrooms, coaching staff through demonstrating how they taught or approached issues and consciously using school assemblies as occasions when they could promote and reinforce educational values and practice across the school. As the National Primary Headteachers’ Association (NPHA) said in their evidence to the House of Commons Education and Employment Committee (1998): “headteachers must set standards of performance by their personal example” (para. 21). All of the heads in this study understood this and given the evidence of their own and colleagues’ statements they all did it.

Monitoring involved the heads looking at teachers’ weekly plans and the learning objectives teachers were working towards, examining samples of pupils’ work, visiting classrooms, observing the implementation of teaching, learning and curricula policies, reviewing pupil assessment information and evaluating pupil, class and school levels of performance and progress.

Professional dialogue was developed through staff meetings, reviewing practice, looking at pupil learning data, joint planning meetings and policy formation. The heads also followed up visits to classrooms with informal discussions with individuals, or used questions to probe teachers’ assumptions and to promote ideas and ways forward.

Complementing these three strategies were a number of school structures and systems that the heads had put in place. Together, the leadership strategies and the organisational and curricular structures and systems were the processes by which shared educational goals were created, the ways in which consistency in teaching and high expectations were put in place and the means by which improvements in pupils’ learning outcomes and progress were realised. They were the practical ways in which these heads enacted their educational and instructional leadership. As such, they are anatomical features of successful leadership in small primary schools.

5. Educational leaders

These headteachers were first and foremost educational leaders. In common with previous research studies (Alexander, 1984; Nias, et al., 1989; Nias, et al., 1992;
Southworth, 1995a & 1998), longstanding traditions in primary headship (Alexander, 1992) and contemporary thinking (House of Commons, 1998) educational leadership has long been favoured. Yet despite consistent advocacy for it, the 'street realities' of headship can inhibit or thwart such leadership because heads can be caught up in administration and management at the expense of exercising professional leadership. These heads knew that while effective management and efficient administration were necessary, they were not sufficient for the success of the school. Certainly they would have welcomed more administrative support to free them from some of the bureaucratic tasks they dealt with. Yet despite many other calls on their time, they were most strongly focused on leading the schools' educational development. All that they did was concentrated on enhancing pupils' learning provision, progress and outcomes and they did this in an educative way. In developing the quality of learning the heads often enabled staff to learn from them and from one another. Thus the process of improvement was a learning process for the staff.

The heads focused strongly and directly on improving the quality of teaching. To this end these heads were ‘instructional leaders’, that is they looked hard at how children were being taught and how such practice might be improved and shared so that every teacher could teach to the same standard as the best. Much of this development in pedagogy occurred through modelling, monitoring and discussion. However, all of these strategies were predicated on teachers being able to learn from one another. Thus improving teaching was based on professional learning and this required the heads to be both educational and educative leaders. What this interpretation of headship, leadership and improvement suggests is that leaders in small primary schools need to be able teachers of young children and good at enabling the professional learning of adults as well.

Currently, ‘best practice’ in management outside education is pointing towards ‘liberating leadership’ with a focus on trust, integrity, fairness and belief in self and others (Turner, 1998). As Glatter (1998) has suggested, effective human resource management practices contribute far more, in statistical terms, to company performance than do strategy, quality, technology and research and development combined. Also:

The increasing emphasis on people management is reflected in the growing literature on the significance in modern conditions of the ‘intellectual capital’ of organisations (e.g., Allday, 1998; Stewart, 1998), with its implications for valuing, motivating and developing staff.

(Glatter, 1998, p. 11)

Judged by these criteria these heads provided effective leadership because it was educational. They helped staff to feel involved and valued their ‘intellectual capital’ – their professional knowledge – by treating them as colleagues and valued partners.
Relationship with existing literature and theory

The first point to make is that this study is broadly consistent with other studies into headship and school leadership. Previous studies conducted into primary headship have identified how the role is demanding, tiring and hard work (Southworth, 1995a, pp. 13–15). There are also parallels with other studies which have invited heads to identify from their experience the personal qualities and professional skills required to be an effective school leader (Bolam, et al., 1993; Southworth, 1995a; Day et al., 2000). The National Commission on Education (NCE) study (1996) found that leaders of effective schools in disadvantaged areas used similar organisational and curricular structures and systems, monitored pupil learning and teaching and paid attention to the physical environment in order to create a context ‘optimally fit for learning’ (p. 320).

The NCE study noted that the heads had ‘an abundance of energy and commitment’ and that ‘an unusually high level of human effort’ was expended ‘in a very focused way’ (p. 335). These leaders believed their schools had the potential to succeed. The heads were omnipresent in their schools, having a high profile with pupils and their progress and observing teaching and learning. They took a lead in monitoring the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils and provided feedback. The key elements of these heads’ leadership styles were: accessibility; willingness to build expertise and experience of others into the management of the school; and a desire to get the best from every member of staff (p. 339). Also:

There is a clear sense in which the headteachers have an impact by setting an example to the rest of the school, providing powerful role models.

(PP. 338–9)

Team building was also highlighted as important, as was developing the team. In the case of the latter, collaborative cultures and participative approaches were developed (p. 343) along with positive reinforcement of individual’s efforts. The development of cohesive and professional relations among staff was regarded as essential.

Given the parallels between these studies it seems safe to claim that these successful heads in small primary schools are not unusual from other headteachers whose work has been investigated. However, this is not to say that they are the same in all respects. There are similarities, but also some important nuances of difference.

For one thing, the study of small schools suggests that recent thinking about effective school leadership needs to be examined with the variable of context in mind. Hallinger and Heck’s (1998) review of research between 1980 and 1995 explored the relationship between principal leadership and pupil achievement and developed a three-fold classification of principal (headteacher) effects:
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

1 Direct effects
   Where the principal’s actions influence school outcomes

2 Mediated effects
   Where principal actions affect outcomes indirectly through other variables

3 Reciprocal effects
   Where the principal affects teachers and teachers affect the principal and through these processes outcomes are affected.

(Hallinger & Heck, 1998, pp. 162–3)

Reviewing these three models Hallinger and Heck are critical of the first insofar as those researchers who use it do not typically seek to control for the effects of other in-school variables such as teacher commitment, or curricular organisation (p. 163). The lack of attention to other factors creates a simplistic view of headteacher action and effects. Indeed, in my view, it may develop the idea of headteacher causation. That is, there is an assumed one-to-one correspondence between what a head does and the school improving. On occasions this may happen, for example, where the head has a direct input into teaching. As one of the heads in the small schools’ study said: “In this school I represent 25 per cent of the teaching” (ht 1). Hence it is reasonable to expect that given s/he is an effective teacher their practice will enhance pupil outcomes, but so too will the other 75 per cent of the teaching!

The mediated effects model hypothesises that leaders achieve their effects on outcomes through ‘indirect paths.’ The model recognises that:

Leadership practices contribute to the outcomes desired by schools but the contribution is always mediated by other people, events and organisational factors such as teacher commitment, instructional practices or school culture. This conceptualisation is consistent with the proposition that leaders achieve their results primarily through other people.

(p. 167)

The reciprocal effects model presents heads as ‘enacting leadership through a stream of interactions’ (p. 168) through which they address the salient features of the school, such as pupil outcomes, staff morale or commitment. However, in so doing they adapt to the organisation in which they work and change their thinking and behaviour over time. As Hallinger and Heck argue, this model regards leadership as an ‘adaptive process rather than a unitary independent force’ and allows for the possibility that ‘causal relationships may be multidirectional, change over time and even be non-linear’ (p. 168)

Hallinger and Heck conclude from their detailed analysis of the literature that mediated effects studies yielded more consistent findings than did the direct effects studies that were popular earlier in the decade. They argue that the general pattern of results drawn from their review supports the belief that princi-
pals exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and pupil achievement (p. 186). As Hallinger and Heck also note, researchers in the early years of research in this domain focused on answering the question: ‘Do principals make a difference?’ More recently they have transcended the bounds of this question to try to understand ‘not only if principals have effects on school outcomes, but more particularly the paths through which such effects are achieved’ (p. 187). In their review Hallinger and Heck conclude that a primary avenue of influence appears to be in shaping the school’s direction through vision, mission and goals.

Of course, there is much to debate about these ideas and there are obvious difficulties in adopting the findings of research about principals in North America for headteachers in England. One particular difficulty I have with their ideas is in discriminating between direct effects and mediated effects. I can appreciate their co-existence, but it becomes difficult to attribute some headteachers’ actions as ‘direct’ effects and others as ‘indirect’. Nevertheless, Hallinger and Heck’s analysis is insightful and implies that context does matter, since contextual factors will mediate leaders’ actions. Furthermore, when the three models of principal effects are applied to this sample of headteachers they offer a valuable analytic tool and lead me to make four points.

First, all three models of effect can be detected somewhere across the headteacher, teacher and governor data. Teaching heads would have certainly have had some direct effect in their schools because of their class teaching responsibilities. Mediated effects stem from the ways the heads had influenced goals, expectations, instructional and curricular practices and so on. For those who had been in the school for some time there were also indications that, over time, there were reciprocal effects. Not only had they influenced the school, but as staff changed, as trust was developed with staff and governors, as circumstances changed and developed so too had the heads adapted some of their practices.

Second, because these are relatively small schools, it seems reasonable to assume that these heads will have stronger direct effects than heads in larger schools, where mediated effects are more likely to be at work. Such an outlook is plainly an assumption in the inspectors review of small schools (HMI, 1999) and in Waugh’s (1999) study which were both reported in the literature review above. However, what emerges from this study is the suggestion that not only did these heads have some direct effects, but they were also very active in terms of mediated effects. Their behaviour was typified by a keen awareness that they were working with and through others. They knew that to improve the school they had to influence others and did so with tenacity, determination and a clarity of purpose.

Third, it is especially interesting that these heads appear to have been effective in how they indirectly influenced pupil outcomes. Perhaps because they worked in close proximity and interacted face-to-face with staff they could ensure there was much personal contact. Communication and professional
interaction between head and staff was processual. Such patterns of interaction connect with Fullan’s (1991) ideas about managing change and developing meaning. The data suggest that these heads were skilled in negotiating and developing teachers’ understandings and subjective meanings about desired changes for the school.

Fourth, while the impact of heads in small schools included some direct effects and reciprocal effects, the ability and dispositions of these heads to engage strongly with and act on the mediating factors as well, may, in part, account for why they were so successful. Expressed another way, these heads worked directly – through their interactions and interventions – on the indirect pathways to effectiveness.

Therefore, this study points to a theory of leadership effects whereby these heads’ success was to a significant degree, attributable both to the heads’ direct effects and especially their mediated effects. Because the heads engaged with the mediating factors, and often in a direct and personal way, they were particularly powerful in making a difference in their schools. The strength, frequency and effectiveness of their encounters with staff made their influence pervasive or, as the NCE (1996) stated, omnipresent. Their dealings with staff were regarded as warm and open and they valued individuals and groups, praised them and worked in teams themselves. In these ways they undoubtedly tempered what may in some other circumstances become oppressive conditions. Nevertheless, over time, these heads appeared to be irresistible in moving – directly and indirectly – the schools along paths they and the staff and governors wanted.

Thus, while heads in small schools are likely to exercise greater direct influence than colleagues in larger schools, they have the potential and opportunity, because of their smaller organisational contexts, to make their indirect effects very powerful too. When both effects are used positively, these doubly loaded heads can be doubly influential.

Central to leading school improvement was the assumption that leadership itself involved a social influence process whereby “intentional influence” was exerted by the head over the staff to “structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation” (Yukl, 1994, p. 3). As Leithwood et al. (1999) say:

Influence . . . seems to be a necessary part of most conceptions of leadership. This suggests that most of the variation in leadership concepts, types or models can be accounted for by differences in who exerts influence, the nature of that influence, the purpose for the exercise of influence and its outcomes.

(p. 6)

For heads of small schools their influence was achieved by the power of their professional and personal example and their implicit belief in the ‘primacy of personal contact’ (Fullan, 1991, p. 53). They used copious amounts of effort and
energy, and while each was willing to exert influence ‘over’ others, more usually it seems they exercised their influence through ‘positive politics’ (Block, 1987, p. 97). Positive politics refers to changing organisational cultures through personal behaviour because it is our actions which are our political statements. These heads, with their belief in the power of example, knew that the truth of what you say lies in what you do.

It also needs to be emphasised that these heads were emotionally intelligent leaders. They were empathetic, used positive reinforcement to value staff and to steer them towards common goals. They were also able talkers and listeners and used a dialogic approach to setting targets and expectations (see Goleman, 2000). Working in such close and continuous proximity to their colleagues and reliant upon them and their goodwill to go beyond the boundaries of the basic job requirements, they needed to create and sustain a workplace climate which was conductive to collegiality. This they appear to have achieved by being interpersonally skilful and emotionally sensitive as well as professionally knowledgeable and effective.

It remains to be seen whether this approach is similar or different to leadership in other contexts. Research is now needed to see how heads in larger schools use direct and indirect effects and how they blend and mix the two. What seems likely from this examination of heads in small schools is that these heads took advantage of their close, personal proximity with their staff groups, in settings characterised by first-hand, oral communications and collegial interactions. Nor should it be forgotten that these heads were also teachers. They remained active members of the teaching fraternity. Thus, the power of their example was based not only on the perspicacity of their knowledge and understanding, but also on the fact that they provided concrete evidence of these ideas in action. In other words, they were neither remote figures, nor leaders who had left the classroom. The combination of both qualities may have made them particularly potent leaders.

The outline I have sketched here begins to provide an analytic description of a sample of heads’ leadership. While this picture shows that successful heads’ roles are polyphonic and their actions subtle and intricately woven, it also suggests that these heads broadly followed patterns common to other leaders. Here I have in mind Bolman and Deal’s (1991; 1992) views about there being four frames of leadership:

The structural frame emphasises rationality, efficiency, structure and policies. Structural leaders value analysis and data, keep their eye on the bottom line, set clear directions, hold people accountable for results and try to solve organisational problems with new policies and rules – or through restructuring. The human resource frame focuses on the interaction between individual and organisational needs. Human resource leaders value relationships and feelings and seek to lead through facilitation and empowerment. The political frame emphasises
conflict among different groups and interests for scarce resources. Political leaders are advocates and negotiators who spend much of their time networking, creating coalitions, building a power base and negotiating compromises. The *symbolic* frame sees a chaotic world in which meaning and predictability are socially constructed and facts are interpretive rather than objective. Symbolic leaders pay diligent attention to myth, ritual, ceremony, stories and other symbolic forms.

(Bolam & Deal, 1992, pp. 314–5)

These frames have been researched by Bolman and Deal who conclude that, while all four frames are important for success as both a manager and leader, their results suggest that school leaders rarely use more than two frames and almost never use all four (p. 316). Furthermore, research with principals from Florida and Singapore showed that the human resource frame was dominant in principals’ critical incidents, while structural themes were the second most common (pp. 317–8).

Day et al.’s (2000) study of school leadership in England also utilised these four frames and they argued that, while there was evidence of the use of all four frames by the leaders they case studied, “it was the human resource frame which occupied most of their daily time and which created the most tensions and celebration” (p. 165). Much the same conclusion can be drawn from these heads of small schools. Their concern for teamwork, positive and productive social and professional relations, collegiality and collaboration are equivalents for Bolman and Deal’s lexicon for the human resource frame. Thus, it seems that headteachers and principals share a common concern for leading and managing staff, or as Riley and MacBeath (1998) refer to it, “the school’s inner life” (p. 148). That is, the emotional, personal and interpersonal dimensions of organisational life and growth, as well as the professional.

In line with Day et al.’s (2000) study I would also argue that this sample of heads of small schools used the other three frames, but not with as much emphasis. There were signs of structural, symbolic and political frames being used, but without each individual completing Bolman and Deal’s inventories it is impossible to say whether this is a composite view or something common to each individual. Thus further work is needed to advance this line of enquiry.

However, what can be said is that the human resource frame appears to be a constant emphasis and the highest priority for heads and principals. This could have implications for their professional development. Heads who experience difficulties may need to hone their interpersonal skills, while others may need to attend to their structural, symbolic and/or political frames.

**Conclusions**

Although this chapter is predicated on the idea that we need a more discriminatory appreciation of context and situational leadership in schools, there is also a
good case for studying leadership in small schools in greater depth. The study reviewed here is, at best, an introductory analysis of the issues. Notwithstanding the small sample and other limitations of the research, there is more than a suggestion here that if we want to look at instructional leadership, then leaders in small schools offer a particularly rich source of knowledge that has hitherto not been developed. Perhaps too much of the educational leadership literature has been willing to advocate particular approaches without providing detailed analytic descriptions of what such leadership actually looks like in action.

These heads were emotionally intelligent leaders because they were able to handle the intense interpersonal dynamics that come with working in small groups. Undoubtedly they were able instrumental leaders, but equally, they were also highly skilled expressive leaders. From all accounts they appeared to manage the affective domain of life in schools and were able to deal productively with the emotional costs of teaching and working with teachers. Clearly, there is more to explore here which should benefit our understanding of organisational context and teacher cultures. Indeed, it can be argued that unless the emotional and psychological dimensions of teaching are acknowledged and dealt with in an empathetic way, then developing knowledge creating schools (Hargreaves, 1998), where the intellectual capital of teachers is valued and utilised for the good of the school, may not advance very far or very fast.

This latter point relates to two others. First, what emerged from looking at leadership in small schools was the extent to which these leaders were able to multi-task. They could switch from one issue to another and keep many things in their minds simultaneously. Such polyphonic behaviour is common to teachers and headteachers in my experience, but not to the extent suggested by these heads and their witnesses. Second, eight of the ten heads were women and all of them led female staff groups. Therefore, the issue of gender should not be discounted. I am not saying that what is presented here is a feminine model of leadership, but I do think that the presence of so many women in the studied schools was a contextual feature and that this in itself warrants further analysis.

The case for women leaders to be studied has long been recognised and advanced. Hall (1997) in reviewing 25 years’ worth of articles in the journal of British educational management and administration says that “gender only began to emerge as a discrete topic after 1980 and since then, has hovered in the wings like a wallflower at a party” (p. 309). Since Shakeshaft’s (1987) influential review which raised issues about the different world of women administrators, the literature has broadly focused on two sets of issues: why women were under-represented in senior positions in educational administration; and differences between male and female managers (Hall, 1997, p. 310). It is the latter set of issues which is of relevance here. Some studies suggest there are differences between male and female leaders, while others suggest that there are no significant differences (McGhee Banks, 2000). In recent years the favoured view seems to be that gender does make a difference in how administrators behave (Hall, 1999; Shakeshaft, Nowell & Perry, 2000; Coleman, 2001). I was not able
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

to detect any such differences, but that may only reflect a weakness in the analytic frame and my interpretation.

However, some current thinking is advising against taking a single issue approach to leadership. Hall (1999) questions the appropriateness of seeing gender as a single determining factor (p. 155) and advocates that researchers adopt a wider viewpoint. Likewise, McGhee Banks (2000), in her review of gender and race in educational leadership, is critical of the limited scope of studies of educational leaders and their attention to just one key variable such as gender, ethnicity, leadership style, or career patterns. Such studies:

Do not usually examine several variables or attempt to identify the intersections among them. Future research needs to have a broader scope and to reflect the dynamics of race and gender within the changing nature of our society. As a socially constructed phenomenon, leadership must also be examined within the changing meanings of race and gender.

(p. 245)

I did not include either perspective in this study and that was clearly a weakness. However, this study of leadership in small schools certainly points to the need to examine in greater depth how women lead staff groups composed entirely of women.

This observation paves the way for another conclusion. In the introduction I argued that small schools are relatively low status institutions. In schooling size matters and bigger schools are usually seen as more important than small ones. This position is further compounded by the fact that small schools are almost entirely staffed by women. Yet, the picture of leadership which emerges from this study shows a sample of leaders who were highly effective, extremely hard working and capable of dealing with multiple issues simultaneously. Their capacity to use skills in combinations was impressive, as was their ability to be energy creators, enablers and empowering. These heads were perhaps the closest I have seen to transformational leaders in action. Far from according them low esteem and paying them little attention because they lead ‘small’ schools, they may well be potentially rich subjects for learning about instructional and educational leadership.

Finally, given all that I have said about context, I now want to end with one further observation. Within the primary school sector in England, at least, but possibly in elementary schools in other countries too, many of the differences which might be detected in leaders’ interests, actions and behaviours and which are associated with contextual variables, are likely to be more about matters of degree than of kind. For example, it may be that there are substantially more indirect and mediated effects used in very large schools. In small schools heads may have to be more directly involved in expressive and affective leadership than in larger ones, where other leaders may be involved and the headteacher
LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS

more remote. Likewise, the effects of shared and distributed leadership will figure in larger schools and these will need to be taken into account alongside the headteachers’ effects. Clearly there is much to discover, explore and record before we can feel we have an adequate understanding of school contexts and their influence on the nature and texture of leadership.

References


223
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS


STAGES OF HEADSHIP

Dick Weindling


1. Introduction

This chapter uses socialisation theory to re-examine the NFER longitudinal study of headteachers (Weindling and Earley, 1987; Earley et al., 1990 and 1994/5) in order to study the stages of headship transition. Previous models of leadership transition and succession in both business and schools are outlined. Finally, the NFER findings are integrated with the earlier work to produce a stage theory of headship which can be used as a research tool and to assist the development of heads and prospective heads.

2. Stage theories of socialisation

A useful approach to understanding leadership and headship development derives from Merton’s (1963) socialisation theory. The stress here is on the two-way interaction between the new leader and the school situation (with each trying to change and influence the other). In this view of socialisation, which is prevalent in the North American research, there are two main overlapping phases:

- professional socialisation which involves learning what it is to be a headteacher, prior to taking up the role, from personal experience of schooling and teaching and from formal courses;
- organisational socialisation which involves learning the knowledge, values, and behaviours required to perform a specific role within a particular organisation (Schein, 1968), after appointment.

A large body of work exists, drawn largely from the non-educational field, where previous writers have suggested stage theories to explain the transition phases experienced by leaders. Although various labels are used by different authors, they commonly identify three periods of organisational socialisation. Hart (1993) provides the most detailed synthesis and critical analysis of the field and the following is adapted from her book.
STAGES OF HEADSHIP

Stage 1. Encounter, anticipation, or confrontation
The initial arrival stage requires considerable learning on the part of new heads as they encounter the people and the organisation. Cognitive approaches focus on rational interpretations and the understandings that new heads construct, what Louis (1980) called the *sense making* process in an unfamiliar situation.

Stage 2. Adjustment, accommodation, clarity
This involves the task of attempting to fit in. New leaders must reach accommodation with the work role, the people with whom they interact and the school culture. They look for role clarity in this new setting and may face resistance from established group members.

Stage 3. Stabilisation
In this stage, stable patterns emerge but this is only visible in data from longitudinal studies. Nicholson and West (1988), using a cyclic model, treat the stages of stabilisation and preparation (for the next change) together, because they found that stabilisation did not occur for some managers who had moved on to their next post.

3. Previous research
A few studies have looked at the period as a deputy as preparation for headship. Ribbins (1997), for example, interviewed 34 heads and found that, while some enjoyed the experience as an appropriate preparation for headship, relatively few remembered it with enthusiasm or their former heads with unqualified warmth. Although most felt that their heads had not positively prepared them for headship, they believed that they had learned from the negative experiences, often vowing never to act like that themselves.

Gender issues and headship were explored in two important, life history studies by Evetts (1994) and Hall (1996) who found that women heads’ career paths, and the way they approached management, differed from that of men, but these authors did not use stage theory.

Parkay and Hall (1992) conducted a US project modelled on the NFER research. They surveyed 113 new high school principals and carried out case studies of 12 throughout their first year in post. A return visit was made after three years. The authors derived a five-stage developmental model to describe the career patterns of new principals:

1. Survival
2. Control
3. Stability
4. Educational leadership
5. Professional actualisation.

Four basic assumptions underlie the model:

- principals begin at different stages and not all start at Stage 1;
- principals develop through the stages at different rates;
- no single factor determines a principal’s stage of development. Personal characteristics, the school context and the previous principal all play a part;
- principals may operate at more than one stage simultaneously, i.e. the stage is their predominant orientation.

In this country, Day and Bakioglu (1996) questionnaired 196 headteachers and interviewed a sample of 34, and derived a four-phase, developmental model:

1. Initiation: idealism, uncertainty and adjustment.
   This lasted about three years and involved two key processes: learning on the job and accommodating to the existing framework and structure of the school.
2. Development: consolidation and extension.
   Heads with four to eight years’ experience were still enthusiastic, saw this as more satisfactory and rewarding with fewer difficulties than the other phases, built new management teams as inherited senior staff left, and delegated more.
3. Autonomy.
   Here heads continued to be self-confident, felt they had management expertise but had less energy, a nostalgia for the past, and saw externally imposed national initiatives as causing lack of enthusiasm. ‘Autonomy’ was positive in that they felt in control of the school, but negative because this was threatened by external change and pressure to work with governors.
4. Disenchantment.
   A decline in confidence, enthusiasm and fatigue were the characteristics here. Heads started to ease off and their health (physical and mental) deteriorated as they approached retirement. The Education Reform Act had a major impact on many of them.

Ribbins (1998) adapted Day and Bakioglu’s phases and a stage model developed by Gronn (1993, 1999) to produce a model of typical pathways for school leaders:

- Formation – the early socialisation influences from agencies such as the family, school and other reference groups which shape the personality of a future head.
- Accession – career advancement and preparation for headship.
STAGES OF HEADSHIP

- Incumbency – the total period of headship, from appointment to leaving, sub-divided into Day and Bakioglu’s four phases, to which Ribbins adds enchantment as an alternative to disenchantment for some long-serving heads.
- Moving on – leaving headship which may involve divestiture for the disen-chanted or reinvention for the enchanted.

Gabarro (1987) conducted research on 17 senior management successions in business and industry in the US and Europe (including three case studies in the UK), pointing out that while there has been research on management succession, very little work has examined the activities and problems facing a new manager after they take up their post. He calls this process ‘taking charge’:

... I do not mean just orienting oneself to a new assignment. Taking charge, as I use the term, refers to the process by which a manager establishes mastery and influence in a new assignment. By mastery, I mean acquiring a grounded understanding of the organisation, its tasks, people, environment, and problems. By influence, I mean having an impact on the organisation, its structure, practices, and performance. The process begins when a manager starts a new assignment and ends when he or she has mastered it in sufficient depth to be managing the organisation as efficiently as the resources, constraints, and the manager’s own ability allow.

(Gabarro, 1987)

He characterised the process as a series of five predictable, chronological stages of learning and action. The timings are approximate:

- Taking hold (the first six months).
  This period involves intense learning as the manager develops a cognitive map of the organisation using processes of orientation, evaluation (an assessment of staff, understanding where the problems lie) and establishing priorities. ‘Corrective’ actions are taken to address emerging problems and ‘turnaround’ actions to deal with urgent problems.
- Immersion (six to 12 months).
  This very important period of deeper learning and diagnosis involves relatively little organisational change activity. Managers develop a much better understanding of the basic issues and underlying problems. They often question more sharply if they have the right people in place as they understand their strengths and weaknesses.
- Reshaping (12 to 21 months).
  This is a time of major change, organisational reconfiguration and implementation. The transition to reshaping often involves the use of task groups and external consultants.
LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

- Consolidation (21 to 27 months).
  Earlier changes are consolidated. Learning and diagnosis tend to be evaluative. The manager and key colleagues assess the consequences and the unanticipated problems of earlier changes and take corrective actions.

- Refinement (27 to 36 months).
  A period of fine-tuning with relatively little major additional learning. The managers had ‘taken charge’, were no longer ‘new’ and had either established their credibility and power base, or not. This relative calm could be disturbed by changes in the external world.

Gabarro found that the organisational changes managers made as they worked through these stages characteristically occurred in three waves: the first wave occurs during the Taking-Hold stage, the second, and typically largest, during the Reshaping stage, and the last and smallest during the Consolidation stage. These stage and wave patterns are found in successful transitions regardless of the kind of succession (insider versus outsider; turn-around versus non-turnaround cases), the industry of the organisation involved, or the manager’s prior functional background.

4. The NFER secondary heads project

This unique project, which followed a cohort of headteachers for over ten years, falls into three stages:

1. Stage 1 began in 1982 with everybody who took up their first post as a head of a secondary school in England and Wales. Questionnaire data were obtained from 188 heads. Forty-seven new heads were interviewed towards the end of their first term in post and 16 of them were then chosen for detailed case studies covering the first two years of headship. A total of three visits were made to each of the schools in this part of the project and individual interviews conducted with the heads, each of the senior management team, a cross-section of teachers, the chair of governors and a senior LEA adviser. A total of over 300 interviews was conducted.

2. In 1988, the cohort of 188 heads was surveyed after they had been in post for five to six years and the 16 heads were re-interviewed.

3. In 1993, survey data were collected from 100 heads who were still in post some ten-11 years after they began their headships.

This chapter concentrates on the problems the heads experienced and the changes they made in this ten year period.

a. The first years

The key point to make is that new heads do not start with a clean slate (as some seem to think). The shadow of ‘headteachers past’ hangs over them for longer
than they expect. The previous head had often retired, having been in post for 15 to 20 years. They had ‘shaped the school in their image’ and while this might be apparent in the form of structure, it was harder to see the school culture. New heads were often surprised, when they confronted existing routines, to be told, ‘That’s the way we have always done it’. They soon found that their approach differed from that of their predecessor and this affected the period of settling in and the kind of changes they made. Many teachers said the new heads and their predecessor differed considerably – they were like ‘chalk and cheese’.

The main problems reported by new heads were: difficulties caused by the style and practice of the previous head, the school buildings, communication and consultation with staff, creating a better public image of the school, coping with a weak member of the SMT, dealing with incompetent staff, and low staff morale.

The heads differed in their approaches to change. Some deliberately chose to make early changes, others to move cautiously, while some were delayed and hindered by a poor SMT.

Almost all the changes made in the first year were organisational. Curricular changes began in the second year and continued into the third year and beyond. A few of the changes to the pastoral system occurred in the first year, but these were mainly introduced in years two and three.

The organisational changes made soon after the new head’s arrival were frequently concerned with communication and consultation. Another group of early changes was concerned with promoting a positive image for the school, something of particular concern to the new heads especially where the community held it in low esteem or student numbers were falling.

Today it is hard to remember the pre-National Curriculum and OFSTED inspection period when these heads first took up their posts. They had to initiate curricular changes. Timetable changes could not be implemented until the beginning of their second year, but much preparatory work was undertaken in the first year. This usually took the form of a curriculum review, where each department was required to set out its aims, objectives, schemes of work and, in some cases, methods of assessment.

Of the 200-plus changes introduced in the first three years in the 16 case study schools, it was noticeable that only a handful did not originate with the new heads themselves. Once the decision to adopt a change had been made, day-to-day responsibility was usually delegated either to a deputy head or a head of department.

b. Ten years on

The external changes produced by the Educational Reform Act and other legislation had only just begun when we conducted the second phase of the research in 1988. The following five years saw the heads attempting to cope with substantial changes imposed from outside.
One hundred of the original cohort 1982/83 returned a completed questionnaire in 1993. Seventy-seven were still in their first school, while 23 had moved to a second headship. We were not able to track down the fate of those (104) who did not return a questionnaire, but we believe that most had retired.

To gauge their feelings after ten years the heads were asked a set of questions about their current level of enthusiasm. Two-thirds said they had the same enthusiasm as when they started as heads but there were noticeable differences between those who were still at their first school compared with those who had moved to second headships. For example, 40 per cent of those still in their original school said they did not have the same enthusiasm as when they started, compared with only 14 per cent of those in second headships. This may not be an unexpected result, but it is difficult to tell whether those who moved to a second school were more highly motivated people, or whether the challenge of a new school boosted their enthusiasm. It is most likely to be an interaction of the two.

In order to explore how the problems changed over time a set of core questions was used in the first and last surveys. Table 1 shows heads’ perceptions in 1984 and 1993 on the core questions where a direct comparison is possible.

Most problems were perceived to lessen over time, e.g. getting staff to accept new ideas; creating a good public image of the school; dealing with poor staff morale; improving communication and consultation; managing staff development and INSET; establishing discipline; dealing with finance; and issues concerning non-teaching staff. However, a few problems seemed to have increased, e.g. managing time and priorities; working with the governors. Dealing with

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Percentages</th>
<th>Very serious or serious</th>
<th>Moderate or minor</th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
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<tr>
<td>Getting staff to accept new ideas</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creating a good public image</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with a weak member of SMT</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with incompetent staff</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>Dealing with poor staff morale</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving consultation/communication</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing staff dev. and INSET</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>Establishing good standards of discipline</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managing time and priorities</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dealing with LMS and finance</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issues concerning non-teaching staff</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working with LEA officers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working with the governors</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working with LEA inspectors</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>32</td>
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incompetent staff appeared to have continued over time. Working with LEA officers and advisers remained a very minor problem for most heads.

These findings are likely to be due to the interaction of several complex factors. With time, heads and staff get to know each others’ strengths and weaknesses; the heads have made some key staff appointments; they have gained a deeper understanding of the school and have introduced most of their intended changes. But the world outside has also changed. During the ten-year period a large number of external changes occurred, such as: the role of governors, LMS, GM, NC, league tables, and OFSTED inspection.

The 100 heads were also asked to outline how they thought the school had improved in the five years since the previous survey. It is interesting to compare these results with the heads’ replies to the same question in 1988 when they had been in post about five years.

Half the heads reported improved exam results in their first five years, while 29 per cent said the results had improved in the last five years. It seems possible that some sort of ‘levelling off’ may have occurred. However, without more detailed information it is not possible to say exactly what has happened over the total ten-year period.

Similarly, in the 1988 study, half the heads mentioned improvements in the curriculum. Not surprisingly, this again emerged as a focal area. In fact, the comments were very similar, usually describing a more relevant curriculum, but after ten years just over a quarter of the heads mentioned the curriculum.

Approximately the same number – about a quarter – talked about physical improvements in the buildings and facilities in 1988 and 1993. At each point in the study very similar comments were also made about improvements in the main areas of staff, students, parents and the community.

School improvement, in all its forms, is obviously the major quest for all heads. From our longitudinal research it seems that most of the groundwork is put in place during the first five years or so, and then further refinements are made. This involves setting up a number of working parties, curriculum and organisational restructuring, modelling appropriate behaviour, and most crucially, appointing key staff (particularly at senior and middle management).

5. Transition to headship: stages of socialisation

A problem with much of the previous research in schools or businesses is the lack of a sufficiently long time-frame to see all the phases of development. Hence the value of the NFER ten-year study.

Gabarro’s work shows interesting parallels with the NFER study where the new heads attempt to ‘take charge’. But heads are more constrained than business managers in their ability to hire and fire, and the school year and timetable delay major curricular changes. Nevertheless, the waves of changes described by Gabarro have great similarity to the way that the heads introduced change.
Another common finding was that internally appointed heads/managers appear to make fewer changes and to move slowly than external appointees.

Day and Bakioglu’s final phase of disenchantment produces a new perspective, while Ribbins offers the alternative of enchantment for some long-serving heads. The NFER data shows that, as Ribbins believes, some heads are enchanted and others disenchanted by their experience of headship.

The NFER results and the work of Hart, Gabarro, Day and Bakioglu, and Ribbins and Gronn, have been used to produce the following model which maps out the stages of transition through headship. The timings are approximate.

**Stage 0 – Preparation prior to headship**

Throughout their career people develop a conception of headship during their professional socialisation which is learned through both formal and informal processes. As the NFER and other studies (e.g. Ribbins, 1997) show, they learn from both good and bad headteacher role models.

The NFER heads said they learned about headship throughout their career but they particularly stressed the value of the following experiences prior to appointment: the need for a wide variety of experience, especially as a deputy head; the value of a period as acting head; the importance of delegation by the head; the rotation of deputies’ responsibilities; and the need to work with heads who saw deputy headship as a preparation for headship. Some heads spoke highly of management courses that they had attended as deputies, but most agreed that off-the-job training and development complemented experiences gained as a deputy working with ‘a good practitioner’. The gulf from deputy to head was, nevertheless, seen as enormous: ‘no course or reading matter can really prepare you for the job’. It will be interesting to see to what extent the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) improves the preparation for headship.

**Stage 1 – Entry and encounter (first months)**

The first few days and weeks are a critical period when the new head’s notions of headship meet the reality of a particular school. It is a time of ‘surprise’ and the importance of sense-making is highlighted as organisational socialisation begins and the new head attempts to develop a cognitive map of the complexities of the situation, the people, the problems and the school culture.

**Stage 2 – Taking hold (three to 12 months)**

The newcomer strives to ‘take hold’ in Gabarro’s terms, and the new heads begin to challenge the ‘taken for granted’ nature of the school. The NFER heads introduced a number of organisational changes. They develop a deeper understanding and their diagnosis of key issues during this stage was used to decide priorities.
STAGES OF HEADSHIP

This is also part of the ‘honeymoon period’, when staff are more lenient and open to change. In the NFER study we found that all new heads had such a period, though some did not realise it! The length of time varied, from about a term to possibly a year. It was often ended suddenly by negative staff reaction to an action of the new head e.g. an internal appointment whom the majority of the staff considered the wrong person for the job.

**Stage 3 – Reshaping (second year)**

After a year in post most heads felt more confident and were beginning to feel that they could take off their ‘L’ plates! They had experienced a complete annual cycle of school events and learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the staff. Conversely, the staff had also learned about their strengths and weaknesses, and their mutual expectations had become more realistic. The seeds planted in the previous stage now produced the implementation of major changes to reshape the school. This was the period of major change.

**Stage 4 – Refinement (years three to four)**

After two years many of the structural changes were in place. But during this stage further curriculum changes were introduced and a number of refinements made. Previous innovations were fine-tuned and heads felt they were ‘hitting their stride’.

**Stage 5 – Consolidation (years five to seven)**

After about five years a period of consolidation seems to occur after the heads have introduced most of their planned changes. However, in the NFER study this was affected by the introduction of legislative and external changes. These, as Gabarro found, required attention as their impact may hit the school during any of the stages.

**Stage 6 – Plateau (years eight and onwards)**

The NFER heads suggested that about seven years in one school was sufficient to see through a cohort of pupils and to have initiated most of the changes they wanted. This period corresponds with Day and Bakioglu’s phase of disenchantment or Ribbins’ enchantment. The NFER data showed that about a third of the cohort felt they had reached a plateau after ten years but that this was far less likely if they had moved to a second headship. Motivating heads who stay in one school until the end of their career can be a problem. However, many of the NFER heads said they still enjoyed their work and, despite the changes to the role, considered it to be the ‘best job in education’.

The model is in the form of an ideal type and some caveats are necessary.
Clearly the time periods attached to each stage must be treated as approximations. It is also likely that different heads may move at different speeds, as Parkay and Hall suggest. Also, the situation in the UK has changed considerably due to ERA and other legislation. Whereas the NFER heads were able to introduce almost all the changes internally, today’s headteacher has to manage multiple initiatives which originate externally, and attempt to integrate themselves and shape the culture of the school. Unfortunately, the NFER study of secondary heads had too few women heads to make a comparison. This means that it is not possible to say how gender differences might affect the stages of headship.

The model is offered as a means of helping headteachers and prospective heads to understand the likely phases they will experience during headship. Although the particular circumstances in each school make it unique there are common patterns, knowledge of which can be used to improve the preparation and support for heads.

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Part 9

LEARNING LEADERSHIP
ENHANCING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Evaluating the use of virtual learning communities

Megan Crawford


Introduction

The growth of the virtual learning community, both in the UK and globally, has been rapid in recent years, especially for those in positions of leadership in schools. This is part of a global trend to ‘online anything’ (Stephenson, 2001), where governments, educators and companies are keen to exploit the potentials of the Internet and Web-based online learning. Stephenson argues that it is a powerful trend that education is part of, and asks whether it amounts to anything more than doing what was previously done, but on a larger scale, and for more people.

At first glance, it would seem that much of the development in England has been driven by perceived governmental need to disseminate policies, share ‘good’ practice among heads, and allow direct communication to the leadership community, bypassing LEAs (local education authorities). However, by the very nature of their role, leaders can be isolated from those they lead. Developing online networks would seem to be an excellent strategy for relieving isolation, providing space for educational leaders not only to reflect, but also to share the affective side of leadership. The purpose and structure of online communities within the greater policy context may well be a subject for debate for some time.

This article draws on Wenger’s concept (1999) of a community of practice, and Salmon’s model of e-moderation (Salmon, 2000). Drawing on an evaluation of one such online community, the article will look at the influencing factors in such an online conferencing facility, the part played by group interaction and participation, and the distinctive role of moderation in such leadership discussions. It will also draw on established adult learning concepts such as situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1990). To this author, online conferencing is all about community—creating new social forms at a time where communities everywhere are being eroded, and the possibility that you can have deep, warm personal relationships electronically in this medium (Farson, 1997). This article
will argue that these forms of discussion are organizationally, socially and intellectually challenging, and discuss a developing conceptual framework. It aims to begin to shape our thinking about the ways in which school leaders can be supported through online conferencing, and how such discussions could play a key part in encouraging and sustaining leadership in schools, perhaps through more formal online mentoring arrangements. It also highlights the need for more research into this area.

The discussion will be shaped around the following questions:

- What value do educational leaders place on using online conferencing?
- What is it about working online that changes the environment and the experience for those that take part?
- What is the role of the facilitator/moderator in working and learning online?
- How can we define both online groups and ‘participation’?
- Are there any key implications for leadership and management in using such environments?

**Context of the original research**

Developed by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in partnership with Hay/McBer Management Consultants, and in association with the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) and the Open University (OU), the Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) became nationally available in the United Kingdom in November 1998. The OU supported the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) component of the programme until Easter 2001. Responsibility for the LPSH passed from the TTA to the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) in June 1999 and then the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in April 2001. The college now runs ‘Talking Heads’ a follow-up online community.

The programme was aimed at all serving headteachers in England and Wales and had four key elements: pre-workshop preparation; a four-day residential workshop; post-workshop support; and a follow-up day. During the residential workshop it was intended that trainers introduce the dedicated LPSH website. This was developed and managed by the Open University, and incorporated a range of features including:

- a conferencing facility which enables participants to share ideas and expertise;
- a ‘Good Ideas’ database submitted by headteachers;
- resources providing guidance on analysing school performance data and target setting; and
- SWISH—(Selected Websites Indexed for Serving Headteachers) providing an A to Z index of websites covering management, education and professional topics.
The research concentrated on the online conferencing part of the ICT component.

Each LPSH workshop was given a conference facility, using First Class conferencing software in its web access format, so that in theory participants could keep in touch electronically after the residential element of their programme. Where appropriate they were moderated by colleagues with experience at a senior level in the field. Access to all conference areas was controlled centrally and each LPSH participant was given a unique user name and password. A published code of practice set out the etiquette for all online conferencing.

Up to January 2001, 5388 headteachers had been given user names and passwords entitling them to full LPSH website access. Thirty-eight per cent of the entire LPSH population, 2067 people, logged on in the period January 2000–January 2001. Thirty-six per cent had never logged on by password, though this figure does include a small number who had yet to attend their LPSH workshop; a further 26 per cent had not logged on in the calendar year in which the research was carried out.

From January to September 2000, there were 63,338 successful hits for the entire LPSH website. The number of sessions peaked in March and dropped to their lowest in August, when most schools are on vacation. If the August figure is discounted, the average figure per month is 7659 hits. Extrapolated across the year these figures suggest over 85,000 hits. However, care is required in extrapolating figures because the number of LPSH workshops varied from month to month.

The programme itself did not insist upon participants using or demonstrating a competence in ICT. It was for participants to choose whether to use the ICT component. They were neither contracted to do so nor provided with the necessary ICT equipment. The follow-up project, ‘Talking Heads’ using Think.com software, provided participants with a laptop and insisted upon regular logging in as a component of participation in the pilot phase. Laptops are also given to new headteachers in England every year, if they join the project. The rollout phase is currently being evaluated and should provide more information on the role of online communities.

**Method**

For the evaluation, a variety of research instruments and techniques were used and both quantitative and qualitative evidence was collected. This created a mixed method study (Caracelli and Greene, 1993). The sources comprised technical records from the OU servers, a telephone survey, an online questionnaire and a specific online conference. Technical records generated by the OU servers provided a range of valuable background material. The telephone survey was conducted in late November 2000. Four separate categories of participant were targeted and 72 successful interviews conducted. The four participant categories were as follows and the bracketed figure shows the number interviewed:
LEARNING LEADERSHIP

- the most active users in October 2000 (24);
- occasional users (6);
- non-users who went to a workshop in June and July 2000 (21); and
- participants from two parallel LPSH workshops in January 2000 (21).

Separate but linked question sheets were designed for each category. The questionnaire was first made available as a downloadable file and subsequently as a document that could be completed ‘live’ online. It was designed to elicit information about:

- respondents and the schools they work in;
- their use of the LPSH website;
- their views on the current LPSH website; and
- their views as to how it should develop.

Questions in the first two areas were primarily designed to yield quantitative objective data; those in the remaining areas to provide opportunities for qualitative judgements. Additionally, once the initial findings were analysed, an online, moderated conference was set up, drawn from a random sample of participants who logged on regularly. This offered a forum to discuss and interpret the results, as well as an opportunity to probe further into the answers.

The research

Telephone survey

The 72 respondents to the telephone survey were almost evenly divided by gender. Exactly half were heads of primary age children; 57 respondents had served as a headteacher for six or more years, and 35 had 10 years’ or more experience.

In the survey, active and occasional users of the LPSH website were invited to make qualitative judgements about it. Of the 30 active and occasional users of the LPSH website surveyed, 26 regarded the conference facility as its most useful feature. The ability to keep in touch with course participants was also mentioned several times and clearly, for many, conferencing was the key strength. Both groups were also asked to indicate their strength of feeling in relation to a series of statements about the LPSH conferencing facility. Using a five-point scale they were able to express opinions from strong agreement (5) to strong disagreement (1). Taken together, active and occasional users believed that the conferencing was easy to use (mean score 4.1) and promoted useful discussion (mean score 4.0). They also thought, though with less strength, that the conference facility was relevant to their needs (mean score 3.7), reduced their isolation (mean score 3.5) and enabled them to get rapid responses (3.3). Active users were slightly more certain that it was easy to use and promoted useful discussion; occasional users that it reduced their isolation.
Headteachers felt that not enough people used the conferencing facility. The reason for this given in the responses was often believed to rest within the LPSH training, and is outside the remit of this article. However, we will return to the discussion of the importance or otherwise of numbers of participants in conferencing.

Non-users were also asked about their reasons for not subsequently logging onto the website. When offered a list of five possible reasons just over half said they had too little time to do so and, in setting out other relevant factors, several more pointed to other priorities, including preparing for an OFSTED visit and inspecting a leaking roof. None of the respondents identified a lack of ICT skills as an issue, though four touched on a lack of suitable ICT equipment and one reported not being able to gain access despite trying. While a small number were not sure about the website’s relevance and felt that they needed some sort of stimulus, just one person did not like the content. Although no one reported lost passwords as a factor preventing them from using the website, two-thirds of those contacted asked to be sent access details in one form or another.

As well as targeting groups of headteachers by their usage of the website, a sample was taken of two workshops picked at random. These two groups contained 24 participants and all but three could be contacted for the telephone survey. Over two-thirds of the respondents were female; exactly two-thirds were headteachers at schools involved with Key Stage 1 and/or Key Stage 2; and all bar two had served at least six years as a headteacher. Of these headteachers 16 said that they had had the opportunity to look at the website on their LPSH workshop. However, of these, three commented on their disappointment that they had only done so briefly and two noted that there had been significant problems with the computers. Furthermore, the two headteachers who said they had not had the opportunity to look at the website during the workshop explained that this was due to difficulty logging on and the tutor’s inability to overcome the problems. Seven headteachers said that they have had subsequent opportunities to explore the website, but of these only three felt able to express views on it. The 14 who had not logged on responded to a list of factors and were given the chance to include others; 11 (and therefore half of the entire group actually sampled) said they had too little time and several more reported other priorities. Five noted lack of suitable ICT skills or equipment and two said that they had tried but been unable to get onto the site. While only two had lost their passwords, 10 asked to be sent their access details again. Just three of the entire sample had gone on to become more regular users. Where they expressed preferences and exercised clear judgements this small group felt conferencing to be the most useful feature.

One headteacher expressed concern about conferencing (in general) being used as a chat line instead of a business tool, while another had suspicions about the web and what happened to comments once people had expressed them. This may be a personal opinion reflecting a normative view about how communication between professionals should be structured. However, there was frequently
recognition that the website could be a means of keeping in touch and exchanging ideas, as well as providing links to other sites and resources.

**Online questionnaire**

As well as the telephone survey, an online questionnaire was trialed. Although the online questionnaire used a very small sample the results obtained were very detailed. Most of the 12 respondents to the online questionnaire were headteachers working in the primary sector, mostly in community and voluntary-aided schools. Five were in their first headship and eight had served for over 10 years as a headteacher. School size varied from 93 to 513 pupils and nearly all were within 5 miles of an institution similar in status, type and the number on roll. Analysis of respondents’ use of the LPSH website revealed that nearly all logged on from home in the evening, even though they could take advantage of confidential access at school if they wished. Most logged on at least weekly, but three visited the site monthly and one person just once a term. The length of user sessions was rarely less than 10 minutes or over one hour. Ten headteachers used the website during school vacations. Conferencing was the most frequently accessed area; it was also regarded as the most useful.

Respondents were invited to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the conferencing facility. Keeping in touch with former course participants and the ability to share and discuss ideas were frequently noted strengths. One headteacher described it as: ‘a rare opportunity to share thoughts and concerns with colleagues across the country’. Another valued the opportunity to: ‘break away from the local culture’. For one person the opportunity to get a rapid response to issues of concern or interest was important. ‘Comprehensive debate’ was also mentioned and the site was described as ‘a valuable opportunity for the exchange of idea, with real potential’.

More generally, other respondents noted that it was easy to use, getting broader and covering more issues. It was ‘an excellent resource’ in which the main strength was the ‘support structure’. These thoughts were taken up in the Online Conference on the initial research.

**Why do educational leaders use online conferencing?**

To probe deeper into why headteachers used the site, the online conference discussion was set up. Its aim was to focus more specifically on why headteachers who used the conferencing frequently did so, and what were the barriers, if any, for them in building up an effective online community. The strongest reason for using it was summed up by the following headteacher: ‘As heads, we have relatively few people with whom we can traditionally confer on an emotional level and more generally, conferencing does provide opportunities for informed discussion.’

Another said: ‘This form of communication fits in with my time schedule. I
can use it whenever I have time.’ There was an interesting paradox that began to emerge from the comments. Those who use the conferencing said that it fitted in with their time schedule, and was a welcome treat in a school day: ‘If I’m word-processing some document or other for school or governors or church, it’s a welcome diversion to pop into LPSH.’

Less active users, as reported above, were more likely to make comments focusing on lack of time, such as: ‘I wish I had more time to use it. It could do with being bigger and quicker so that people like me, when I am busy and need it most, can get on line quickly.’ This strongly suggests, as a participant noted, that ‘time and tradition influence our use’.

A strong feeling to emerge early on was that, as in any social arena, people feel more comfortable when social conventions that would apply in face to face discussion, are observed:

People need a bridge into electronic communications.

We feel more comfortable if there has been some sort of introduction.

There is the opportunity for one to one engagement, but at a level of intimacy that is less than that face to face. It is in some ways less spontaneous than speech and may appeal to those who prefer writing to talking.

These findings replicate other studies of online forums (Anderson and Kanuka, 1997). They have suggested that professional discourse needs to develop new social skills to cope with socializing electronically. Others (Rafaeli and Sudweeks, 1997) suggest that face-to-face communication should not be used as a standard of comparison because, if communication is to be fully interactive, preceding messages must be taken into account and the manner in which previous messages were reacted to.

Newcomers to conferencing reported a sense of moving into an established group of people who had physically met, despite any online evidence of this:

It felt strange contributing to something when you didn’t know any of the other names. In fact for a while I just read everyone’s contributions. I felt as if they must all know each other personally from the way the contributions read.

This emphasises how a feeling of ‘knowing others’ can develop, despite the lack of physical or verbal clues. In some ways it is akin to the art of 19th-century letter writing, but with more opportunities to interact with the ongoing community commentary. The headteachers’ comments echo those comments reported by Beatty. Her study of the emotions of leadership online is one of the fullest currently available.
Their enjoyment of the process of sharing real feelings, is itself an important finding. This experience has been described variously as follows: ‘compelling,’ ‘a real high,’ ‘I really enjoy reading this stuff,’ ‘I feel this dialogue has provided both personal and professional growth.’ (2000: 13)

These comments and the replication in this research suggest that online conferencing for headteachers actually taps into the affective, emotional side of leadership, rather than being a ‘professional’ discussion arena. The topics, e.g. stress, bereavement, difficult colleagues, that participants have themselves suggested over the time period of the research suggest strongly that this is the case.

Last year I was experiencing a very traumatic time with a governor. I used the steam room and boy was it good. The comment about needing to unload with peers is very true and colleagues in nearby schools are not always the ones.

**What is it about working and learning online that changes the learning environment and the experience for those that take part?**

Brochet (1989) suggests that some conferences have an energy that encourages active participation, while others, apparently designed to facilitate discussion of equally relevant and interesting topics, seem to offer little of value to the contributor. The ICT component of LPSH was predicated on the assumption that the implementation of networked technology to online conferencing would be easy, and require little extra from the trainers, if the headteachers had access to the appropriate equipment. Somehow, they would both know how to use it, and what its value to them was as leaders. This has not been the case. Very quickly, the leaders using the site moved the discussions away from the initial workshop stimulus (leadership in a more theoretical sense) to issues of daily concern. But providing the facility was not enough, the community had to be nurtured and developed. This research has shown that those who took up the opportunity of conferencing, and used it regularly, found it very valuable. It not only linked in to their daily lives as headteachers, but also enabled them to share emotions about the dynamics of working in schools. There have been major pressures in England over the last few years, coupled with increased and increasing accountability to central government. Conferencing has provided opportunities for leaders both to acquire knowledge from a professional community and also develop shared meanings as the group learning processes have been developed.

As heads have relatively few people with whom they can traditionally confer on an emotional level and more generally, conferencing does provide opportunities for informed discussion.
I find purpose—apart from fun—and I have a much-enhanced respect for heads, their skills and problems (just like mine).

The benefits they have felt are derived from the paradox described by Beatty (2000: 15):

The paradox of emotion and educational leadership, is the dichotomy between the way leaders, and teachers, believe they are required to seem, and the way, as highly functioning, multi-dimensional human beings, they need to be. In order to accomplish the emotional labour of being emotionally controlled in difficult, threatening and angering situations, the emotions may become subverted to the cause. Even so, deep emotional understanding requires access to what oneself and others are really feeling, something that has been professionally hidden in the traditional models of teaching and leading.

Gradually, a community of practice had developed, a living context that, as Wenger argues, invites a personal experience of engagement. Identity is about deep connections with others through shared histories and experiences, reciprocity, affection and mutual commitment (Wenger, 2000).

The LPSH research detailed in this article showed how the community could help other members manage the multi-dimensions of leadership. Building such a community of practice through the medium of online conferencing meant that participants could explore aspects of leadership within a safe virtual space. To engage with the community across various levels, because so many became involved, it was necessary to structure it in layers. The NCSL has also structured ‘Talking Heads’ into more accessible layers, as navigation can provide a bar to access and participation. I will return to the meaning of ‘participation’ in online communities. Wenger suggests that this layering into a fractal structure means that you can belong to your own subcommunity and yet experience in a local and direct way your belonging to a much broader community. This can be further illustrated by using Wenger’s three elements of community as identifiers.

Members are held together by their collective understanding of what their community is about . . . (they) hold each other accountable to this sense of joint enterprise.

Members build their community through mutual engagement. They interact with each other, establishing norms and relationships of mutuality that reflect these interactions.

Communities of practice produce a shared repertoire of communal resources—language routines, stories, styles, etc. To be competent is to
have access to this repertoire and be able to access it appropriately. (2000: 229)

For newcomers to become full members of the community, they must gain new positions in that community’s economy of meaning. Participation in a community can therefore be seen as crucial. This dovetails with Lave’s concept of situated learning. If learning occurs, it is a function of the activity, culture and context in which it occurs, and social interaction is a critical component of situated learning.

Another key variable is the role of the facilitator, or e-moderator, in online conferencing.

**What is the role of the facilitator/moderator in working and learning online?**

There is a growing literature on the role of e-moderator in learning online, and on the competences that are required to be successful, both for moderators and participants:

Successful online learning depends on teachers and trainers acquiring new competencies, on their becoming aware of its potential and on their inspiring the learners, rather than on merely mastering the technology. In practice, networked applications should reflect the needs of teachers and learners (rather than the other way round!). Providers of online learning platforms are keen to respond to these needs, but currently, most teachers do not know enough about online learning to be able to articulate their needs effectively.

(Salmon, 2000)

Salmon has been at the forefront of work in the UK in this area. She describes a five-stage model of moderation.

This conceptualization is very relevant to this research, but with some significant differences. In the Salmon model, the participants go through certain defined stages as the online learning progresses. At stage 1, individual access and the ability of participants to use the online learning platform are essential prerequisites for conference participation.

The next stage involves individual participants establishing their online identities and then finding others with whom to interact. At stage 3, participants give information relevant to the course to each other. At stage 4, course-related group discussions occur and the interaction becomes more collaborative. The communication depends on the establishment of common understandings. At stage 5, participants look for more benefits from the system to help them achieve personal goals, explore how to integrate online learning into other forms of learning and reflect on the learning processes. She also describes (Salmon, 2000: 112–13)
three types of conference participant—swimmers (participants who can plunge right in), wavers (need quite a bit of help to get started, and often feel there is too little time) and drowners (find it very difficult to log on, and have little motivation to succeed). These evocative names sum up for this author some of the research findings. However, with the LPSH conferencing, there was no explicit course content to moderate. Explorations of issues chosen by the participants were the means that the moderators used to build community, and the participants built their online identities over time.

I have developed a model for this, drawing on the LPSH experience. The model assumes a certain kind of conference, which I initially called non-context based and professional. It seemed pertinent here to develop these models for such a professional online conference, and match them to the research. In the final section of this article, I will align this evidence with other typologies in the online field.
It would seem that the LPSH conferencing was more fluid and organic than the Salmon model described, and the participants, although similar to swimmers, wavers and drowners, differed in several ways. I have called them addicts, newcomers, thinkers, sceptics and dippers. Figure 2 attempts to explain the fluidity of this framework. By definition, everyone is a Newcomer at some stage! However, some heads never moved past this stage into the community proper. Addicts, like Salmon's swimmers, tend to be confident with ICT and able to integrate quickly into a known community. Their motivation may be quite altruistic in that they are willing to spend time in cyberspace with other professionals sharing both the day-to-day minutiae, as well as more profound issues. Thinkers
may eventually become addicts, but the research had many examples of heads who preferred to stay in this group: ‘I get support just reading the conversations.’

‘Thinker’ is a more user-friendly title than that of the ‘lurker’, but may well be seen in the same way as a pragmatic approach to information gathering, or at a further level what Lave and Wenger (1990) call ‘Legitimate peripheral participation’. Sceptics are newcomers who have often been subjected to some sort of technological breakdown on the way to using conferencing, of which the following quote is typical: ‘Recently had trouble logging on. Not been able to log on so not bothered.’

They may also be concerned about the audience for their comments or, having not interacted themselves with others significantly, may treat the whole idea dismissively as ‘chat’. Dippers, on the other hand, tend to be less altruistic than other users, and will only really become involved when they need some sort of response urgently from other leaders. This activity can also be described in online discussion groups as ‘illegitimate peripheral pilfering’. This is effectively summed up in the following comment: ‘On tap there are other educational professionals’.

Because the software used (FirstClass) gives the participant an overview on his/her screen of the whole conferencing arena, and access to the history of messages, they can feel a part of the whole process. This is more difficult to achieve in other conferencing systems where the pages displayed are very individualized. However, it also means that for those who choose not to participate fully, or become sceptics, they are unable to get a sense of what taking part and being part of a community actually means.

Effective facilitation engages participants in this process of becoming and adds and fosters the personal experience of engagement. The research has shown that this type of intervention by other leaders and professionals was clearly valued and part of the reason that they felt a part of the community. It also reinforced the idea that this sort of activity was a professional one to engage in:

The facilitator keeps the conversation going. They wind up if the topic is waning and bring forward other ideas. A bit like the needles on the knitting they’re holding onto the threads.

The facilitator is absolutely indispensable. There needs to be somebody ‘who knows’ and who has a role as leader to take participants gently into the community and make them feel welcome—part of the community. They need to be obviously keen on the system and dedicated to making it work. An enthusiast.

The facilitator provides continuity, encouragement and a sense of mediation/legitimation i.e. a sort of independent guarantor that the site is bona fide and therefore ‘proper’.
Through the facilitator, personal learning could take place. Facilitators, then, are key features of making such communities active and growing. The ‘Talking Heads’ community for example has full-time paid facilitators, seconded from their teaching posts. More work remains to be done both on what makes facilitation effective, and whether the outlay (in cost terms) is beneficial enough to leaders’ personal practice to justify it in the long term.

**How can we define online groups and the meaning of participation?**

Online communities are being used in many settings worldwide, for study as part of a course with assessment, as fluid chat groups around an issue decided by the group, and as educational discussion groups where the content is decided by the participants. Both the LPSH project and ‘Talking Heads’ would seem to fit naturally into the latter group. This differentiation between different types of online groups is important when discussing any kind of professional development. There is also an ongoing issue on how one judges participation in such online group settings.

Coomey and Stephenson (2001) have reviewed the information available in the literature on benefits and detriments of online learning for participants. Several of their conclusions are similar to the research I have outlined. Four key features of online learning were widely identified as essential to good practice, and they are summarized below:

- **Dialogue**: facilitators must not assume that people will get into debates online just because they are told to participate.
- **Involvement**: this is associated with challenge, clear feedback, learner control and concentration.
- **Support**: participants need to see participation as ‘congenial’ and view themselves as a community.
- **Control**: this is more relevant to course tuition, and concerned with debates over which learners have control over key learning activities. However, it may be applicable to the communities described in this article, because of the view expressed by some that it is the government, not educational leaders who are setting the agenda and exercising control. (Based on Coomey and Stephenson, 2001: 38–40)

Coomey and Stephenson have also proposed a framework that helps locate practice and helps construct appropriate programmes and systems for online learning. It would seem that this framework would be helpful if framing questions about both the LPSH/ICT and other developments such as ‘Talking Heads’. They suggest that current experience of online learning falls within four paradigms:
1 teacher-controlled, specific learning activities;
2 teacher-controlled, open-ended or strategic learning;
3 learner-managed specific learning activities; and
4 learner-managed, open-ended or strategic learning.

Professional online discussion groups would seem to be most aptly described within paradigm 4, and aligns with my characterization of non-context-based professional learning environments. Such groups are characterized by peer group discussion groups, relating the learning to their own personal or vocational needs, support from facilitators, and control of the goals and outcomes by the learner. The important aspect of learner-managed, open-ended or strategic learning, I would suggest, is what Coomey and Stephenson call personal goals or reasons for being there. Educational leaders using such facilities need to be convinced that there is a good reason for logging in, as was evidenced from the LPSH research. And when headteachers have logged in, we need to develop clearly what is meant by participation. As developers of such online dialogues, we may be pleased with a figure of, for example, 60 per cent logging in on a regular basis. However when the figures are examined, much of that may be characterized as ‘Lurking’, ‘Browsing’ or ‘Thinking’. Actual posting of messages may be done by as few as 20 per cent. What appears to be passivity on the part of the participant may be useful learning of the dialogue of a new community, but a problem must surely occur in professional development communities when there is a high ratio of ‘Browsers’ to people who post messages. As a participant suggested: ‘Lurker is too furtive and threatening a term to capture this thing that can be very positive, as long as everyone isn’t trying to do it at once.’ It is clearly very important to distinguish between different types of participation, using the framework I described in the previous section.

Another difficulty is the quality of the contributions that are made, and the checks on veracity. Once messages are posted in a public online space, they can remain for some considerable time. Headteachers may not wish to express key opinions in front of ‘unknown’ colleagues, and onlookers from the government. Even when private communities are used, there can still be a very public face to posting messages. Beatty’s work used pseudonyms for the headteachers who participated.

Developing online interaction of value to education leaders clearly introduces new and complex challenges for those involved both as participants and designers.

**The implications for leadership and management of using E-learning environments**

‘Leadership has its highs and lows, its successes and failures. Principals cry, laugh, dream and become suspicious’ (Loader, 1997). Loader’s book on the ‘inner’ principal conveys to the reader the affective side of leadership. He
LEARNING LEADERSHIP

shares, through the use of metaphor, the emotional journey that is leadership in schools today. Similarly, the one strong outcome of this research is a realization by school leaders that they need support, affirmation and direction in their leadership, and that a useful way of providing this is online. For example, the online discussion group that was created in this particular research example was not, in the end, to do with discussions of models of leadership effectiveness, as may have been envisaged by the programme’s originators. Instead, the climate created was one that enabled leaders to begin to explore some of the personal and emotional issues that impacted on their leadership, as well as giving access to a professional community with ready solutions for day-to-day management problems. More development could be done in the online environment to offer the kind of coaching/mentoring for educational leaders that is already available within the business community.

The overall question still remains. Is this move towards online discussion groups for educational leaders part of the move to ‘online anything’, or has it more to offer? The challenge in terms of community growth, for example, is to extend the number of participants, while still retaining quality facilitation to enable people to feel valued, and also to add more specific professional development opportunities to the e-learning environment. The proliferation of such online communities in education also means that research needs to be carried out to find out what works best, and how aspects of community online can be effectively assessed.

When designing online learning opportunities in general, Shaw (2001: 177–8) suggests that a practical set of questions can be very useful. To sum up the reflections in this article, I have adapted them to fit the learner-managed, open-ended model that many leadership online experiences seem to be offering.

• What works best for educational leaders?
• In what circumstances?
• Where is the evidence?
• What are the resource, development, validation, implementation and maintenance implications?
• How much will it cost?
• How can leaders progress within such communities in order to maximize professional learning?

This article has begun to address the first three questions, but more research is needed to build a model of the effective online community for leaders in schools. The challenge is enormous, but the development of the virtual learning community for leadership could also be invaluable in terms of wider issues such as motivation, morale and retention of staff in leadership posts.
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References


LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

Jennifer Kerr and Danny Murphy


Improving the learning experiences of pupils in schools through a work based learning approach to the development of school leaders – the experience of the Scottish Qualification for Headship

In the late 1980s and early 1990s a variety of management training initiatives were taken forward within Scottish local authorities and nationally across Scotland as a whole (SOEID 1988 MTHT). Recommendations from two published evaluations of the MTHT programme (Draper et al 1995, Kerr 1992) included the expressed wish of senior managers in schools for a move towards more use of self evaluation within a competence and school based approach along with a greater focus on joint training for school teams and on outcomes for pupils. At the same time, approaches to management training in the worlds of business and industry were being standardised around a ‘competence model’ within vocationally oriented training programmes and trialed in an education setting (Earley 1992). Meanwhile a critical literature was developing in relation to lack of fit between this technicist/managerialist model (Paterson and Fairley 1996) and both the broader models of professional learning emerging from the research literature (Eraut 1994, Kolb 1984, Schon 1987) and the broader models of professional practice written up in ‘critical leadership studies’ (Grace 1995).

The piecemeal character of previous training for Headship in Scotland, together with observation of experience and practice in other systems and the theoretical heat generated by discussion of competence models for training and development, made more likely the development of a consensus on the need for a more coherent, grounded pathway for leadership and management development towards Headship in Scottish schools. Development was rooted and professional consensus developed in typical Scottish fashion (Humes 1986, Humes and Mackenzie 1994) by widespread managed consultation, in this case on the purpose and
characteristics of Headship as defined in The Standard for Headship (SOEID 1998). The Standard provided a framework for describing the professional practice of Headship and consequently for developing potential Heads. The Standard avoided narrow competence-based approaches to practice, although drawing from them, by developing a model which required the successful development of Professional Values. Management Competence in four key areas and Intellectual and Interpersonal Abilities and was widely acclaimed within the profession after extensive national consultation.

Scottish funding was made available for a pilot and full-scale implementation of two approved programmes which could lead to the award of the Scottish Qualification for Headship – an Accelerated Route for those who were already competent school managers and a Standard Route for those seeking further development. Both routes were designed to lead participants to a level of professional practice equivalent to that described in The Standard and recognised by the award by the Scottish Minister for Education of The Scottish Qualification for Headship (Higher Education Institutions offering these programmes would also award a Postgraduate Diploma.)

The programmes can be summarised:

- All participants evaluate their current practice against the Standard and identify learning needs.
- The programme comprises four Units of study, designed to ensure progression in practice and reflective thinking by personalising and contextualising broader issues of leadership and management, as these emerge from current research and associated thinking, through constant direct reference to and application in the current workplace of those taking part.
- Learning takes place through the normal methods of academic coursework (reading, reflection written assignments, class meetings, workshops and tutorials) but just as importantly through successful experience of taking forward project(s) which make a difference to the learning lives of pupils. It is a central part of the programmes that participants should not just know about leadership and management but should be able to practise successfully in a contemporary school setting.
- To this end, work-based learning is supported by the compilation of a portfolio of evidence, assessed as a written document, but also verified through a field visit. Within the portfolio participants must demonstrate that their leadership has made a difference to the learning lives of pupils through successful management practice with and through staff.
- The portfolio is complemented by an analytical commentary in which participants reflect on their experience of management and their professional learning.
- Workplace learning is supported by the local authority employer and by the school Headteacher (who acts as the participant’s supporter through the programme) in partnership with HEIs.
LEARNING LEADERSHIP

• Quality is assured by the national programme descriptor, nationally set performance criteria, national training within the pilot phase and through University quality assurance procedures. The assessment criteria are designed to ensure that the Standard has been met in practice.
• There has been limited experimentation with using online learning support.

The commitment to experience-based professional development, set within a context of reflection on purposes and values and within a well structured Standard defining good practice, offers many new ways to assess the manner and extent of the impact of professional learning on the experience of pupils. One of the links between the ambitions of the programme and the improved experience of pupils is in the framework for school improvement adopted within the programme and based on current visions of effective improvement in schools and schooling experiences (Hargreaves and Hopkins 1994, Harris et al 1997, MacGilchrist et al 1997, MacBeath and Mortimore 2000). Indeed Unit 3 of the programme is entitled ‘Managing School Improvement’ and requires participants to begin their management activity with an analysis of the ‘capacity for change’ (Stoll 1999) of their school.

Four key characteristics of school improvement highlighted in current literature fit well with the SQH model and are used in the following discussion to illustrate and expand on this link. These are:

• Learning and teaching as the key focus for improvement
• A whole school approach
• The involvement of a range of stakeholders
• Contextual specificity of improvement factors linked to awareness and development of a school’s capacity for change

For each of these four characteristics there now follows a discussion and illustration, based on actual SQH school improvement projects.

1) Learning and teaching as the key focus

While the literature encourages practitioners to understand that there is no single model which will guarantee school improvement (Slee et al 1998) it has also led to the concept of the classroom as the main context for change in terms of the teacher as the agent of change and the pupil as the focus for change (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992, MacGilchrist et al 1997).

In the Standard for Headship in Scotland (SEED 1998) the stated key purpose of Headship is:

To provide the leadership and management which enables a school to give every pupil high quality education and which promotes the highest possible standards of achievement.
Through their work based projects and development of the interrelated competences of The Standard (see diagram) programme participants are expected to demonstrate that they are striving towards the above key purpose. The detail of the programme is designed in such a way as to encourage this in a range of ways including:

- In Unit 1 participants evaluate themselves as leaders and managers of learning and teaching using The Standard and an extensive audit tool. The links between a corporate style development plan (MacGilchrist et al 1995) and improving pupils’ achievement is explored.
- In preparation for Unit 2 participants prepare a detailed project plan for the management of learning and teaching and managing people, in which they are required to plan not only for the management tasks but also for the outcomes for pupils and for the involvement of all staff in the chosen initiative.
- Assessment criteria for the work based project on learning and teaching state clearly that participants should have successfully developed structures for the management and evaluation of effective learning and teaching. The expectation is that within the evaluation process participants are able to demonstrate successful outcomes for pupils.
- As participants progress to Unit 3 (see above) the focus on learning and teaching remains, but now within the context of understanding and demonstrating their increasing application of a wider range of factors affecting school improvement: the school’s capacity for change, strategic planning,
In Unit 4 in the final stages of the programme participants explore political and educational issues at local authority and national level in order to improve their understanding of and practice in strategic management, but still within the overarching purpose of The Standard for Headship.

Illustration 1

In common with many colleagues in other primary schools in Scotland, the focus for this participant in the first year of the programme was raising attainment in writing, linked to a national and local education department priority. From rationale through to evaluation, the participant emphasised commitment to improving outcomes for pupils. During the whole cycle of the project the participant also became the acknowledged school expert on aspects of learning and teaching in writing: policy, programmes, pedagogy, assessment, resources, staff development, management and evaluation. Nevertheless it was still a learning experience for her in terms of managing learning and teaching.

- Embarking on this project meant far more to me than simply meeting a school development necessity and using it as a vehicle to develop my leadership skills and demonstrate competency against The Standard. I am a passionate believer in the central importance of writing as being a liberating and life enhancing skill, and feel strongly that a lack of literacy has major implications for the rights of all children to receive an equal education.
- Having managed a collaboratively produced policy, programme, and assessment and recording procedures, the next task was to ensure its effective implementation . . . so that it was more than solely a curriculum development . . . but also an instrument in promoting a culture of achievement.
- Many staff changes in recent years have made it difficult to establish the kind of staff collaboration necessary to ensure consistency of approach and therefore continuity to ensure raised achievement. I had to learn how to establish collaborative working patterns. Feedback from staff about changes in methodology for teaching writing suggested that team teaching, and therefore smaller pupil/teacher ratios would be a supportive strategy for all staff. This involved me in confronting the dilemma of negotiation in order to convince senior managers that they should be timetabled and involved in the teaching of the writing programme. I now firmly believe that such ‘leading from the front’ provides a great impetus to whole school teamwork and collaboration, with clear outcomes for pupils’ learning.
• I introduced a number of strategies to support high expectations and to celebrate the success of the pupils’ writing, not only for the pupils’ self esteem but also for that of staff: the ‘star writer’ of the week, exchange of audiences across the school for pupils’ writing, personal gifts of books written by older children for infants, celebratory letters to parents. What I learned was that staff also needed to celebrate their success through open discussions together: displays of writing throughout the school were shared and enjoyed by staff; staff meetings discussed targets, progress and achievement, smaller groups of children have enabled better working relations with pupils and with other staff in the team as well as between pupils. These outcomes were not in my original plan.

• I began the project with a clear end-point in mind – the raising of attainment in writing – and thinking I had a fairly good idea of the best way to achieve that. I now know that working through the whole school team provided a richer and deeper approach, with more divergent ideas, than my possibly too rigid, clear, coherent vision did.

• Pupils’ attainment in writing has improved but real professional development has also taken place – collaborative working, improved knowledge about teaching, greater enthusiasm to engage in discussion, more positive attitude to change – school improvement factors which will have a long lasting effect.

• I do not have a clear end point as planned – the point where we are now is merely a current position.

2) A whole school approach

A whole school approach incorporates the concepts of professional leadership (Macbeath 1998, Grace 1995, Day et al 1993), shared vision and goals, (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992) and the learning organisation (Senge 1990) which together are inextricably linked with effective learning and teaching. These concepts are also fundamental for the developing practice of participants on the programme, particularly in order to demonstrate their competencies in managing people (see The Standard 2.2.1 to 2.2.4) and interpersonal abilities (see The Standard 3.1).

The requirement on programme participants to plan for and lead a whole school development priority for the first time is a challenging one. The structure and size of management teams in many primary schools is such that it is often only the Headteacher who does not have a teaching commitment and who therefore may be the person who leads all parts of the school development plan, with other staff having responsibility for a particular stage in the school. The other side of this coin is that in Scotland there are many small primary schools, where leading a whole school development may fall to a teaching Headteacher and a small band of class teachers who do everything together as an effective team.
In secondary schools, which normally have larger management teams, each member of that team may have a substantial remit, but still not have a whole school responsibility for any one part of that remit. For the first time in their professional lives many participants find themselves leading a team of colleagues through a whole school development priority, with the expectation that they will be able to make a difference on a whole school basis.

The programme supports participants towards this in a range of ways including:

- Ensuring that participants have the strength and legitimacy of the school development plan as the context for their leadership and management of their chosen project.
- Encouraging participants to research and become the school’s expert, or leading learner in relation to the focus of the chosen development project.
- A supporter (normally their Headteacher) who can facilitate access to the whole school context and provide personal, professional support.
- Taught days, study sessions and tutorials which are both knowledge and skills based, focusing on such topics as team roles and team working, delegation, motivation, conflict management, interpersonal abilities and emotional intelligence.
- Assessment criteria which require a reflective commentary on each of the two major school based projects. In the first of these, participants analyse key issues in managing people (within a context of managing learning and teaching) through examining critical incidents at a personal level in the management of people. In the second of these participants move on to analysing key issues in their management, often of people, through examining critical incidents relating to the wider strategic and political contexts which affect their school.

**Illustration 2**

One participant in the programme described critical learning points in managing a whole school approach to the development of learning and teaching in a large secondary school. A whole school policy had been agreed as a working document, a guide and a spur to assess learning and teaching and work for improvement.

- *This is a large organisation with a history of balkanised departments and little whole school activity. I knew I would need to initiate change in a step by step way, building on the strengths of a hard working staff, committed to their pupils’ achievements. However statistics told me there was significant potential for improvement in achievement.*
LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

• To support an agreed focus on teaching and learning two experienced external consultants acted as critical friends to four departments, as the staff developed their own learning and teaching handbooks and identified and shared their successes and failures with the whole school. This was very successful and a learning point for me – I could not be all things to all people, the staff responded well to the professional attention from the critical friends and to the change in methodology used by the critical friends in an in-service day.

• Another aspect of the development was the use of staff mentors for under-achieving pupils. The first attempt at this had not been successful, due I believe to my strengths in initiating new ideas but my weakness in monitoring, supporting and evaluating the implementation. I am conscious of how very differently I have operated the process this year . . . by sharing a structured process for evaluating the mentoring I am also valuing the staff who are making it possible. There have been excellent ideas from those staff involved for improving the mentoring process. I hope to incorporate these next year – I may even delegate the mentoring process to another teacher next year as a staff development opportunity.

• The project has required me to reflect on and improve my interpersonal abilities: by giving all staff a regular newsletter and summary evaluations of all aspects of the project I believe I encouraged them to realise that the school was making good progress and they were part of that; I am aware that having built up strong relationships, I can trade on this to challenge pupils and teachers to achieve more, move into challenging areas and have a positive result; each critical learning point has brought me out of my own personal comfort zone and I am more aware of how the correct input will help our school grow and improve.

3) The involvement of a range of stakeholders

A recent on-line study session, using the University SQH web-site and a structured model of teaching and learning on-line (Salmon 2000), has been encouraging participants, who are just at the start of their Unit 2 project, to consider the views of pupils, parents and teachers as vital indicators of effectiveness and for improvement (McCall J et al 2001). Responses have ranged from How can pupils have a say in the school development plan? to Our parents trust us to get on with the job and I’m planning to do this but don’t quite know how. (Participants had been encouraged at the earlier project planning stage to include stakeholder involvement at one or more stages of their project).

Consultation with and involvement of pupils, parents and teachers is now enshrined in Scottish legislation (SEED 2000), and one must assume that this has
been influenced by the school improvement literature. More than twenty years ago a Scottish study (Gow and Macpherson 1980) raised the awareness of researchers and the education establishment of the importance of listening to the voices of our pupils, as the authentic evaluators of their classroom and school experience. More recently, pupils’ and parents’ voices were heard and listened to while planning for improvements in teaching and learning (SBC 2001) and schools were encouraged to identify a genuinely parental agenda and model partnership in action (Bastiani 1993).

Although stakeholder involvement is well documented as an important school improvement strategy, it is not universally acknowledged as such, seldom going beyond the involvement model to the model of effective partnership. How are the participants in the SQH programme supported to develop their knowledge and practice in this aspect of their work-based learning?

• As stated above, detailed project plans for both Unit 2 and Unit 3 are expected to show how the participant will recognise the importance of involving all stakeholders.
• Study sessions and tutorials are designed to include access to the literature and the opportunity to share strategies which work (with a health warning about different contexts).
• Participants have the opportunity to listen to and have discussions with expert, and generally inspirational, witnesses, who have been involved in research or who are headteachers of improving schools where partnership with stakeholders has been a key strategy.
• The Standard itself (see 1.3, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2) and associated assessment criteria for the two major projects require participants to demonstrate that they can establish, develop and use participative management structures and partnerships with the full range of stakeholders.

Illustration 3

In Unit 3 in the second year of the programme, participants are required to demonstrate competence in the core activity, develop and maintain partnerships with parents, pupils, school board, outside agencies and the community. Within a school priority on target-setting for senior pupils preparing for external examinations, one senior manager in a large secondary school successfully worked in partnership with an educational psychologist, whose specific role was to provide an objective evaluation of the initiative. The psychologist focused on teachers and pupils, while the participant focused on parents. The participant referred to a statement in a national document on school leadership. ‘Leadership involves looking beyond the school and working with others who can contribute to school improvement.’ (SEED 2000a: p5) Numerous self-evaluative comments appear in the participant’s commentary in relation to the involvement of stakeholders and experts beyond the school.
LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

- I wanted staff to see that the status quo was not an option, that it was not bolt-on but part of the monitoring of progress and assessment procedures which students deserve to achieve their potential.
- Following the outcome of the psychologist’s evaluation it was apparent my communication of the target setting procedures (agreed by all staff – or so I thought) had not been as effective as I believed. One of the ten characteristics of effective leaders (SEED 2000a) is developing and sharing a vision; obviously I needed to do some work on this.
- The responses to my letter to parents about their views of target setting made it apparent that not all of them had been involved in the process. I now realise that parents should have been consulted on the process rather than being informed about it once the policy was in place. If parents back schools and we work with each other, there is more likelihood of success – a lesson I intend to remember:
- The value of this project for me lay in allowing me to plan strategically for change, to experience the difficulties I was likely to meet in the process of managing change, to learn from my mistakes and be up front about admitting them to colleagues and parents.
- The main findings of the psychologist’s extensive evaluation report give me an agenda for future action. It states that this has been a bold venture, that the committed school management team have planned and implemented carefully, that we have been open to outside evaluation and keen to take on advice about development. The findings will be shared with staff and students and a number of recommendations are already being worked on.

4) Contextual specificity of school improvement factors linked to awareness and development of a school’s capacity for change and improvement

Participants on the programme come from a wide variety of school contexts: depute headteachers in large urban schools, senior teachers in small town schools, headteachers of two or three teacher rural schools, a mix in any one cohort of secondary, primary, special and nursery school contexts, some from leafy suburbs, some from areas of social and economic deprivation. As well as a unique context, each school will also have its own mix of factors influencing its capacity for change.

All participants are required to meet The Standard in order to gain the SQH, but it follows that, just as there is no blueprint for school improvement (Harris 2001, Fullan 1993, Macbeath and Mortimore 2001, Lauder et al 1998) nor any consistent capacity for change and improvement, because schools are different (Hargreaves 1999, Macbeath 1999), there is also no blueprint for how a participant works towards the SQH, apart from a satisfactory performance in each of the assignments through meeting the given and transparent assessment criteria.

An issue for the programme providers then is how to ensure that all contexts are
catered for while also ensuring that those who gain the SQH do not simply gain a context specific qualification. Some of the ways in which this is managed are:

- Participants are deliberately mixed in terms of context for group sessions on taught days, in tutorials and local authority network seminars, to encourage both cross sector understanding of different contexts and also sharing of experience, expertise and knowledge.
- Through case studies and interaction with the literature, participants can consider a wider range of strategies than they might otherwise have done.
- By the second year of the programme, through analysing their own school’s capacity for change, participants are encouraged to develop their own unique package of improvement strategies within their Unit 3 project plan as well as reflect in their Unit 3 assignment on that package and its usefulness in moving their school forward.
- A comparative study placement in business or industry gives participants the opportunity to consider improvement strategies from a wider context and to consider how practice beyond their own world of education could be adapted to support change and improvement in their own or another context in which they might work.
- Participants themselves bring a wealth of experience to the programme if they have worked in different school contexts; some move schools during their time on the programme, giving current first hand knowledge of capacity for change and improvement in differing contexts. The programme provider can capitalise on such experience to support participants with developing their understanding of this issue.

Illustration 4

The opportunity to act as Headteacher in a different school gave one of the participants an ideal opportunity to gain first hand experience of a different school culture as well as develop an appropriate package of strategies to move the school forward.

In addition the school catered for children with special needs, each requiring special support from other professionals within the staff as well as appropriately designed teaching and learning strategies. Many aspects of the school were different from mainstream schools – the line management arrangements for the school as a whole and within the school, finance and resourcing, staffing requirements, expectations of parents.

The aim of the chosen development project was to develop partnership with parents, which involved discussion on target setting, support for the children’s work, involvement in decision making in the school and parental development in issues relating to their own children. An analysis of the school’s prevailing culture and the package of school improvement strategies developed gave the participant much opportunity for critical self-reflection and learning:
LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

• The outcomes of the analysis were quite clear; but I found that I needed to explain aspects of the process clearly to staff, who felt confused about the purpose. I will think such a strategy through more fully in the future.

• Stoll and Fink’s (1996) steps, I got to know the culture as an objective outsider, without being part of any subcultures. I considered how the culture supported or inhibited pupil progress, concluding that talking with and involving the hard working, committed and knowledgeable staff, and involving them in decision making, was a powerful forum for sharing values. The introduction of inter professional meetings allowed the discussion and sharing of values.

• Although the staff were keen to move forward on a number of fronts, the analysis of the school’s capacity for change and a high staff turnover persuaded me that beginning the change process for three cultural norms would be enough of a challenge – shared goals, collegiality/collaboration and openness.

• This change process involved better communication with parents. From this I soon learned that we needed to do more than allow parents to share in the new ethos. We should have involved parents in how they perceived the school ethos and in assisting its self-evaluation. I will be guarded about getting carried away with organising ‘events’ just for their own sake.

• I am now more aware of the need for accurate baseline information against which improvement can be measured. A related area of personal development is how to design specific criteria, against which pupils’ achievement can be measured, especially in this fairly unique context.

• I have found it difficult, due to the nature of the pupils’ special needs, to be certain that parental involvement did help pupils’ learning, but I am convinced that building relationships between the range of professionals within the school and parents is the key to involving parents.

**Summary and discussion**

The experience of how professional learning relates to and supports school improvement has been illustrated through these descriptions of current experience within the Scottish Qualification for Headship. More structured but piecemeal evaluation of the overall characteristics of the Scottish Qualification for Headship experience has taken place and some of this has been published (Morris 1999, Simpson et al 2000, Malcolm and Wilson 2000). Although this does not allow a definitive assessment to be made of the impact on pupils’ learning experience of the SQH programme and of the professional learning it encourages, there are clear indications of areas where substantial contributions are being made and the summary discussion which follows is therefore based on the illustrations given above and the evaluation evidence currently available.
Using assessment criteria which require participants to produce evidence of improvements in children’s learning experience has acted as a powerful lever on practice. In tutorial discussion, tutors regularly comment on this set of criteria as the most powerful lever to take practice beyond ‘comfortable collegiality’ (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992). This contrasts with some previous models of professional development in which the main focus has been on the ‘inputs’ in terms of programme structure or those ‘outputs’ which could be assessed from written presentations by participants. The outputs of this work-based CPD are evidence based improvements for pupils in the school context.

There have however been difficulties with progression into and within the programme. As a new programme, and the only one of its kind on offer in Scotland, it has shown up the lack of a pathway for those aspiring to Headship from earlier in their career. Unit 2 of the programme was designed to develop operational management skills, Unit 3 is strategic management for school improvement, but this has not been an easy progression. As those delivering the programme identify the gaps and difficulties, they have continued to rewrite guidance and expectations of quality in participants’ work have increased.

The partnership characteristics of the programme ensure that it affects those involved in school development well beyond the participants themselves, for example Field Assessors (generally current serving Headteachers) and local authority staff developers. In local evaluations of the experience of Field Assessment conducted within the south and east of Scotland, field assessors considered that they had been developed professionally by the experience. In many cases, they considered that this development had been significant and cited as examples the contact with good practice in school improvement, the rigour of thinking associated with the assessment process and the encouragement to personal self-evaluation.

Local authority experience of SQH has been varied. This is in part due to the variety of personnel involved, the different resource bases and different approaches taken within Scotland’s local authorities. An evaluation of the role of local authorities in promoting work based learning (Draper et al forthcoming) highlights the significant role local authorities play in: selecting and supporting staff; ensuring equality of access; ensuring that work-based contexts for learning offer appropriate opportunities to learn and develop; providing pastoral support. The capacity of local authorities to develop and sustain a professional environment within which this kind of support can be offered varies greatly (Harris 2001). The clear link from this kind of work based learning to improved outcomes for pupils suggests that this is a capacity which all authorities should be aiming to develop and sustain.

Alongside the many positives for SQH as a new model for professional development which aims to make a difference in schools, there are issues to be addressed. Part-time context based learning is proving difficult for participants. All those involved in part-time postgraduate study alongside full time jobs might reasonably be expected to complain of workload difficulties or problems in managing their work-life balance. Some difficulties have been encountered also in finding a balance within portfolios. Candidates tend to produce far too much evidence
without sufficiently considering issues of quality and selection. Portfolios still do not comfortably sit with professional expectations of assessment. Additional problems emerging for participants in SQH derive from the wide variations in school context which can have a dramatic effect on the character of the learning opportunities. Sometimes this is to do with problems in finding suitable contexts within school to demonstrate competence at the level prescribed in the standard – this applies for example in relation to the management of budgets, for Headteachers may be reluctant to delegate the function or in recruitment and selection, for opportunities may not occur during the time the candidate is on the programme. This is most strikingly the case, for example, where the Headteacher is challenged or threatened by the SQH model and the programme design of collegial and systemic school improvement (with the Headteacher as supporter to the management of key school improvement priorities) is replaced by a reality where participants are managing the micropolitics to do what is possible. There are also different types of social profile for the programme in schools. Where it is known that a senior member of staff is pursuing SQH this can lead to staffroom chatter about motivation, or about relative success or failure. Previous relationships in school, the ethos of the staff and the culture of professional improvement in the school can all have a significant impact on whether or not these factors help or hinder participants in moving forward professionally (Reeves 2001).

The management of a complex site-based development model also makes logistical/infrastructural demands on people and institutions. The time involved in partnership working, in dual assessment (professional and academic), in establishing systems to support site-based learning, is substantial. The variations in context, from small two teacher rural primary to separate nursery school to 1800 inner city comprehensive demand sensitive customisation both in delivery and in assessment.

The profession is still guarded in its approach to the qualification. Early concern that this was a simplistic ‘competence’ model has given way as the programme has become embedded to worries about access and desirability of a ‘mandatory’ statement. School Boards and Local Authorities responsible for appointing Headteachers continue to see possession of SQH as only one, and not necessarily the most important of the criteria to determine who is best for a given Headteacher post.

A new legislative framework for school improvement in Scotland has been devised nationally (SEED 2000) in which evidence-based improvement strategies, analysed and delivered through effective development planning, are required of every local authority and every school. At the time of writing, a national Ministerial strategy group for continuous professional development has been established by Jack McConnell, until recently the Scottish Minister for Education. These logistical concerns will loom large in the proposals this group makes to develop the framework for Chartered Teacher in Scotland, since whatever professional development structure is built for Scotland’s teachers to meet the demands of the McCrone agreement on the continuous professional development of teachers (SEED 2001), it will have to work in the wide variety of situations that characterise the Scottish school system. A sub-group of that committee is currently developing
proposals for a career development pathway in leadership and management and SQH as it now stands will thereafter be absorbed into a broader framework for developing teachers for teaching and for leadership. In doing so, they will benefit from evaluation of the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads (LPSH), the new consultative framework for school leadership development (National College for School Leadership 2001) and the SQH in Scotland. Whatever that broader framework turns out to be, there is much to learn from the SQH experience, and its commitment to ensuring that professional development is measured in part by evidence of its impact on pupils, thus far.

In conclusion, the continuing development of SQH has offered many new and exciting possibilities for professional development in leadership and management for those who aspire to Headship in Scotland. The use of portfolio and commentary assessment, benchmarked against The Standard for Headship, has stimulated an exciting range of reflection and practice on the part of those on the programme – practice which demonstrates professional learning in new and exciting ways and has stimulated partnership to support this learning across schools, local authorities and HEIs. There are continuing areas for development – both logistical and in terms of the learning experiences offered and supported, but this is development building on an exciting and successful start.

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PREPARATION FOR THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALSHIP
The United States’ story

Joseph Murphy


Abstract
In this paper, we trace the evolution of training programmes for educational leaders in the United States, focusing primarily on activity in the 20th century. The history of preparation is divided into four eras: The Ideological Era, 1820–1899; the Prescriptive Era, 1900–1946; The Scientific Era, 1947–1985; and the Dialectic Era, beginning around 1986. Key dimensions and central events are underscored in each time frame. Particular attention is devoted to the eras of ferment that characterize the shift from one era to another.

Introduction
The study of principal preparation in the USA is of interest for a variety of reasons. It is, of course, centrally important in its own right, i.e. to the extent to which it is linked to the development of more successful educational leaders and school managers. An analysis of preparation programmes also provides a window on the development of the field of school administration writ large. Our thoughts about relevant epistemological foundations of the field, about connections between the academic and practice arms of the professions and about appropriate anchoring values are all highlighted in the evolutionary tapestry of principal preparation. Because formal, university-based training for school leadership positions has been relatively rare outside the USA (Willower & Forsyth, 1998), lessons learned here over the last century may prove helpful to other nations exploring adoption of the US model of preparation. Regardless of the approach they are employing, unpacking principal preparation in the USA
may help others to avoid pitfalls that have been experienced here, so that they can concentrate on the more positive lessons.

In this paper, we trace the evolution of training programmes in the USA over the last century, relying heavily upon the efforts of others who have already begun to fill in some of the pieces of this historical puzzle. We review the development of the preparation of school leaders through four periods of time: the ideological era; the prescriptive era; the behavioural science era; the dialectic era. Table 1 and Figure 1 provide the frameworks that ground our discussion.

The Ideological Era, 1820–1899

Although the administration of schools in the USA enjoys a relatively long history, in its early days it ‘went largely unrecognized as an essential component of school operation’ (Guba 1960: 115) and the actual number of administrators was quite small until after the Civil War. For example, the development of the school superintendent, the first administrative position in education, occurred during the latter part of the 19th century (Gregg 1960). The Department of Superintendence, precursor of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), was not organized until 1866 (Button 1966). Moreover, because early schools were simple organizations, their administration was not an arduous task. As Gregg (1969) notes:

Under such circumstances, the administrator could learn his profession effectively on the job by trial-and-error processes. Little, if any, formal specialized preparation was needed, and none was provided. The minimal formal education which was designed for teachers was deemed sufficient for those who would become administrators.

In 1875, William L. Payne, then a school superintendent in Michigan, wrote the first book in the USA dealing with school administration, *Chapters on School Supervision*. After receiving a faculty appointment in education at the University of Michigan in 1879, Payne also taught the first college level course in school administration (Callahan & Button 1964). Although other ‘departments of

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1820–1899 Ideological Era
   First Era of Ferment (1900–1915)
1900–1946 Prescriptive Era
   Second Era of Ferment (1947–1957)
1947–1985 Scientific Era
   Third Era of Ferment (1986→)
1986→ Dialectic Era

*Figure 1* Eras in the history of school administration. *(Source: J. Murphy (1983) Preparing Tomorrow’s School Leaders: alternative designs p. 4.)*
Table 1 Historical eras in the preparation of school administrators

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education’ were also established in the 1870s, professors of educational leadership and programmes specific to school administration ‘were unknown until the early 1900s’ (Cooper & Boyd 1987: 16). Thus the earliest:

... formal training for administration included some basic pedagogy and a lifelong search for the ‘ideal’ education, but not much self-consciousness or thought about their own roles as leaders, statesmen, or administrators. Hence, they attended no courses, received no credits, and applied for no licenses in educational administration.

What broad education departments such as that at Michigan did offer students was subject matter ‘relating to school management as well as to philosophy’ (Moore 1964: 11) and pedagogy. The ‘first teachings to prospective administrators were “theories” about exemplary school leaders which were then rarefied into “great man” and “trait” theories’ (Cooper & Boyd 1987: 7).

Callahan & Button (1964) and Button (1966) have isolated two doctrines of school leadership before 1900 that, at least to some extent, exerted influence on thinking about the content to which administrators were exposed from 1870 to 1905 in these newly forming departments of education. Under the doctrine of administration as the teaching of teachers (1870–1885), ‘administration was very simple, really; administration was supervision’ (218). Because the proper role of education was instruction, much of the limited education administrators did receive was in the areas of curriculum and instruction.

The doctrine of administration as applied philosophy (1885–1905) asserted that truth, concerning all things and all matters, was eternal and to be discovered. As in all other fields, this was necessary in education. It therefore followed that the learned administrator, who could discover relevant truths, was the best authority on all matters concerning education, and that the problem of administration was the application of philosophical knowledge to schools.

This new doctrine, ‘with its emphasis on eternal wisdom and moral judgement, made the administrator into something like the clergyman and borrowed from him some of the clergyman’s status’ (219). It also reinforced the emphasis on philosophy and theories about outstanding school leaders in the rudimentary subject matter being offered to students of school administration.

The Prescriptive Era, 1900–1946

The 20th century ushered in the beginning of the prescriptive era in school administration (Campbell et al. 1987), a nearly 50 year period of expansion in
training programmes for school leaders. In 1900, no institutions were offering systematic study in the area of school management. By the end of World War II, 125 institutions were actively engaged in preparing school administrators (Silver 1982). A first generation of educational administration professors was actively engaged in laying the foundations of the field and in training a second generation of professors to take their place. Many states were requiring formal coursework in educational leadership for administrative positions and were certifying graduates of preparation programmes for employment (Moore 1964). As these elements of the profession began to find acceptance, more and more principals and superintendents embarked on their careers with university training in the practice of school administration.

This shift from an era of teaching, ideology, character and philosophy to one of prescription represents the first era of ferment in school administration, one marked by a number of trends that we see repeated during both the second (1947–1957) and third (1986–) periods of ferment in the profession (see Figure 1). All three periods witnessed much critical analysis about the health of educational administration in general and the status of preparation programmes in particular. There was considerable muckraking literature about the way practicing administrators were managing schools (Cooper & Boyd 1987). In addition, new views of leadership (the captain of commerce role from 1900 to 1930 and the social agent role from 1930 to 1950) that reflected dominant social and cultural forces in American society were held up as desirable alternatives for training educational administrators (Callahan 1962).

Information on the preparation of school leaders following the first era of ferment is limited and uneven, gaining in clarity as we approach World War II. Faculty of this era were drawn almost exclusively from the superintendency. They carried heavy teaching loads and showed little proclivity for research. A similar homogeneity characterized students of this period. Most were white males holding full-time positions as school administrators while attending school on a part-time basis (Campbell et al. 1987).

The education received by superintendents and principals was largely undifferentiated from that of teachers until the onslaught and widespread acceptance of the scientific management movement throughout the corporate world between 1910 and 1915. For the next 20 years, business was to exert considerable influence over preparation programmes for school administrators: ‘Program content was consistent with prevailing emphases of science on fact gathering, inductive reasoning, and empirical generalizations’ (Culbertson 1988: 9). During this time, ‘preservice education for school executives tended to stress: the technical and mechanical aspects of administration’ (Gregg 1969: 994); ‘specific and immediate tasks’ (Callahan & Button 1964: 87); the practical aspects of the job (Newton 1934). The objective was to train students to understand the job of administration as it was and to perform successfully in the roles they undertook, what Campbell et al. (1987) labelled preparation for the role, as opposed to
studying what might need to be done differently and preparing for roles as change agents, i.e. preparing the person.

While the Great Depression and World War II saw the incorporation of new material into training programmes—‘human relations in cooperative educational activities’ (Gregg 1969: 994), social foundations and the human factor in general—by the end of the prescriptive era, preparation was still highly technical in nature. Almost no attention was given to the theoretical underpinnings of the work of school leaders:

The scholarship that informed course content throughout this era was little more than ‘naked empiricism’ or ‘factualism’, resulting in the development of: ‘fuzzy concepts’; ‘inadequately field-tested principles’; and a mere ‘encyclopedia of facts’ that lacked ‘the power of unifying interpretive theories’. The knowledge base was comprised of: ‘folklore, testimonials of reputedly successful administrators, … the speculation of college professors’; ‘personal success stories and lively anecdotes’; ‘personal accounts or “war stories”’, and prescriptions offered by experienced practitioners’; ‘experiences of practicing administrators as they managed the various problem areas of school administration’; ‘maxims, exhortations, and several innocuous variations on the theme of the Golden Rule’; and ‘preachments to administrators about ways in which they should perform’.

(Cited in Murphy 1992: 31–32)

The Scientific Era, 1947–1985

Beginning in the late 1940s and continuing throughout the 1950s and 1960s, prescriptions drawn from practice came to be overshadowed in preparation programmes by theoretical and conceptual material drawn from the various social sciences. Like the prescriptive era before it, the scientific era, in its emergence, drew support because of its harsh attacks on the status quo in the area of administrative training, its critical analyses of the performance of existing school leaders and its lure of an alternative vision (science in this case) that held forth the promise of dramatically improving the education available to prospective school leaders.

At the onset of the scientific era, considerable criticism was levelled against the naked empiricism, personal success stories and maxims or untested principles that constituted the knowledge base of educational administration at the time. It was also argued by many that the explicit values framework of the latter half of the prescriptive era—the human relations era—was inappropriate in a scientific world. In the first period of ferment in school leadership (1900–1915), practicing administrators were chastised for their lack of grounding in the management principles of the corporate world, especially those developed by Frederick Taylor and his peers. In the second era of ferment (1947–1957), they came
under attack for their unscientific, non-theoretical approach to administration. Throughout this second era of ferment, training institutions were being exhorted to develop better preparation programmes ‘to protect the public against ill-prepared or indifferent practitioners’ (Goldhammer 1983: 253). In addition, as has been the case throughout the history of school management, professors began to reweave the fabric of preparation programmes to mirror the high status professions in the larger society, thereby creating an alternative vision of the role of school administrators (Callahan 1962; Callahan & Button 1964). Since scientists, not business people, held centre stage at this time (Halpin 1960), a quest for a science of school administration was undertaken (Culbertson 1965, 1988; Greenfield 1988; Griffiths 1988a).

This second period of ferment in school administration was characterized by considerable enthusiasm, activity and growth and by dramatic changes in the structure and content of training programmes (Wynn 1957; Willower, 1983; Crowson & McPherson 1987). It was a period which many believed would lead to the full professionalization of school administration (Farquhar 1977; Goldhammer 1983).

Four major events mark the second era of ferment. The first of these was the formation of the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) in 1947. By linking professors throughout the country for the first time, the NCPEA exercised considerable influence over emerging conceptions of the profession and over school administration training programmes (Gregg 1960; Campbell et al. 1987). The second defining event in the transition from the precriptive to the scientific era was the creation of the Cooperative Project in Educational Administration (CPEA), a consortium of eight universities funded by the Kellogg Foundation whose primary purpose was to institute changes in preparation programmes. Continuing initiatives charted at earlier NCPEA meetings, especially the ‘benchmark’ 1954 gathering in Denver (Getzels 1977: 8), the CPEA encouraged a multidisciplinary approach to analyses of administration and to the education of school leaders. As Gregg concludes in his 1969 review, the CPEA had a profound influence on preparation programmes and on the practice of school administration. The establishment of the Committee for the Advancement of School Administration (CASA) in 1955 and of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) in 1956 are the third and fourth milestones that helped shape evolving conceptions of school administration during the second era of ferment (Griffiths 1959; Moore 1964). The CASA’s most important work focused on the development of professional standards of performance. The UCEA’s influence has been quite pervasive (Willower 1983). Throughout the 1960s and 1970s it ‘became the dominant force in shaping the study and teaching of educational administration . . . [and] a major force in the advancement of preparation programmes’ (Campbell et al. 1987: 182–183).

Under the pull of these forces, there was a considerable flurry of activity in preparation programmes throughout the USA during the scientific era, especially during the 1950s and 1960s. This was a period of rapid growth in educational administration. While approximately 125 institutions were in the business of
preparing school leaders in 1946, 40 years later over 500 were involved (National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration 1987). The number of doctoral degrees doubled during each decade throughout this period (Farquhar 1977). The size, defined in terms of number of faculty, of the typical programme increased substantially during the heyday of the scientific era, doubling in size from five to 10 full-time faculty members (Farquhar 1977) before falling back to its original size by the mid 1980s (McCarthy et al. 1988).

The average faculty member in 1945 was most likely to be a generalist, drawn from the superintendency and oriented primarily toward the practice dimensions of the profession. By the mid 1980s that picture had changed considerably. The typical faculty member in educational administration at the end of the scientific era was likely to be a discipline-focused specialist with little or no practical experience, concerned primarily with the professorial (if not scholarly) aspects of the profession. While there was considerably more diversity among students in preparation programmes in 1985 than in 1945 in terms of gender and, to a lesser extent, ethnic background, there were still many commonalities. Most students continued to be drawn from the bottom quartile on national entrance exams, to have self-selected their programmes, attended local institutions on a part-time basis and exercised little control over their lives as students (Murphy 1990a, 1992).

Consistent with the guiding vision of the scientific era, the predominant trend during this 40 year period was the infusion of content from the social sciences into preparation programmes. The infrastructure for this activity was the expansion of the conceptual and theoretical knowledge base of the profession by the development of a science of administration. This was a movement intended ‘to produce a foundation of scientifically supported (hypothetico-deductive) knowledge in educational administration in place of the hortatory, seat-of-the-pants literature already in place’ (Crowson & McPherson 1987: 47–48) and a trend ‘away from technique-oriented substance based upon practical experience and toward theory-oriented substance based on disciplines “external” to education’ (Culbertson & Farquhar 1971: 9). The scientific movement led to: (a) a conception of educational administration as ‘an applied science within which theory and research are directly and linearly linked to professional practice [and in which] the former always determine the latter, and thus knowledge is superordinate to the principal and designed to prescribe practice’ (Sergiovanni 1991: 4); (b) the acceptance of a heavy reliance on social science content ‘as an indicator of a high quality program’ (Miklos 1983: 160); (c) ‘the borrowing and adopting of research techniques and instruments from the behavioural sciences’ (Culbertson 1965: 7); (d) a multidisciplinary (if not interdisciplinary) approach to preparation (Culbertson 1963; Hodgkinson 1975).

The Dialectic Era, 1986

Educational administration today is in the throes of a third era of ferment, one that appears to be accompanying the shift from a scientific to a post-scientific or
dialectic era in school administration (Murphy 1993; Murphy & Forsyth 1998). As was true in each of the preceding two eras, the present ferment is being fuelled by devastating attacks on the current state of preparation programmes, critical analyses of practicing school administrators and references to alternative visions of what programmes should become. If anything, the rhetoric in this third period of ferment seems both more strident and more comprehensive than that found in earlier eras of reform (Hallinger & Murphy 1991).

The most fruitful sources of support for current reform efforts are critiques of existing training programmes. While the current era of ferment was foreshadowed by scholars such as Harlow (1962) and Culbertson (1963) 35 years ago and began to pick up momentum starting with Greenfield’s (1975) insightful critique, it was not until the mid 1980s that the scale was tipped toward a critical analysis of educational administration in general and of preparation programmes in particular. Subsequently, every facet of the education of school administrators has come under serious scrutiny in the last decade. Almost every programme component has been found wanting: (a) few recruitment efforts are undertaken and selection standards are low; (b) programme content is irrelevant, connected neither to the central mission of schooling nor to the practice of leadership; (c) instruction is dull; (d) ‘faculty are only marginally more knowledgeable than their students’ (Hawley 1988: 85); (e) standards of performance are largely conspicuous by their absence (Murphy 1990a, 1992).

Also contributing to the current ferment is the increasingly voiced opinion that existing school leaders are responsible for the current crises in education and that they are incapable (or unwilling) of solving the array of problems that plague schools (Murphy 1990b). It is argued that school administrators are mere managers, nurturing a dysfunctional and costly bureaucracy (Murphy 1991). Concomitantly, their perceived inability to address fundamental educational (Evans 1991) and value issues (Greenfield 1988) in schooling is dissected with increasing frequency. In turn, the cry for leadership is being heard on all fronts (Murphy 1990c).

While there is an emerging consensus about the deficiencies of current preparation programmes and the leaders they anoint, there is less agreement about an alternative vision that might shape the existing ferment into a new model for preparing tomorrow’s leaders. Some of the most frequently heard suggestions these days include: (a) greater attention to matters of practice in the design and delivery of educational experiences (including enhanced cooperation between the two arms of the profession); (b) movement toward a professional school model; (c) recognition of the importance of craft knowledge (and the legitimacy of practice-based learning experiences); (d) additional emphases on values, social context, core technology, inquiry and new forms of leadership.

It is difficult to anticipate what future historians of educational administration will designate as the major events during the current era that helped form this ferment into strategies for improving preparation programmes—assuming, that is, that some consensus emerges about redefining the profession. One market
that will most likely be highlighted is the set of activities comprising the work of
the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration
(NCEEA). Growing out of the deliberations of the Executive Council of UCEA,
the Commission was formed in 1985 under the direction of Daniel E. Griffiths.
The NCEEA has produced three influential documents that have promoted con-
siderable discussion both within and outside educational administration: (a) their
1987 report *Leaders for America’s Schools*; (b) Griffiths’ highly influential
address to the American Educational Research Association (AERA), which was
subsequently published as a UCEA paper (Griffiths 1988b); (c) a UCEA-
sponsored, edited volume containing most of the background papers commis-
sioned by the NCEEA (Griffiths *et al.* 1988). These three documents have
helped crystallize the sense of what is wrong with the profession, extend discus-
sion about possible solutions and, to a lesser extent, provide signposts for those
engaged in redefining preparation programmes.

Following up on these activities, the UCEA Executive Director, Patrick
Forsyth, initiated discussions with foundations and set about mustering support
for one of the NCEEA recommendations, the creation of the National Policy
Board of Educational Administration (NPBEA). After considerable work on the
part of the UCEA to forge a union among the executive directors of 10 groups
with a deep-seated interest in school administration, the NPBEA was created in
1988. Its care was entrusted first to David L. Clark, then to Scott D. Thomson.
The NPBEA has undertaken a series of activities designed to provide direction
for the reconstruction of preparation programmes and for the institutions that
house them (see Thomson 1998 for a full review). After a year of work sup-
ported by the UCEA, chaired by the UCEA’s Executive Director, Patrick
Forsyth, and facilitated by the NPBEA’s Executive Secretary, David L. Clark,
the NPBEA released its first report (National Policy Board for Educational
Administration 1989). The report outlines an extensive overhaul and strengthen-
ing of preparation programmes. Its recommendations were later adopted in
slightly modified form by the 50-plus universities comprising the UCEA.
Following release of *The Reform Agenda*, the NPBEA published a series of
occasional papers that were designed to inform the reform debate in educational
administration. It also began to sponsor national conferences, in conjunction
with the Danforth Foundation, to help professors discover alternatives to deeply
ingrained practices in training programmes.

In the midst of this ferment, and building on earlier-noted documents, two
national efforts to redefine the knowledge base of the field have been completed.
In 1990, the National Commission for the Principalship (NCP), under the leader-
ship of Scott Thomson and funded by the National Association of Elementary
and Secondary Principals (NAESP), published a report entitled *Principals for
Our Changing Schools: Preparation and Certification* (National Commission
for the Principalship 1990). The document represented an attempt to unpack the
functional knowledge base required by principals. Subsequent to the release of
that report, the NCP assigned working teams to flesh out each of the 21 func-
tional domains listed in its report. The resulting document (National Commission for the Principalship 1993) was published in 1993. A year later, the UCEA authorized six writing teams under the overall direction of Wayne K. Hoy to update the knowledge bases in educational administration preparation programmes.

In addition to the reform reports described earlier, efforts to strengthen preparation programmes were shaped by a series of volumes devoted to the analysis and improvement of the profession. Each of these books helped focus attention on the problems of the field and provided alternative visions for a post-theory world as well as solution paths to guide programme reform. Some of the most important of these volumes are: the first handbook of research in the field, an AERA-sponsored volume edited by N. T. Boyan (1988); two volumes on the professoriate authored by Martha M. McCarthy and colleagues (McCarthy et al. 1988; McCarthy & Kuh 1997); the edited volume growing out of the NCEEA project (Griffiths et al. 1988); the 1990 National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook (Mitchell & Cunningham 1990); a volume resulting from the National Center for Educational Leadership conference on cognitive perspectives in school administration (Hallinger et al. 1993); a volume on school administration published by the Politics of Education Association and edited by Hannaway and Crowson (1989).


The initiatives of the Danforth Foundation will no doubt be seen as an important marker in this decade of programme reform (McCarthy, 1998). In addition to its sponsorship of the NCEEA and its core support for the NPBEA, Danforth has underwritten four significant efforts designed to assist self-analyses and improvement efforts in educational administration, all of which capture multiple elements from the various reform volumes and documents of the late 1980s: (a) a Principals’ Program to improve preparation programmes for prospective leaders; (b) a Professors’ Program to enhance the capability of departments to respond to needed reforms; (c) research and development efforts, such as the Problem-Based Learning Project under the direction of Philip Hallinger at Vanderbilt University, that are designing alternative approaches to understanding the profession and to educating tomorrow’s leaders; (d) a series of conferences and workshops created to help the professoriate grapple with important reform ideas in the area of preparing leaders for tomorrow’s schools.

Two standards-defining activities are also likely to be heavily referenced in future reports of events shaping the evolution, and perhaps the transformation, of preparation programmes as the profession moves into the 21st century. The first initiative was the development by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education of their curriculum guidelines for school administration. This work, completed under the aegis of the NPBEA over a 3-year period,
brought the best thinking of the Policy Board, via *Principals for Our Changing Schools: The Knowledge and Skill Base* (National Commission for the Principalship 1993), and the various professional associations into a comprehensive framework to reshape preparation programmes for school leaders (Thomson, 1998). A second initiative, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), conducted under the auspices of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and in cooperation with the NPBEA, produced the first universal set of standards for school leaders. Approved in late 1996, *Standards for School Leaders* (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium 1996) sets about strengthening preparation programmes primarily through the manipulation of state controls over areas such as licensure, relicensure and programme approval (McCarthy 1998; Thomson 1998).

Finally, it is likely that two additional triggering events from the AERA and UCEA during this last decade will stand the test of time when the history of preparation programme reform is written. For the AERA the important event was the establishment of the Special Interest Group on Teaching in Educational Administration (Willower & Forsyth 1998). For the UCEA it was the development of an annual convention (Forsyth 1998). Both of these catalysing initiatives have helped create sustained work in the service of reshaping the education of school administrators.

**Note**

1 The material in this article is taken from Murphy (1992, 1993) and Murphy & Forsyth (1998). For a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of educational preparation programmes, see *The Landscape of Leadership Preparation: Reframing the Education of School Administrators* (Murphy 1992).

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287
LEADERSHIP, LEARNING AND SYSTEMIC REFORM

Kathryn Riley


Abstract

For three consecutive years, opinion polls in the US have placed education as the top national issue (USA Today, 1999). ‘Education, Education, Education’ has been the personal mantra of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. These responses are not unique, governments across the globe are engaged in the education reform business, motivated by a range of concerns. Drawing on the experience of a number of countries, this article explores the context for education reform, offering insights into the reform process and questioning some of the conventional orthodoxies about the nature of education change. The author argues that the structural reforms which have been the pre-occupation of governments over recent years have been limited in their impact because of their lack of connection to learning – teacher learning and student learning – and because of the ways in which policy-makers have embarked on the change voyage. She argues that governments need to move away from a compliance models of educational reform, towards an approach which reflects the aspirations of schools and communities, and which is supported by forms of leadership connected to learning.

Introduction

Education has always been a contested issue, and the extent to which the State should or could control it, the topic of debate, dispute and compromise (Riley, 1998). Two decades ago, education systems in most industrialised countries functioned in the belief that teachers were competent and needed to be left alone to teach (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). For good and ill, teachers are no longer left alone to teach. In many countries and contexts *what is to be taught, where, by whom, how, and with what outcomes* have become issues for politi-
cians to decide about, and teachers to act on. The professional voice is muted, the pupil voice silent and the parental voice limited.

Governments around the world are now engaged in the education reform business. Improving the micro-efficiency of the schools has come to be seen as a vehicle for addressing some of the macro-problems of the state and society. Rising national expectations about schools have been accompanied by reduced teacher autonomy and increasing demands for higher performance – by teachers, as well as by pupils (MacBeath, Moos & Riley, 1996).

There are no certainties, however, in the education reform business and the debate is bedevilled by controversy. There are claims and counter claims about the impact of reform: growing evidence that some education reforms are working, but a declining public confidence in education; claims that we know what works in education and counterclaims that the generic solutions which are being pedled simply do not work. There are perhaps even more claims and counter claims about the financing of education: a belief that there has been soaring spending in education and equally strong assertions that there has been little real increase in spending, except in specific areas; a view by some (including some leading economists) that governments are throwing money away in education – and yet a counter argument that we are now discovering ‘how money matters’; a focus on value for money but few evaluations of reform initiatives (Boyd, 1998). Despite these controversies, the arguments for investment in education are powerful. Investment can help reduce poverty; contribute to the accumulation of human capital; strengthen national capacity and good governance; and add to the well-being and development of individuals, but the gap between investing in education and achieving all, or some of these goals is wide for a number of reasons. Although arguments have been made about the need to provide coherence to the reform process (Fuhrman, 1993) reform initiatives are more likely to be characterised by disconnection than connection, and to be divided into two mental black boxes: one called structural reform and the other called cognition and learning. Typically, reform initiatives give insufficient weight to the perceptions and experiences of those caught out in the reform process – administrators, teachers, parents and pupils – who not infrequently feel pressurised and confused by reform.

Figure 1, The External Combustion Engine, was drawn by a Scottish headteacher (one of a cohort of headteachers and school principals in an international project on school leadership in which I have been involved). It depicts his experience of trying to manage the reform process. The headteacher is in the driving seat. The external ‘fuel’ which drives the engine is a mixture of national and regional policies and legislation, as well as pressures from trade unions and employers, but in his view, the ‘wheels’, the foundations of reform, are in teaching and learning (teacher learning, as well as student learning) and are reflected in the core ethos of the school. The wheels are lubricated by humour, integrity, trust and goodwill and maintained by good communications (MacBeath, Riley & Kruchov, 1995). The image reflects a crucial point: that educational reform is
as much about leadership and learning within the local context, as it is about national policy. Although the headteacher who drew the combustion engine put himself in the driving seat, as the image suggests, external forces are taking the vehicle to an unknown destination.

The reform imperative

The reform imperative is strong and emanates from a range of sources. For developing countries and countries in transition, the provision of basic education as a primary route to social transformation has been the pressing concern. For most industrialised countries, maintaining a competitive edge in the globalised economy has been the strong reform driver, even though the link between educational attainment and economic performance is a disputed one (Robinson, 1998).² Whilst the economic driver is common to many countries, national reforms give different weight to the parallel issues of social justice and equity.

I was serving as an elected member of the Inner London Education Authority when, in the summer of 1987, Margaret Thatcher’s third Conservative Administration turned its attention to education. The charge against education was that producer domination, combined with the pursuit of egalitarian goals, had created a poor performing system (Riley, 1994). The political solution was to introduce a range of market-orientated reforms which were characterised by choice, competition and accountability through a range of performance mechanisms. A
heavily prescriptive national agenda was introduced which co-existed uneasily with greater devolution to schools and governing bodies. These reforms created winners and losers (Riley, 1994, 1998). Although some aspects of these reforms have been tempered by the 1997 Labour Government, a standards-based agenda (with its emphasis on school accountability for student performance, and local education authority accountability for school performance) now stands centre-stage.

Although governments of many different persuasions are driven by the reform imperative, the focus of reform inevitably reflects national concerns, as in the UK example. In the US, reform has been a familiar part of the education landscape for over half a century, yet disillusionment with public education remains high (Mathews, 1996). The current phase of reforms, described by Murphy and Adams as the ‘excellence era, a generation of educational policies intended to enhance student learning’, encompasses a range of strategies, each of which reflects a different conceptualisation of the nature of the problem. According to their analysis:

- **Intensification reforms** ... target the problem of low expectations.
- **Restructuring** addresses the problem of outmoded school organization.
- **Systemic reforms** attack the problem of fragmentation and uncoordinated state policies. Similarly, **standard setting** confronts the problem of unspecified or inadequate student learning goals and measures of success, while privatization focuses on the problems of entrenched bureaucracy and weak incentives.

(Murphy & Adams, 1998, pp. 1, 7)

What these different strategies have in common is a belief that the US education system is not working.

Education is also a pressing issue for countries in transition. The United Arab Emirates, for example, is embarking on a comprehensive reform programme, *Education Vision 2020*, which aims to enhance the skills and capacities of the indigenous population, reducing reliance on external labour, whilst also sustaining economic development and affirming cultural and social values (UAE, 1996). Other countries in transition are focusing on specific aspects of reform. Vietnam, for example, is concerned about the quality, training and management of its teaching force and is developing a package of reforms aimed at enhancing the skills and competencies of teachers. Poland is seeking to address the relatively low levels of literacy of many of the 16–25 year olds who have completed formal schooling.

For many developing countries, the problems may appear to be intractable. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, one out of three males, and one out of two females is illiterate. One out of three primary age children is out of school and in ten countries, less than half of the school age population is enrolled in primary school. In many parts of Africa, the spread of AIDS is having a profound impact
on education, depleting an already limited teaching force, undermining parents’ ability or willingness to pay for education, and generating social upheaval (World Bank, 1999). Enrolment and student drop-out have become critical reform issues.

The context for educational reform is a global one, adding to the complexities and creating a strong external imperative for change (Riley, 1998a). The emergence of the knowledge-based society, coupled with the technological revolution takes us into unchartered waters. ‘The free access to information on the scale offered by the Internet and inter-active technology promotes the flow of both information and disinformation, knowledge that is both educational and anti-educational: anti-social, as well as beneficial to society’ (MacBeath, Moos and Riley, op. cit., p. 225). Teenagers can buy cheap jeans on the net, research homework assignments, but they can also access pornographic images and engage in net vandalism, by sending viruses to unsuspecting recipients. Technology may also widen divisions: between the confident middle class net-surfers and the working-class children who do not have the access of their peers. Its impact is complex and messy. Within schools, many teachers are uncomfortable with interactive technology, and acknowledging the technological skills and capacities of many their students, as well as the potential power of interactive technology, challenges traditional notions of how teachers teach and pupils learn.

The external context is also shaped by the changes in social and public policy which have taken place over recent years in many countries, and by shifting international influences and power allegiances. The collapse of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War, the global spread of capitalism and the emergence of new poverty in Western countries erode many previous distinctions between countries (Albrow, 1994). Societies are changing at a rapid pace. The reconfiguration of nation-states, increased inter-ethnic conflict and the emergence of the new ‘moral’ globalisation, reflected in the threat and actuality of intervention by external powers into these conflicts, add to the uncertainties.

**The change voyage**

The education challenges are considerable and the path to reform is neither an easy nor a uniform one. Educational reform, policy and practice are shaped by political, structural, individual and social dynamics (Murphy & Adams, op. cit.), many aspects of which are context and culturally specific. The legislative framework and the cultural context create the expectations and boundaries about what can and should be achieved – and how (Fitz, Firestone & Fairman, in press). How the reform ‘problem’ is identified and characterised, the political possibilities and policy options, and the final choices and priorities are a product of national circumstances and historical arrangements. The number and range of players who try and influence that framework continue to expand. Businesses are taking a larger role: trade unions are seeking to affect both the nature of educational reform, and how it is implemented on the ground.
Approaches, as well as priorities to reform differ significantly. Some governments have pursued the path of decentralisation, giving greater autonomy to schools, although often (as in the case of the UK) retaining significant degrees of central control, with both anticipated and unanticipated outcomes (Riley, 1998a; Whitty, 1997). Others have embraced privatisation, deregulation and choice. Others still have placed greater emphasis on quality control, evaluation and testing, as part of a general accountability thrust. Whatever the rationale for change, the question of how to introduce reform in ways that will maximise its impact is one which governments share.

From a national policy-maker’s perspective, the central task is to get the policy right, but whilst national or state polices are important, this is only a small part of the jigsaw. Reform initiatives are not received by schools in a uniform way. The national context may set the scene, but the local context – the municipality, school district, or local education authority, as well as schools themselves – influences how reform is interpreted and implemented. Key actors construct their own meanings about the nature of reform and their perceptions may resemble, or differ from those of policy-makers. A school’s history, leadership and community context will affect how a national reform initiative is perceived. School principals, teachers, parents and governors may have their own views about the nature of the reform or change initiative, about priorities, and about how the local and national agendas come together.

Managing change at the school and local system level is about responding to competing demands. It is about managing the political/professional interface within the locality, and between the locality and national and state governments. Roles and relationships have to be negotiated between schools, trade unions, local agencies, the business and local communities, as well as with governments. Boundaries have to be established. Schools have to manage competing sets of realities: not only the policy context set at the national or state level; but also the community location i.e. the neighbourhood context and the social needs in the locality; and the internal workings of the school itself (Silver, 1994). Characteristically, schools are in a state of flux as new staff, pupils or governors enter the school, or as the school responds to the latest crisis: fire, pestilence, or loss of funding. Rational and planned models of change fail to capture the realities and complexities of the school context, or to recognize that:

School development is a process that occurs as a result of the interacting influences of three sources of change – that which is deliberately planned; that which is naturally occurring in the life cycle of organisations; and that which is unforeseen or unknowable in advance.

(Riley & Louis, in press)

Embarking on education reform and creating and sustaining significant levels of improvement are not one and the same thing. School reform is about change. Change in its turn depends on the will, capacity and actions of many players at
different levels in an education system. The degree of alignment between any reform initiative and the personal goals and aspirations of individuals and organisations engaged in the reform process is a powerful force in school reform (Murphy & Adams, op. cit.). There have to be incentives for reform (Hanushek, 1994), although not necessarily financial ones. There has to be capacity building and opportunities for professional learning (Fullan, 1991).

However, much thinking and research about the change process is predicated on assumptions about certainty, yet change is not linear. It is unpredictable, stuttering and drawn out, requiring the identification of existing constraints and obstacles, as well the capacity to design new strategies and embed these within existing polices and practices (Riley, Docking & Rowles, in press). Change is an intractable beast and, as a number of researchers have argued, reform and school change is a never ending process (see for example, Sarason, 1990; Cuban, 1990).

For those embarking on the reform voyage, there is much preparation work needed before embarkation. The route and final destination will need to be planned. If all the different vessels are to arrive safely at port, then the lead ship will need to understand the capabilities of the different craft on the voyage, as well as the skills and enthusiasms of the captains and their crew. Much will have to happen during the journey itself to keep the flotilla together, but whilst there may be treacherous waters ahead, there are also some landmarks to guide the way.

Navigating the waters

*Identify what needs to be changed during the voyage*

Education systems across the globe will need to tackle the significant problems of failure, drop-out, under-performance and student disengagement. OECD studies have estimated that between 15–30% of school age children are susceptible to school failure (OECD, 1996a). Student performance varies by country, gender and location and, regardless of the source of difficulties experienced at school, there are large differences in the attainment levels of the weakest 25% of pupils and the strongest, generally, the equivalent of two years of schooling, but as much as five years in some countries (OECD, 1997).

Educational attainment at age 16 is the most important predictor of future participation in learning, and of labour market prospects (Pearce & Hillman, 1998). Young people without upper secondary qualifications are between 3–5 times more likely to become unemployed than their peers (OECD, 1996b). Those who leave school before the standard ‘graduation’ date in their country are at particular risk of unemployment and long-term social exclusion (OECD, 1996c). Annually in the UK, 8% of young people leave school without any qualifications (House of Commons, 1998). In some of the most difficult and deprived
areas in the US, as few as 1 in 16 students graduate from high school (Kozol, 1996).

The scale and level of student disaffection is considerable. A longitudinal Swedish research found that for 1 in 3 young people, school was a profoundly disappointing and largely unhappy experience, offering little creative or intellectual stimulation. If schooling was perceived as a negative experience, this perception tended to be carried through into adulthood, influencing views about future learning, as well as parental attitudes to schooling (Bengt-Andersson, 1997; Lindblad, 1997). The consequences of an unhappy school experience can be far reaching.

Take account of all the passengers and crew

School reform is an inherently political process. Notions of what constitute a ‘good’ school are bound in culture and context and, as Harold Silver has argued, change over time:

Good schools have been ones (in the past) which have trained girls to be good wives and mothers, or which trained boys to serve the commercial ethic of the Empire. ‘Good’ has been an infinitely adaptable epithet, used of schools of many kinds, by interested parties of many kinds.

(Silver, op. cit., p. 6)

To reach a consensus on issues which are profoundly value-laden is unlikely in a pluralist society. However, identifying the needs and aspirations of the major stakeholders in educational reform, and respecting their concerns is critical. Findings from a major study on the role and impact of local education authorities – intermediary systems – suggest that stake-holders in a typically diverse educational community, can come to respect even controversial policies (such as the inclusion of children with special educational needs into mainstream education), if decisions have been reached after genuine and wide consultation process, and if there is clarity about what is to be achieved, and how (Riley, Docking & Rowles, 1999).4 Respect is not the same as agreement but it is a key ingredient in making reforms work.

Teachers, of course, are key players in the reform process and government approaches to teachers and teaching can have a significant impact on teacher recruitment, teacher morale and teacher retention (Riley, 1998b). However, many governments seek compliance to their reforms and the ‘compliance mentality’ generated by large-scale reform (David & Goren, 1993) can foster institutional inertia and stifle professional creativity. Reforms will be limited in their impact if teachers are denigrated and disengaged from the process, seeing implementation as a hoop they must jump through, rather than as a central activity which will improve their professional practices.
Teachers are motivated to change their practices, if they can see the benefits for their pupils. Investing in the sustained professional development of teachers and providing them with a wide span of opportunities (such as work-shadowing, shared classroom observation, access to relevant web-sites and teacher networks which cross schools and localities) are key elements in the change process. Research evidence suggests that teachers who are part of professional development networks have higher standards, a stronger service ethic in their relations with students, and a greater commitment to the teaching profession than other colleagues (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994). The strategy is a twofold one: engage the hearts and minds of teachers (Hargreaves, 1998).

Parents have to be brought on board and recognised as co-educators, and not viewed as hindrances to learning. Where the partnership between schools and parents is genuine, ‘parents play an active part in their children’s learning and are confident that problems will be dealt with and feedback given’, according to Scottish researcher John MacBeath, and ‘the school provides for the special, cultural and linguistic background of pupils. Parent-teacher meetings are useful and productive and pupil progress is shared with parents on a regular basis’ (MacBeath, 1999, p. 58).

The other key partners in learning are the pupils. Pupils’ perspectives give us fresh insights, not only into what schools are, but what they might be. Young people in Greenwich in South London helped set the local reform agenda by contributing to a video, which I coordinated, Young Voices of Greenwich. They describe what in their view, makes a good teacher:

- You can talk to the teacher and ask them questions and they won’t get the hump, and they have a sense of humour.
- Someone who listens to the children and knows what it is like.
- Someone who trusts us and knows our point of view.
- They try and understand that there are things going on in a child’s life outside school.

Young people thrive in a climate of mutual respect and trust. They attach great weight to school policies which help to maintain that climate and which tackle issues such as bullying and racism. They recognise the ways in which bullying, racism and name calling impede learning, or ‘cause depression’, as one young woman from Greenwich explained to me. They want an environment which is conducive to learning. ‘The school should have an anti-bullying policy, written by the pupils, for the pupils and which is followed carefully’, a member of the local Youth Council commented.

Whilst the young people from Greenwich had much to say that was positive about their school experience, they also identified what needed to change. In their view, schools do not give sufficient attention to pupils who are struggling. A young Somalian refugee, striving to make sense of a new country, culture and language, had felt this acutely. Greenwich students wanted access to the curricu-
lum for all young people and a recognition that a physical disability is not an impediment to learning. ‘I think that some schools believe because you are disabled you don’t need to learn’ a wheel-chair bound young woman argued. They wanted a broad curriculum which included technology, ‘to link us to the real world’, sports and the arts, personal relations and sexuality. They wanted a curriculum which offered enrichment through out of school experiences, such as opportunities for travel. ‘It’s great to have experience of foreign countries and so on, it helps the person to have more confidence’, explained a young man whose first experience of foreign travel was though a school trip. The young people who contributed to Young Voices of Greenwich, made it clear that they wanted to be considered as active partners in their own learning.

In our project on school leadership referred to earlier, we looked at the ways in which teachers, parents and pupils, as well as headteachers themselves, thought about leadership (note 1, Riley, 1998b). We found that perceptions differed between countries. English parents, for example, viewed ‘assertive or strong leadership’ as a key component of effective management of the school: a concept which was alien to Danish parents who valued ‘co-operative and collaborative’ leadership (Moos, in press). Pupils had very clear views about school leaders. Older students in our study valued an inclusive leadership style which demonstrated care and respect for students and which contributed to a school environment that was conducive to effective learning. Younger children emphasised safety, security and relationships. One group of nine-year-olds worked with me to construct a job description for a headteacher which powerfully demonstrates the importance which young people attach to trust and relationships (Riley, 1998a, p. 122).

We asked some of the young children in our study (5–6 year-olds) to answer some questions about school leadership by drawing pictures for us, with captions. The question ‘How do you become a headteacher’ elicited a range of responses, including, ‘You read a book about being a headteacher and you take an exam in kindness’. Some thought you become a headteacher by ‘buying a school’, by ‘reading a book about it’, by ‘going to a school and seeing whether you like children’ or, ‘by years of hard work and kindness’. With some pre-science in the UK context, one thought that, ‘the Government lets you’ become a head (ibid.).

In responding to the question ‘What does a headteacher do?’ the children captured many facets of the job. ‘The headteacher comes to see the children and says very good.’ ‘The headteacher sings and she tells you if you are naughty.’ Some of the complexities of the job are shown in Figure 2, the caption for which reads, ‘The headteacher writes letters about discos and she keeps old books. She teaches the children songs and she talks on the telephone.’ Most of the images were positive, although not all, as Figure 3 shows. Here the headteacher is a tall angry figure who looms over a small child who is crying. What the headteacher does on a daily basis can contribute in significant ways to both the immediate and overall school experience of children. The messages they
give as they ‘walk their vision’ (as one of the headteachers in our study described it) are profound. In one large secondary school in the UK, I asked a group of 12-year-olds, ‘what makes a good headteacher?’ One replied, ‘Mr X is really good, he queues up for his (school) dinner’. The others agreed. What they experienced from their headteacher was a simple but profound mark of respect for them.

**Be clear about the purpose of the voyage**

The call for a renewed focus on teaching and learning is becoming a familiar one. In a ‘blue print’ for reform, American educator Linda Darling-Hammond
quotes from Civil Right’s activist W.E.B. Du Bois, to remind us of the power of learning.

Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental. . . . The freedom to learn has been bought by bitter sacrifice. . . . We should fight to the last ditch to keep open the right to learn, the right to have examined in our schools not only what we believe; not only what our leaders say, but what the leaders of other countries have said. We must insist on this to give our children the fairness of a start which will equip them with such an array of facts and such an attitude toward truth that they can have a real chance to judge what the world is and what greater minds have thought it might be.

(Du Bois, quoted in Darling-Hammond 1997, p. 1)

The notion of an entitlement to learning is a powerful one, but if classrooms are to become ‘intellectually rigorous and exciting’ places to be, schools will
need to put learning at the centre. The extent to which schools provide active support for learning can be assessed by the following indicators:

- pupils see themselves as independent learners;
- teachers believe that all pupils can learn and gain success;
- the main focus of school activity is related to making learning more effective;
- learning in and out of school is seen as a coherent whole;
- pupils are involved in reviewing progress, recording achievement and target-setting. (MacBeath, 1999, p. 136)

Radical changes will also need to be made in the organisation and delivery of education services. Avenues to learning will need to be accessible to a wide community, creating a stronger focus on distance and self-directed learning, with a much wider definition of who learners are (Duguet, 1995). If young people are to become autonomous and self-regulating learners’, able to cope with uncertainty and change, rather than ‘diligent’ workers who have a ‘sense of duty and discipline’ (Posch, 1996, pp. 6–8), a transformation from teaching to learning will need to take place.

Despite the growing research focus on learning, the evidence across many countries is that the structural reforms which have been the major preoccupation of many governments over recent years have had insufficient impact on the substantive core of teaching and learning, and what actually goes on in classrooms. The prevailing notion of teaching and learning remains one in which, according to an OECD study, knowledge, competencies and values are predefined and stored in curricula, tests and accredited textbooks (Posch, ibid.).

There are many reasons why this is the case. The pace and speed of change has often meant that headteachers or school principals have had to focus much of their time and energy on administration, rather than on pedagogical effectiveness, classroom innovation and improvement. Similarly, teachers have had limited time and opportunity to review the effectiveness of their practices, or to think about new modes of learning. A UK study found that 9 out 10 of primary school teachers felt that they had insufficient time to do their job as it should be done, and 8 out of 10, that their job did not make good use of their skills and ability (ATL, 1998). The pressures of testing (which have led to an overemphasis on examinations which test the ability of students to recall a body of knowledge, rather than assess whether they are able to understand the concepts which underpin that knowledge, or are capable of solving problems based on that knowledge) have compounded the problem.

In refocusing on teaching and learning, assessment clearly has to be addressed. British academic Caroline Gipps has argued that there is a need to move away from an ‘examination-as-hurdle’ model, to an assessment model in which ‘we try to give all the candidates a real opportunity to show what they know, understand and can do’ (Gipps, 1999, p. 1). As she goes on to argue, there are many demands on assessment systems:
Assessment is now required to achieve a range of purposes. It has to support teaching and learning; provide information about pupils, teachers and schools; act as a selection and certification device; as an accountability procedure; and drive curriculum and teaching. There are increased demands for testing at the national level which must offer some comparability but equally some recognition that we need assessment to map more directly onto the processes we wish to develop, including higher order skills.

(ibid.)

Assessment needs to be more closely aligned to learning, but in some countries and contexts assessment of student performance and evaluation of institutional effectiveness have become the drivers in the system. The UK national school inspection system, for example, has been criticised for its cost (estimated as being £26,020 for an average primary school, 4.5% of the school’s budget and £65,893 for an average secondary school, 3.2% of its budget); for its failure to focus sufficiently on pupil achievement and the ‘non-school’ factors which contribute to this; and for the punitive and adversarial culture which it has generated (Rowntree, 1999). The Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Woodhead, has been criticised by a Parliamentary Select Committee for ‘his intemperate approach’ and his reliance on ‘conjecture rather than evidence’ (House of Commons, 1999). Although there have been some gains from the ‘culture of review’ which has been created (particularly in those schools which have been most resistant to change), the current system is flawed and is in serious need of revision (Riley, 1998a). A more developmental system which offers the opportunity for a more professional and reflective dialogue is needed.

Avoid the treacherous waters and the sirens

Once reform is on the agenda, politicians want results, but there is a fine line between maintaining momentum and generating reform overload. In June 1999, headteachers from England and Wales welcomed Prime Minister Tony Blair to their annual conference, but also complained vociferously about reform overload and were adamant in their opposition to Government proposals on performance related pay (TES, 1999b, p. 4). In the school year 1998–1999, schools and local authorities in England and Wales had to implement 29 new policies. In 1999–2000, a year in which government pledged to reduce the overload, they still had a further 19 polices to implement (TES, 1999c). If reform is experienced as a constant round of ‘flavour of the month’ initiatives, it will create cynicism and frustration amongst headteachers, teachers and administrators. We have ‘more pilots than Heathrow’, was how one teacher characterised her experience of the reform process in the UK (Riley, Docking & Rowles, 1998).

The context in which policy-makers make their choices about reform priorities is, of course, an international one. Ministers, researchers, civil servants,
trade union leaders meet to discuss developments in education. International projects (such as The Third International Mathematics and Science Study – TIMMS – which compares the performance of different countries) add a competitive edge to these discussions. A range of international organisations, such as the World Bank, the OECD, UNESCO and Education International provide fertile ground for the transmission of new ideas. Technology provides instant access to information, but there are no ‘quick-fix’ solutions, no uniform structural changes which will inevitably create specific changes, no reform panaceas. ‘Packages for Improvement’ do not arrive by mail order. Research traditions such as school effectiveness and school improvement, which have much to offer to the reform process, cannot be applied as ‘laws of science’, appropriate to all teachers and all schools (Glickman, 1987). Whilst much can be learned from the experience of others, what matters is clarity about goals, understanding of the context, and attention to the process of reform and change. Let us take the example of decentralisation.

*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes (Beware Greeks bearing gifts)*

Decentralisation has been a popular policy option over recent years, stimulated as much by business trends and the collapse of large centralised states, as educational arguments (Fiske, 1996). To some countries, the appeal of decentralisation has been that it has offered the potential to improve the quality of services and maximise resources. Other countries have pursued decentralisation, primarily as a way of dispersing power and widening decision-making. In some cases, community financing has been an attraction, either because it offers the prospect of sharing the financial burden of education (by getting alternative financing from local communities, or private sector organisations), or because it emphasises the importance of partnership and joint responsibility in the education enterprise (Bray, 1996). Enthusiasm for community financing, however, has not always been accompanied by enthusiasm to relinquish control.

Too often, decentralisation is seen as a panacea for all the ills of an education system, rather than as a tool which if properly used can aid reform. There is no empirical or statistical evidence to suggest, for example, that school-based management (which is not of course synonymous with decentralisation) has increased student achievement (Summers & Johnson, 1994). Authors of a recent review of the impact of decentralisation in Nicaragua entitled, ‘What’s Decentralisation Got to do with Learning?’ argue that decentralisation on its own will not improve student performance (King & Ozler, 1999). As I have argued earlier, substantial changes are needed in teaching and learning, and in the culture of schools themselves.

Decentralisation can create fragmentation, loss of expertise (in areas such as support for pupils with special educational needs) and reduction in professional development opportunities and networks. School autonomy when linked to
choice is as likely to exacerbate differences, as lead to school improvement. In the UK for example, an analysis of ‘failing schools’ suggests that a combination of factors, including decentralisation, competition, reduction in the role of the local education authority (i.e. the municipality or school district) have combined to engender a climate of isolation and insularity, turning schools into themselves in ways that reduce professional reflection and challenge and contribute to failure (Riley & Rowles, 1997). On the other side, decentralisation can help to challenge inertia and unlock a frozen system.

Undoubtedly what matters is the approach and the focus. Nicaragua, for example, has embarked on a major programme of decentralisation, motivated by the twin objectives of extending democracy and widening the financial base for education. According to researchers in the field, how school-based actors have interpreted the new ‘school autonomy’ has had a significant impact on the degree, and success, of implementation. Responses have been ‘quite divergent, especially in schools that lack[ed] cohesion and a shared mission, prior to the onset of decentralization’ (Fuller & Rivarola, 1998, pp. 5–6). Teachers have tended to see the ‘new autonomy’ as being about increasing their pay and giving them a greater say in what happens within their school; headteachers, as enabling them to have more control over their school; parents, as offering them a greater voice in what is happening. Where perceptions differ radically – and are not reconciled in some way – then the impact of reform will be limited.

The Nicaragua experience is that school principals have been much more positive about the decentralisation programme than teachers (ibid.). The same has been true for the UK (Bullock, Thomas & Arnott, 1993). Much depends on how schools are led and managed. Decentralisation puts school principals centre stage and they can choose to adopt a more hierarchical and directive model of leadership, or a more inclusive model which brings teachers into the frame (Fuller & Rivarola, op. cit.). Where school principals in Nicaragua have adopted the latter model, and brought their staff into decision-making, then teachers have been more supportive of the reform initiative overall.

Decentralisation needs to be linked to learning: pupil learning and teacher learning. Key questions need to be asked. Have teachers been prepared for a decentralised context? Are schools able to think about the long-term, as well as the short-term development of teachers? In an overview of the literature on parental choice and school autonomy in Britain, New Zealand and America, Geoff Whitty has argued that attention needs to be given to developing ‘mechanisms of regulation, and to the most appropriate ways of deciding these’ (Whitty, op. cit., p. 36). In other words, in thinking about decentralisation, we need to consider what checks and balances are needed to ensure equity, and to support the achievement of other education goals.

A UK study on teachers’ professional development, found that devolution of budgets to schools, in the context of erosion of much of the provision previously offered by the local educational authority, had created unequal access to professional development, as well as inequities of funding between schools. Practices
and opportunities varied within schools, as well as between schools and the attitudes of individual heads of department and of senior management were key. Training and development opportunities tended to be targeted towards immediate school-based priorities at the expense of the longer-term development needs of teachers (McMahon, 1998).

Before embarking on decentralisation, policy-makers need to clarify their objectives. The decentralisation process needs to be regulated to reduce inequalities, as well as create opportunities, for teachers and pupils. As decentralisation usually includes a broadening of the base for school governance, then developing the capacities of school governors to be involved in decision-making is also key. The shift in the vertical partnership – the powers and responsibilities of central and local government and of school governors and headteachers themselves – will mean that the roles and responsibilities of each will need to be redefined and ways found to ensure that teachers, and teachers associations are involved. Finally, as Bruce Fuller and Magdalaegna Rivardo ask in the review of education in Nicaragua referred to earlier, if decentralisation creates greater parental involvement but does not raise pupil achievement is it a victory? (op. cit.).

**Think about the ships’ captains – and their crew**

Amongst other things, the discussion on decentralisation illustrates the importance of leadership in the change process. But as Chris Hodgkinson has asked, ‘Is leadership a matter of seduction, a bewitchment of the led?’ (Hodgkinson, 1999, p. 25). From a policy-maker’s perspective, school leaders can perhaps be seen as holding the key to resolving many of the ‘problems’ which appear to be facing schools. Increasingly, leadership is accepted as a key constituent in the ‘effective’ school (Sammons et al., 1995), but equating leadership with principalship, or headship creates a narrow definition of the term.

The conceptualisation of leadership which Karen Seashore Louis and I have begun to develop is much broader (Riley & Louis, op. cit.). It sees leadership as a network of relationships among people, structures and cultures (both within and across organisational boundaries), not just as a role-based function assigned to, or acquired by, a person in an organisation, who then uses his or her power to influence the actions of others. This notion of distributed leadership extends beyond the immediate school community, embracing other actors on the leadership stage – such as trade unions and school districts. Leadership is seen as an organic activity, dependent on interrelations and connections (Riley, Docking & Rowles, in press).

But how do school leaders contribute to leadership? Authors of a major compendium on leadership have argued that the search for a general theory of leadership is doomed to failure (Leithwood et al., 1996). However, there are a number of conceptual understandings about leadership which offer some relevant insights into the management of change. To explore these, I want again to
draw on the research project *Effective Leadership in a Time of Change* (note 1, Riley & MacBeath, 1998; MacBeath, 1998; Riley, 1998a and b). A number of core issues emerged from that study:

- That there is no one package for school leadership: no one model to be learned and applied, regardless of culture or context. However, leadership can be developed and nurtured.
- That school leadership is beyond the heroic undertakings of one individual.
- That school leadership is not static. School leaders do not learn how to ‘do’ leadership, polishing their style to perfection. Effective school leaders are often rule breakers and are willing to change in response to new sets of circumstances, and the differing needs of children, young people and teachers.

The paradigm of school leadership which we found is one of *mobility and fragility*. It is a model which rests on the assumption that schools are constantly changing and that the challenge for the school leader is to respond to the school’s inner life, as well as to the demanding and constantly changing external context. It is a paradigm which recognises that constructions of school leadership are profoundly value-laden and bound in national and local context. It acknowledges that schools have to serve internal and external constituencies which are often in uneasy coexistence with each other, and that school leaders have to manage contested notions about achievement, as well as multiple interests and demands, and complex ethical dilemmas. The headteacher or school principal of today is expected to be a significant player in a whole galaxy of sometimes separate, sometimes interlocking spheres: governing bodies, local authority, central government, parents, teacher unions and of course, teachers and students. This involves managing conflict and competing expectations.

Effective school leaders exercise both their professional and political leadership. Political leadership is about being able to recognise patterns, draw on past experience and note the unique elements of a situation (Riley, 1998b). To some extent, headteachers have always had to exercise political leadership, seeking alliances; deciding on courses of action about the fate of individuals; and drawing on their own beliefs and judgements to make decisions about the use of resources. What has changed in the UK and elsewhere, is the extent to which headteachers have to exercise those skills.

The evidence from an international review of research on the effectiveness of school principals is that they exercise a measurable, although *indirect* influence on the effectiveness of a school, and on school achievement, and whilst the effect is relatively small – it matters. The reviewers, Hallinger and Heck (1999), concluded that there were four areas in particular, in which the leadership of the principal, influenced the school. The most obvious was through establishing and conveying the *purposes and goals* of the school. This was achieved through the selection and motivation of teachers. A second area of leadership influence was through the interplay between the *school’s organisation and its social networks.*
Highly effective principals tended to promote participation in decision-making, networks and interactions between staff, and the involvement of parents. A third, and some would argue, the most critical area of influence was through people. Effective principals fostered group goals and modeled their desired behaviour for others, by providing intellectual stimulation and support for staff, both personally and through staff development. The fourth and final area was in relation to organisational culture. School leaders operate within an environment but also influence how others perceive that environment and interpret events.

Moving the reform process forward and working to influence the school community is difficult. Figure 4 depicts a headteacher who is trying to lay out a path for change. The path is steep. The headteacher sees her job as pulling people up the hill. The image has a number of other components. It depicts the ‘trailblazers’ who have already made it to the top, the ‘defeated’ who have lost their hold, and the ‘refuseniks’ who are turning back (MacBeath, Kruchov & Riley, op. cit.).

Leadership is about learning, yet many schools are structured in ways that are antithetical to teacher learning (West et al., ibid.). Successful school leaders model professional values and aspirations, supporting teachers in meeting professional challenges and in managing the change process. Good leaders are learners themselves. School teachers in Canada rated school principals as effective if they worked hard; had lots of energy; were genuine in their beliefs; modeled openness and had good people skills; and, most importantly showed evidence of learning by growing and changing themselves (Leithwood et al., 1997). Whether it is managing a decentralised reform process, or implementing specific aspects of reform, the evidence is that:

![Figure 4](image.png)
Teachers appear more willing to participate in all areas of decision-making if they perceive their relationship with their principals as being more open, collaborative, facilitative and supportive. They are less willing to participate . . . if they characterise their relationships . . . as being closed, exclusionary and controlling.

(Smylie, 1992, p. 23)

Trust is key. A UK study found that less than 50% of primary school teachers felt that they could usually believe what their headteacher told them (ATL, 1998).

**Was the voyage worth it?**

Education reform hinges on trust and a recognition of what each of the different partners in the process can contribute to the reform journey. There are many expert voices which need to be heard: children, parents, and teachers, as well as politicians, administrators and officials, but if this is to happen, then the reform process needs to be an open and inclusive one. Sergiovanni (1998)\(^\text{10}\) has argued that there are two discredited theories about how schools should be run: the *pyramid theory* (which assumes that the way to ensure that schools achieve their goals is to put one person in charge to control the others), and the *railroad theory* (which assumes that teachers can be controlled by standardising their work). The same two approaches seem to characterise many national and state approaches to reform. Such approaches are outmoded. As societies become more complex, education systems will need to move away from maintenance and control, towards quality and development, which in its turn will require new ways of monitoring and evaluating performance (Cassidy, 1999). Given the complexity, government ministers will need to recognise that they cannot direct what happens in individual schools and classrooms.

Successful reform initiatives are those which recognise that not everything may need to change – some things might actually be working – and that reforms have unintended, as well as intended consequences. Strong connections are made between the two black boxes of *structural reform* and *cognition and learning*, and the voices of the often overlooked stakeholders in the education community are heard. Such initiatives aim to develop education leaders (policy-makers, local systems and schools leaders) who are wisdom seekers, committed to developing their own thinking and capacity, as well as that of others. Pupils are recognised as co-learners, not as passive recipients of the reform process, parents as educators, and teachers as co-agents of change. Reform depends on three interlocking elements: the skills, capacity and commitment of educators within school and at the local system level; the enthusiasm and commitment of pupils and parents; and the ability of politicians to create the right legislative framework. In the last analysis, however, its success will be judged by the ways in which real changes in teaching and learning take place.
Notes

1 The project, *Effective Leadership in a Time of Change*, included school leaders from England, Scotland, Denmark and Australia. Members of the Research Team were: Associate Professors Chresten Kruchov, Lejf Moos and Johnny Thomassen (The Royal Danish School of Educational Studies, Copenhagen); Professors Kathryn Riley and Pat Mahoney (The Roehampton Institute, London, England); Professor John MacBeath, Joan Forrest and Jenny Reeves (University of Strathclyde, Scotland); Associate Professor Nell Dempster (Griffith University, Brisbane) and Lloyd Logan (Queensland University, Australia). Findings from the project are reported in MacBeath, Kruchov & Riley, 1995; MacBeath, Moos & Riley, 1996; MacBeath, 1998; Riley, 1998a and b; Riley & MacBeath, 1998.

2 Peter Robinson has argued that there is no evidence that boosting national attainment in maths will improve national economic performance. He derives this conclusion from an examination of the relationship between student attainment in international tests of literacy, numeracy and science and the economic performance of countries which have participated in the tests. Taking, for example, the scores for 13 year olds in 16 countries which took part in the Second International Mathematics Study in 1992–1993, he examines the economic growth in those countries over the subsequent decade, and concludes that the ‘impressive’ economic growth rates of countries such as Hong Kong and Thailand, in the decade up to 1997, are not a product of past superior attainment in mathematics. The relative improvement in the mathematical attainment of Hong Kong students, for example, followed economic growth, rather than precipitated it.

3 For example, the ‘opt out’ provision which allowed schools to vote (through a parental ballot) to become independent of the local education authority, and to be nationally funded as a grant-maintained school, has been rescinded by the 1997 Labour Government. The ‘assisted places scheme’ which provided state sponsorship for a small number of children to attend private education has also been withdrawn. However, the private sector now seems set to play an increasing role and the pace of education reform has accelerated. A swath of reforms have been introduced which Ministers argue offer ‘new’ solutions to old and intractable problems: a claim which, in the case of one particular initiative, Education Action Zones, has been disputed (Riley & Watling, 1999).

4 The Research team members for the project, *The Changing Role and Effectiveness of the LEA*, are Professor Kathryn Riley, David Rowles, Dr Jim Docking, Ron Letch, Elle Rustique-Forrester and Ian Monk from the Centre for Educational Management, the Roehampton Institute, London. Findings from the project are published in Riley, Docking & Rowles, 1998, 1999 and in press.

5 The video *Young Voices of Greenwich* was produced for the London Borough of Greenwich in 1998 by Susie Grant Productions, as part of a local education reform initiative. Professor Kathryn Riley from the Roehampton Institute, London was the lead adviser and co-ordinator of the project.

6 Cognitive psychologists in the UK have concluded, for example, that the General Certificate of Education (the external examination taken by the bulk of 16 year-olds) is largely a test of memory (TES, 1999a, p. 1).

7 That is, those schools which have failed the national inspection carried out by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

8 In 1997, grant-maintained secondary schools received an average of £32,000 for professional development, compared with £12,000 for locally maintained schools (McMahon, 1998). With a change of government in 1997, there has been a convergence of funding between grant-maintained and locally funded schools (note 3).

9 Paul Begley (1999) has argued that, as school principals increasingly encounter value
conflict, they need to develop a sophisticated understanding of the interaction between personal values and the collective valuation process.

10 Referred to in Ribbins (1999).

References


310


Times Educational Supplement (1999a). IQ has no impact on exam success. 18th June, p. 1.


TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

Expanding educative possibilities

Charles F. Webber


Abstract

This report describes the evolution of a technology-mediated leadership development network from its origin as a local e-mail discussion group to a loosely-coupled international leadership web. The report includes a description of the components of the network, which include face-to-face and online cross-role discussion groups, annual seminar series, graduate degree programming, an online refereed journal, summer institutes, university partnerships, and cross-cultural research. In addition, an explanation is offered of the challenges that the network poses for understandings of what counts as professional development, university regulations for planning and delivering instruction, communication of research, and teacher-student roles. Then the paper offers a profile of the leadership development network in terms of its professional, role, environmental, and emotional dimensions. Finally, a set of questions is offered for readers interested in planning leadership development networks.

Introduction

The use of technology in leadership development programs pervades university, school district, and professional organizations. Examples of technology-mediated leadership development initiatives abound online. For instance, see the University of Calgary distance-delivery graduate programs[1] the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development online training opportunities[2] and the Australian Council for Educational Administration’s Educational Leaders
Online services. Significantly, these online leadership development programs are not stand-alone projects but parts of well-integrated networks. Further, online leadership development provides readily accessible information and networking opportunities for large numbers of school leaders worldwide.

What is the actual function of technology in these networks? It could be said, perhaps naively, that technology is but a tool that allows individuals and groups who share common interests to communicate and learn together. However, Macpherson (2000) cautioned that technology is not a neutral force but one that can fundamentally reshape how individuals interact and think. Bates (2002, p. 141) went further to say that “there is little doubt that innovations in technology are facilitating many of the processes of globalization” and pointed to what he claimed are associated challenges of privacy loss, distribution of misinformation, and even criminal behavior. Similarly, Winsboro (2002, p. 42) warned of potential problems associated with intellectual dishonesty, content compatibility with electronic formats, and ability to deal with sensitive issues such as race and multiculturalism.

Other perspectives suggest that we be wary of the “uncritical acceptance of the status quo” and consider that technology may provide opportunities for individuals and groups to envision new possibilities for how they might live their lives (Harris, 2002, p. 38). For instance, organizational structures that once supported traditional educational environments are being reengineered, because of technology, to facilitate student-centred learning that includes both synchronous

![Diagram](image)

Figure 1 Change Agency network linkages.
and asynchronous learning (Macpherson, 2000) that may allow learners to acquire deeper understandings and increased problem-solving capacity.

Glickman (1998) claimed that Western democracy is based on the idea that we all are capable of educating ourselves if we are able to participate actively with knowledge. This complements Harris’ (2002) suggestion that if technology is to benefit our communities then it “must enhance rather than reduce the public space in which people discuss, in an ethical manner, matters of communal interest.” In fact, the features of Glickman’s (1998) “pedagogy of democracy” suggests that leadership development networks, electronic or otherwise, might best be characterized by active engagement, choice, responsibility for others, public demonstration of learning, and both individual and group work.

In short, technology has emerged as a major factor in leadership development programs worldwide and this is reshaping how educational leaders learn, interact, and conceptualize their professional practices. Indeed, the traditional venue for formal educational leadership development programs – the university – is being challenged to reengineer both conceptual and physical infrastructures in order to cope with increasing demands from the field to become “dual-mode organizations” (Macpherson, 2000, p. 276) that provide both face-to-face and technology-based learning opportunities. Therefore, it is important that the impact of technology use in leadership development initiatives be examined carefully so that pitfalls can be avoided and benefits maximized.

Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to describe the evolution of one technology-mediated leadership development network from its origin as a localized e-mail discussion group based at a single Canadian university to a loosely-coupled international leadership web (see Figure 1). The components of the network are described, which include face-to-face and online cross-role discussion groups, ongoing seminar series, graduate degree programming, an online refereed journal published by a major academic press, summer institutes, university partnerships, and cross-cultural research. In addition, an attempt is made to explain the challenges that the network poses for understandings of what counts as professional development, university regulations for planning and delivering instruction, communication of research, and teacher-student roles. The paper closes by offering a profile of the leadership development network and by speculating on the broader educative possibilities for this and similar networks.

Limitations

The content of this report is subject to several limitations. First, it is written from the perspective of an active participant who may be too closely associated with the network to assess critically all of its dimensions. Second, this report is meant only to highlight possibilities and cautions for others who are interested in
technology-supported leadership networks, rather than to present a framework that could or even should be replicated in other contexts. In addition, the learning network exists primarily, though not exclusively, in Western nations and, therefore, its strengths and limitations may be specific to Western culture. Finally, limits to the length of this report demand that this report offer mainly an overview of the learning network and that a description of how and why the various network components emerged be offered elsewhere. Therefore, readers are directed to earlier and forthcoming descriptions, cited throughout this report, of specific network components.

The Change Agency Listserv: a catalyst for educative leadership

The electronic mail discussion group called the Change Agency Listserv[4] originated in 1994 with a request made by a small group of teachers and junior school administrators from a large Canadian urban school district for an online discussion group that would promote dialogue about their educational practices. Use of the resulting listserv quickly spread from the original group to members of other local educational organizations. Shortly afterwards graduate students were offered the opportunity to participate in the listserv for partial course credit. Over time the Change Agency evolved from a small listserv for teachers to a virtual discussion group for teachers, principals, graduate students, parents, school trustees, and department of education personnel. As well, some colleagues and their students from North America and abroad began to participate in the listserv.

Over the next few years, the Change Agency became a catalyst for several related local and international leadership development initiatives:

- Online academic refereed journal. As the Change Agency gained strength, several individuals associated with the listserv decided to create a free online academic refereed journal that focused on educational leadership. The journal was named the *International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning (IEJLL)*[5] and it began publication in 1997. Recently, the journal became the University of Calgary Press’ first online academic journal, after a rigorous cross-disciplinary review process. Significant numbers of the Change Agency Listserv’s international subscribers participate in editorial activities associated with the *IEJLL*, while the Change Agency occasionally is the forum for discussions among *IEJLL* readers.

- Centre for Leadership in Learning seminar series. Change Agency subscribers participate annually in an online needs assessment that is used to plan a face-to-face seminar series sponsored by the Centre for Leadership in Learning (CLL), an educational consortium housed at the University of Calgary. The same needs assessments also have been used successfully to plan and conduct international online seminars that parallel the face-to-face CLL seminars.
• Summer institutes. Participants in an annual University of Calgary summer institute use the Change Agency Listserv to conduct pre- and post-seminar online discussions that involve international participants in addition to summer institute registrants.

• Travel studies. Graduate students at the University of Calgary who participated in recent travel studies to New Zealand and to the United Kingdom used the Change Agency network prior to arriving at their destinations to dialogue with their hosts about the issues they were to discuss later in face-to-face formats. The information that was shared and the bonds that formed online meant that travel study participants and their international hosts were able subsequently to engage in face-to-face exchanges that were richer and more productive than they might otherwise have been. Indeed, the online and face-to-face academic activities resulted in professional relationships that continue to the present.

• Online graduate courses – In 1999 two online graduate courses in educational leadership were designed with the help of a colleague. One course provides an overview of school reform in Western nations and the other course addresses school-based management issues. Students in both courses use the Change Agency Listserv to gain insights from dialogue with individuals who represent several different educational roles. In fact, students in the school reform overview course plan and host an online seminar series that in the past has drawn over 300 participants from a wide variety of countries. As this paper is being written, a colleague and co-researcher from New Zealand is teaching the University of Calgary school reform course while still based at the University of Waikato.

Several of the leadership development initiatives described above have been the focus of on going studies that have informed the growth of the leadership development network linked by the Change Agency network. For instance, a four-week discussion on the Change Agency Listserv among graduate students in educational leadership from the University of Calgary in Canada and the University of Waikato in New Zealand led to the development of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model (Webber and Robertson, 1998). A CLL seminar series in 1998 led to a set of provocative questions and insights into public education garnered during a period of rapid change in education in Alberta (Spencer, 1999). An analysis of a Canada-New Zealand cross-cultural travel study program for graduate students allowed the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model to be clarified and expanded (Robertson and Webber, 2000). These reports and others (Robertson and Webber, in press; Spencer and Webber, 2000; Webber, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 2000, in press; Webber and Robertson, in press) document the evolution of the virtual and face-to-face network components linked by the common thread of the Change Agency and they underscore the centrality of research in the evolution of the web of leadership development projects.
International influences have pervaded the leadership development activities described previously. Graduate students, professors, and other educators from a wide range of countries have been actively engaged in Change Agency discourse. In turn, some of the international participants have formalized their linkages to the Change Agency’s host university by updating or entering into official partnerships between the University of Calgary and others such as the University of Waikato in New Zealand, the University of South Australia, and the University of Amsterdam. Such partnerships allow for cross-institutional recognition of graduate programming for credit toward the attainment of degrees at students’ home universities. Less formal internationalization is clearly evident in the composition of the IEJLL editorial committees and the countries of origins for IEJLL authors[6], speakers’ lists for CLL programming[7], travel study destinations[8,9], emergent cross-university staffing and student registrations, and co-sponsorship of international summer institutes[10].

Network challenges

The challenges that students, colleagues, and the author himself faced as they created the leadership network framework fell into four interrelated areas: structure, procedure, access, and power.

Structure

The structural challenges were in many respects the least interesting parts of the work associated with developing the leadership network. However, ensuring a dependable structure was also perhaps the most critical work, at least on a practical level. Even the first phase of the network, which was the creation of a listserv for a small number of individuals, depended on our access to a stable server that was operational 24 hours a day. Dependable computer access grew increasingly important as the network expanded to include the international online journal and Web-based graduate courses. After a variety of possible servers were tried, we came to rely on the university’s computer network for reliable listserv software, e-mail accounts, and archival space.

Besides access to a computerized infrastructure, software and Web site maintenance quickly emerged as a significant issue. Graduate students, university technical staff, and contracted designers all have supported the network by coordinating listserv subscription lists, designing and updating Web sites, assisting with the creation of support materials such as CDs, and formatting online materials. In addition, enough had to be learnt about maintenance to be able to update Web sites and manage listserv software independently.

In the early phases of the network, the speed of Internet access was not an important issue. Telephone lines and computer modems provided satisfactory service for listserv subscribers using simple e-mail software to exchange text-based messages. However, as the network began to include, for example, Web-
based graphics and audiovisual components, high-speed Internet access became more important. Some network participants still rely, at least at home, on low-speed connections but it is expected that very soon network participants will find that high-speed access is a necessity.

The implications of the structural challenges of technology-mediated leadership networks for equity and social justice are clear. Simply because of cost, network access is extremely limited at this point for individuals in remote areas and in developing nations. Equally limited access is clearly the case for the poorer members of even wealthy societies.

Interestingly, women are well represented as Change Agency Listserv subscribers, *IEJLL* editorial committee members, *IEJLL* authors, and participants in both online and face-to-face seminars. The strong representation of women may be due in part to the demographics of the graduate student population at the university and others such as the University of Waikato in New Zealand whose students regularly participate in Change Agency-related programming.

Related to graduate student participation in online dialogue, summer institutes, seminar series, and travel studies, several additional structural challenges emerged that will be profiled in a forthcoming paper (Webber and Robertson, in press). These include, among others, registrar’s offices deadlines, immigration rules that restrict who universities can hire, course approval procedures, institutional “ownership” of students, legal requirements for cross-university partnership agreements, prolonged university governance procedures, and tuition fee regulations.

**Procedure**

As discussed earlier, the Change Agency Listserv linked a large number of related programs. Despite its connective capacity, however, several of its limitations should be noted. First, Change Agency conversations, for which students sometimes receive graduate credit, occasionally become pedantic as students strive to demonstrate their ability to cite academic references and to critically analyze broad issues. Interestingly, the more formal tone of Change Agency postings contrasts with the more informal, practice-oriented conversation on the Leaders’ Net[11] a parallel listserv for school leaders in New Zealand that was modeled on the Change Agency Listserv. Second, the online discussions are influenced heavily by the credential-driven interests of some student participants so readers should not assume that every posting is based on heartfelt interest in the discussion topics. Third, Change Agency participants are likely completely unaware of the unseen influence of, for instance, instructional designers whose technical backgrounds do not prepare them for the learning styles, information needs, or time limitations of current and emerging educational leaders. The result is that the assumptions guiding Web site design, for example, may conflict occasionally with the realities of users.

A continuing challenge arose in the form of the academic schedules of
educational institutions in the northern and southern hemispheres. School terms that overlapped in varying patterns, conflicting due dates for grade submission to registrars’ offices, asynchronous vacation and work schedules all mitigate against cross-hemispheric collaboration in technology-mediated learning networks. Even the loss of one shared workday a week because of the international date line reduces the ease with which North Americans and Australasians can collaborate online.

A surprising early challenge arose in relation to the widespread need for many teachers in Western nations to submit an annual professional development plan. When a Canadian teacher submitted to her principal a professional growth plan that included participation in online seminars, her principal returned it for revision noting that online dialogue was not acceptable as professional development. The teacher persevered with the online seminars but was required to participate in complementary face-to-face programs so that her school administrator could perceive her professional development plan as “real.”

In summary, the procedural challenges that we have faced to this point in the evolution of the Change Agency-related network demonstrated that only some professional development activities “count” for at least a few of our colleagues. Further, the cost of participation in technology-mediated programming, the university-driven dialogue, and the unseen influence of technicians on, for example Web design and interactive capacity, mean that there are limits to what we can expect of online networks as we currently know them.

**Access**

As stated earlier, access to participation in the Change Agency or other technology-supported vehicles for professional and academic discourse is limited for some. The reasons for limited access fall into several domains: cost, role responsibilities, urban and rural network inconsistencies, time, and culture.

First, the issue of cost is not insignificant. Although participation in an e-mail discussion group is not reliant on highly sophisticated equipment and a high-speed Internet access, some of the information that is discussed on the change does require this. For instance, postings regularly contain references to articles, news briefs, government policy documents and databases that are accessible only with the help of a relatively recent Web browser, a high-speed Internet service provider, and a computer with high-speed processing capacity. Participating in an online discussion with no access to the material that informs the conversation could not be particularly useful or gratifying for anyone. For many Change Agency participants the cost of access is borne by their employers while others are able to afford access costs on their own. Clearly, cost is a factor that excludes the voices of many both in Western and developing nations.

Role responsibilities reduce access for others to the dialogue associated with participation in the Change Agency and its associated seminar series, summer institutes, travel studies, and research projects. For instance, some women with
family responsibilities have little or no time outside of their workdays to engage in professional dialogue. Therefore, it is surprising that the majority of Change Agency subscribers, for example, is comprised of women, although it should be noted that most are relatively privileged women with at least middle-class incomes or, in the case of graduate students, the capacity to earn such incomes.

Another group that has reported a reluctance to participate is made up of senior educational leaders (Webber, 1995c). They attribute their online and face-to-face discretion to their fear that their leadership capacity could be limited if they are perceived to be less than articulate or informed. It should be noted that limited time to participate is also an access issue for senior educational leaders.

Inconsistent access to electronic networks for rural and urban dwellers influences whose voices are heard in the Change Agency. Initially at least, subscribers were mainly urban professionals who had Internet access through their work environments. As residents of rural communities in many countries gained access to at least telephone-based Internet access, their voices began to appear in the online dialogue. As a result, postings now regularly include reference to issues that are either specific to rural and isolated communities, or they are shared concerns.

Perhaps less conspicuous are the ways in which network conversations are culturally specific, to the extent that subscribers from non-Western countries tend to drop into the listserv only for short periods and to limit their participation. Offered explanations refer to astonishment at how Western participants can lament their access to resources when their counterparts in developing nations can only imagine some of the educational resources that are available in Western contexts. In contrast, cultural limitations seem not to apply to 416 subscribers (as of October 4, 2001) to the online journal affiliated with the Change Agency. Online subscribers to *IEJLL* represent an extremely wide array of nationalities and languages.

Despite the different ways that access to network dialogue can be limited for some, it is also important to note how the network has increased access for others. The layered participation in the Change Agency, seminar series, and summer institutes means that some educators participate for professional development purposes, some parents and community members participate in order to gain access to knowledge and opinions held by other educational stakeholders, and some graduate students participate because they can gain partial university course credit as a result. The result is an unconventional participatory mix that is not possible in many other formats.

**Power**

It has been informative to observe the ebb and flow of dialogue among network participants and to note that power is often an important part of what people say and how they say it. It has been observed that many components of the online discourse could be described as reactive rather than proactive. Examples include
participants who use the electronic context to lament the growth of technology-mediated learning environments at the perceived loss of meaningful human interactions, to argue that educators should not be subject to shared governance mandates, to suggest that public accountability mechanisms are meant to control teachers or students, and to decry the expansion of private, home, and charter school options for students and parents. Many of these arguably reactionary stances could be attributed to a defensiveness that arises from an apparent loss of control or status, while others could be seen as a normal human reaction to unsought educational change.

Less common but as powerful are the postings and presentations from individuals who wonder about possibilities, question current policies and practices, and pose challenging alternatives. Examples include the enterprising principal who markets her school to international students so that she can generate revenue to subsidize the rest of her school’s operations, and the international schoolteacher who challenged participants in North America to understand that there are numerous successful alternatives to traditional Canadian or American public schools. Similarly, an American home-schooling parent instigated a strong debate about the ways public schools deny voice, access, and success to disadvantaged students and their families.

Power or, more precisely, the desire to have more of it may have been a motivator for the occasional participant who has used the Change Agency, for example, as a vehicle to try to accumulate disciples of one kind or another. One example, was a Canadian school trustee who used the listserv to gather information and vocabulary to assist in her re-election bid. Another example was an American participant who seemed to be an itinerant sessional instructor who wrote from a postsecondary institution address that changed every few months. This person used the Change Agency to espouse his Marxist beliefs about education to all. Other power ploys have been less obvious and perhaps more acceptable: the teacher who wished to increase his visibility within the educational community while applying for leadership positions, and the teacher education student who thought that a Change Agency and seminar series presence would help her applications that had been submitted to some of the school superintendents who also participated in these activities.

Interestingly, the Change Agency has served to level the power often associated with role. For instance, a beginning graduate student unwittingly challenged a renowned American academic over the latter’s theoretical stance. The student was aghast when informed by her peers that she had just told someone they regularly cited in their papers that she was misled in her thinking. Importantly, the student-guru exchange that resulted was a dialogue between equals and the debate-limiting deference that graduate students too often give to senior academics was not evident (Webber and Robertson, 1998).
Educative possibilities

The challenges of the Change Agency notwithstanding, the network that it fostered has created numerous educative possibilities. The network offered increased participant diversity, the potential to promote alternative thinking, the identification of voices that are noticeably absent in most educational debates, and new understandings of professional growth.

Participant diversity

Perhaps the most useful insight gained from my participation in the Change Agency and its larger network is the power of so-called “low tech” software to connect individuals, groups, and institutions. The result is a “boundary-breaking” network (Webber and Robertson, 1998) that crosses the borders normally imposed by role, politics, and institutional regulations. Without the support of the Change Agency Listserv, much of the associated network activities could not happen. For instance, the seminar series’ needs assessment is conducted primarily on the listserv; summer institute participants grapple online with professional challenges before and after the institutes; and travel study registrants “bond” before and after their face-to-face meetings. Further, the international university partnerships that support the network are a direct result of individuals “meeting” on the Change Agency or through colleagues who are Change Agency subscribers. As well, most of the editorial board members associated with the International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning are current or occasional Change Agency subscribers or associates of subscribers.

A second important observation mentioned earlier and highlighted here is that, contrary to usual expectations, most of the participants in the network described in this paper are women. This network feature is worth closer examination. That is, what are the factors that led to this gender imbalance? Are the numbers of participants who are women and the voice of women in network activity proportional?

Another aspect of diversity that warrants further examination is the impact of cross-role participation. That is, what are the benefits and limitations of participation by teachers, principals, students, parents, community members, department of education staff, graduate students, and professors? Participants regularly report that they appreciate cross-role dialogue but the impact on practice and, importantly, on the lives of students is not entirely clear.

The promise of the network to promote discourse among diverse individuals and groups notwithstanding, there is no easy or obvious solution to the problem of socioeconomic limitations to participation in network activities. One possible solution may grow from the proliferation of cellular telephones in both developed and developing nations. That is, nations such as Kosovo, Romania, and China appear to have abbreviated the transition from limited access to telephone communication, to relatively widespread telephone access through the
installation of a nation-wide grid of overhead telephone lines, to heavy use of cellular telephones. Therefore, one wonders if Internet access will follow a similarly shortened transitional period as a result of advances in wireless technology and high-speed processors in hand-held and portable computers.

Alternative thinking

Further to the tendency noted earlier in this paper for network participants to voice conservative or even reactionary stances, it also is entirely possible that we are in the stage of the social change process where we lament the passing of the familiar and resist the effort required to engage change. Perhaps we need to go through the lamentation phase before we can begin to consider how familiar structures and organizational frameworks can be altered or discarded as new and more promising possibilities emerge.

Promising signs of a shift to engagement with possibilities are manifested in some network programming. For example, a recent online exchange among students taking the same graduate course while residing in several different nations suggests that there is increasing recognition of the utility of network activities for educators working in rural or remote communities, for professionals with young children whose study time during regular business hours is extremely limited, or for individuals who either cannot afford or will not tolerate long treks in urban or rural communities to participate in more typical evening graduate classes.

Absent voices

Students both in and out of school-sponsored activities constitute one group whose voice is seldom heard in educators’ professional growth activities. Therefore, the Change Agency network programming has provided some but insufficient opportunities for educators, policy makers, and community makers to talk directly with students who are currently in school and those who have elected to leave school early. These student-related events easily have been among the most powerful of all Change Agency network programs. For instance, a seminar several years ago featured a troupe of high school actors who, with the help of their teacher, had written a play that addressed the construct of teacher professionalism. Their powerful play moved the audience to levels of discussion that had not occurred in previous seminars. Due entirely to the profile they gained at the seminar, the student actors subsequently performed their play at several conferences for school principals, superintendents, and school trustees.

Besides the self-reported endorsement by network participants of cross-role dialogue, there are some groups that participants have not called on adequately to join the discourse. These include representatives of business and industry, the military, and church-affiliated organizations. The Change Agency and its network affords a unique opportunity for these previously unheard voices in conversations about education to become more actively engaged.
New understandings of professional growth

Until recently, professional growth was thought, at least by educators, to be their domain and to include traditional in-service activities such as professional development days, specialist conferences, and curriculum development committees. However, the Change Agency network has allowed for the acceptance of alternative activities, such as online professional growth, shared cross-role learning, and graduate studies to be considered equally legitimate. This type of “layered participation” is unique to the Change Agency network and merits additional study.

Similarly, technology-mediated programming has allowed network participants access to professional growth that is less dependent on space and time (Webber, 2000) than traditional professional development. Therefore, it now is possible and in fact extremely beneficial for participants to engage in joint discussion and research while living and working around the globe.

Finally, the ability of network participants to learn across roles, space, and time, suggests that the educative possibilities of technology-mediated programming are largely untapped. Therefore, it is important that we successfully engage, for example, with the cognitive dissonance that comes from talking with those who conduct their learning and lives differently.

Educative network profile

The preceding sections describe how a relatively unsophisticated communication tool – the Change Agency Listserv – was a catalyst for the formation of an international leadership development network. The network was informal in many respects, loosely-coupled, and fragile. Nonetheless, there was a discernible profile for the network that may evoke possibilities for readers (See Table 1).

Professional dimensions

Perhaps the most significant observation within this section of the network profile is the focus on learning possibilities rather than on technology per se. That is, although the network was supported by technology, learning and learners are the primary foci. Moreover, network activities focused on leadership issues such as accountability, globalization, governance, organizational frameworks, school reform, and instructional leadership, and not on technology concerns like bandwidth, processing capacity, or software upgrades. Obviously, technological capacity was necessary for the network activities to occur and, in fact, the network formed primarily because of technology; however, the technology tended to exist in the background with most network members either unaware of its impact or not particularly interested in discussing it.

Role flexibility emerged as a significant characteristic of the leadership network. That is, traditional leadership roles such as professor, superintendent,
and principal were less clearly defined than in participants’ previous experiences with leadership development. That is, teachers, school students, parents, and community members emerged as information providers and discussion facilitators in both face-to-face and online activities. This meant that participants representing traditional leadership roles were able to move in and out of the role of learner, information gatherer, and decision challenger. Further, the open access to many of the network programs, for example, the Change Agency Listserv and the seminar series, meant that individuals were able to dialogue about significant educational issues with other stakeholders with whom they do not normally interact. To a much lesser extent, participants were able to communicate and learn with individuals from both developing and Western societies.

It should be noted that although network initiatives allowed and in fact encouraged participants to draw on learning derived from their professional practices, theoretical and empirical reports were highly valued and used regularly, e.g. Hargreaves (1997), Levin (2001), and Macpherson et al. (1998). Moreover, the participants’ preferred literature suggested a strong inclination toward future-oriented leadership development rather than to past practices.

**Role dimensions**

The most pervasive and most productive feature of the leadership development network was that it challenged virtually every standardized policy and practice

Table 1: Educatiopic network profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional dimensions</th>
<th>Role dimensions</th>
<th>Environmental dimensions</th>
<th>Emotional dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on possibilities, not technology</td>
<td>Challenger of standardization</td>
<td>Tension between seeking equity and positioning for equity</td>
<td>Passion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Scholar</td>
<td>Learning from but moving beyond the past</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role flexibility</td>
<td>Explorer</td>
<td>Layered participation</td>
<td>Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Entrepreneur</td>
<td>Flexible time and space</td>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical evidence</td>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>Globalization</td>
<td>Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-oriented</td>
<td>Responsible failure</td>
<td>Technological leaps</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open access</td>
<td>Public performer</td>
<td>Serendipity</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>Practitioner</td>
<td></td>
<td>Compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegiality</td>
<td>Translator</td>
<td></td>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

326
of the individuals and organizations it served. For example, the awarding of
graduate credit for participation in various components of network program-
ming, the required collaboration across decision-making bodies in universities
and professional organizations, and even event timetabling to accommodate
participants from different time zones and hemispheres, all challenged how
leadership development has been done in the past. Successfully challenging
these and other standardizations meant that participants filled a large number of
roles at different times that could be characterized by these descriptors: scholar,
entrepreneur, politician, practitioner, and networker. Further, participants had to
translate network practices into a format that colleagues in their respective
organizations could understand and accept.

As expected, all network initiatives were not highly successful. Fortunately, pro-
gramming failures, such as a poorly attended conference that unfortunately coin-
cided with drastic budget cuts to schools and universities in Alberta, Canada, were
viewed as productive so long as reckless risks were not taken and if significant
lessons could be learned and applied to future planning. This network attribute
could be described as “responsible failure.”

Environmental dimensions

Network participants discovered that pervasive school reform over the past
decade in Western nations reduced in stature and utility much of their know-
ledge about how best to cope with educational change. Therefore, lessons from
the past were useful but only minimally so and a future-oriented perspective was
required, especially among program planners.

For example, network participants and planners resisted their tendency to
want to wait for a time when educational stakeholders from more demographic
groups and from developing nations could participate, for example, in online
seminars and travel studies. They resisted because they found that if they did not
gain experience in delivering online seminars for relatively privileged particip-
ants with high-speed Internet connections, then they would not be ready to make
the most of the online multimedia capacity of new software programs like
Centra[12] and vClass[13] that can be used to good effect with lower-speed
Internet connections.

The capacity of learning-related software, such as WebCT[14] and First-
Class[15], led to the discovery of the effectiveness of “layered” participation in
network programming. In addition, very powerful learning occurred when the
benefits of “layered” participation combined with the positive impact of indi-
viduals who were able to participate in learning groups regardless of their time
zone or geographic location.

Finally, network programmers learned to take advantage of serendipitous
opportunities. Some of the strongest and most productive network linkages to
date were the result of a misdirected telephone call, a brief introduction while
one of the network planners was on vacation in The Netherlands, and a response
to a general call for a North American contact that was sent from the United Kingdom to one of the listservs sponsored by the American Educational Research Association[16].

**Emotional dimensions**

The emotional dimension of the leadership development network was in evidence in all of its components. Passionate debates on the Change Agency Listserv and during summer institutes cemented ongoing professional exchanges between participants from Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America. Also, a healthy competition between professional organizations was balanced by the need for them to collaborate in order to deliver high quality seminar series, online publications, Web-based courses, and travel study opportunities. Furthermore, the productive competition-collaboration tension was characterized by creativity, sensitivity, and trust. Indeed, it could be said that the emotional dimension of the leadership development network was one of its strongest features.

**Conclusion**

To close, the Change Agency network provides some evidence that technology-mediated learning has a large educative capacity. To realize that potential, practitioners and theorists alike might consider the following questions:

- How can the Change Agency network components – online dialogue, research studies, seminar series, travel studies, and electronic publication – be adapted to other contexts in useful, defensible ways?
- What are the benefits and disadvantages of participation in networks that are concurrently local, national, and international in scope?
- Is the apparent dominance of the privileged in technology-supported networks defensible?
- How can absent voices be recognized and invited to participate?
- Is there the will to change organizational structures and procedures to allow for technology-supported networking?
- Can educational institutions successfully and effectively incorporate technology-supported learning or will it simply occur without them?
- What is the future of a learning network that fails in the long term to involve both genders, at least the majority of community voices, and the less privileged among us?

All of these questions apply equally to more traditional learning institutions and networks. However, the incorporation of a technology-supported component changes the focus, magnitude, and audience for these important issues.
Notes

1 http://www.external.educ.ucalgary.ca/gder/distance/index.html University of Calgary distance-delivery graduate degree programs
2 http://www.ascd.org/trainingopportunities.html Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development online training
4 http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~cll/CAN/frameset.htm Change Agency Listserv
5 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~iejll International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning
6 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~iejll International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning
7 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~cll Centre for Leadership in Learning
8 http://www.waikato.ac.nz/education/ New Zealand travel study destination
9 http://www.shu.ac.uk/ United Kingdom travel study destination
10 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~cll/semevnt.html#ev international summer institutes
11 http://www.soe.waikato.ac.nz/elc/leaders.html Leaders’ Net
12 http://www.centra.com Centra
13 http://www.elluminate.com/ vClass
14 http://www.webct.com/ WebCT
15 http://www.firstclass.com/ FirstClass

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329
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**Further reading**

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING—
REENGINEERING ‘MIND SETS’

John West-Burnham


Abstract
This paper argues that for schools to be able to respond to fundamental changes in their environment a profound re-conceptualisation of leadership is necessary. Using Sergiovanni’s notion of a mindscape, the article argues that the current formulations influencing the language of leadership are archaic and inappropriate. Drawing on a range of sources, alternative models are proposed using concepts such as intellectualism, artistry, moral confidence, etc. The article argues for a closer linkage between the language of leadership and the language of learning, in contrast to the vocabularies of management and the curriculum. The overarching theme of the article is that it is only through changing language that we can change conceptualisations and so behaviour.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the extent to which the language that is used in talking about leadership in schools is compatible with the notion that learning is the core purpose of schools. The semantics of leadership are fundamental to the creation of meaning and so to perceptions, expectations and behaviour. For Sergiovanni (1992) this has to do with the mindsapes, or theories of practice, that leaders develop over time, and with their ability, in the light of these theories, to reflect on the situations they face.

(p. 7)

He quotes Diana Lam:

I believe leadership is an attitude which informs behaviour rather than a set of discrete skills or qualities, whether innate or acquired.

(p. 1)
Attitudes and ‘theories of practice’ are constructs derived from a prevailing culture and expressed, reinforced and elaborated into practice through language. The vocabulary, definitions and metaphors of leadership will be powerful forces in formulating attitudes, expressed, as they are, through the symbolism of schools, the content of training and development activities and the discourse that is employed in all the events that inform the culture of a school.

If schools are to respond to the fundamental changes that are taking place in social and economic terms then it is necessary to re-conceptualise leadership. In British society in particular much of the formulation of the concept of leadership is essentially 19th century in origin. People in Britain are subjects, not citizens, and this has a profound impact on how the language of leadership has developed and the way in which associated behaviour is accepted. In essence leadership is expressed in terms of individuality, hierarchy and essentially masculine language.

This has produced a culture of formal accountability, control and dependency. However much this is mitigated by personal characteristics, the fact remains that most schools are essentially archaic in organisational terms, resembling classic bureaucracies which, by definition, lack flexibility, adaptability and the potential to be transformed. If a school, or any organisation, is to be capable of transforming itself then it has to be led by people who are capable of personal transformation. If schools are to reengineer themselves, then one of the starting points has to be reengineering the perceptions of leadership.

One of the most powerful determinants of the mindscape or attitude of leadership is experience. The experience of leadership in many schools is expressed through a number of key concepts, e.g. Headteacher; Senior Management team; Line management; Head of department; etc. Although the practice can and does vary, the underlying mindscape is one of hierarchy, control and linearity. Somewhat paradoxically, this language is combined with that of professionalism. Saul (1992) characterises the situation thus:

The myth of salvation through efficient management is now so strong that no one pays much attention to the premise upon which the new elites are being educated.

Efficiency. Professionalism. A belief in ‘right’ answers, which can only be produced by professionals.

One of the results of this has been a tendency to express leadership as ‘super-management’; leaders are more competent at a wider range of tasks. Thus the model of headship is one of omnicompetence: the skilled classroom practitioner plus curriculum leader, plus technical expert, plus all the manifestations associated with being the figurehead. It is no wonder that so many headteachers seek early retirement or suffer a range of work-related illnesses. The job as historically constituted is almost impossible.
An implication of this view is the formulation of the role of the teacher and the status of the curriculum. Both in terms of content and delivery, the National Curriculum is predicated as a control culture based on the right answers. This is manifested in the often significant confusions between the functions of teaching and learning; the inference, for example, that there is a logical correlation between the two and that efficiency in the former will necessarily lead to the latter taking place. The consequence of a hierarchically based mindset for leadership has a number of implications for the implementation of learning in schools: automatic cohort related chronological progression; time constrained compartmentalisation; assessment based on ‘right’ answers; emphasis on the recording of information.

What emerges is a picture of uniformity, dependence and an implicit definition of learning that is generic and essentially passive. Of course, this is a stereotype and caricature, but the absence of appropriate definitions of leadership and learning, at the very least, allow the possibility of elements of what has been described to be found in schools. However, even if the reality is much softer than implied, there are still serious doubts that the underlying culture described is an appropriate one for the changing context in which schools will have to operate.

Schools are moving into an era which has the potential to challenge every existing premise on which current notions of leadership and learning are posited. Four key trends can be identified.

Firstly, as the self-managing school movement reaches maturity, notably in England and Wales, the level of significance attached to institutional leadership and management will increase. This is a direct function of prevailing models of accountability, which are both personal to the headteacher in terms of legal and contractual issues and specific to the institution in terms of inspections, league tables, etc. Schools are increasingly vulnerable in that the historic support mechanisms and limited public exposure have been replaced by direct answerability. The quality of decision making at school level is becoming increasingly important as mistakes and failures are visited directly on the institutions and its members. Errors or omissions in planning, budgeting, staff deployment, etc. have direct, immediate and specific consequences.

Secondly, and directly related to the first point, is the increasing emphasis being placed on performance at institutional and personal levels. The need to demonstrate value added, value for money, year-on-year improvement, target achievement, etc. has fundamentally altered the view of the school as one stage in a life long process where outcomes may not be manifested for many years. The growing importance being attached to results, usually in a quantitative form, calls into question the view of learning as an iterative process.

Thirdly, these first two trends are taking place in the context of exponential social, economic and technological change. Caldwell and Davies have explored the implications of these trends in more detail elsewhere in this volume; the issue for schools is the extent to which they can legitimatise the way in which they
function in the context of rapid environmental change. It may be that the current formulations of leadership and learning are correct and appropriate, but if education is a function of society and society is changing, then the a priori conditions on which schooling is based at the very least has to be visited and re-affirmed. There is the possibility that schools will become increasingly dysfunctional because they are working to mindscapes which owe more to 19th century maps of Africa (vast tracts of land labelled ‘unexplored’ and then turned into colonies with straight line boundaries totally ignoring local realities) than to the latest satellite images.

Fourthly, and perhaps most significantly, is the growing awareness that the world is not linear, but is rather complex and chaotic. Most prevailing orthodoxies in management and learning assume a linear and controllable universe,

But chaos theory has proved these assumptions false. The world is far more sensitive than we had ever thought. We may harbour the hope that we will regain predictability as soon as we can learn how to account for all variables, but in fact no level of detail can ever satisfy the desire. Iteration creates powerful and unpredictable effects in non-linear systems. In complex ways that no model will ever capture, the system feeds back on itself, enfolding all that has happened, magnifying slight variances, encoding it in the system’s memory—and prohibiting prediction, ever.

(Wheatley, 1992, p. 127)

Almost every teacher will recognise what Wheatley is describing—it is the dynamics of the classroom and staffroom, meetings and lessons, interviews and plans. Most importantly, Wheatley is describing the learning process, where each child in the class is a variable and each child is made up of a complex range of variables that determine how they might learn. Equally, every school leader spends most of her/his time managing unpredictability—yet this is rarely reflected in role descriptions, the deployment of time, organisational structures, etc. One of the reasons why schools can be such demanding places to work in (for children and adults) is that people have to live in a state of permanent tension between the superficial simplicity of management and the deep complexity of learning and leading.

If schools are not to become asynchronous, then the way that a school is led has to become a macrocosm of the learning process, in design terminology, form has to follow function. The language that is used to talk about leadership has to be changed to reflect the world in which leaders can lead and learners can learn. This is an incredibly complex task, but it is one that we regularly engage in; joining the staff of a new school, a club or even getting married all involve developing (or re-aligning) our vocabularies which determine our understanding of the way we are to function, to be together. As Sergiovanni (1996) puts it:

The heart and soul of school culture is what people believe, the assumptions they make about how schools work, and what they con-
sider to be true and real. These factors in turn provide a theory of acceptability that lets people know how they should behave. . . . Efforts to change school cultures inevitably involve changing theories of schooling and school life.

(p. 3)

Theories are mental constructs and as such are the products of our choice of formulations to describe the reality we wish to create. Much of our social understanding is created by ostensive definitions—relating a name to an object or process. The terms leadership and learning continue to be applied to processes which are no longer valid or appropriate. The process of creating meaning is described by St Augustine in the *Confessions* (quoted by Wittgenstein, 1968)

. . . Thus, as I heard words repeatedly used in their proper places in various sentences, I gradually learnt to understand what objects they signified; and after I had trained my mouth to these signs, I used them to express my own desires.

(p. 3)

The rest of this paper is concerned with identifying which words should be used, what are the ‘proper places’ and how everyone in the school can be helped to express their own desires. In the context of (a) the changing world that has already been described and (b) the need for leadership to be reformulated to make it logically consistent with the learning process, the following concepts are proposed:

- intellectualism;
- artistry;
- spirituality;
- moral confidence;
- subsidiarity;
- emotional intelligence.

There are two important points to be made about this list. Firstly there is a danger with any list that a hierarchy of significance will be imposed on it. This is not intended, indeed, the important thing is to see the six elements as interdependent and contributing to a holistic view of the nature of leadership. Secondly these are all elusive concepts, subject to a variety of interpretations and applications.

A helpful metaphor is provided by Valerie Stewart (1990) in *The David Solution*

When Michelangelo looked at the block of marble he was to carve, he looked beyond the outside and saw the shape of the statue he was to create. He could see the real beauty hidden within the waste.

(p. 1)
The process of personal growth, development and change has to start with a visualisation of how we want to be. David was a unique personal creation which can be understood by all who see it. A parallel metaphor for the school might be the building of a cathedral. The patron’s vision had to be interpreted by the architect whose drawings had in turn to be interpreted by a wide variety of skilled workers. The minutiae of specific tasks were held together and made meaningful by an overarching vision which had to be understood, interpreted and translated into action. In both cases, David and the cathedral, the vision had to be made meaningful through specific intent ‘you just chip away the bits that don’t look like David’ (p. IX); each mullion, gargoyle and piece of stained glass had to be put in place.

If the primary purpose of educational leadership is to facilitate learning, then what follows is an attempt to describe the appropriate components—even the most spectacular flying buttress is eventually rooted in the foundations and secured to the main body of the building. There is a danger in describing the six elements separately—they might be interpreted as being discontinuous whereas the argument here is that they are inter-related elements of a holistic model.

**Intellectualism**

One of the most depressing outcomes of the self-managing schools movement coupled with the introduction of a national curriculum and its associated testing regimes is the increasing emphasis on school leadership and management as a technical skill. Increasing levels of definition, specification and imposed goal setting have served to diminish the creative and critical components of leading and managing. Prescription of the right answers and associated models of accountability may have contributed to the creation of an accepting and conformist culture. Giroux (1988) argues for teachers as ‘transformative intellectuals’ because

> The category of intellectual is helpful in a number of ways. First, it provides a theoretical basis for examining teacher work as a form of intellectual labour, as opposed to defining it in purely instrumental or technical forms. Second, it clarifies the kinds of ideological and practical conditions necessary for teachers to function as intellectuals. Third, it helps to make clear the role teachers play in producing and legitimating various political, economic and social interests through the pedagogies they utilise. By viewing teachers as intellectuals, we can illuminate the important idea that all human activity involves some form of thinking.

(p. 125)

The assertion of the role of teacher as intellectual is essential if the educative and transformational role of schooling is to be refined and strengthened. At no point in the development of educational practice—whether at national policy
level or decisions about learning strategies in schools and classrooms—are there uncontroversial decisions. The process of being an educator is the process of making decisions, of choosing and interpreting the outcomes in ideological and practical terms. Policies may be prescribed at a variety of levels, but the implementation of those policies involves ‘forms of knowledge, language practices, social relations and values that are particular selections and exclusions from a wider culture’ (p. 126). Decisions as to modes of practice involve the conscious legitimisation of specific options; that legitimisation has to be an intellectual process if it is not to be reductionist, bureaucratic and a denial of the social purposes of education as opposed to training.

A further dimension to the concept of the ‘teacher-as-intellectual’ is that it is very difficult to see how the notion of the ‘reflective practitioner’ can be developed except in the context of an intellectual perspective. Reflective practice implies the ability to conceptualise, analyse, establish causal relationships, draw conclusions, etc. These qualities are at the heart of effective pedagogic practice, just as they are central to the learning process and therefore have to be axiomatic to any notion of leadership.

Said (1996) argues that one of the greatest barriers to the true functioning of the intellectual is the ‘attitude’ of professionalism:

> ... thinking of your work as an intellectual as something you do for a living, between the hours of nine and five with one eye on the clock, and another cocked at what is considered to be proper professional behaviour—not rocking the boat, not straying outside the accepted paradigms or limits, making yourself marketable and above all presentable, hence uncontroversial and unpolitical and ‘objective’.

(p. 74)

He goes on (pp. 76–83) to identify four characteristics which mark out the true intellectual:

- love for, and unquenchable interest in, the larger picture;
- making connections;
- refusing to specialise;
- caring for ideas and values.

Said argues that the most appropriate counter to the imperatives of specialisation, expertise, power and authority is that

The intellectual today ought to be an amateur, someone who considers that to be a thinking and concerned member of a society one is entitled to raise moral issues at the heart of even the most technical and professionalised activity . . .

(p. 82)
For leaders in schools Said’s four points offer a powerful parallel between the qualities of leadership and the overarching educative purpose of the school. If leaders function as intellectuals then they are more likely to create a culture in which others are able to function in the same way, even though this might be extremely uncomfortable at times. However, given the moral nature and social significance of the educational process, the development of a critical and creative perspective as an essential component of leadership seems axiomatic.

Artistry

Stewart’s (1990) metaphor of Michaelangelo’s David provides a helpful model of the distinctions to be drawn between aspects of leadership and management. What makes the statue so distinctive is the artistry that transforms the physical material into a powerful image. Management can only function within the context of the vision of the completed work. Equally, the traditional management skills are unable to cope with the complexity of the creative process, they are the tools to facilitate it. Schemes of work, school timetables, etc. are literally pointless if they are not set within the context of a vision of the school as a learning community.

The leader as artist is thus a central notion to the process of realisation—translating ideals into concrete outcomes. Leaders need three qualities that are found in artists—vision, creativity and the ability to communicate. Much has been written on the centrality of vision to quality, school improvement and school effectiveness. However, it is unlikely that any school can have a vision per se, it has to be a school understanding which is initially individually articulated.

The process that leads to the articulation of the vision is a complex one. In discussing the origins of the creative process Gardner (1993) argues

At first accepting the common language or symbol system of the domain, each creator finds soon enough that it proves inadequate in one or more respects . . .

. . . because the creative individual is dissatisfied with an ad hoc solution or because the particular problem can only be solved by a fundamental reorientation . . .

(p. 33)

Given the context that schools are increasingly having to function in and the complexity of creating a learning organisation, it is essential that leaders are capable of the ‘fundamental reorientation’; conceptualising a new paradigm. This process is well known in the arts and sciences—Michaelangelo, Beethoven, Darwin, Einstein, etc. Similar qualities may well be appropriate to respond to the changing demands on schools. Reference to the intellectual giants of Western culture may be intimidating, each is unique (and male) and there are
25,000 schools in Britain! However, it is possible to argue for artistry and creativity to be given higher significance in our understanding of what constitutes the elements of leadership. According to Henry (1991)

Change is occurring too fast for quantitative extrapolation, rather we will have to re-open the part of us that ‘knows’ in some other way; the sure judge with the courage to risk, the imagination to challenge, the sensitivity to know when to act and whom to involve.

(p. XI)

For Henry creativity is

... a thinking process associated with imagination, insight, invention, innovation, ingenuity, intuition, inspiration and illumination.

(p. 3)

What is highly significant about this listing is that it has much in common with what happens when people learn—the creative process is one of understanding a new phenomenon and this applies equally to student, teacher and headteacher. However, if the latter is managing rather than leading, the outcomes are more likely to be replication, reiteration, reinforcement and resignation.

There is an obvious tension between the creative individual and the needs of any organisation—the need for some stability in order to support innovation. Kao (1996) uses a musical analogy, jazz improvisation, to examine the potential conflict:

A well-managed enterprise can’t survive without some sheet music. It allows the management of complexity, without which the modern symphony orchestra... would degenerate into cacophony. Most large-scale human interactions require their specific blue-prints, rituals, road maps, scripts, whatever, but they also require improvisation.

A detailed examination of the process of creativity is outside the remit of this discussion. The essential points to make are its centrality to appropriate models of leadership for learning and reengineering and the fact that it can be developed in individuals.

The real reason why we have done so very little about creativity is very simple. We have not understood it at all. We have not understood the process of ideation. We have not understood creativity because it is impossible to do so in terms of the passive information universe... No matter how hard we try in the wrong universe, we shall not understand creativity.

(de Bono, 1991, p. 218)
If we are in the ‘wrong universe’ with regard to creativity then the chances are that we are inhabiting the wrong universe with regard to leadership and learning. A very high warp factor may be needed to bring about the paradigm shift required.

The final element of artistry is the ability to communicate the new insight or vision. This assumes a sophisticated level of competence in order to bridge the gap between vision and understanding. The first performance of Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* produced a riot in the audience. Stravinsky’s vision was not understood and so not accepted. Many innovators have experienced a similar response—although riots in staff meetings are mercifully rare. Any product of a creative process will challenge existing norms and force new ways of thinking. In an educational context the issue of effective communication cannot depend on the passage of time to gain acceptance. The leader as artist has to educate her/his audience, to help them learn and understand and in this respect is no different to the effective teacher.

**Spirituality**

One of the limitations of competence approaches to management is that they miss the holistic view of the ‘person’. Any discussion of the qualities of leadership has to address what is usually described as the ‘spiritual’, although this is an unsatisfactory word as it is not proposed to advocate a metaphysical or transcendental component *per se*. What is important is the recognition that many leaders possess what might be called ‘higher order’ perspectives. These may well be, and often are, represented by a specific religious affiliation. However, these perspectives may come from a range of sources—Covey (1992) refers to them as principles and characterises them thus:

> Principles are deep, fundamental truths, classic truths, generic common denominators. They are tightly interwoven threads running with exactness, consistency, beauty, and strength through the fabric of life.

> . . . we can be secure in the knowledge that principles are bigger than people or circumstances, and that thousands of years of history have seen them triumph, time and time again.

(p. 122)

Such principles are necessary for self-understanding, they are the means by which the individual is able to contextualise herself or himself in a chaotic, complex and often bizarrely contradictory world. A personal ‘world view’ is the basis of self-awareness, interpretation and an essential prerequisite to the process of reflection that is the key to personal learning and so to growth through transformation.

Most educational leaders will experience failure, disappointment, frustration, rejection and hostility at some time during their professional lives. The lack of a
set of fundamental principles makes such reverses almost impossible to bear and may actually give rise to acute dysfunction. When faced with personal rejection we can either seek to reaffirm the principles by which we work or become reactive, pragmatic and expedient. As Gardner (1995) puts it

The creator must in some sense embody his story, although he need not be saintly. . . . The individual who does not embody her messages will eventually be found out, even as the inarticulate individual who leads the exemplary life may eventually come to be appreciated.

(p. 293)

Terry (1993) affirms this emphasis

Faith in authenticity must undergird our actions. To be faithful, we must believe that any authentic act, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant is upheld by the universe as worthy and honourable. Leadership is spiritually grounded.

(p. 274)

In terms of leadership development this area has often been seen as too ‘personal’ or too elusive to be regarded as a significant factor. Yet this is not a matter of seeking to establish religious faith (although a significant number of schools do require that information), but rather ‘what do you believe in?’ and ‘how do you translate your beliefs into action?’.

This implies a degree of sophistication in being able to articulate a belief system and use it as a benchmark in a variety of personal and professional contexts. Given the sensitivity of personal beliefs systems this is an obvious area for development through reflection-in-action and mentoring.

**Moral confidence**

This quality is clearly closely related to spirituality in that a moral code is often the most overt manifestation of any personal belief system. However, because of its significance in the context of school leadership it requires specific discussion.

The term ‘moral confidence’ is used to stress the importance attached to the capacity to act in a way that is consistent with an ethical system and is consistent over time. This requires confidence in terms of acceptance and understanding of the ethical system and the ability to interpret it in a wide range of situations. Schools are highly complex communities—there are no value-free decisions where the learning of young people is involved. Equally, schools are understood through the actions of individuals—what in the Total Quality movement are known as ‘moments of truth’, actions which are the direct and immediate reflection of a moral code. As Etzioni (1995) expresses it, schools
... provide experiences that tend to have deep educational effects, either positive or negative. Thus the first step towards enhancing the moral educational role of schools is to increase the awareness and analysis of the school as a set of experiences.

(p. 104)

Two issues emerge from this assertion. Firstly the role of leaders in creating the ‘awareness and analysis’, i.e. a morally competent community. Secondly the importance of leaders being able to validate their own actions in explicit moral terms. Sergiovanni (1996) reinforces this when he tells of the need

... to accept as part of our role responsibilities the necessity to practice leadership as a form of pedagogy. Aristotle would suggest that nothing could be more natural for schools since he defined pedagogy as a good; as a virtue.

(p. 96)

‘Leadership as pedagogy’ (or practice what you preach) captures the essence of leadership for transformed schools. At a time of social and moral uncertainty the need for leaders to exemplify not so much a specific code but rather the existence and understanding of a personal ethical framework and the ability to translate it into validated and justified outcomes would seem to be essential. If the school *qua* organisation is going through turbulent times then its moral purpose needs to be clear so that it can be debated, understood and applied. There are numerous issues in schools (child protection, equity, health and safety, access, etc.) which do not permit ambiguity in terms of practice.

The morally confident leader is someone who can:

- demonstrate causal consistency between principle and practice;
- apply principles to new situations;
- create shared understanding and a common vocabulary;
- explain and justify decisions in moral terms;
- sustain principles over time;
- reinterpret and restate principles as necessary.

These attributes might appear to be a ‘counsel of perfection’ and they are undoubtedly demanding. However they relate very closely to the concept of the leader as intellectual discussed above. In essence, moral confidence is the product of a learning process which makes direct use of higher order cognitive skills. The process of becoming and developing as a leader is the process of learning to think and of learning to learn.
Subsidiarity

It is impossible to dance if every joint is locked rigid, it is impossible to have a conversation if those involved only talk in monologues, it is impossible to lead if control is seen as the necessary condition. One of the problems with hierarchies is that they are manifested through increasing accountability, which appears to require increasing capacity to control. At a time of complexity, chaos and rapid change, leadership through control will inevitably produce brittle organisations and brittle people.

The relationship between leadership, hierarchy, power and control is endemic to British organisations. If nothing else it is reflected in the symbols of status—in schools it is manifested in time and space. This apparently endemic view has been powerfully challenged by Charles Handy (1989), who quoted a papal encyclical:

> It is injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of the right order for a large and higher organisation to abrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies.

(p. 100)

This statement is a fundamental and profound challenge to the semantics of leadership in education and in particular the mindscapes which inform the behaviour of headteachers and principals. Subsidiarity confronts the status of headship, the validity of hierarchy and the notion of delegation as the basis of effective leadership. Control and delegation, and the cultural manifestations of seniority, are inappropriate models for organisations that have to change rapidly and that are primarily concerned with learning. Central to the concept of subsidiarity is the notion of trust—willingly surrendering power rather than delegating it and structuring organisations to institutionalise and reinforce trust. As Fukuyama (1995) puts it

> If people who have to work together in an enterprise trust one another because they are all operating to a common set of ethical norms, doing business costs less. Such a society will be better able to innovate organisationally, since the high degree of trust will permit a wide variety of social relationships to emerge...

By contrast, people who do not trust one another will end up cooperating only under a system of formal rules and regulations, which have to be negotiated, agreed to, litigated and enforced, sometimes by coercive means.

(p. 27)

The purpose of leadership in the context of a culture of subsidiarity, or what Handy calls a federal organisation, is not to manage but rather to enable, facilitate, interpret, create meaning and to develop through trust.
**Emotional intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is a problematic concept—to many it is an oxymoron. Goleman (1996) has argued persuasively for the importance of emotional intelligence as a balance, if not an antidote, to the implicit supremacy of cognitive intelligence in the language that is used about individual and organisational life.

The concept is introduced in this paper because schools are places in which emotions play a highly significant role. Relationships between student and student, teacher and student, teacher and teacher, parent and teacher, senior manager and teacher, etc. are often expressed in emotional terms. For institutions so founded on cognition and rationality, most people’s experience of schools is in fact in terms of fear, joy, apprehension, worry, love, hate, grief, jealousy and resentment.

The process of transformation that we are arguing schools will have to go through is likely to increase the range and intensity of emotions. It therefore seems appropriate to argue for an understanding of the place of emotions in the repertoire of qualities desirable in a leader. Goleman quotes Gardner

Many people with IQ’s of 160 work for people with IQ’s of 100, if the former have poor intrapersonal intelligence and the latter a high one. And in the day-to-day world no intelligence is more important than interpersonal.

(p. 42)

Goleman (p. 43) argues that emotional intelligence is made up of five main domains:

1. knowing one’s emotions;
2. managing emotions;
3. motivating oneself;
4. recognising emotions in others;
5. handling relationships.

Developing capability in each of these domains is an intimidating prospect, but as Goleman argues

The underlying basis for our level of ability is, no doubt, neural, but as we will see, the brain is remarkably plastic, constantly learning. Lapses in emotional skills can be remedied.

(p. 44)

The development of emotional intelligence in leaders is perhaps the most complex of all the qualities raised in this paper, but

Imagine the benefits for work of being skilled in the basic emotional
competencies—being attuned to the feeling of those we deal with, being able to handle disagreements so they do not escalate, having the ability to get into flow states while doing our work. Leadership is not domination, but the act of persuading people to work towards a common goal.

(p. 149)

Conclusion

This paper has set out some of the possible variables in developing a new vocabulary for leadership in schools, so influencing the prevailing mindscapes and thus behaviour. If schools are to change in order to respond to a changing world, then a disjointed incremental approach is not appropriate, if for no other reason than the toll it takes. The response to profound externally imposed change (such as the 1988 Education Reform Act in England and Wales) has usually been based on piecemeal approaches derived from professional commitment, e.g. ‘working harder’. This is reflected in the level of demand for early retirement, levels of stress-related illness, etc. Profound and fundamental changes in what has to be done have to be replicated in an equally significant shift in how it is done—and this has to start with the conceptualisation of leadership.

There is, of course, a need for the technical managerial components of leadership to be addressed through appropriate training. However, that training has to be contextualised, set within a mindscape that is responsive to a complex and chaotic world, schools that are focused on learning, individuals that are capable of personal transformation and growth and so able to lead schools for the 21st century rather than the 19th century.

References

LEARNING LEADERSHIP

Part 10

MIDDLE LEADERSHIP
LEADERSHIP OF SCHOOL SUBJECT AREAS
Tensions and dimensions in managing in the middle

Hugh Busher and Alma Harris


ABSTRACT
There are an increasing number of research studies concerned with the realm of middle management in schools. However, few of these studies have adequately defined what might be considered middle management in schools, or have clarified which posts constitute those of middle managers. In addition, these studies have rarely considered the way in which different departmental cultures and structures affect leadership style and departmental performance. This article acknowledges the importance of the role of the head of department in secondary schools in school wide change and outlines some of the tensions and dilemmas facing those who manage from the middle. It considers the leadership tensions facing heads of department in secondary schools and points towards the variety of departmental contexts, structures and cultures in which heads of department, or subject leaders operate. The article offers an analysis of the dynamic between leadership and culture within the departmental context. It concludes by suggesting that heads of department have a major contribution to play in managing cultural change at both the department and whole school level.

Introduction
Research evidence concerning school improvement underlines the importance of focusing change efforts at different levels within the organisation (Fullan 1992; Hopkins et al. 1994; Hopkins et al. 1997). The largest study of differential school effectiveness in the UK highlighted the importance of differences between departments in explaining differences in school performance (Sammons
et al. 1997). It provided evidence that both schools and departments are differentially effective with pupils of different abilities and of different social and ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, the study suggested a need to re-conceptualise school leadership more broadly to include leadership at middle management level. However, as Glover et al. (1998) have argued most recently, the distinction between middle and senior management remains blurred and leadership functions are still not adequately delineated, or defined. Yet, in view of the overwhelming evidence of the influence of departmental performance upon school performance such clarity concerning leadership at middle management level would seem imperative.

Leadership: tensions and dimensions of managing in the middle

One of the fundamental tenets of school effectiveness and school improvement research concerns the powerful impact of leadership. Research findings from diverse countries and school contexts draw similar conclusions (e.g. van Velzen et al. 1985; Ainscow et al. 1994; Hopkins et al. 1994; Stoll & Fink 1996). Essentially, schools that are effective and have the capacity to improve are led by headteachers who make a significant and measurable contribution to the effectiveness of their staff. Whatever else is disputed about this complex area of activity, the centrality of leadership in the achievement of school effectiveness and school improvement remains unequivocal.

This broadening of interest in, and understanding of, the leadership role parallels the pattern of development of leadership theory generally. There has been an increasing emphasis within school development upon the links between leadership and the culture of the organisation. This has led to a move away from the notion of leadership as a series of transactions within a given cultural context towards a view of leadership as transformational, having the potential to alter the cultural context in which people work. This transformational leadership perspective, as Duignan and Macpherson (1992) explain, focuses on the moral values and value-laden activities of a leader and how these are disclosed to other colleagues. Blase and Anderson (1995) argue that leaders acting in this mode try to use power with, or through other people, rather than exercising control over them. Implicit in this view is also notion of shared or devolved leadership activity where leadership activity is not chiefly the preserve of the headteacher.

UK research suggests that subject leaders can make a difference to departmental performance in much the same way as headteachers contribute to overall school performance (Sammons et al. 1996; Harris et al. 1996a & b; Harris 1998). This departmental sphere of influence has been termed the ‘realm of knowledge’ because of the importance of the subject boundary (Siskin 1994). Furthermore, it has been suggested that at the department level there is a major potential and possibility to influence whole school development. Huberman (1990: 5) states:
From the artisan’s logic, I would rather look to the department as the unit of collaborative planning and execution [since] in a secondary school this is where people have concrete things to tell one another and where the contexts of instruction actually overlap.

In hierarchical terms the head of department is a middle manager. He or she is not part of the senior management team, responsible for the overall strategic development of a school, but someone responsible for the operational work of others, namely classroom teachers. Site supervisors and senior office administrators might, along with heads of academic and pastoral departments in secondary schools, also be classed as middle managers, being operationally responsible for overseeing and developing the work of their colleagues.

In schools these organisational hierarchical distinctions are not neatly delineated. Many staff will be involved in a complex switching of roles and lines of accountability between different aspects of their work. For example, most teachers will be responsible to both academic and pastoral heads of department for different aspects of their work. The demands of these two arenas may conflict. Heads of academic departments will also be classroom teachers in their own or other subject areas. Heads of pastoral departments and senior staff will work in subject areas and be accountable for this aspect of their work to academic heads of department.

Within this complex matrix of leadership and accountability, heads of department are increasingly acknowledged to be key figures. Early research into the role of heads of department (Bailey 1973; Busher 1988; Earley & Fletcher-Campbell 1989) was concerned mainly with the responsibilities and time pressures upon heads of department. Most recently, attention has turned towards their leadership role and the relationship between departmental leadership and the differential performance of departments (Bennett 1995; Harris et al. 1995; Turner 1996; Sammons et al. 1997; Harris 1998).

This raises a number of important issues about the leadership role of subject leaders in schools and how they deal with the tensions between different functions of their role. Drawing upon the work of Glover et al. (1998) it is possible to identify four dimensions of the head of department’s work. The first dimension concerns the way in which heads of department translate the perspectives and policies of senior staff into the practices of individual classrooms. This bridging or brokering function, although only perceived by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA 1998) and the Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) as one of the functions of subject leaders, remains a central responsibility. It implies a transactional leadership role, wherein heads of department make use of power—usually ‘power over’ others (Blase & Anderson 1995)—to attempt to secure working agreements with departmental colleagues about how to achieve school and departmental goals and practices. Part of this role is the managing and allocating of resources.

A second dimension focuses on how heads of department encourage a group
of staff to cohere and develop a group identity. The area, or areas, of subject knowledge that the department shares usually defines the boundaries of the group. An important role for the head of department therefore, is to foster collegiality within the group by shaping and establishing a shared vision. This necessarily implies a leadership style that empowers others and that involves subject leaders using ‘power with’ or ‘power through’ other people to generate collaborative departmental cultures (Blase & Anderson 1995). This style of leadership is people-oriented and requires a leadership approach that helps other people to transform their feelings, attitudes and beliefs. Transformational leaders not only manage structure but they purposefully impact upon the culture in order to change it. Hence an important dimension of the head of department’s work is to shape and manage departmental culture.

A third dimension concerns improving staff and student performance. At one level this implies a transactional leadership role for the head of department in monitoring the attainment of school goals and meeting particular prescribed levels of curriculum performance. On the other hand, as Glover et al. (1998) note, it suggests an important mentoring, or supervisory leadership role in supporting colleagues’ development and the development of pupils academically and socially. It also draws on the expert knowledge of heads of department and that of their referent power as sources of power to bring about improvement in practice (French & Raven 1968).

The final dimension of a head of department’s work is a liaison or representative role. This requires them to be in touch with a variety of actors and sources of information in the external environment of the school and to negotiate, where necessary, on behalf of the other members of the department (Bussher 1988, 1992). One aspect of this dimension is in helping departmental colleagues keep in touch with others in their subject area and with the views and needs of colleagues in other school departments. Part of this dimension of the role, then, is representing the views of departmental colleagues to senior staff and other middle managers within the school (Bussher 1992).

These four dimensions of the head of department’s leadership role create both complementary and potentially competing demands. They reflect the complexity of a management role within the middle of a hierarchy and reveal the tensions facing leaders in a middle management position. However, for individual heads of department this role is made even more challenging because of the wide variation in departmental structure and cultures. The very fact that departments vary in size, configuration, status, resource power and staff expertise make the job of each head of department contextually different from that experienced by other heads of department either within the same school, or in other schools. Consequently, to explore fully the tensions and dimensions within this role, we must consider how different departmental cultures affect potential leadership performance.

In analysing departmental cultures so as to understand the problems involved in managing different types of departments, there seem to be four main para-
meters. The first relates to the structural organisational configuration of a department, i.e. size, membership, institutional location and subject affiliation. The second relates to the degree of social cohesion and collegiality within a department. Writers such as Hargreaves (1995) and Hopkins et al. (1994) have demonstrated how the dimensions of ‘social cohesion’ and ‘social control’ can delineate different types of school culture. Consequently, these dimensions are used as tools for exploring the social relationships and processes within a department. The third parameter focuses on the status or esteem in which a department is held. It concerns those socio-political forces which shape the relationship of a department to its wider organisational contexts both within and outside a school. The fourth parameter which invisibly permeates all these other three is that of power: in terms of what constitutes power in social situations (French & Raven 1968; Foucault (in Ball 1990); Siskin 1994), the power imbalance between leaders and followers (Hofstede 1991) and the strategies through which leaders and followers exercise power (Busher 1992; Blase & Anderson 1995), be it formal authority or informal influence.

The following sections explore each parameter in depth. Each section considers a particular set of influences upon departmental culture and explores the implications that emerge for departmental leadership. Collectively, the three sections analyse the dynamic between departmental culture and departmental leadership.

**Departmental structure: implications for leadership**

The realm of academic departments in secondary schools presents a considerable range of organisational differentiation. Departments in secondary schools range from multidisciplinary departments such as design and technology departments, or science departments with many staff in them, to departments staffed by one or two people or even one person (the subject leader) and several part-time staff (e.g. a music department or history department). Furthermore, some larger departments may well have several subject leaders, each with a particular subject specialism, responsible for creating an inspiring vision in their area which fits within the overall vision of a faculty area. In such academic departments (e.g. a humanities, or science department), the head of faculty may supervise the work of a specialist subject area and also have responsibility for co-ordinating the work of the other subject leaders in the area (Kemp & Nathan 1989; Blease & Busher, in press). This suggests that not only do heads of department face competing leadership demands but that they also have widely differing arenas in which to exercise their power.

In secondary schools different departmental structures can be easily defined by size, configuration, staff-membership and subject expertise. Using these defining features, we can identify five departmental types. The first two, and largest, contain many staff and possess generous resources. The first type is the ‘federal’ department, such as science faculties, or humanities departments.
These are likely to contain and support the teaching of several subject areas. Yet these subject areas may work closely together because their subjects and pedagogies are perceived as cognate and their cultures are substantially homogeneous.

On the other hand some large multi-subject departments can be seen as primarily an administrative convenience, as in the case, perhaps, of some design and technology departments. These might be described as ‘confederate’ departments. Here, subject areas are allied together but share little in common. Confederate cultures are likely to be heterogeneous, with individual subject areas creating their own identities that may be in conflict.

A third type of large-scale department is the ‘unitary’ department, defined by a single subject area e.g. English or mathematics. Only one area of subject knowledge would be taught within the unitary department, and this is likely to have strong influence on its culture (Siskin 1994).

Smaller than unitary departments, ‘impacted’ departments also teach only a single subject area. These have very few staff, some of whom are part-time and/or teach other subjects too. They are likely only to have a few rooms in which to teach, and may have relatively small budgets. Although this type of department can be freestanding within a school’s organisational structure— including departments such as music, history and geography—it can also be part of a larger federal department—a biology department in a science faculty, for example.

The fifth type of departmental structure can be termed ‘diffuse’. For example, information technology may have no identifiable base in a school and may be taught by a wide variety of staff under the guidance of a school co-ordinator. It may be very difficult for the subject leader to create a sense of subject identity under these conditions. Consequently co-ordination may fall into a largely technical, instrumental process with the subject leader creating materials for the other staff to use. Such informal administrative processes are likely to be supplemented by infrequent team meetings focusing on predominantly instrumental matters.

These different departmental structures inevitably affect the leadership approaches of a head of department. The extent to which cognate subjects within a federal department actually work together in various strategic and operational ways will depend on the quality of leadership both of the whole faculty and of the semi-autonomous subject areas within it. Other factors likely to affect this process are the demands made upon it by school senior staff and the external environment. The historical development of the department and the formal and informal distribution of power and authority within it will also affect how it works. An implication, however, in the notion of a federal department is that the ‘centre’, held by the department or faculty leader, is sufficiently powerful organisationally to ensure that in key decisions, such as processes of change or resource allocation, the members of the department will work as a unit.

In confederate departments, however, the ‘centre’ is not sufficiently powerful.
to ensure the members of the department work together on key decisions. Consequently, leadership is likely to involve a great deal of micropolitical activity between the allied subject areas. Formal meetings might well be relatively formalised processes of statements of position by leaders of the subject areas, with the real negotiations taking place informally outside the meetings. The management of joint resources, including staff development, is likely to be a tense process, with each subject area making its own arrangements as far as possible.

In unitary departments, leadership is likely to display less obviously some of the more central characteristics of micropolitical activity found in the first two types of departments described. On the other hand, it will still include complementary formal and informal processes of interacting with and co-ordinating the work of staff and pupils. The more effective of these departments are likely to display a well-developed homogeneous culture.

In the smaller impacted departments, many of the dimensions of leadership may be constrained into a network of informal processes. There may be too few staff, or they may have other duties in other departments, to make formal processes worthwhile except as a gesture to the administrative demands of the school. Although the norms and procedures of the department are likely to be strongly upheld by the few full-time staff, they are likely to be held progressively more weakly by those with lesser organisational commitment to it. Leaders of such departments are likely to find themselves in weak positions when negotiating with senior staff.

As departmental structures vary in size, configuration and resource base, so they also differ in the cultural norms and values they establish. As departmental structures are enacted and create formal and publicly accepted rules, so cultures create informal and often implicit rules. Both represent forms of constraint upon the individual, and as such represent statements of power relationships between members of the organisation. However, just as structures are susceptible to both direct and organic change, so cultures are not fixed either. The possibility of creating a new set of norms to replace those of the existing culture is one potential form of departmental and whole school change.

Social cohesion and departments: implications for leadership

It has been consistently argued that unravelling the culture of a department will cast light on how teachers and support staff understand notions of collegiality and collaborative leadership (Ribbins 1992; Busher & Saran 1995; Sammons et al. 1997). Schein (1990: 5) suggests that ‘the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture’, and Siskin (1994) makes a similar claim for departmental leaders. In this respect, heads of department have points of reference and influence that, in some sense, transcend many of the formal structures within the school. Consequently, their leadership style is fundamentally important in shaping the direction and cohesiveness of subject departments.
Siskin maintains that ‘collaborative’, ‘administrative’, ‘dictatorial’ and ‘non-leader’ styles of leadership can be related to department cultures identified using the dimensions of ‘inclusion’ and ‘commitment’. These dimensions can be used to identify different departmental cultures. Hence, it is important to explore the dynamic between departmental structure, culture and leadership style.

Subject departments are not just smaller pieces of the same school social environment, or bureaucratic labels, as Bennett (1995) points out. They are separate worlds, with their own:

... ethnocentric way of looking at things. They are sites where distinct groups of people come together and together share in and reinforce the distinctive agreements on perspectives, rules and norms which make up subject cultures and communities.

(Siskin 1994: 81)

Departmental cultures, then, represent the enacted views, values and beliefs of teachers and support staff about what it means to teach students in particular subject areas within particular institutional contexts. These are moral relationships (Hodgkinson 1991) rather than instrumental ones which exist both between the people in, for example, a subject department, and between them and their surrounding institutional and socio-political contexts. Such cultures will be represented through a variety of cultural artefacts (Samier 1997), including rituals, ceremonies, language and other agreed educational practices which people undertake (Beare et al. 1989). Within given organisational structures, cultures may be collegial, or falsely collegial, termed ‘contrived collegiality’ by Hargreaves (1994); or autocratic, or corporate, or collegial, or fragmented (Busher & Saran 1995). Writers such as Huberman (1990) and Harris (1997) have used various terms and dimensions to produce cultural typologies of subject departments. The main dimensions of the last model are those of ‘departmental maintenance’ and ‘departmental development’ against which the quality of potential change in performance can be plotted.

Using such typologies of departmental culture, then, goes well beyond the Handy (1985) notion of cultural types into an exploration of the micro-ethnography of subject departments. A defining feature of departmental culture in secondary schools has been shown to be the nature and discourse of the academic subject knowledge (Siskin 1994), which provides the focus of identity to a department. This is not merely the structure of school curriculum content, texts and tests, but also includes the values, methodologies of study and foci of work. These elements of its epistemology play a fundamental part in shaping teachers’ individual approaches to teaching and learning and, hence, the departmental culture.

The development of this subject-oriented culture is of key importance in the creation of staff identities. To a teacher it is frequently the subject department, rather than the school, which is seen as the central and immediate unit of organi-
sation (Little 1995). Thus, subject departments often represent the primary point of reference or professional home for most teachers (Siskin & Little 1995), especially those who perceive themselves as subject specialists (Bennett 1995: 52). This process is helped by the subject department often being the most common organisational unit for organising secondary school teaching. Therefore, subject departments exhibit very powerful social relations functions in schools, as Goodson (1996) pointed out. Where teachers spend time together and work together, this can, positively, lead to the development of friendship groups. Conversely, subject departments can become sites of inter-personal rivalry. Where this conflict cannot be diffused through the trust between colleagues (Blase & Anderson 1995; Stoll & Fink 1996) it is likely to degenerate into confrontation or continuous friction. Thus the informal and formal relationships between teachers can create disparate working cultures between and within schools and departments. In the case of the least effective departments, research has indicated how dysfunctional staff relationships within a department can negatively affect departmental culture and performance (Harris 1997, 1998).

People’s connections with the world outside the department and the school will influence both their attitudes to their work and how and how well they carry it out. The range of professional knowledge and skills which people have, and how well they carry out their job (Blase 1995) will affect teachers’ relationships with each other both in the department and in the school. For subject leaders to work effectively with colleagues individually and collectively requires them to develop expertise in transformational leadership and to, themselves, recognise and enact the importance of the moral dimensions of collegial working and leadership (Hodgkinson 1991).

The views on subject knowledge and pedagogy held by their heads of department are, then, of major concern to subject staff. Further, how well middle managers act as transformational leaders and exercise inter-personal skills will affect the extent to which they build a genuine collaborative culture (Blase 1995). Stoll and Fink (1996) cite this as indicative of healthy departments and schools that are likely to bring about improvement in practice.

**Departmental status and the organisational context: implications for leadership**

The third parameter for analysing departmental culture is that of its relationships with its environment. These can be divided into two sectors: those with the internal organisational processes and contexts of a school, and those with a school’s external socio-political environment. The latter can be subdivided into national and local or civic environments, which interact with each other (Barker & Busher 1998).

In the internal organisational context, the quality of relationships of a department with the rest of a school is often manifested by the status in which a department is held for the academic performances it attains. As noted earlier,
although this will be affected by the status of its subject area (Siskin 1994), other status comes from the contribution that it makes to the core purposes of a school. The status a department acquires depends upon the academic and technical performances of the students it teaches, on its contribution to the extra-curricula activities of a school, and on the quality of profile it helps the school to gain with its local community (Bush 1992). Thus, departmental status can be used as a means of gaining extra resources. The department can be an important source of organisational power to those people with access to it.

Subject departments have an administrative function (Goodson 1996) in the functional organisation of secondary schools. They provide the structures and channels for managing the teaching and learning of students and staff. In doing so they tend to serve as arenas for communication between colleagues within the department and as channels of communication between staff in distant parts of a school. In both these aspects, a department is likely to be judged by its members and its observers for the effectiveness of its processes. Where these processes are effective, the head of department as manager of these formal communications is in an influential position to shape the professional interactions and perceptions of staff. Control of these communication channels can also contribute to the strength and bargaining power of department heads in their claims for increased resources (Bush 1992). Heads of department who know how to make contact and bargain with colleagues through an array of micropolitical processes are in a stronger position to implement or defend the policies of their departments than are those who do not. Subject departments therefore play important mediating roles between the demands of a subject area on staff and the demands of the school on them.

Local and national socio-political environments also have a major influence on the culture of schools and departments (Earley et al. 1998) and on members’ leadership styles of heads. Glatter (1997) makes the point that researchers into the management of school organisations tend to overlook the importance and influence of external environment on internal school processes. Simkins et al. (1992) and Wallace (1993) point out the impact that the introduction of local management for schools in England and Wales has had on the internal workings of schools. Hargreaves (1994) debates how the roles of teachers are changing as a consequence of the changes in the socio-political contexts of their work.

Grace (1995) suggests that, in part, the relationships which formally appointed school leaders at any level develop with their teacher colleagues depends on how they view and respond to changes in the national socio-political environment. Hence, the culture of a department will be affected by how its leader mediates legal and curriculum changes facing schools from agencies in the national or local environment. Influencing leaders’ actions and interpretations will be not only their subject expertise, but also their educational, social and political values.

A particular external influence on heads of department in secondary schools in England and Wales in the mid to late 1990s, is that of the Office for Standard
in Education (OfSTED). Through its inspection process, this agency sets a series of demands about how subject departments should be run in order to deliver what it considers to be quality teaching and learning. Heads of department, under the guidance of more senior staff, have to interpret and implement these demands. This external influence has reinforced hierarchical processes and strengthened imbalances of power between leaders and followers amongst staff at whatever level in a school. Successful heads of department are expected to have a clear awareness of what the OfSTED process expects of themselves and their colleagues, and to be able to advise departmental colleagues on how to implement the required processes effectively. How heads of department act in these circumstances is likely to have a considerable impact on the culture of a department.

At another level, the civic community that a school serves will have a considerable effect on the curriculum decisions made by heads of department and their colleagues. In particular it will raise questions about the pedagogy they use to meet the learning needs of students from particular ethnic and religious backgrounds and of varying socio-economic status. Combined with the level of resources available to a department, these factors will have a considerable effect on how teachers work with students. The ability of heads of department to recognise a creative range of solutions within whatever resources and personnel they have or can gain is likely to have a considerable effect on the performance of a department, and hence on its status and culture.

**Coda**

It is increasingly stated that effective management requires staff at all levels to be involved in decision-making and policy formation. As Peters (1988: 23) remarked, writing within a business context, in a fully developed organisation the front line person should be capable of being involved in strategy making. Heads of department are very much in the front line, but their degree of involvement in strategic matters or organisation decision-making is likely to vary according to the nature of the organisation, the management approach of senior staff and the culture of the organisation.

Most importantly, perhaps, levels of involvement are a function of the confidence, expertise and skill in management exhibited by the middle manager or subject leader. While recognition of the role of the head of department has been shown to be very important to the personnel concerned (Glover *et al.* 1988), the status and power based recognition is often complicated by the multiplicity of tasks being undertaken by these middle managers.

So, if as Huberman (1990) suggests, the ‘goofy logic’ of focusing change at the school level is resisted and, instead, the department is regarded as the unit of change, then the role of the head of department is of major importance. Indeed, while the literature repeatedly finds attributes such as goal consensus, collaborative norms and shared experiences to be essential components of effective
schools, there is less clarity about how to achieve such social cohesiveness. However, it is clear that heads of department, as explored in this article, can play a central role in defining and sustaining collegial sub-cultures, by ensuring that departments operate as socially cohesive communities where all members work collaboratively with a high degree of commitment. Within this middle management role, more than any other, is the real potential of organisational change and improvement.

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MIDDLE LEADERSHIP

DISTRIBUTED PROPERTIES
A new architecture for leadership

Peter Gronn


Introduction
The question addressed by this article is: ‘What is to be done with leadership?’
This question represents an extension of what has become an ongoing concern
for the future of leadership, which was first articulated in an invited keynote
address to BEMAS in 1995 (Gronn, 1996). In that state-of-the-art paper, I syn-
thesized current trends and developments in leadership and considered whether
the field was on the cusp of a fundamental rethink—driven mainly by the need
to accommodate new organizational change and restructuring imperatives—
which would supersede all that had gone before it, and which would alter
forever our view of leadership. Implicit, always, in these kinds of speculations
about shifts or switches in perspective is the lurking spectre of historicism.
There is a cautionary tale here, therefore, for anyone who wishes to make pro-
nouncements about alleged turning points, movements to higher stages, water-
sheds, paradigm shifts and the like, as any of us who have been spectators of the
debate (or furore?) following the publication of Francis Fukuyama’s (1992)
influential The End of History and the Last Man will be aware. I have no wish in
what I say now to stumble into the pitfalls of end-ism raised by that particular
episode. Rather, my intention is to connect with some of the threads of my 1995
address in an effort to move forward our understanding about the phenomenon
of leadership with which we, practitioners and commentators alike, are dealing,
because I believe that most of us still labour under serious misapprehensions
about its nature. My purpose is to identify some of those deficiencies and then to
sketch the framework of what I believe is a much more promising possibility.

One of the developments which I summarized in the 1995 paper was a bifur-
cation in leadership thinking around two broad polarities: the one, stimulated
principally by Bernard Bass’s (1985) ideal type of transformational leadership,
representing a kind of apogee of individualism, and the other, typified by Elliott
Jaques’ (1989) managerial leadership, a vigorous reassertion of systemic proper-
ties and role structures, but devoid (virtually) of any identifiable sense of agency. In my review (Gronn, 1996: 17) I pointed to some of the more obvious shortcomings in the work of both writers. That said, it has to be conceded that individual or structural perspectives on leadership are not entirely devoid of merit. Thus, work which, on the one hand, permits a better understanding of the psychological and ethical dispositions of leaders is as welcome as, on the other hand, any elucidation of the structural dimensions of the roles and contexts in which various leaders lead. But what I now want to assert is that the way of the future lies with neither of these perspectives, for the choice posed by these or other similar approaches which privilege agency ahead of structure, or vice versa, rests on a false ontological dualism. The dualism is false because neither constitutive element of social reality, agency nor structure, reduces to the other; rather, the relationship between the two is always one of interplay through time: each element is analytically distinct from, but is ontologically intertwined with, the other. Thus, while an existing social structure is always a precondition for the actions of future cohorts of agents, it also represents the outcome of the pur-

positive, generative (as well as unintended) actions of previous sets of agents and is potentially modifiable by agents yet-to-be-born (Archer, 1995: 66–79).

In answer to the question of what is to be done with leadership, therefore, I shall be bypassing both of these two broad conceptions of leader–follower relations. Instead, I intend to go straight to the heart of the agency-structure inter-
play and will focus my remarks on activity. Activity is the bridge between ageney and structure. The structural patterns taken by various social or organi-
zational formations are activity-dependent and an analysis of the activities engaged in by particular sets of time-, place-, space- and culture-bound sets of agents permits an understanding of agential-structural relations through the process of structuring. The structuring actions of agents may serve two possible ends: the reproduction or the transformation of existing sets of institutional rela-
tions. My point of departure from prevailing conceptions of leadership, particu-
larly those which accord generous dollops of voluntarism to key individuals (acting either within or without formal positional roles), will be to emphasize the centrality of conjoint agency. That is, the satisfactory completion of discretionary tasks is attributable to the concertive labour performed by pluralities of interdependent organization members. Leadership and influence comprise part of that labour within those structured relationships, but I shall argue that the properties displayed by leadership are more likely to take a distributed, rather than a concentrated, form, a claim I have already rehearsed elsewhere (Gronn, 1999a and b).

Unlike some critics in education and beyond who plead for the abandonment of leadership altogether, therefore, I shall be maintaining that leadership can, and should, be salvaged, albeit in a distinctly different form. To achieve this end, I will develop the argument that, if our perspectives of leadership are to continue to serve useful analytical and practical purposes, then they must be grounded in a theory of action. This possibility, I hope to show, requires those of
us with an interest in leadership to rethink current organizational practices, and
the ontological properties of the activities which aggregate to constitute those
practices. The reason is that a distributed view of tasks and activities implies the
existence of a new form of the division of labour at the heart of organizational
work. Such a development has important implications for traditionally defined
individual roles and for crude dualisms such as leader–follower and leadership–
followership. For these and other reasons, an attribute like distribution needs to
be incorporated into a reconceptualized view of the appropriate unit of analysis
if we are to ensure that leadership is to retain its credibility, viability and utility.
One promising approach for rethinking leadership which I consider briefly is
activity theory (see e.g. Engeström, 1999a). My aim is to show that leadership
will retain its relevance provided that it is reconceptualized as part of a model of
jointly performed and tool-mediated activity.

The article begins with a brief recapitulation of the shortcomings of prevail-
ing views of leadership, and next considers two recent claims: the first is that
leadership should be abandoned because there are other more appropriate factors
which can be shown to substitute for it, while the second is that there are,
indeed, no other factors which can be substituted. The article then develops the
notion of distribution and appraises some recent approaches to organizational
work (including activity theory). Finally, the significance of distributed leader-
ship systems will be spelled out before I consider some of the issues raised by
the discussion and their implications for future research.

The trouble with existing dualisms

Of the two broad polarities mentioned above, the individualistic view of leader-
ship dominates the field (and for that reason, and for purposes of economy, I
confine most of my discussion to it). This individualism may be typified as naive
realism or the belief in the power of one, and it is grounded in the assumption
that ‘effective performance by an individual, group, or organization is assumed
to depend on leadership by an individual with the skills to find the right path and
motivate others to take it’ (Yukl, 1999: 292). Implicit in this kind of reasoning is
a crudely abstracted leader-follower(s) dualism, in which, inter alia, leaders are
superior to followers, followers depend on leaders and leadership consists in
doing something to, for and on behalf of others. Space limitations preclude a
detailed consideration of the difficulties with this exaggerated sense of agency
attributed to leaders (but see Gronn, 1999c: 1–20), save what in my view are the
most serious deficiencies to which it gives rise: an undertheorized view of task
performance and accomplishment, and a neglect of the division of labour. These
shortcomings were first highlighted in claims about substitutes for leadership.1

In an important article, Kerr and Jermier (1978) argued that there was ample
(statistical) evidence in numerous studies of a lack of demonstrated leader
effects in explaining organizational outcomes. They then showed how a number
of typical, hypothetical, organizational outcomes could be accounted for without
resort to leadership as the sole or exclusive candidate, causal explanation. At least three other substitute factors made the leadership of a superordinate individual redundant: the personal attributes of organization members (e.g. their self-motivation to perform), organizational processes (e.g. autonomous work group norms) and characteristics inherent in the work itself (e.g. its routine or programmed nature). In retrospect, the timing of the publication of this argument proved to be unfortunate. Although the late 1970s yielded a number of remarkably insightful contributions to the field of leadership studies—some of which are discussed below—it was also, for some commentators, something of a 'doom and gloom' period (Hunt, 1999: 133) in which leadership had forfeited any claim to validity or utility as a legitimate area of study. In the 1980s, however, students of leadership discovered organizational culture, so that heroic, neo-charismatic approaches to leadership underwent a resurgence, and the popularity of visionary and transformational leadership soared. In this climate, Kerr and Jermier's substitutes claim was virtually lost from view until its revival in 1997 in a symposium in the *Leadership Quarterly*. After 20 or so years, both authors maintained that their argument about leader substitutes had never been properly addressed by the field (Jermier and Kerr, 1997: 97).

The significance of the substitutes argument is twofold: first, it focuses our attention on what it means to perform and accomplish tasks: and, second, by discounting the causal omniscience of leadership it invites a reconsideration of the connection or relationship between leadership and task performance. On the first point, self-evidently, the tasks confronting organization members vary in status and are usually amply differentiated in most contexts. Thus, relatively straightforward, well-rehearsed operations (e.g. responding to a customer inquiry, or processing a student's admission application) differ markedly from complex, ill-defined problems (e.g. allocating educational resources under severe financial constraints). Kerr and Jermier are clearly right: tasks in the former case reduce over time to learned and refined routines (and are typically encoded in procedural or operating manuals) which when implemented, on the face of it, require nobody's leadership at all. Here, most employees, for most of the time, appear to know what to do and when to do it, and can be said to act out of habit or, in effect, in a quasi-programmed manner. This example leads to the second point and invites the question of the kinds of circumstances which might necessitate leadership and what form that leadership could be expected to take. In this connection, Robinson (forthcoming: 6) has proposed that leadership is evident 'when ideas expressed in talk or action are recognized by others as capable of progressing tasks or problems which are important to them'. This is a viewpoint entirely consistent with the now widely accepted attributional basis of leadership (see Lord and Maher, 1993), asserting, in essence, that leadership is a phenomenon in the eye of the beholder. Thus, for Robinson, leadership will be manifest in the effect or effects of contributions which yield contributions from others, and which secure the coordination of those contributions and accomplish the tasks in hand.
Before pursuing this valuable lead provided by Robinson, two possible objections have to be considered. The first, which amounts to an extreme version of the substitutes line of reasoning (e.g. Lakomski, 1998), is to assert, not (as Kerr and Jermier, and Robinson do) that leadership in some form counts for at least some of the time in the work of organizations, but that it counts for none of the time. That is, an enduring substitute or alternative explanation can always be found for leadership. On this view, the contributions of some organization members which produce or trigger contributions from other members need not be taken as evidence of leadership, but as evidence of something else: namely, learning. The second objection, a rejection altogether of the substitutes argument, asserts that there is no such thing as a substitute for individual leadership. Instead, what different eras reveal are alternating views about the leadership of individuals represented in either allegedly weak (1970s) or strong (1980s and 1990s) theories. From this perspective, the attraction of the substitutes argument (and even of distributed leadership) among commentators is evidence or a sign of the adoption or dominance of weak leadership theories within the field (Shamir, 1999: 50). These objections are discussed in the next two sections.

Do we still need leadership?

Despite the well-documented and widespread phenomenon of the romance of leadership (Meindl, 1995), anti-leadership proponents emerge periodically. Beginning with Miner (1975: 200), who asserted that leadership had ‘outlived its usefulness’, a batch of them surfaced in the late 1970s (e.g. Argyris, 1979; Calder, 1977; Pfeffer, 1977) and then were submerged by a kingtide of culturally grounded theories comprising what Bryman (1996) terms the ‘new’ leadership. But with this new leadership now being subjected to the intense scrutiny of critics—which, in turn, has stimulated equally intense defensiveness on the part of its proponents (e.g. Bass and Steidlmeyer, 1999)—anti-leadership arguments have begun to emerge once again, perhaps the most vocal and sophisticated proponent of which, at least in education, has been Lakomski (1998, 1999a and b; Lakomski and Evers, 1999).

Briefly, the claim against leadership put forward by Lakomski (1998: 99) is that there is no natural entity or essence which can be labelled ‘leadership’. This is a similar assertion to the claim advanced previously by Calder (1977: 185–7), which was that it was impossible to identify a universally agreed upon concrete referent for what, essentially, is a lay label of convenience intended to attribute personal potency to someone’s observed or reputed behaviour. Despite the best endeavours of commentators to find such a natural object, the most that decades of leadership research has yielded, according to Lakomski (1999b: 6), is: first, a mass of largely inconclusive results: second, an awareness that the determination of leadership effects differs from one organization to another: and, third, the realization that leadership means different things to different people in different contexts (the attributional argument mentioned above). Lakomski (1999a: 36)
readily concedes the point about potency—‘there is no doubt that there have
been, and are, strong individuals who by dint of their abilities and personalities
were and are able to have a positive impact on organizations’—yet she suggests
that the more appropriate generic object of study is not leadership but effective
organizational practice. Thus, if some people do seem to be able to motivate
others, to make superior or appropriate judgements and to secure performance
beyond expectations, then the really interesting questions for her are: ‘How did
they learn to do that?’ and ‘How did leaders learn [to] lead since no-one is born
to lead?’ (Lakomski, 1998: 100).

Rather than engage in a point-by-point rebuttal of the remainder of Lakom-
ski’s agnosticism, I would simply make two brief observations. First, the fact
that commentators cannot agree upon a set of behaviour that amounts to leader-
ship, and that their researches have produced inconclusive results, does not con-
stitute an argument for jettisoning the concept altogether. Perhaps these
commentators would be advised to rethink their approaches and to continue the
search. Second, if, as she claims, contextual factors keep on bobbing up in study
after study, then maybe that tendency should caution against anyone maintaining
universalist pretensions to knowledge applicability and, instead, invite much
closer contextual analyses of leaders and their leadership. My major concern,
however, is with Lakomski’s abandonment of the study of leadership for the
study of learning, for no argument is offered by her for substituting the object of
study, it seems to me, other than that leadership appears to ‘reduce quite readily
to the study of effective administrative practice’ (Lakomski, 1999a: 48). But what
does it mean to ‘reduce’? Is she proposing a simple lexical switch in terms here?
And suppose that leadership did reduce in the way she appears to suggest, what
would be the justification for her claiming, not merely that leadership (suitably
rethought and contextualized in the manner that I have foreshadowed) was just
one of a number of ingredients making for good practice, but that it was no
longer a legitimate ingredient at all?

The substitution of learning for leadership proposed by Lakomski looks sus-
piciously like an attempt to privilege a model of an organization as akin to a
cognitive economy: ‘it is much more plausible to think of organizations as con-
stituting networks of distributed cognition’ (Lakomski, 1999b: 9, original
emphasis). But why, solely, a cognitive economy? What happens to the notion
of a political economy of interests proposed by Barnard (1982: 139–60), for
example, who devoted an entire chapter of his classic study, The Functions of
the Executive, to elucidating the argument that organizations comprised an
economy of material incentives and inducements to cooperation? While I would
endorse Lakomski’s claim that cognition is indeed a distributed property of
organizations, and that its distributional form is networked, I would part
company with her over the idea that cognition is the sole organizational attribute
which is distributed and that learning is all that counts. Moreover, for reasons
that will hopefully become clear shortly, I would argue that in any model of
organizations grounded in a notion of distribution, leadership remains an import-
ant component. But, first, what is meant by distribution? In order to understand this concept, it is helpful to begin with some assumptions about organizing.

The idea of distribution

If, following Weick (1995: 85), the notion of organizing can be seen as an evolving response to the various flows comprising the flux of phenomenological experience, then a minimalist view of an organization is to understand it as an assemblage of individuals or, in Burns’ (1996: 1) colourful phrase, ‘congeries of persons in more or less autonomous arrays’ engaged, continuously through time, in acquired and learned modes of practice. At some point during the evolution of those practices, typically when those involved desire to represent themselves to themselves and to the wider world as a formally constituted membership unit, an emergent process (organizing) begins to harden into an entity (organization). Entitative status entails patterned and reproduced activity-based conduct, enshrining varying degrees of tightly or loosely coupled relations between the agents involved, and this becomes the source of organizational structure. Those relations (as I hope to show) are also tool-mediated. Through time, that emerging and always potentially modifiable organizational structure, in turn, acts back on or shapes the conduct of the agents. This reciprocity expresses the analytical duality of agency and structure referred to earlier. But what are some of the principal components of organizational structure?

Potentially, there is an endless number of sub-elements of structural relations. Extending slightly an earlier summary list (Gronn, 1986: 45–6), the five most significant are: authority, values, interests, personal factors and resources. I include authority because it is always the locus of overall organizational responsibility and legitimacy, and anchors the role system of an organization. Values provide the justifications or ends to which organization members are committed. A particular balance of interests represents the outcome of the relations between, and the material stakes among, the actors as they pursue their various ends. Personal factors frame the willingness or predisposition of members to act in preferred or required ways. Resources, finally, in all of their manifold forms, including the pattern of their utilization and deployment, are the means which facilitate organizational actions, and affect the likelihood of organizational effectiveness, success or failure. Next, suppose that I posit a continuum of the possible formations which might give material expression to, or might be taken by, these constituent components, with a distributed or dispersed form comprising one polarity and a focused or concentrated form making up the other. According to this arrangement, then, the properties of each constituent element, solely or in combination, are relatively distributed or focused. Hence, if we have a set of attributes in mind which tend to be focused, we might talk of there being concentrations or monopolies of power, whereas if something else tends to be distributed then it is more likely to be shared or diffused. Distributed forms may be achieved by any number of modes of allocating the components,
but principally by means of stratification, laterality, aggregation, webbing, networking, clustering or randomness. Thus, Jaques’s (1989) structural theory of managerial leadership, which is grounded in Stratified Systems Theory (SST) is, like other models based on a notion of hierarchy, one (albeit orthodox) form of a distributed system of leadership. The reason for this is that roles in his SST model are differentiated according to vertical stratification and are intended to be spread over seven (or sometimes eight) levels according to the principle of subsumption which is the basis of all hierarchies. Subsumption means that each succeeding layer of responsibility subsumes, encapsulates or is superordinate to all of those below it.

At any one point in time in an ongoing trajectory of organizational evolution, therefore, particular organizational forms represent oscillating possibilities or potential differences in the degree of focus or distribution taken by the properties of the components. The critical questions then become ones to do with causality and timing. The first question is: which are the factors that contribute to relatively dispersed or concentrated forms of leadership? The second question is: when is the leadership of organizations likely to take a dispersed or focused form? Both questions are answered in the discussion section of this article. In short, my claim is that a distributed-focused continuum is an evolutionary constant. This position contrasts with the orthodox way in which people tend to represent organizational leadership in their minds, namely, something that is invariably individual and heroically male (Meindl, 1995). My line of argument also contrasts sharply with Shamir’s (1999) view that distributed forms represent a difference in kind rather than degree (between two evolutionary possibilities), and that the attention accorded distributed or non-distributed forms arises purely as a consequence of pendulum swings in the popularity of theoretical approaches in different eras. Likewise, the position I am defending is different from the argument of Gee et al. (1996), who also see the property of distribution as representing the hallmark of a different kind of phenomenon, but one which has emerged only in conditions peculiar to the fast capitalism of late modernity. That is, distributed systems are ‘a leitmotif of late twentieth century life’ and arise only because of an ‘exponential growth in variety, variability and diversity of all sorts in all areas’ (Gee et al., 1996: 51, original emphases). Yet, despite the evolutionary possibility of distribution, discussions of it in respect of leadership are few in number. By far the most popular area of application of the notion of distribution in the study of organizations, and the most advanced area of understanding distributed systems, has been cognition.

Central to the view of socially distributed cognition is the idea that mind and mindfulness are not solely features of the interior mental life of individuals, but are manifest in jointly performed activities and social relations. Distributed mind, therefore, means the pattern of overall activity-based attention between socially positioned actors, and their relations with various representational and computational objects, tools or implements in the performance of tasks. This definition means, in turn, that situations and contexts, and their objects, both
structure and mediate thinking. The corollary of a distributed view of mind is that learning—the outcome of task-focused, multi-party cognition—is also socially structured, and is part of the overall system of collective relations between agents, activities and objects. Distributed mind and distributed learning are especially evident in working environments in which decision making is heavily dependent upon the rapid processing of large amounts of information as part of networked, computer-mediated work practices and similarly complex technological artefacts. In these environments—which include the more obvious examples of the flight decks of aircraft carriers (Weick and Roberts, 1993), airline cockpits (Hutchins and Klausen, 1998) and the control rooms of mass transit systems (Heath and Luff, 1998)—individuals perform tasks to some extent autonomously but mostly in concert. That is, the actions which comprise their jointly performed work are either coordinated or programmed to occur either simultaneously—conjointly, in parallel or sequentially—sometimes in circumstances of bodily co-presence, and in others when the actors collaborate but are separated by zones of time, space, place and culture (Gronn, 1999b). What of leadership? In what way can it be said to be distributed?

The claim made earlier about an emerging balance between degrees of distribution or focus is not new, for it was first raised early on in the development of leadership studies as a field by Gibb (1954), but lay dormant until its resurrection by Brown and Hosking (1986). Gibb’s (1954: 884) claim was that ‘leadership is probably best conceived as a group quality, as a set of functions which must be carried out by the group’ and that it could either be concentrated, monopolized or focused, on the one hand, or dispersed, shared and distributed, on the other. He then proposed two forms of distribution: the overall numerical frequency of the acts contributed by each group member and ‘the multiplicity or pattern of group functions performed’. The first of these conceptions is really an accumulation or aggregation model of distribution, whereas the second is a systemic or holistic perspective. Gibb’s former view of distribution is still consistent with a perspective on leadership as comprising individual behaviour in which the totality of leadership acts is the numeral sum of every single contribution. This represents a minimalist view of distribution which encompasses leadership as a shared phenomenon. The second, alternative conception of distribution, on the other hand, requires a reconceptualization of the unit of analysis to encompass conjoint agency and plural member work groupings (see Gronn, 1999a and the discussion below).

Gibb’s thinking was remarkably prescient. He was uncomfortable with the idea of the solo leader and adopted an interactional standpoint. He noted, for instance, that the entitative idea of an organization seemed to imply clear and fixed role differentiation, yet, in the importance he attached to formative group and organizational processes, he highlighted the fluidity of circumstances in which there was a ‘tendency for leadership to pass from one individual to another as the situation changes’ (Gibb, 1954: 902). This was an emergent view of leading, and Gibb developed it by showing how the popular idea of leaders
and followers as mutually exclusive categories was grievously mistaken. Instead, he claimed (Gibb, 1968: 252) that ‘each of these is but a transient status’, so that ‘leaders and followers frequently exchange roles and observation has shown that the most active followers often initiate acts of leading’. The important idea was that leaders and followers were to be thought of as collaborators in accomplishing group tasks. Gibb even highlighted studies which showed formally designated leaders to be captive of long-standing traditions and values, and as even having those traditions forced on them, so much so that as leaders they were reactive, and ‘forced to follow the behavior of those who in the [experimental] pre-test situation had followed’ and who simply ‘led the group in the direction it would have taken had [she or] he not been there’ (Gibb, 1954: 898). Moreover, leaders ‘inevitably embod[jed] many of the qualities of the followers, and the relation between the two may often be so close that it is difficult to determine who influences whom and to what extent’. Indeed, so difficult was it in practice to monitor such influence flows that Gibb suggested official leader designations be jettisoned and that observers concentrate instead on leader behaviour in groups. In this way ‘no a priori assumptions are made as to the distribution of those functions among members’ (Gibb, 1968: 271–2).

For these kinds of reasons, then, leadership is more appropriately understood as a fluid and emergent, rather than as a fixed, phenomenon. This view is perfectly consistent with Robinson’s notion that leadership is something which is acknowledged for the purposes of successful problem solving, and that as an attributed status it may endure (from the perspective of those doing the attributing) solely for the duration of a task. From this possibility it follows that the pay-offs or gains from persisting with traditional, static dualisms entrenched in leader-follower roles are limited.

**The rudiments of a theory of action**

In this section of the article I consider two implications of the possibility that the constituent components of organizational structuring, especially leadership, are likely to take a distributed form. First, I argue that for commentators distribution requires a new conception of the unit of analysis. This, as is evident from the earlier discussion of distributed mind, is mainly because account has to be taken of various forms of conjoint agency. That is, conjoint agency presages a new division of labour in which the authorship and the scope of the activities to be performed have to be redefined to encompass pluralities of agents whose actions dovetail or mesh to express new patterns of interdependent relations. Second, the abandonment of fixed leader–follower dualisms in favour of the possibility of multiple, emergent, task-focused roles necessitates a reconceptualization of the nature of influence and its relation to activity.
In this section I review the respective merits of two approaches to activity in leadership and management: first, the research of the work-activity school: second, activity theory.

1. Work-activity: a false start?

The ‘work-activity school’ was the name given by Mintzberg (1973: 21), author of the highly influential book *The Nature of Managerial Work*, to an inductive approach to research conducted in a variety of management settings. Central to this approach was the attempt to describe the content and characteristics of the day-to-day work of managers. At the time of its publication, Mintzberg’s study was distinctive because, rather than rely as his predecessors had done on data procured from diaries completed by samples of managers, he generated first-hand field reports by shadowing managers while they managed. Mintzberg labelled this field strategy structured observation, rather than participant observation as conventionally understood in anthropology or sociology. This form of observation entailed the collection of what he termed ‘structured’ and ‘anecdotal’ data. Anecdotes comprised descriptive background notes on incidents observed, while structured data meant procuring for any observed event three forms of quantifiable information: a chronological record of observed activity patterns, a mail record of incoming and outgoing mail and a contact record of who talked to whom (Mintzberg, 1973: 232–3).

Mintzberg’s research was influential in triggering off scores of replication studies over the next two decades or so in a variety of managerial spheres (including education). Given the emphasis of Mintzberg and his followers on description—explicit in the research question for which they became famous: ‘What do managers do?’—it seemed possible in the 1970s and 1980s that this work-activity approach might generate an enduring scholarly tradition in an academic discipline long dominated by prescriptive, normative approaches to knowledge. This was not to be, for work-activity and structured observation studies have declined in number and significance. Their original purpose was to track the dynamics and flow of work as experienced by managers. In this regard, Mintzberg was probably the earliest researcher to document the fast-paced and interrupted flow of the work, as captured in his pithy summary of managerial activities as comprising ‘brevity, variety and fragmentation’ (Mintzberg, 1973: 51). There were some shortcomings in the structured observational approach of the work-activity school (see Thomas, 1993: 47–55). For present purposes, the most glaring of these was its assumption that the individual, free-standing, solo-performing manager was to be taken as the appropriate unit of analysis. Yet, as Engeström (1999b: 63–4) has pointed out, this mode of representation tends to depict managerial work as a linear or cumulative flow of discrete, task-related, individual actions. Moreover, even ethnographies of managerial work or leadership,
according to Engeström, frequently lack a critical developmental dimension, even though they have the added advantage over structured observation studies of being better situated or contextualized, and sometimes provide a psycho-socio-spatial dimension for the reader’s understanding. This lacuna occurs because ‘there is no room and no language for representing horizontal interactions between various parallel tasks of an actor, or between different actors, or between actors and their artifacts’ (Engeström, 1999b: 64).

As I pointed out (Gronn, 1982, 1984, 1987) in response to the application of work-activity school research designs to the investigation of the work of educational leaders and managers, a shortcoming of the traditional Mintzbergian structured observation approach was that it left substantial dimensions of managerial work performance implicit, tacit, unsaid or invisible. Part of my rebuttal of its proponents in educational administration was that the promise of structured observation—namely that ‘through the eyes of the observer . . . the important “invisibles” of principals’ administrative behaviors are at last being documented “as they really are”’ (Thomas et al., 1981: 70)—was a claim on which it could not deliver. That is, upon the completion of structured observational studies of educational executives, a substantial proportion of the so-called invisibles of management still remained invisible (e.g. managers’ cognitive representations of their tasks). By and large, the popularity of the work-activity school had run its race by the early 1990s, mainly because, while structured observational studies yielded superficially appealing, low-level descriptions of what managers did and how they performed their work, these ‘[did] not tell us whether what they do is management’ (Thomas, 1993: 54).

A more recent and promising approach to the study of the work of leaders and managers is activity theory or, as it is sometimes known, socially distributed activity theory. This aims to take a more holistic perspective on the study of organizational work, which is consistent with the second of Gibb’s two understandings of distribution. Central to activity theory is the division of labour (the critically important dimension glossed over by the work-activity school) and it also takes as its unit of analysis the notion of a collectively performed activity system. Moreover, this approach represents an explicit attempt to make visible the dimensions and properties of, and to analyse the internal relations between, the components of activities.

2. Activity theory: a fresh start?

The intellectual roots of activity theory are disparate but find their principal expression in Russian Marxist psychology, particularly in the writings of L.S. Vygotsky (1978) and A.N. Leont’ev (1978, 1981). The most vigorous recent proponent of activity theory has been Engeström (1999a and b). There have been few discussions of activity theory in leadership and management (although see Blackler, 1993), but its attraction for students of leadership is that it offers an entirely new conception of workplace ecology. Activity theory has three particu-
lar advantages. First, the components of its activity system model are sufficiently encompassing to rectify the typical contextual gaps and omissions identified previously (see Gronn and Ribbins, 1996) in discussions of leadership. Second, it provides a thorough analysis of the pragmatics of accomplishing organizational work. Third, an understanding of the contribution of leadership to learning in the workplace is facilitated by the developmental and emergent approach to practice implicit in the activity system model. These points are discussed in turn.

Activity is a vehicle for representing human behaviour in and engagement with the material (i.e. natural and social) world. Flows of activities comprise the constituent elemental stuff of human existence (Leont’ev, 1978: 66). The key components of the model of an activity system are outlined in Figure 1.

The first features to note is that the relationships between the six components located at equidistant points around the perimeter of the equilateral triangle are always mediated rather than direct. That is, the link between actions of the Subject (S, individual or collective) and the Object (O) of her or his work-oriented, purposive actions is not direct but is mediated through various Instruments (Is): that is, artefacts or tools (including symbols and linguistic systems) which purport to represent experience, accumulated learning or solutions to previously encountered problems. Instead of S > O, then, the relationship is more accurately expressed as S > I > O. This idea of mediation stems from Vygotsky’s (1978: 30) contention that in child development ‘the path from object to child and from child to object passes through another person’, or, as Leont’ev (1978: 59) expresses it: ‘equipment mediates activity connecting man (sic) not only with the world of things but also with other people’. Likewise, that same Subject–Object relation occurs within a Community of practice (C) in the form S > C > O: it is subject to various culturally derived Rules (R), expressed as S > R > O, and it is embedded within a Division of Labour (DoL), or S > DoL > O.

But the model does not define an activity per se. Rather, it is a template for facilitating the analysis of particular activities. The critical point about the structure of activities is that they always form part of a collective labour process and, as Leont’ev’s (1981: 210) example of the hunt indicates, the definition of

![Figure 1](image-url)
activity comprises the three elements of motives, actions and operations. Motives express objects (or objectives) which meet needs, and actions fulfil purposes in pursuit of objects:

When a member of a group performs his labour activity he also does it to satisfy one of his needs. A beater, for example, taking part in a primaeval collective hunt, was stimulated by the need for food or, perhaps, a need for clothing, which the skin of the dead animal would meet for him. At what, however, was his activity directly aimed? It may have been directed, for example, at frightening a herd of animals and sending them towards other hunters, hiding in ambush. That, properly speaking, is what should be the result of the activity of this man. And the activity of this individual member of the hunt ends with that. The rest is completed by the other members. This result, i.e. the frightening of game, etc. understandably does not in itself, and may not, lead to satisfaction of the beater’s need for food, or the skin of the animal. What the processes of his activity were directed to did not, consequently, coincide with what stimulated them, i.e. did not coincide with the motive of his activity; the two were divided from one another in this instance. Processes, the object and motive of which do not coincide with one another, we shall call ‘actions’. We can say, for example, that the beater’s activity is the hunt, and the frightening of game his action.

For any activity, operations are the means of facilitating actions and they comprise its content. In this example, they would include the beating of bushes and disturbing of habitat by this particular member of the hunt, and the direct attack on and killing of the game by other members (with, note, no separation into the familiar categories of mental and manual operations being made by Leont’ev).

Although this description concentrates mainly on the actions and activity of one man as a subcomponent of a larger system, Leont’ev’s hunt example points up the centrality of the division of labour in human activity. There are two points to note here. First, the actions of each individual only make sense from the perspective of the overall pattern or system of labour relations between them. Thus, ‘the beater’s action is possible only on condition of his reflecting the link between the expected result of the action performed by him and the end result of the hunt as a whole’ (Leont’ev, 1981: 212). Second, in conjoint actions such as those comprising a hunt, the labour relations between individuals are interdependent. Just as the actions of others ‘give sense to the object of the beater’s action’, then so too do the beater’s actions ‘justify and give sense to the actions of the people who ambush the game’, for, ‘were it not for the beaters’ action, the making of an ambush would be senseless and unjustified’ (Leont’ev, 1981: 212–13).

The next point to notice about the model is the fluidity of relations inherent within it. This attribute is represented by the dual-directional arrows which express the interactional relationship between all of the components. The
The significance of this reciprocity is that it allows for the duality of constraint and enablement in respect of action—as in the structure–agency duality adumbrated earlier in the article. That is, at the same time that all Ss act within particular contexts determined by unique configurations of R, I, C and DoL, the dimensions of R, I, C and DoL and the pattern of the relations are potentially modifiable by the actions of those same Ss. Thus, in the relationship S<>I<>O, the degrees of freedom experienced by Ss in respect of potential accomplishments or outcomes are at once circumscribed by the range of existing artefacts, but also potentially widened as new technologies become available. In this way, the universe of possibilities is expanded. These dynamic relations in the model are further enhanced to allow for emergence by the incorporation of Vygotsky’s (1978: 84–91) notion of the zone of proximal development. In his discussion of the relationship between the learning and development (or maturation) of children, Vygotsky observed that all learning has a history. As part of that history, the zone of proximal development stands for the space between two levels on a trajectory of development: the actual (or retrospective) and the potential (or prospective). In the distance between the two levels lies a series of embryonic functions yet to mature, their maturation being contingent upon appropriately structured learning.

Transposed to the activity system model, the zone of proximal development expresses the emergent, evolutionary potential of activity. Thus, the dimensions of the particular arrangement of R, C, I and DoL which obtain for an actor or actors at Time1 (T1) may, at T2 and T3 etc., form a different configuration. Hence, if we bring to mind the image of a series of activity system triangles randomly positioned in a roughly ordered left–right sequence, then (Engeström, 1999b: 67):

The zone of proximal development may be depicted as a gray area between actions embedded in the current activity with its historical roots and contradictions, the foreseeable activity in which the contradictions are expansively resolved, and the foreseeable activity in which the contradictions have led to contraction and destruction of opportunities.

The dynamism inherent in Leont’ev’s (1978: 50) notion of activity is expressed in his view that activity not only has a structure but ‘its own internal transitions and transformations: its own development’. What is not clear from his explanation, nor from Engeström’s discussion of Figure 62.1, however, is what provides an activity system with its dynamism, nor what happens in the case of more open-ended, less well defined and new activities for which actions are less clearly culturally circumscribed and well defined than in the archetypal instance of the hunt. For this reason, in my view, some statement about the connection between influence and action which makes allowance for the non-occurrence as well as the occurrence of activity (and, therefore, its opposite state, inactivity, an
eventuality which Leont’ev (1978: 156) appears reluctant to countenance and relegates solely to the human experience of sleep) is necessary to amplify the model.

**Leadership and activity theory**

In discussions in social and political theory of what might be termed the family of power terms, commentators generally see a number of closely related concepts forming a tightly knit cluster. The principal ones include power, influence, authority (discussed in the next section), force, coercion, manipulation and deterrence—although rarely, interestingly, leadership. Each term provides a qualitatively different description of the relations obtaining between nominated sets of agents or actors (role incumbents). I commence with some remarks on power and then influence in which, because most commentators in leadership studies treat the two terms as synonymous (see Gronn. 1999c: 7–8), I conflate leadership and influence.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, at the same time that the so-called ‘new’ leadership was superseding anti-leadership views, social and political theorists were engaged in a prolonged debate over the locus and form of power in political systems and communities, and their connection with the interests of various parties (for a brief summary see Gronn, 1986: 46–50; Hardy and Clegg, 1999). In regard to the locus of power, the argument mainly concerned whether power was concentrated in one centre, and exercised by an individual or by an elite, or dispersed or decentred among a plurality of elite groups. In respect of the form of power, much of this debate focused initially on the status and legitimacy to be accorded latent, as opposed to manifest, behaviour in the political sphere and whether or not decision-making procedures could be rigged to stifle the expression (let alone the representation) of interests, or even prevent their formation.

From the findings of a number of strategically conducted comparative case studies emerged a recognition that while issues might become public events in some communities, elsewhere they remained non-events. While there was evidence of issue-oriented action (e.g. in respect of air pollution) in community A, therefore, nothing whatsoever transpired in community B. The explanations invoked for these disparities in policies and approaches ranged from overt preventative measures exercised by powerful groups, through self-censorship on the part of the disaffected (because they imputed power and influence to reputed others) to the absence of alternatives and possibilities in the minds of the disaffected (due to effects of their cultural socialization, prior learning, etc.). Thus, in parallel with the claim about possible substitutes for leadership in organizations, there existed a variety of candidate substitute explanations other than the orthodox behavioural view that outcomes were attributable to the decisions of identifiable individuals or groups.

The likelihood that power and influence might be dispersed or concentrated, that they did not have to be manifest or overt, and that their covert and latent
forms of expression could result in inaction as well as action, has significant conceptual and empirical implications for organizational leadership. First of all, if leadership is an instance of influence, then, like influence, it need not be expressed in ways that are obvious to the naked eye. Consider the case of anticipated reactions, which was central in the debate just summarized. In circumstances of either the imagined or embodied presence of the members of an organization, suppose that one party surmises how another might respond were she or he to initiate an action. The particular supposition may be based on previous direct experience or on the reputation of the other party. Anticipating a possible negative outcome, perhaps, the first party refrains from doing anything. Ostensibly, then, while no action has occurred, the second party (unbeknownst to her or him, or anyone else) has been influential. That is, covert leadership has produced a significant effect, in this case negation. This example is not unlike the inferential reasoning explanation provided by causal attribution theorists of leadership (e.g. Lord and Maher, 1993: 55).

Second, although the instance just given is clearly an exception, organizational influence is frequently reciprocal. The explanation for this feature lies in the division of labour. Inherent in the division of labour is a duality between specialization and interdependence. That is, tasks are broken down into their detailed specialist components, which are then performed by different individuals. But this fragmentation of effort leaves each worker dependent on others for the completion of an overall task. Paradoxically, then, labour (i.e. Leont’ev’s notion of operation) has to be reintegrated at the same time as it is differentiated (Sayer and Walker, 1992: 15–17). Influence is one means of reintegrating work tasks to achieve cooperatively generated outcomes. In Leont’ev’s archetype of the hunt, for example, the actions of the beaters and the shooters combine to accomplish the activity and to attain the desired outcome because, even though the actors perform different operations, they depend and rely on and influence one another. But unlike the kinds of organizational activities normally associated with leadership, a hunt is a set-piece, low discretionary level activity in which people are likely to play their appointed roles automatically. Nonetheless, in activities in which there is greater scope for discretion, examples of reciprocally expressed influence abound. In the relations between organizational heads and their immediate subordinates, or between executives and their personal assistants, for example, couplings form in which the extent of the conjoint agency resulting from the interdependence and mutual influence of the two parties is sufficient to render meaningless any assumptions about leadership being embodied in just one individual (Gronn, 1999a).

Third, there is an emergent dimension to influence. I have already cited Gibb’s work on this point. Emergence means that in the variously connected arrays of persons proposed by Burns (1996: 1), for example, the potential for leadership is present in the flow of activities in which a set of organization members find themselves enmeshed. Thus, a person or persons within this kind of web of relations, an initiator, perhaps—‘who because of certain motivations
of her own combined with a certain self-confidence, takes the first step toward change, out of a state of equilibrium in the web’ (Burns, 1996: 1)—may succeed in triggering a chain or cycle of multiple interactions which crystallizes into a patterned response over time. One implication of emergence is that, as the actions play themselves out as part of activities some actors are likely be more influential than others (their actions carry greater consequences for all concerned). It is at these points in time, perhaps, that the task-related leadership recognition process to which Robinson (forthcoming: 6) refers comes into play. Perceptions of some individuals as being more important than others—due to current, previous, imagined or reputed performance—may eventually solidify into an enduring expectation about anticipated consequential behaviour in future activities, but they need not.

Finally, although discussions of leadership are frequently expressed either timelessly or a-temporally, influential actions are inescapably time-bound. This neglect of time is part of the failure adequately to specify the particular contexts for action. There are, of course, different senses of time. Sometimes the influence exerted is purely momentary—as in the instinctive response to an exclamation alerting us to impending danger. But influence also endures. Moreover, there are degrees of endurance. A good illustration is Meindl’s (1995) idea of the romance of leadership. This phenomenon provides evidence of the long-term persistence of hardened, culturally shared sets of expectations about the locus of influence. The significance of this enduring dimension of influence is that the consequences of actions may only become apparent after lapses in time. The absence of evidence of immediate causal effects at any point in time, therefore, should not be interpreted as absence of influence or leadership. A useful analogy here is the accumulation of water stains on hard surfaces over time in which the gradual build-up is not necessarily evident to the naked eye while a tap is observed to be dripping. One advantage of Vygotsky’s notion of a proximal development zone in this context is that it alerts us to the transformation of activities through time, to the influential actions which contribute to that transformation and to the possible future expansion or contraction of activities (Engeström, 1999b: 67).

**Discussion**

I turn now to the two earlier questions which were concerned, respectively, with the factors which might explain the emergence of distribution as an organizational phenomenon and those factors which might permit us to hypothesize about the likelihood of leadership being either focused or distributed.

**Determinants of distribution**

The first point to note is that some version of distributed leadership has always been in evidence, not merely in the aggregated sense distinguished by Gibb but
in his second holistic sense as well. Apart from the leadership couplings just cited, the more obvious instances are the typical kinds of collaborative decision-making forums common to most educational settings such as teams or committees. In respect of the activity system model, these two are membership (Ss) units in particular settings and locales (Cs) which, drawing on specialist expertise (DoL) and utilizing various tools—such as regulations, documents, statistics—(Is), endeavour to perform tasks or solve problems (Os). These units operate according to explicit and implicit conventions or codes (Rs). Team and committee deliberations can be expected to manifest all of the evanescent properties of influence distinguished in the previous section of the article. Thus, at different points in the life of these units, different members will exert influence (and therefore leadership). The patterns of influence in evidence may or may not accord with the overall status relations of the members.

But there are also other less obvious instances of distributed forms. Long before the idea of distribution even became part of the lexicon of the field of leadership (with the exception of Gibb), Hodgson et al. (1965) had published a study of the role constellation formed by three senior psychiatric hospital administrators. This conjoint work unit represented more than the aggregated efforts of three self-contained individuals enacting their own particular roles. It evolved from a process of adaptation negotiated between the three men as they intermeshed their personalities while reworking a pre-existing set of relationships following a leadership succession process. Hodgson et al. (1965: 284) describe a constellation as a ‘latent substructure’, that is, an unspoken and implicit sense of a bonded relationship. This awareness was grounded in the intersubjectively shared knowledge that each constellation member possessed his own unique set of specialist attributes, predisposing each one to rely on the other two. And the fact that each individual’s specialist expertise was clearly differentiated from but still complementary to, that of their colleagues, and that each person trusted his two executive peers, worked to the mutual advantage of all three men and provided a sound grounding for their interdependence. Complementary specialization enabled each man to engage in actions and operations of his own choosing for which he was best fitted within a jointly agreed-upon framework of activities, in pursuit of the interests and well-being of the hospital.

In other less obvious examples, distributed leadership is even manifest in what appear to be the most self-evident and uncontestable instances of standalone or focused leadership. In the sphere of politics, consider the cases of tyranny, dictatorships or coups in which a military general takes charge. While the individuals in each case may exercise naked, supreme or virtually untrammeled power, they generally act on behalf of or with the blessing of an army council, a junta or a cell group. They institutionalize new organs of state, thereby creating a new regime of authority that they may seek to manipulate at will but on which they are also heavily dependent. Likewise, in more familiar democratic arrangements, there are often vast networks of specialist advisers, minders and officials that form an apparatus of shared responsibility and
influence surrounding heads of state and government. In each of these instances the division of leadership labour, I would argue, can be demonstrated to be shared or dispersed. Why, then, does this attribute appear to be unacknowledged or unnoticed? The reason lies with the word ‘head’. As a close reading of Gibb (1968) will show, when people use ‘leadership’, more often than not they really mean ‘headship’. Whereas leadership denotes influence, headship, on the other hand, denotes authority and describes the exercise of authority by the most senior role incumbent in an executive hierarchy. The confusion is caused, therefore, by the slippage in usage from the person who heads becoming cast as the person who leads. Authority overlays the actual division of labour so that the head individual who exercises overall responsibility becomes vested with a monopoly of influence. Thereafter an expectation solidifies that the chief authority figure or head is also, by definition, the leader.

The key component in the activity system which accounts for organizational leadership taking a distributed form, as I have been arguing, is the division of labour, despite the appearance of concentration, as in some of the above examples. The division of labour is the principal driver or generative mechanism for the structuring of work and workplace relations. This is because it defines the overall amount of work originating in the task environment to be performed, and the nature and extent of the specialization into which the totality of that work is subdivided. Yet the acknowledged form taken by the division of labour in a particular context, in respect of the allocated work, will always be determined by the structuring elements distinguished earlier: authority (whose effects we have just witnessed), the values, interests and personalities of the members concerned and the resources at their disposal.

**Incidence of distribution**

Given my claim that, appearances to the contrary, leadership invariably takes a distributed form, there are two questions which demand answers. First, why have commentators seemingly only just begun to accord explicit recognition to distributed leadership? Second, has the character of distribution changed over time? And, if so, why?

In regard to the first question, all of the indications are that distributed leadership is an idea whose time has come. The term is appearing in discussions of decision making in schools, although mostly only in Gibb’s minimalist sense or as a euphemism for collaboration and spreading the burden of decision making (e.g. Clift et al., 1995). Another reason for its appeal may be the dawning realization that the roughly two decades-long preoccupation with visionary champions is flawed, particularly in respect of their demonstrated accomplishment of direct effects on organizational effectiveness (Hallinger and Heck, 1999: 185–6). Another, perhaps, is that organizations and systems are reaping what they have sown. That is, having diminished dramatically the overall number of (especially middle) managers through processes of downsizing and de-
layering—with all of the negative consequences of the erosion of culture, loss of collective memory and so on—the justification for traditional manager–managed and leader–follower distinctions begins to weaken. Suddenly, the possibility opens up of all organization members becoming managers (Grey, 1999) and of all followers becoming autonomous leaders (Miller, 1998: 18), a consideration I have discussed elsewhere (Gronn, 1999b). Another, clearly, is the rise in popularity of organizational learning and the learning organization. The attractiveness of these two notions is accounted for less, perhaps, because of any prima facie connection between learning collectively and the notion of distributed cognition, than because of the awareness that the (tacit and codified) knowledge required to solve complex problems is dispersed throughout organizations. Hence, perhaps, the recent rise in the popularity of teams as vehicles for harnessing collective expertise.

The second question is the more difficult of the two. A trite answer would be to say that the character of distribution is likely to alter substantially whenever there are dramatic changes in the division of labour, particularly when the volume and complexity of problems and tasks increase. Despite the enduring attachment of commentators to an individualistic leadership paradigm, as a normative option in such circumstances distributed organizational leadership has, prima facie, much to commend it. Distribution entails maximizing sources of information, data and judgement, and spreading the detrimental impact of the consequences of miscalculation and risk. Because of the pooling of expertise and sources of advice, it also affords an increased likelihood of detecting errors in judgement and more attention being accorded feedback. These things amount, in short, to an overall widening of the net of intelligence and resourcefulness. But quite apart from what may be the inherent attraction of these features, the division of labour in human service organizations has been changed recently beyond all recognition by the availability of networked electronic communications technology, namely, the tools, artefacts (or Is) of the activity system template. Reliance on networked office computers, for example, now facilitates the transcendence of previously insurmountable barriers of time, place and space by opening up entirely new possibilities for the performance of collaborative work. New arrangements for scheduling and programming tasks simultaneously, sequentially or in parallel with one another by geographically separated work units, for example, have suddenly become tangible options. The inherent advantages of distribution can be realized on a scale and in a form previously not contemplated.

At the same time as the creation of these new possibilities, existing routines and operating procedures cease any longer to provide ready-made answers. The search for new solutions begins as part of the ongoing dialectic between design and adaptation in the workplace. Strauss’s (1985: 4) term for these new configurations of tasks is trajectory. The creation and re-creation of task trajectories requires the labour of articulation. Articulation and rearticulation work is central to what it means to manage, and is crucial for resolving the paradox at
the heart of the division of labour. That is, coincident with the process of differentiating tasks into their subcomponents is the simultaneous requirement that these be reintegrated by means of coordination and control mechanisms (Sayer and Walker, 1992: 17). Task integration is a precondition of cooperative effort and effective conjoint activity, yet 'none of this work is called into play automatically', remarks Strauss (1985: 5). It is for this reason that proposals that organizations can be reduced to networks of distributed cognition should be treated with caution. Cognition, clearly, is important but not so important that it is a substitute for everything else.

Conclusion

In this article I have sought to revise orthodox thinking about leadership. Building on the early work of Gibb, and in the face of a resurgence of anti-leadership arguments, I have argued for the retention of leadership, but in a form which accords more with the realities of the flow of influence in organizations, and which disentangles it from any presumed automatic connection with headship. I have discussed the merits of activity theory, as a means of tracking distributed influence and leadership, and have suggested that the activity system model at the heart of this approach forms a helpful and useful bridge between organizational structures and the actions of agents. The particular attraction of activity theory is its model of a work context, principally because of the way this foregrounds the division of labour. Provided leadership commentators and researchers focus their analyses on the actual divisions of labour obtaining in systems and organizations, especially on the ways in which the specialization–integration duality is resolved or plays itself out, rather than applying traditional stereotypic dualisms like leader–follower(s), then realistic portrayals of leadership should be attainable. This kind of outcome should result in more accurate knowledge of the causal connection between leadership and the outcomes of action, which was the original trigger for the substitutes of leadership argument. It should also generate more realistic hopes for leadership, including a less widespread lay romanticism of the concept, and a revised set of role expectations among future cohorts of aspiring educational leaders.

Those in education who insist that the achievement of sound and effective practice, and ascertaining the factors which contribute to that practice, should be the overriding goals of commentators and practitioners alike are right. My approach, however, has been to show that leadership (albeit in a considerably different form) still has a significant role to play in accomplishing good practice. But if the perspective outlined here is to have an enduring impact then there remains much to be done. Having cast doubt on learning as a sole substitute or replacement for leadership, I have said very little about its connections with leadership (although see Gronn, 1999b). On this point, activity theory has much to contribute to understanding learning and its impact on the division of labour through such processes as visibilization (Engeström, 1999b; Star and Strauss,
I have also relied on a relatively undifferentiated notion of tasks and have tended to treat these as synonymous with problems. Tasks and problems and their connection with the kind of distributed, conjoint agency view of leadership propounded here, needless to say, warrant much closer attention. The disarming implication of my argument for those with a vested interest in defending leadership as the vital ingredient in the success of organizations, however, is that attending to both of these matters of unfinished business entails foregrounding organizational work and labour more and more as the focus of analysis and discussion, with leadership being relegated to a contributory role. On the other hand, the argument of this article will have succeeded provided it demonstrates that removing leadership altogether from the stage is premature.

Note

There are, of course, numerous other potentially fatal weaknesses likely to be triggered when an exaggerated sense of agency is attributed to leaders. Grandiosity is one. At the time of writing (late 1999, early 2000), the ruling Liberal–National Coalition government in Victoria has recently been ejected after seven years in office in what was widely tipped to be an unlosable election. The Liberal Party’s campaign strategy (based on what its spin doctors believed was the Premier’s extraordinarily high public profile and popularity rating) was to embargo all its ministers from public comment, and to confine every policy announcement and public statement to the party leader and Premier, the Hon. J.G. Kennett. The Premier even established his own website (www.jeff.com)—since abolished—and produced radio advertisements with voices exclaiming ‘Jeff f****** rules!’ and the like. Following a complete electoral debacle (loss of 13 seats and government), the Coalition agreement collapsed, and Kennett has since resigned as premier, party leader and member of state parliament. The subsequent by-election held for the former premier’s seat was then won (for the first time ever) by the new minority Labor government with a massive voting swing of about 10.5 per cent. The resignation of the leader of the National Party is imminent, thereby creating another by-election.

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HEADS ON DEPUTY HEADSHIP
Impossible roles for invisible role holders?

Peter Ribbins


I. Introduction
Headteachers are interesting: deputy headteachers, it seems, are not. The former have routinely, and over many years, attracted the attention of biographers, dramatists, novelists and stage and screen directors (Ribbins, 1997); the latter have been, virtually, ignored. While many headteachers have written about themselves and about headship, I could discover no substantial autobiography and few published accounts of deputy headship written by deputies. As I write, there is now a BBC television serial, Chalk, programmed after the late evening news, which has as its central character the deputy headteacher, Mr Slatt, of Galfast High Comprehensive. It is billed as a comedy and Slatt is more anti-hero than hero. No doubt, there are real deputy headteachers up and down the land who might be described in similar terms, but my reading of the literature and research suggest that many more should be regarded as victims not villains.

In developing this theme I will attempt two things. First, to say something about how deputy headship is depicted in the literature in general and the journal in particular. Second, to draw selectively on research into heads and headship in which I have been involved, with Michael Marland, Christine Pascal, Steve Rayner and others, to consider the views of heads on deputy headship. This took the form of 34 substantial, face-to-face conversations with 11 heads of secondary schools,1 12 heads of primary schools or units2 and 11 heads of special schools/units or schools with substantial numbers of pupils with statements of special need.3 Some of these conversations are in print (Ribbins, 1997; Ribbins and Marland, 1994) and the rest will be available shortly (Pascal and Ribbins, 1997; Rayner and Ribbins, 1998). For many, their experience of deputy headship is remembered with, at best, mixed feelings. In this there is a match in the extant literature, a good deal of which has been produced by heads or former heads.
II. Deputy headship in the literature

There is a published corpus of work on deputies and deputy headship in the primary and secondary school, if not in the special school, which might just about be characterized as a literature. I recall reading Peter Lawley’s book on Deputy Headship in the secondary school, which claimed to be the first book of its kind (1988). More recently, Gareth Thomas has published Primary School Deputies Handbook, which describes itself as the first dedicated text for primary deputies (1996). While I am not sure what a ‘dedicated text’ is, I do know that the literature on deputies and deputy headship is far more modest than that available on heads and headship. A comparative examination of the space devoted to these two themes in Educational Management & Administration over the last 25 years illustrates the point. No other theme has received anything like the same attention as has headship. During that time the journal has in 38 editions published 50 article and 14 reviews on headship (several other contributions have dealt with aspects of school leadership at a senior management level more generally). Of the articles, 17 focus on headship in secondary schools, 9 in primary schools, 2 in middle schools and just 1 on special education: 10 of the articles and 5 of the reviews were by heads, with most of the rest from academics. Only one article and one review on headship was from a deputy head. As well as many articles on headship in the UK, there have been contributions from Africa, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Israel, Kuwait, Malta, Thailand, South Africa and the United States. The first articles on headship, a debate on training between Harry Gray and Alan Barnes, were the opening contributions to the first issue. More significantly, the third issue contained a paper from the founding editor, Meredydd Hughes (1973), on ‘The Professional-as-Administrator: The Case of the Secondary School Head’, which has proved to be one of the most influential, and most often quoted, in the field.

The journal’s record on deputy headship is far slimmer and much less impressive. To date it has published in five issues, five articles and one review. Of the articles, three focused explicitly on deputy headship in the primary and one in the secondary school. More than a decade passed before the journal published an article on deputy headship. A paper from Owen, then a deputy head, and his colleagues on ‘The Role of the Deputy in the Secondary School’ has the distinction of being the first, as well as the last, article specifically on this theme (Owen et al., 1983). That edition also contained the first review of a book on (primary) deputy headship. This cannot be described as an embarrassment of riches. But things may not be quite as bad as this account may make them seem. This is so because some of the most thoughtful studies on deputy headship which the journal has published are not explicitly labelled as such. One of the best, from Alan Coulson (1976), is entitled ‘Research Report: Leadership Functions in Primary Schools’. It has much to say on headship, deputy headship and the relationship between the two.
This is not the first substantial examination of deputy headship in recent times. Burnham, some years before, undertook a study of deputies for his M.Ed. His thesis (1964) and a chapter (1968) in a book by Allen offer the fullest available account of the origins of deputy headship within the English educational system. The role is an ancient one. Its genesis has two main strands. The first dates back to ‘the position of the usher in the Endowed Grammar Schools of the fifteenth century. At that time the concept was the simple one of substitute for the Headmaster, acting as a stand in when the head was absent’ (1968: 169). But, ‘by the end of the eighteenth century the usher was being given full charge of the Lower School, his authority including the right to hire and fire staff’ (p. 169). Later still, ‘the usher’s deputyship became associated with a struggle for top-man leadership in the school’ (p. 170). The second strand, that derived from the notion of the first assistant in the elementary school, developed in the late 19th/early 20th century. These studies establish that from its origins the role of the deputy has depended crucially upon how the role of the head is interpreted and on what headteachers wish to make of the position of their principal subordinate.

Coulson (1976) examines ‘the conceptions of primary school heads and deputy heads for the role of the deputy head . . . in order to discover how, and to what extent, staff leadership functions are divided between the head and the deputy’ (p. 37). He reports:

In general, heads and deputy heads agreed that instrumental leadership (behaviours concerned with organizing, directing and evaluating) is more appropriate to the head and that administration is more appropriate to the deputy. However, the conceptions of the two groups diverged in regard to the expressive or socio-emotional (behaviours indicative of friendship, integration, personal concern) leadership of teachers; whereas heads perceived this as mainly their concern, deputy heads considered it more appropriate to themselves. In most schools, delegation to the deputy head appears to be limited, mainly involving the performance of routine tasks on the head’s behalf

Coulson concludes that, as things stand: ‘deputy headship often appears to be neither intrinsically satisfying, nor an adequate preparation for headship, since the aspiring deputy rarely has the opportunity to make the type of decision which will face him after promotion’ (p. 46).

So much for the primary sector, what of the secondary school? Todd and Dennison (1980) have a similar tale to tell. They argue that the job of:

deputy headteacher has not been clearly defined, and in part this has arisen from a similar lack of role definition for headteachers, who have tended to exercise the powers of a paternalist autocrat. As a result headteachers have viewed their deputies as extensions of themselves, and in

391
doing so have deprived them of an authentic role... many (complain) they were frequently reduced to carrying out a few minor technical or clerical duties which did not encourage, or even allow, the use of initi-ative and expertise. In addition the 'man in the middle' position—between the headteacher and his staff—was a major source of difficulty and dissatisfaction.

(p. 304)

In the light of all this it is hard to deny Coulson’s claim that ‘as things stand, deputy headship appears to be neither intrinsically satisfying, nor an adequate preparation for headship’. On this last point, Gross and Herriott (1965) have also concluded that ‘some school systems promote individuals to the principalship only after they have served an apprenticeship as an assistant or vice principal, apparently in the belief that it is a valuable training’ (p. 68); ‘our findings suggest that they should not’ (p. 156).

Curiously and despite such evidence, it seems that a belief in deputy headship as an effective preparation for headship is now even more strongly entrenched than it was when Burnham, Coulson, and Gross and Herriott were undertaking their research. At the time many more made the jump to headship, without having been a deputy, in both primary and secondary schools than is the norm now. Research by Hilsum and Start (1974) undertaken in 1971–2, involving a national sample of 881 schools and 6,722 teachers in those schools, suggested that promotion to headship from lower levels within the teaching profession than deputy headship was commonplace at that time. They found that 51 percent in primary schools and 53 percent in secondary schools had not been deputies when appointed to their first headships. Much has changed since the early 1970s and it is high time for this fine study to be replicated. New research would show that the figures now, especially in the secondary sector, are much lower. Thus, for example, of the 34 heads we interviewed only four had not been deputies. What else has changed?

A reading of recent studies of deputy headship, still an undemanding task, encourages a short answer to this last question—not much! But this may oversimplify. Some contemporary authors do strike an optimistic, or, at least, a hopeful, note. Edith Jayne (1996) talks of the roles of head and deputy (or, as she would prefer, ‘associate’) head as ‘varyingly described as complementary, yin and yang, or the leader partnership’ (p. 317). In employing the term ‘associate head’ rather than ‘deputy head’, Jayne cites West (1992), who uses it to mean deputy as in deputy-head-of-school rather than as head’s deputy. Developing this idea West talks of the head as pilot and the deputy as co-pilot of the school. Even so this notion is based upon a partnership model in which both head and ‘associate head’ share a responsibility for ‘the art of headship’. These and related ideas have been developed by others. Southworth (1994: 6) suggests ‘assistant heads should be responsible for at least one aspect of the school on their own’. He concludes that the future of
primary deputy heads seems to lie on the role being rethought and enhanced. If a dynamic partnership can be formed between head, deputy and staff, and if the position can be regarded as that of assistant head . . . who are managerial partners with their headteachers . . . (this) will ensure the old adage is true: two heads are better than one.

I have two problems with this thesis. I doubt if it is particularly novel and do not believe we have the evidence to judge the extent to which it represents a reality in practice. Burnham’s ideas on deputy headship, advanced some thirty years ago, were not dissimilar, nor did they lack theoretical force, but they failed to be heard by or, if they were, to persuade many headteachers to change their ways.

In taking this view I rely upon evidence from two of the best of ethnographic studies of headship published in the United Kingdom. I do so, not least, because some of the most revealing observations about deputy headship are located in research which focuses on headship or has been conducted by heads or former heads. Elizabeth Richardson (1973) has, to the best of my knowledge, never been a headteacher or a deputy headteacher. Even so, her study of Nailsea (Secondary) School remains one of the most illuminating studies of a deputy headteacher of a secondary school. This notwithstanding the fact that it was undertaken 25 years ago and despite the fact that its treatment of the role of Robin Thomas, the deputy headteacher, and of Joan Bradbury, the senior mistress, is very much slighter than that of Denys John, the headteacher. She admits that, before she began her research at Nailsea.

I had previously thought of ‘top management’, in so far as I had used this term at all, mainly in terms of a pair . . . of a head and his or her deputy . . . What I saw at Nailsea was something a great deal more complex than . . . my image of the head/deputy-head partnership, for I had to begin by looking at a trio, not at a pair, and then found myself having to shift my perspective again in order to look at a small (leadership) group of six.

(pp. 207–8)

In introducing this aspect of her discussion, Richardson remarks that ‘the role of deputy head was a difficult one to sustain in a school where other leadership roles seemed to be overshadowing it’. This despite the fact that ‘Denys John’s deputy, both because he himself had the necessary inner strength and because of the head’s trust in him, could and did take over his role, if necessary for quite long periods’ (p. 210). However, if a deputy’s relationship with his head is a key dimension of his evolving role, there are others, each of which have a contemporary relevance. First, there are the implications for the role of individual deputies when, as in most secondary schools, there are two or more of them. This, in effect, was the situation at Nailsea. Thus, for Richardson, ‘the experiences of Robin Thomas and Joan Bradbury during the years of expansion
cannot be studied in isolation . . . these two people felt themselves to be equally trapped in straight jackets—the one as “the administrator”, the other as “the carer” (p. 218). In developing this theme she stresses the extent to which role stereotyping of this kind reflects ‘ancient assumptions about masculinity and femininity’. In such a context

in an expanding school the increasingly heavy administrative task is liable to be identified more and more with the deputy head, however strenuously he may resist this . . . so (he) may find himself having to cope with their [the staff’s] unwillingness to acknowledge that he has any skills that are not purely administrative.

(p. 220)

Second, there are problems in regarding deputyship as essentially a preparation for headship. If most secondary schools have more than one deputy there are practical difficulties. Not all can achieve headship. But there may be other problems. As Richardson puts it, Robin Thomas

lived with a good deal of uncertainty about how far the school, and particularly the headmaster and the governors, were committed to him. He had been told at interview that he would not be expected to stay for more than four years or so. Now an observation like this could be interpreted in two ways. Did the governors (and the headmaster himself) mean to imply that they would hope to get rid of him after about four years? Or did they mean that they would not wish to stand in his way if, after about that time, he had the chance of being appointed to a headship?

(p. 222)

What Thomas had not heard was

Denys John’s uneasiness about . . . subjecting an experienced and skilled teacher and a potential headmaster to what might well turn out to be a role tied to dull administrative chores, relieved only by occasional opportunities to deputize for himself and so to have periodic experiences of being, in effect, the headmaster.

(p. 222)

Ironically, these well-intentioned concerns led Thomas to be uncertain about his tenure and whether his colleagues believed ‘Denys John trusted him, as deputy head, with responsibilities in the leadership of the school’. He also wondered if he was seen ‘as a yes-man [to the head], who at best could only step into the head’s shoes and do what he had been told to do?’ (p. 224). Richardson concludes that
lacking any continuing leadership role [other than, presumably, ‘dull administration’] . . . it was, it appeared, very difficult for Robin Thomas to imagine he could ever appear to them as anything more than [‘admin-man’ or] the occasional stop-gap headmaster. In his own mind, the real task leader, the ‘ideas man’, the inspirational head was Denys John. It was hard for him to convince himself he was any more than the organizational assistant who might help to get ideas implemented, the ‘man on the ground’, the person whom colleagues might bring their confusion and anxieties.

(p. 225)

If this was the case with a head as concerned for the well being of his colleagues as was Denys John and with a deputy as able as was Robin Thomas, then we might expect problems of this kind to be commonplace. We certainly found echoes of them in our discussion with many secondary headteachers. What of deputy headship in the primary school?

In thinking about this I turned to a study by Geoff Southworth (who has been a headteacher) of Ron Lacey, head of Orchard Community Junior School (Southworth, 1995). In the context of his belief in the need for a ‘dynamic partnership’ between the head and deputy in which ‘two heads are better than one’, Southworth was ‘intrigued’ that Dave (the Deputy) should figure in such a pale form, even though they appeared, on the surface, to work as partners. They spoke to each other, kept in touch and seemed to enjoy one another’s company. Dave covered for Ron in his absence and kept him informed of developments among the staff. Yet, when Ron spoke about headship, he tended to talk about it in an individualized, as against shared way. Ron focused upon what he did, or was thinking and planning. Dave barely figured in Ron’s analysis. Nor was Dave regularly consulted about what actions to take. Ron tended to determine courses of action about which Dave was, at most, informed. In other words, the partnership of Ron and Dave was relatively shallow. Ron largely worked independent of Dave.

(p. 139)

In puzzling on this, Southworth explores five possible ‘single strand’ reasons why this should be so but plumps for a single ‘multi-strand’ interpretation which suggests that Dave was a relatively weak figure in the school because Ron regarded the headteacher as the most important person in a school. Hence there was an in-built asymmetry to any partnership between himself and his deputy . . . It shows that deputy heads are heavily reliant upon their headteachers.

(p. 140)
Relating this to his earlier paper (Southworth, 1994), he concludes that ‘Deputies cannot be assistant heads . . . unless their headteachers facilitate such a partnership’ (p. 141).

This is not to suggest that headteachers today are uninterested in deputy headship or unconcerned about the welfare of their deputy heads. On the contrary, many are. One such is Nick Butt (1997), head of St Edmund’s Community School in King’s Lynn, who fears that deputies may too often lead ‘a dawg’s life’. As a result,

more deputies burn out than either heads or class-room teachers, despite the well-documented concern about both these other groups.
Deputies are the silent minority, the forgotten troops in the education army, suffering the most casualties, providing the most support and receiving none of the glory.

(p. 10)

Deputies, it seems, can and must learn to say ‘no’ if they, like the Vulcans, another unduly stoic people, are to survive and prosper. Butt has much useful advice to offer deputy heads but I wonder on what evidence he bases such grand claims as

The majority of deputies work their socks off with very little appreciation from their heads, colleagues, parents or the local authority. It is expected that deputies will be at everybody’s beck and call, drop everything for whoever, have no agenda of their own and be a constant source of balm, encouragement, inspiration and energy.

It would have been interesting to know, for example, the extent to which, if any, his views on deputy headship represent aspects of his experience as a deputy head. If they do, he will be in good company. Surprisingly few of the 34 headteachers interviewed by my colleagues or myself recalled their experience of deputy headship with affection and several retain negative views of the role. It is to this theme that I will now turn.

III. Heads on deputy headship

In what follows I will focus on what the heads in our studies say on three themes: what they felt about their experiences as deputies; what they regard as the role of the deputy; and how they compare headship with deputy headship. I will illustrate the discussion with reference to the views of heads drawn from across all sectors. I look forward to examining the data according to age, experience, gender, ethnicity, etc. However, since all the conversations will be published within the year, others can engage in similar analysis. My colleagues and I would welcome this.
1. Heads on the experience of deputy headship

All but three or four of the headteachers in our studies had been deputy heads; most for relatively short periods, some at greater length. Fewer still had been a deputy in more than one school, several had worked for more than one head. How did they recall this experience? Relatively few remember their days as a deputy headteacher with overwhelming enthusiasm or the head(s) with whom they worked at the time with unqualified warmth. These are demanding tests. I should not paint too bleak a picture, some enjoyed deputy headship, viewed it as an appropriate preparation for headship and had a high regard for their headteachers.

(a) Deputy headship as an experience

For several of the headteachers in our study, the transition to deputy headship had been a great disappointment. Some found its demands disappointingly slight, others unexpectedly heavy:

[My] experience [of deputy headship] I found very frustrating. The head was a very different style of leader than the one I had worked for. She was much more autocratic . . . I found I actually had more power and decision making and responsibility as a head of infants than I now did as deputy head.

(Sue Beeson)

I found the step from head of department to deputy headship the biggest I ever made . . . in my eighteen years of headship, five of the seven deputies I have helped appoint are now heads and good heads. I have always told them that the step to deputy head is much bigger than that to head. I think most of them would agree.

(John Evans)

Sue Beeson stresses the extent to which her headteacher was responsible for making her experience of deputy headship a ‘frustrating’ one. John Evans has a higher regard for his headteacher (or rather ‘acting head’) of the time but nevertheless suggests that he was, at least in part, responsible for making his time as a deputy so demanding. More generally we found headteachers from each of the three sectors of schooling who enjoyed their time as deputies and others who did not. More often than not their attitudes, both positive and negative, had been shaped significantly by their memories of one or more of the heads with whom they had worked.

(b) Deputy headteachers and their headteachers

Several of the heads in our studies have good memories, as deputies, of their headteachers and of the part which they played in preparing them for headship.
I became a deputy headteacher to a head who was six years from retire-
ment and was very much looking forward to it . . . He was a wonderful
man . . . I [took on] a lot of things during my deputy headship which I
simply continued to do in my headship. In that respect, the deputy
headship was a good grounding for headship . . . [As deputy] I seemed
to do most of the organizing in school . . . In many respects I suppose I
ran the school on a day to day basis . . . I was, I suppose, the curriculum
leader and kind of personnel manager . . . I felt involved and I felt he
appreciated my work . . . There is nothing like being appreciated is
there? . . . I think my years as a deputy served me well.

(Edna Ross)

I worked for somebody who viewed her role as head as being to train
me for headship. I don’t think I had that in mind . . . She groomed me
for headship . . . The head helped to push me in the right directions. She
was great because she allowed me to make mistakes, helped me to discuss
situations, but also sometimes left it entirely to me and said ‘No, it’s your
problem, you deal with it’. I guess it wasn’t mapped out in a clinical
sense, but all of the basic areas which are involved in the organization of
school were covered.

(Mike Gasper)

I saw an advert for the post of Vice-Principal of Burleigh . . . I sent for
the details and . . . they jumped off the page at me . . . They were
written in a particular style by a woman who turned out to be one of the
formative influences on me. She was called Joan Gregory and was the
Principal of the College. She was quite outrageous, but her educational
vision was absolutely wonderful . . . most importantly for me, there was
a clear role for the deputy: to work as sort of lieutenant to her. It was
the most brilliant experience working for her . . . Jumping on, when I
applied for this job [his present headship] and was interviewed, I was
asked why I should be appointed. What made me the person for the
post? I was able to say, without hesitation, that I’d had this apprentice-
ship and experience of working alongside these two [Keith Foreman
succeeded Joan Gregory on her retirement] remarkable, powerful
people each . . . Their style was that they were grooming me, I knew
they were. I reached a point where I found myself feeling that I could
have a go at most of the things that Keith did, that Joan had done . . . I
learned from working with them and from many conversations with
them.

(Bernard Clarke)

In most cases, however, such expressions of regard, tended to be qualified:
I learnt a great deal from my . . . head. He had previously been a lawyer which was useful for learning aspects of headship. It certainly made me more careful. He was a good mentor . . . [But he] was not very good at talking to parents. He would try to avoid them. I felt that was a bad mistake . . . One does tend to learn what not to do rather than what to do. I learnt how frustrating it can be to work for some heads which was partly why I wanted to move on. I hope I give space and freedom.

(Valerie Bragg)

Several were openly, sometimes scathingly, critical. Some expressed this discreetly. Helen Hyde, for example, notes simply that ‘I did not get on very well with my head and only stayed four years . . . Why did I want to leave? Partly because I didn’t get on with the head.’ Others made the point bluntly. Rosemary Whinn-Sladden recalls that during the appointment process:

I went to look around the school with the head and thought it was the worst school I have ever seen in my life! I decided as I looked around that I couldn’t possibly work with this headteacher. His views were so unlike mine that I really didn’t want the job [but] I got the job. I went to see the headteacher afterwards to talk about what my responsibilities would be and first of all was told that I would have 38 first and second year children, the other full time teacher would have 24 and he would have 18 . . . He said I wasn’t to worry about curriculum areas or responsibilities as a deputy because he didn’t really want me, he didn’t need a deputy. If I just looked after the children in my classroom and didn’t cause any problems, after two years he would give me a good reference and I could go and work somewhere else. This was before I even started!

Even this was not the worst experience we learned of. David Haigh will never forget the first day of his second headship:

At 10.15 the head called me into his office. I had only been in the school an hour, he ranted and raved, said I’d nothing to offer as far as he was concerned, it hadn’t been his idea to appoint me and so on and so on. I went out quite badly shaken, but one of the other deputies said don’t worry, he does that to everybody. I was lucky he didn’t do it in the corridor. He . . . didn’t improve during the six years I was there . . . They were unhappy years. He used to do things like say ‘I’ll fix it so that you’ll never get another job in this Authority’. In my case it was true. I made 76 applications and got 8 interviews. I’d a first class degree and a masters in educational management, experience of everything under the sun special needwise, a history of rapid promotion . . . it didn’t help.
If some heads are remembered as nasty, others are recalled as lazy and unappreciative. It is still possible, however, for such experiences to offer a useful preparation for headship. Liz Paver, for example, when she ‘first became a deputy head’, was shocked to realize:

> you could bring your newspaper in and your electric fire and your toast and sit and be a head . . . I had no respect for [her] as a person and none as a head. [Even so] I learnt more from her than others . . . she taught me how I should never allow myself to be. Her lack of appreciation of others was a great lesson, and the fact that if we ever had irate parents she wouldn’t tackle them and she wouldn’t defend her staff . . . Furthermore, whilst you don’t have to be first on site and last off to prove you are a good head; it does help to be there at the end of the day.

(c) Deputy headship as a preparation for headship

In taking this view Liz Paver is in good company. She is one among several who believe that what they had learnt as deputy heads from the example of their headteachers had more to do with ‘how not to do’ than ‘how to do’ headship. Rosemary Whinn-Sladden is another who acknowledges that her poor experience and unsupportive headteacher ‘taught me things I didn’t want to do’. Sue Abrol makes a similar point,

> there were things I learnt not to do. I rebelled because I didn’t think that what was happening was right. One or two of my heads were very insular and their word was everything, you could not challenge it. I felt this was not on.

In contrast, while Ann Hinchcliffe’s memories of her heads are very positive she still claims that ‘I have also learnt what not to do from them, but it’s not what I emphasise in my own mind.’

Others, while not necessarily critical of the example they had received, did not feel supported or prepared for headship by their headteachers. As Sue Abrol remembers it,

> [My heads] did not overly prepare me for headship. I think they thought I’d never be a head anyway. Nobody expected me to be a head. Not even the head where I was deputy. I can still see his reference, it was balanced, that’s about it. Not necessarily saying I had the qualities needed for headship. He sat on the fence. Most of them did.

David Davies also felt he ‘had no support from the heads I’d worked for. That was wrong of them.’ Chris Morgan apportions blame more widely:
I progressed to deputy headship despite and perhaps even in spite of the system, rather than with any positive support or guidance. There was no real planning and certainly no preparation. [...] There was absolutely no formal preparation [for headship] offered by the LEA or schools I worked for, and the headteachers gave me no real help.

Conversely some believed that they had worked with headteachers who were as well disposed and supportive as circumstances allowed:

I [was appointed] to a deputy headship at a small school for pupils with SLD ... The headteacher was a very nice bloke but unfortunately he was suffering the after-effects of a serious illness. He had to take early retirement less than two years after my arrival at the school. [...] I thought my headteacher was a good bloke with a well thought out philosophy of education and in many ways influenced my approach to leadership and school management. I think he would have been a greater influence upon me as a manager if he had not been unwell.

(Rob Ashdown)

Finally, there were a few who believed that a spell as a deputy was a necessary and valuable preparation for headship. As Paul Craig put it, ‘I do think a period as a deputy is a valuable thing. I would advocate it. It is a necessary preparation ... if you do it for a number of years, it gives you a better insight into the job of headship. You get the chance to see if you really do want to take the next step.’ This testament would have perhaps been more persuasive if Craig had not also been one of the few who had not been a deputy!

2. Heads on the role of the deputy head

The headteachers in our study voiced a wide range of views on what they might expect of a deputy. Valerie Bragg identified three main aspects of the role of the deputy

first, you sometimes stand in for the head. Secondly, you are learning to be a head so you need the opportunity to try a variety of tasks and gain the necessary experience. Thirdly, the role is also a dogsbody’s job. It is part of the learning process ... picking problems up, filling in the jigsaw, noticing what has not been done and doing it.

Many heads, and deputies, would probably agree with this description as far as it goes but might suggest that it does not go far enough. For example, it seems to discount the possibility that deputy headship can be a worthwhile job in its own right and that deputies can be significant people within schools. We talked to heads, from primary and secondary schools, who believed the opposite. In the
strongest expression of this view, it was claimed that deputies were almost working as headteachers:

I’ve two deputies because the school is on split sites. The deputies need to be able to manage and administer their buildings. . . . My deputies are working almost as headteachers and I delight in seeing what they are doing.

(Mike Ashford)

In a school the size of mine, nearly 1800 pupils, the senior managers are virtually my equal in the sense of the shared responsibility we have for the school. Each of my deputy heads has a sectional responsibility for a part of the school which in terms of pupils is bigger than most of the schools in the country . . . They have a great deal of individual responsibility but it is crucial that we meet as a team very regularly; we co-ordinate what we are doing and we try to get the interpretation of policies consistent across the whole school.

(Peter Downes)

The idea that deputies should carry significant individual responsibilities was stressed by many other headteachers, although how they described and justified this could vary a good deal:

To me, you deal with the detail as a deputy . . . One of my deputies . . . (is) brilliant at the student affairs end of things and as a project manager . . . [The] other deputy, has a background in the pastoral side . . . she does the work brilliantly. I feel comfortable about her handling the timetable, the staffing and the curriculum . . . [The third deputy] manages the budget. . . . [Its] playing to people’s strengths and looking for the gaps and seeing what we haven’t got. Then asking if there is anybody who could do it.

(Bernard Clarke)

The deputy headteacher . . . isn’t just a shadow of the headteacher, she has a very different set of responsibilities related to TVEI, Records of Achievement, Inset and Child Protection. There are a number of other things, too, which form her remit . . . generally I would describe the management of the school as a partnership.

(Rob Ashdown)

The idea that the head and deputies, along with other senior staff, must be able to work in partnership and as members of a team was also often identified as a
key aspect of the successful management of the school. Several headteachers also stressed that while it should be clear who was responsible for what, a degree of shared responsibility for major aspects of the school and its management would enable ‘cross-fertilization’, continuity and a ‘consistent interpretation of policy across the school’:

We do work in a partly collegiate way. I have three deputies and a senior teacher who I meet as individuals and as a group every week . . . but they also see the benefits of the arrangements in place. [They mean] that the finance resources deputy is heavily involved with the curriculum because she is working with the heads of department. That is how it should be. The pastoral deputy . . . also looks at curriculum matters. So there is a lot of cross fertilization.

(Helen Hyde)

The leadership of the head . . . is important but so, too, is that of the management team as a whole. It is only when my Deputy Head, my leaders in the curriculum and I are together on things that we can be at our most effective.

(Joan McConnell)

Brian Sherratt, head of the largest school in the country, makes some similar points and says something about what he expects of his deputies and what the deputies might expect from him:

They should expect my confidence in them and my support . . . They should expect leadership and professional guidance from me . . . In a very real sense when I am not around they are me. They are the head. They should expect that I will be happy with the decisions they make. If I am not, they would expect me to say so . . . they should expect thorough-going delegation. Because I trust them and because we are working from the same map. My deputies and I form a team . . . What do I expect of them? I expect their support, their loyalty. I expect them to work tirelessly. I expect total commitment to the school. I expect them to move things forward, to lead in their areas: they are very clearly defined areas . . . We tend to rotate roles periodically . . . and this represents excellent career development; it provides deputies with an excellent repertoire of skills. Great Barr deputies have little difficult in moving on to headships . . . Deputies here are very much members of a team and we work together every working day. In a large school like ours there is a clear division of labour between the deputies. Where such lines of demarcation are clear, deputies tend to show a natural reluctance to trespass on each other’s areas of responsibility without invitation. Because of this it may appear to the observer that support
between deputies is not as evident as in smaller institutions where the responsibilities are less clearly visible.  

(Brian Sherratt)

3. Heads on deputy headship in comparison with headship

Contemporary headship may be tough, but one of the most striking features of the conversations taken as a whole is the extent to which the headteachers in our studies share Bernard Clarke’s view that ‘being a head is the most privileged job there is . . . I absolutely love it’. Helen Hyde also told us

I really love the job (of headship)—I love coming to the school—I love dealing with the personnel side—I like dealing with my staff—I like to feel I am helpful and I like to feel my school is achieving for the girls. I love the job—I really do.

Similar sentiments were expressed by those who work in primary and special education as well. Joan McConnell said ‘I enjoy it very much. I love it very much . . . it’s still a very rewarding job. In fact I don’t see it as a job.’

Such expressions of delight are unrestrained; others are qualified in various ways: suggesting that, whatever its merits, the job does not carry a high social status, others argue that the job is much harder than it used to be. For Brian Sherratt

There were people at [my] school . . . who nowadays occupy high prestige positions, which make my job seem totally insignificant . . . I am not saying that I don’t consider being head of a large comprehensive school an enormous responsibility . . . But in the grand scheme of things I’m not at all sure society ascribes great importance to the role of comprehensive schools, does it?

And David Winkley remarks ‘so many people have said to me in the past, “Oh, you are only a primary school head, why don’t you do something else?”’.

Others stress how much they love being a head and how demanding it is now. Margy Whalley told us ‘I love it [but] I think its tough being a head in the 90s’. Ann Hinchcliffe agreed

I love my job. I’m a very happy headteacher. Not that I haven’t been pushed to the very edge, the brink of feeling I just cannot take this anymore. I love it. It’s been a marvellous joy to me to have been appointed to this job at Ash Field.

Others go even further. For John Evans
Headship is a superb job . . . But some of my best headteacher friends have retired because of illness or stress. I am talking of people I rate highly who are not just looking for a way out. To survive you’ve got to be much tougher than in the past. I’m diabetic with serious stomach problems and think this is stress related. It’s part of the job. But it’s still the most rewarding job there is . . . I cannot think of anything I would rather do than be the head of a big comprehensive school.

Some were even gloomier. Chris Morgan pointed out that Merthyr has about thirty headteachers . . . and eleven of those retired this summer . . . Two . . . have died since they retired . . . [one] just dropped down dead. Everybody thought she was fit and well and were shocked. It . . . makes you think doesn’t it? A lot of my colleagues are turning to drink to help them to relax.

He was one of many who believe ‘the job . . . is going to get more difficult’. Unsurprisingly, some warn that those considering headship should be absolutely sure it’s what you want to do because with the territory comes some very unpleasant and difficult tasks . . . I think it is [still possible to enjoy the job] . . . everything is a bit harder earned nowadays. I do feel that more than perhaps I did that I now earn every single penny of my salary.

(Rob Sammons)

Others suggest that good deputies are becoming more reluctant to consider headship. John Evans stresses ‘My current first deputy is superb but doesn’t want to be a head’ and Mary Gray warns ‘There’s definitely a group of deputies who have seen the reality of being heads and have decided not to take on the headship role.’

Many felt deputy headship was worse. For Mike Gasper the job was absolutely thankless, the worst job on earth. Once I realised that, it was inevitable that I would go for headship . . . I didn’t like being in the position when I was the pig in the middle between the staff and the head and didn’t have ultimate responsibility or control over where or when things were going or how they were done.

The most uninhibited expression of this view came from Rosemary Whinn-Sladden:

I like being in charge. I’m sure this is one of the seven deadly sins . . . I absolutely love being the head. I love being able to do things and see
something happen. I have always been a lousy Indian and . . . known I
was going to be a head . . . I love walking round the school when it’s
full and when it’s empty. I look around and think . . . ‘I did that’ . . .
where else can you have a job where, whatever you do, a little wave
just gets bigger.

IV. Final thoughts

I have examined the literature and drawn on research in which I have been
involved to consider the role of the deputy head seen mainly from the perspect-
ive of headteachers reflecting upon their days as deputies. While very many of
them openly admit to ‘loving’ being a head, very few enjoyed being a deputy.
For several this more or less unhappy experience has shaped how they interpret
deputy headship and relate to their deputy heads. They believe that they have
learnt hard lessons from the mistakes of others. Some were passionate about
this. Since we did not talk to their deputies or others in their schools or observe
them in action I am not in a position to confirm or to deny such claims. I can,
however, make two final comments. First, ethnographic style studies of head-
ship, such as those by Richardson and Southworth, suggest that good intentions
might not, on their own, be enough. Second, and by way of conclusion, I have
been deeply impressed by something Roy Blatchford told one of my colleagues:

I have worked with seven headteachers, and you do learn. I remember
one of them saying to me ‘Well, you’ll watch me, you’ll watch me
make mistakes and you’ll go elsewhere and you won’t make these same
mistakes but remember you’ll make your own!’ I always remember
that. And I can think of the people that I’ve worked with from whom I
learned a great deal about what to do and what not to do, in the certain
knowledge that you’re going to make your own mistakes.

Notes

1 Sue Benton, Valerie Bragg, Peter Downes, Elaine Foster, Michael Marland, Brian
Sherratt, Harry Tomlinson in Ribbins and Marland (1994) and Roy Blatchford,
Bernard Clarke, Helen Hyde, Mary Marsh in Ribbins (1997).
2 Michael Ashford, Sue Beeson, David Davies, Mike Gasper, Sue Matthew, Joan
McConnell, Liz Paver, Usha Sahni, Margy Whalley, David Winkley in Pascal and
Ribbins (1997) and Mary Gray and Rosemary Whinn-Sladden in Ribbins (1997).
3 Sue Abrol, Rob Ashdown, Mike Clarke, Phil Craig, John Evans, David Haigh, Ann
Hinchcliffe, Chris Morgan, Edna Ross, Rob Sammons, in Rayner and Ribbins (1998)
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EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
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## CONTENTS

### VOLUME IV EDUCATIONAL CHANGE

*Acknowledgements* ix

#### PART II

**History and research** 1

64 Some aspects of the “headmaster tradition” 3  
*George Baron*

65 Research in educational administration in Britain 15  
*George Baron*

66 Transformative power and leadership 34  
*Warren Bennis*

67 Transforming the frog into a prince: effective schools research, policy and practice at the district level 41  
*Larry Cuban*

68 Images of teaching and proposals for reform: a comparison of ideas from cognitive and organizational research 66  
*William A. Firestone*

69 A century’s quest to understand school leadership 91  
*Kenneth Leithwood and Daniel L. Duke*

70 Records of achievement: a critical and historical review 144  
*Michael Strain*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>School management in nineteenth-century elementary schools: a day in the life of a headteacher</td>
<td>Angela M. Thody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PART 12</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategy, marketing, change and culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>Primary schools and the nature of the education market place</td>
<td>Les Bell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>Rethinking schools and school leadership for the twenty-first century: changes and challenges</td>
<td>Brent Davies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>Leaders or followers? Governing bodies and their role in school leadership</td>
<td>Peter Earley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>Strategic management: where is the school going? A guide to strategic thinking</td>
<td>Brian Fidler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76</td>
<td>Strategy, external relations and marketing</td>
<td>Nick Foskett</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77</td>
<td>Creating a school culture from the ground up: the case of Celebration School</td>
<td>Kathryn M. Borman, Edward Glickman and Allyson Haag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>Strategic leadership, resource management and effective school reform</td>
<td>Brian J. Caldwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>Renewal in the age of paradox</td>
<td>Andy Hargreaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>School culture, school effectiveness and school improvement</td>
<td>David H. Hargreaves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS

81 Conceptualising school change 355
BENJAMIN LEVIN AND J. ANTHONY RIFFEL

82 School response to a changing environment 370
BENJAMIN LEVIN

83 School self review 387
AGNES MCMAHON

84 Beyond ‘managed change’: rethinking how schools improve 399
KAREN SEASHORE LOUIS

85 Organizational learning and school change 421
HAILA CLAUDIA SILINS, WILLIAM RICHARD MULFORD AND
SILJA ZARINS
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Part 11

HISTORY AND RESEARCH
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SOME ASPECTS OF THE “HEADMASTER TRADITION”

George Baron

“It is a tradition of English life,” wrote Norwood (Norwood and Hope, 1909) “that the Headmaster is an autocrat of autocrats, and the very mention of the title conjures up in the minds of most people a figure before which they trembled in their youth, and with which they have never felt quite comfortable even in mature life. The Headmaster, in most English schools, certainly holds a position of absolute power, for which no analogy can be found in any other profession whatever, a position, further, of authority and in influence far surpassing all that is exercised by those of the same rank in other countries.”

The assessment is no longer generally valid but the position of the headmaster, both in old-established public and grammar schools and even in the “new” secondary schools, still continues to be a distinctive feature of English education and attracts, as it has always done, the attention and surprise of foreign visitors. Whilst he can no longer, without arousing opposition or ridicule, exert the autocratic powers which made his Victorian predecessors legendary figures, he is still, in a very real sense, the pivot and focus of his school, whether it is controlled by an independent governing body or by a local education authority. A headmaster is expected, if not to rule, certainly to lead, both by staff and pupils alike and one who is “weak”, in that he fails to protect his colleagues from outside interference, or who cannot make decisions and enforce them within his school, is little esteemed, no matter what qualities of personal charm, sympathetic understanding or academic distinction he may possess. Moreover, he is expected to have sufficient acquaintance with each of the hundreds of pupils in his school to satisfy parents who wish to discuss details of their children’s education with him. Indeed, a major popular criticism made of the comprehensive schools now being opened in London is that no head could conceivably know personally two thousand children and the suggestion that this particular responsibility should be assumed by his colleagues does not give widespread satisfaction.

In spite of the importance attached to his office, little examination has been
made of the evolution of this concept of the “Headmaster”. At most, it is ascribed
to the respect for “tradition” usually considered characteristic of the English
approach to social institutions. But this is merely to note that what exists now has
existed for an appreciable span of years and furnishes no explanation as to why a
particular institution has survived, nor what successive and diverse influences have
sustained and modified its original form and later growth. Close examination of
such influences may, however, show that what is termed “tradition” is in reality
not merely due to inertia and an aversion to change, but to a delicate counterpoise
resulting from a series of dissimilar but compensating social factors.

In the case of the headmaster the tradition is not one distantly seated in our
history. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century the “Headmaster”, as dis-
tinct from the “Master”, hardly existed, save in a few of the larger and better
known schools. A school consisted of one man and his pupils. Even when an
“Usher” was appointed it was not unusual for him to be quite independent of the
Master and to be responsible to the trustees of the foundation alone. Only excep-
tionally, when numbers rose and when the Master wished to lighten his duties,
did he engage personal assistants at his own expense.

The rapid development of the more famous Public Schools in the first half of
the nineteenth century, however, resulted in the Master being obliged to engage
a number of assistants, whose numbers rose or fell with the fortunes of the
school. In some cases their position was little better than that of the ill-paid and
half-literate teachers in some of the private schools of the time; in others they
enjoyed profits earned from boarding pupils in their own houses or augmented
their stipends by fees received for private tuition. In the newer schools, such as
the City of London School and University College School, founded to meet
rising middle-class demands, the need for a “staff” in the modern sense of the
term was apparent from the earliest days and the number of assistant masters
and their conditions of service were determined by energetic Governing Bodies.

At this stage in the development of secondary education the position of the
headmaster was by no means as stable as it was later to become. At Eton, West-
minster and Winchester he was “an officer and subordinate member of the Foun-
dation or College, and subject to the superintendence of its head, the Provost,
Warden or Dean” (Public Schools Commission, 1864); and at the newly founded
Liverpool Institute School his office hardly existed at all in that its powers were
shared in turn, on the Scottish pattern,\(^4\) by a number of masters of equal status. It
was, indeed, by no means certain how a large school should be organised and
especially where the centre of power should lie. Had it not been for the appoint-
ment of Arnold to Rugby the issue might conceivably have been a major one.

The originality of Arnold lay in his regarding his school first and foremost as
a community which shaped the characters of his boys as well as their minds.
Moreover, because of his sense of pastoral mission, which expressed and was
supported by the liberal evangelism of his time, he was convinced that he must
be the centre of that community and exercise his influence on every individual
member of it. Thus he developed his well-known prefect system through which
he enlisted, though not without difficulties, the aid of older boys to discipline and guide the younger and placed his carefully chosen assistant masters in charge of the “houses” hitherto run by “dames”. Throughout, to parents, old boys and his many friends and correspondents, he never tired of showing how his work at Rugby was a vocation.

It is understandable that the example of Arnold spread to other boarding schools of similar status and importance: the conditions under which boys were taught, the absence of effective organisation, the misuse of endowments and, above all, the low moral tone of school life became increasingly repugnant to the awkening conscience of early Victorian England. It was not inevitable, however, that it should exert the profound influence that it did on the wide range of endowed grammar schools, both boarding and day, which were so drastically reformed in the middle of the century, nor that it should be adopted in the many new foundations which came into being. That this was the case resulted from other factors, including the determination of the rising industrial and commercial interests to break down institutions based upon privilege and patronage and to apply, in their reconstruction, the lessons learnt in the business firm and the factory in which rewards, and, indeed, security depended upon day-to-day performance. What took place, then, was an “organisational” as well as an industrial revolution, which produced the Civil Service, the Army of the Cardwell reforms and later the organs of local government which we know today. In educational matters the Public Schools Commissions of 1864 and the subsequent Public Schools Act of 1868, though by no means root and branch in their approach, firmly remodelled the government of the major Public Schools and made their headmasters responsible to, and dismissible by, the governing bodies of their schools, whilst at the same time affirming their control over internal organisation.

Four years later, the members of the Schools Inquiry Commission (1868), in the course of their thorough and detailed examination of all other schools providing secondary education in some form, found many extraordinary instances of gross mismanagement and neglect. They recommended, therefore, that in all cases a Master should be dismissible by his governing body and that, furthermore, his emoluments should be “largely and intimately connected with his success”. It was indeed urged by Sir John Coleridge with the formidable backing of Mr. John Stuart Mill and Mr. Morley that the Master should be guaranteed nothing save house and grounds rent free. Beyond this he should receive a fixed sum for each boy admitted to his school. Other Commissioners felt, however, that a small regular income should also be guaranteed in order to give new Masters time to build up their schools (Vol. I, p. 599).

This approach, the counterpart in secondary education of “payment by results” in the elementary field, reflected the current belief that the methods which had proved so successful in the industrial field would be similarly beneficial elsewhere.

W. E. Forster certainly espoused it wholeheartedly. “We had,” he said in the House of Commons, when introducing the Endowed Schools Bill of 1869, “to consider carefully this question—whether it is desirable that masters should...
have any payment out of the endowment or should entirely depend upon school fees. I confess that I formed my opinion on this point in a great measure from my trade experience. I looked upon masters as persons employed by the trustees to do certain work and—I hope that they will not feel the comparison a disparaging one—I thought it would be right to treat them as I should treat persons whom I employed to do any commercial work. Now, I have found that the way to get the best service in such cases is to give a small fixed income, which makes a man independent of great want and calamity and then make the remainder of his income depend, fairly and generously, upon the success of the undertaking in which he is engaged. I believe that will be the system by which we can best regulate the payments to the masters of these schools whereas very frequently their income is entirely independent of the success of the school and in those cases the school does not succeed” (Hansard, 1869).

In the revision of school schemes which followed the passage of the Endowed Schools Act the recommendations of Forster and his colleagues were substantially accepted and the personal fortunes of headmasters intimately linked with those of their schools. More important still, the staffing of the schools was, in the great majority of cases, placed wholly in the hands of the headmasters. They were given full powers to appoint and dismiss their assistants and, provided that the total expenditure did not exceed a fixed sum, to pay them whatever salaries they considered advisable. The supremacy of the nineteenth-century headmaster in his school was thus based upon his possessing all the powers of the nineteenth-century employer.5

Many consequences followed. Since the emoluments of a headmaster depended upon his success in increasing the numbers in his school, he had not only to make a show of efficiency, but he had to bow to the increasing pressure to bring scientific subjects, modern languages and geography into the curriculum. Similarly, he had to respond to the demands of parents and employers for visible results and hence sought to enter as many pupils as possible for examination such as the Oxford and Cambridge “Locals”, the London Matriculation and those of the College of Preceptors. Another important result of the widening of the curriculum and the development of new specialisms was that the prestige of a headmaster came to be based less upon his scholarship, although this might on occasion be considerable, but upon his organisational powers; his capacity for maintaining and developing the “tone” of his school and for fostering its corporate life through athletics and out-of-school activities; his sense of occasion as expressed through morning assemblies and speech days; and the personal links which he established with parents, old boys and civic leaders.

The Schools Inquiry Commission (1868) had reported adversely on the virtual monopoly of headmastership by clergymen. “It is said,” they wrote, “and we think with justice, that the profession suffers from the frequent restriction of valuable masterships to men in Holy Orders—and we believe those of our witnesses are right, who consider that their abolition would go a long way to give the profession of teaching a position and importance of its own” (Vol. I, pp. 611–12).
Despite the subsequent removal from many schemes of clauses requiring headmasters to be in Orders, the replacement of clerics by laymen proceeded slowly. The evidence submitted to the Royal Commission on Secondary Education (1895) by the Assistant Masters’ Association showed that of the 596 headmasters of the public secondary schools of which details had been obtained, as many as 283 were clerics (Vol. IV, Minutes of Evidence No. 13, 099). It was not until local education authorities, influenced by their nonconformist voters, began to be represented on governing bodies after 1902 that the possession of Holy Orders ceased to be an important qualification for a headmastership of an endowed grammar school. Moreover, the long continuance of the clerical headmaster tradition could not fail to influence the attitudes of those who were laymen. They assumed, and were expected to assume, something of the moral purpose of their predecessors and often paid particular attention to religious training. Indeed, even at the present day, the headmaster, because he conducts the “daily act of worship” and not infrequently takes upon himself the religious education of his senior boys, is linked with the older order.

From the point of view of the consolidation of the “idea of the headmaster” an important factor was the influence of reform in creating a community of understanding among those so clearly responsible for the well-being of their schools. The Headmasters’ Conference brought together the leaders of the most prominent schools from 1869 onwards, whilst by the end of the century the Headmasters’ Association, set up in 1890, had enrolled practically every headmaster of a secondary school of note. Through the latter body in particular, the man working in some obscure country grammar school or some newly-founded municipal secondary school was brought into touch with the great figures of the day, heard them declare with passion their determination to defend their independence against the central authority and local authorities proposed by the Royal Commission on Secondary Education and was strengthened in his own resolve to assert his authority over his school and its destiny. The headmaster remained no longer an isolated figure, dependent only upon his school and his personal qualities for his status, but was a member of a well-organised body of vigorous and active men, who, through the Conference and the Association, constantly voiced their disapproval of any infringement of their authority and their autonomy. Thus when the Board of Education and the local education authorities eventually came into being they entered an area in which the chief vantage points had already been seized by well-organised and determined forces.

By comparison with the headmasters, their employees, the assistant masters, were slow in developing a sense of identity and common purpose. This was largely because of the very great diversity of men staffing the schools. They ranged from graduates of Oxford and Cambridge, whiling away a few years before entering upon a good “living”, to youths who remained at their schools for two or three years as underpaid drudges. Between these two extremes there were ex-elementary school teachers, who had, in some cases, secured degrees of London University by part-time study; athletic young men prepared to “look
upon cricket not only as their pleasure but as their duty” (The Journal of Education, 1886); and a motley and changing assembly of others who had failed to make good in a recognised profession. Tenure, even for well-qualified men, was insecure and not infrequently a change of headmaster meant the dismissal of the entire existing staff of the school.6

Salaries, too, were low, even by the standards of the day, and there could be little hope of increments for length of service. Finally, nothing in the way of superannuation existed, save in the most well-endowed schools.

Nevertheless, the expansion of the older Universities following the reforms of the mid-century and, more particularly, the increasing number of graduates produced by London, Wales and Victoria, meant that the core of well-qualified men serving as assistant masters was growing. It was not until 1891, however, that their frustration first expressed itself in an organised form through the Assistant Masters’ Association. It is significant that the earliest energies of the latter were not devoted to campaigns for adequate salaries or pensions, but to securing that its members should no longer be regarded as the employees of their headmasters and should be accorded equal status with them as employees of the same governing bodies.

This first objective was attained with the passing of the Endowed Schools (Masters) Act of 1908 and the assistant masters in grammar schools ceased to be the paid servants of their headmasters.7 From this time their position was closer to that of teachers in elementary schools and secondary schools maintained by local education authorities in which head teachers and staff alike were employed by the latter or by appropriate governing bodies.

As has been suggested, there was, during the last decade of the nineteenth century, considerable nervousness among the well-established headmasters of existing grammar schools lest the proposed Board of Education and local education authorities would bring about the loss of their independence and oblige them to conform to rigid codes and regulations of the kind associated with the elementary school world.

In the event, the Board proved to be their ally and lost no opportunity for emphasising that all secondary schools should, through the institution of individual governing bodies, enjoy a wide measure of independence and that headmasters and headmistresses alike should retain the preeminence which they had attained during the preceding century.8

Some of the new local education authorities, however, were not always of this mind. They, and particularly their Secretaries and Directors of Education, were striving to establish their position in respect of schools which had hitherto held them at a distance and in respect also of their own higher grade and day technical schools which, in some cases at least, were seeking to secure something of the independence of the secondary schools proper. Hence they were anxious to acquire or retain control of staffing and tended to treat headmasters with scant respect. Close local control was, nevertheless, strongly resisted by the Board. Its officials were men educated in schools of national status and prestige and they viewed secondary education as a vehicle for the cultural life and traditions of the nation as a
whole rather than for local and sectional interests. It was therefore, to protect the headmaster against undue interference that they stressed the importance of every secondary school having its own governing body, composed not only of members of the local education committee but also of men and women with special knowledge and interests in educational matters. It is interesting to note that, from this time, governing bodies were intended to become the protectors of the independence of the headmasters of the new secondary schools rather than, as envisaged by the nineteenth-century reformers, the means for checking their excesses.

During the vital formative years between 1902 and 1914, moreover, the influence of the Board made itself insistently felt through its indefatigable teams of inspectors. They did not hesitate to recommend the removal of an inefficient headmaster, but they emphasised the importance of his office by the detailed attention which they paid to it during full inspections and by the support which they strove to give to men who could bring the spirit of the established grammar schools and of the older Universities into the new county and municipal schools. In many areas local authorities began to think on similar lines and show a preference for men with distinguished educational antecedents.

To some extent, the years following the first world war saw a shift in what might be termed the “centre of gravity” of secondary education. The rapid increase in the number of secondary schools maintained or controlled by local education authorities meant that their staffs, benefiting from the activities of the National Union of Teachers in the elementary school field, secured a standard salary scale through the Burnham settlement, a nation-wide superannuation scheme and, as a result of stubbornly fought battles with individual local authorities, a vastly increased security of tenure. In that headmasters in such schools were now dealing with men independent of them as regards their salaries and tenure, they were in a far less autocratic position than before. Similarly, in independent and direct-grant schools, whilst headmasters retained their powers to appoint and, with the approval of their governing bodies, to dismiss their assistant masters and whilst salaries and pensions depended upon the custom of each individual school, the ability of any school to attract able and well-qualified masters depended upon it offering them conditions of service at least as favourable as those available to them if they joined the service of a local education authority.

Yet despite these factors and despite also the changed social atmosphere of the post-war years, the headmaster, both in maintained and in less closely-regulated schools, still continued to enjoy a distinctive position. Paradoxically enough, a major reason for this was the freedom which the Board of Education sought to give to each school and indeed to each assistant master in his actual work in the classroom. Since the duties of the latter were not defined and still less the precise content of his teaching or the methods he should use, he had, within the school itself, no clearly formulated professional rights. He could be required by his headmaster, who alone was responsible for internal organisation, to teach subjects for which he had little liking, or to accept what he considered an undue proportion of difficult or backward forms. Furthermore, although his
headmaster could not bring about his dismissal, save after a hard-fought and
wearing struggle with his professional association, he could exercise an often
decisive influence through the open testimonial or the confidential reference. On
the other hand, the increasing uniformity of the academic and professional back-
ground of headmasters and assistant masters, combined with the revolt in the
twenties and the thirties against the authoritarianism prevalent in many occupa-
tions in Victorian and Edwardian times, made the confident exercise of such
powers less attractive to headmasters themselves.

It remains to be seen how far the greatly expanded conception of secondary
education resulting from the Act of 1944 will bring new elements into the situ-
ation. There has been a reversion, as regards the basis of the headmaster’s
salary, to the principle of it being closely linked to the number of pupils in his
school, but the motive has not been to encourage headmasters to attract more
pupils but to ensure that salaries roughly correspond to existing responsibilities.
The former inflexibility of the Burnham scales has also been modified, so that
headmasters can exercise decisive influence over the allocation of allowances
for advanced work to assistant masters. On the other hand, the difficulty of
finding men to staff the schools, at least in science subjects, restricts any tend-
dency towards arbitrary and capricious action in any side of school organisation.
Furthermore, the interlinking of all forms of school with the agencies of the
welfare state brings constant pressure on a headmaster to think in terms of
immediate administrative necessity, of compromise to meet the wishes of the
many bodies and individuals concerned with his school and of quick and effect-
ive response to the social situation in which he works.

So far, however, there are few signs of any significant change, on a scale com-
mensurate with that which took place in the last century, in fundamental thinking
concerning the headmaster’s office. It might perhaps be expected that, just as the
prevailing industrial philosophy of a hundred years ago affirmed his autonomy and
his personal responsibility, so might the present-day development of managerial
training lead to attempts to analyse and assess his position in a world of increas-
ingly complex inter-relationships. But, despite the vast scope of secondary educa-
tion and the incorporation within it of secondary modern schools and secondary
technical schools, some of the roots of which lie deep in the old traditions of ele-
mentary education, very little has yet been said or written bearing on the subject.
In particular, no thought appears to have been given to examining how assistant
masters might, before entering upon headmasterships, prepare themselves through
organised and intensive study for their new duties. There is, of course, no inten-
tion here to suggest that the headmaster is less sensitive to changing circumstances
than the businessman or the civil servant. The reverse is frequently true. What is
argued is that serious thinking and consequently popular speculation about his role
and about school structure is dogged by recollections of earlier stereotypes derived
from the time-hardened images of the great Victorian individualists and hence dif-
ficult to assess within the close-knit patterns of shared responsibility characteristic
of present-day enterprise. As a result the demands made by rapid social change
and by the vast network of welfare services linked with the school tend to be regarded as extraneous, or at most peripheral, to the main task of leadership within the school itself.

It has been seen that, quite apart from considerations of social philosophy, the increase in the size of schools and their staffs was a major factor in the growth of the “Headmaster Tradition” in the nineteenth century. It seems more than likely that the stimulus to remodel it will come from the new comprehensive schools which, by reason of their complexity as well as, in some cases, their size, will make the distribution of authority essential. If this is so, it is to be hoped that its basis, though widened, will remain within the school itself and not be imperceptibly transferred, owing to the weight of administrative considerations and outside influences, to the “community” or its representatives. A stand on this issue, which will only be successful if based on careful thought by those concerned, will preserve the essence of the position taken up by those who, like Thring and many others, fought for the independence of the school from directed political and social pressures and who, in their day, could only achieve their ends by stressing their own personal privileges and authority.

Postscript (1974)

This paper provides a bench mark from which the developments of the past twenty years can be measured. Its publication did, in fact, coincide with the beginnings of interest in the role of the head and in the management of schools. Since then there has grown up a wide range of literature seeking to throw light on the position of the head and on his part in decision-making within the school (Hughes, 1970; Barry and Tye, 1972) and, more recently, action research studies in the processes of change and innovation (Richardson, 1973 and 1974). In addition, there has been a substantial amount of writing by heads themselves (Allen 1968; Halsall, 1970), in which they describe how they have dealt with the new demands being made on them.

Indeed, it is now clear that the kind of significant change in fundamental thinking about the head’s role (the absence of which I noted in my paper) has now taken place. One train of thought has been concerned to minimise the positional authority of the head within the school by advocating some form of participatory committee control. Indeed, committee structures within large schools are commonplace and have grown up from sheer necessity; but they do not, from the studies and experience available, necessarily diminish the “pivotal” role of the head. On the contrary, they strengthen it (Musgrove 1971). Another train of thought has been perhaps more far-reaching in that it is concerned with the integration of the school with the community it serves. This has led, especially in primary schools, to an acceptance of the case for bringing parents into touch with the school’s life and work; and in secondary schools, to the launching of community service schemes and work experience projects, to the school advancing beyond its usual boundaries. Furthermore, as a result of some forms
of secondary reorganisation (for example, those involving “Middle Schools”) and the coming of “linked courses”, schools relate to the outside world not only through the head, but through teachers necessarily concerned with curricular planning extending beyond the school walls.

As I pointed out in my paper there was, at that time, the beginnings of an awareness of the complexity of the educational setting within which the head worked: this awareness has increased with the coming of new forms of examination and assessment, with such innovations as team-teaching and counselling, and with the introduction into schools of a wide range of audio-visual and other aids. Between the head in his study and the teachers in their classrooms, laboratories, studios and workshops there are areas of cooperative planning and decision-making in which his role is that of catalyst rather than that of leader. Nevertheless, in moments of crisis and in major confrontations with political or other pressure groups, the positional authority of the head becomes of critical significance. This is because his responsibility to his local authority and its expectations of his role have not substantially changed. There has not yet taken place in schools the formal redistribution of responsibility and powers which, in colleges of education and further education, has resulted from the rewriting of articles of government and the setting up of academic boards and councils.

I have argued that the prevailing industrial philosophy of the mid-nineteenth century had a major part in shaping the “headmaster tradition” at that time. It is again from industry—in the shape of modern theories of management—that ideas, including some as shocking as those that disturbed the unreformed endowed schools, are entering the minds of those responsible both for the school system and for individual schools. The trend in this direction has been met and reinforced by concern for the efficient use of resources at Department of Education and Science level and at local authority level. As a result, a “managerial” dimension in the concept of the head’s role has now become part of established opinion. But debate is fierce and likely to be prolonged as to the nature of this new dimension. A first and inevitable step has been to draw on the experience of management teaching developed in industry, the armed forces and other branches of the public service. There are, of course, obvious limitations in this approach: schools and educational institutions generally do not fit into the patterns of product or service providing agencies; their purposes or “objectives” can only, save in a very limited sense, be assessed within wide social and occupational contexts; furthermore, schools exist within an environment of central and local government institutions which cannot be equated with that of the industrial world. Nevertheless, there are elements in common: the urgent need is to define these and also those aspects of educational institutions which merit their own distinctive forms of study and analysis.

The influence of industrial thinking in the mid-nineteenth century resulted in a redefinition of the role of the head in an entrepreneurial society. Trade unionism and “industrial relations” played no part in this process. In the second half of the twentieth century a major task in educational administration and in the management of schools, colleges and universities is to come to terms with this
other side of the industrial world. The urgency of this task has been underlined by the entry of the National Union of Teachers, the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions and the National Association of Schoolmasters into the Trades Union Congress and the increasing exasperation being felt by teachers in difficult schools with their conditions of work. There are signs of an emerging conviction among at least some groups of teachers that the duties they are assigned by heads acting on behalf of local education authorities should be matters not only for informal negotiation but also for collective bargaining. Action with regard to school meals supervision some years ago, and more recently in respect of over-large classes, has already tended to place heads in situations of a kind they have not hitherto experienced. The present emphasis on the managerial role of the head does not take into account the incipient “industrial relations” dimension of his task. Yet it is in this area, rendered still more sensitive by the mobilisation of parent and pupil interest groups, that the future distribution of decision-making in schools will be determined.

Notes
1 Although much of this paper might apply, with slight variations, to the office of the headmistress in girls’ schools and, with much greater variations, to the office of headteacher in the superseded elementary school, attention in this study is limited to the main body of tradition evoked by the term “Headmaster”.
2 Its relevance until recent days is suggested by the literature of school-mastering in the present century, from Walpole’s *Mr. Perrin and Mr. Trail* through Bernard Henderson’s *Schoolmasters All; or Thirty Years Hard* and H. S. Shelton’s *Thoughts of a Schoolmaster to Chalk in my Hair* by “Balaam”.
3 This aspect of the headmaster’s role probably derives from Thring, who declared that “as long as the Headmaster knows each boy, he is a Headmaster; the moment he does not, the man who does is so far Headmaster.”
4 In Scotland, according to H. M. Knox (1953), as the range of subjects studied in secondary schools grew during the nineteenth century, there was a “tendency for the virtually independent heads of the separate departments to form a council of masters, sometimes presided over by each in turn, to manage the internal affairs of the school in republican fashion”.
5 In some cases the new governing bodies set up by the Endowed Schools Commissioners signally failed to show the zeal expected of them and resorted to “farming” their schools to the headmaster. That is, they made over to him the income of the trust and let him keep whatever fees he could obtain. In return he shouldered all financial responsibility for the running of the school (Royal Commission on Secondary Education, 1895), Vol. I, pp. 45–6). This system persisted in remote rural grammar schools until the early years of the present century.
6 A notable case occurred at Grantham School in 1899, when a retiring headmaster dismissed his three assistants at short notice and his successor told them, a few days before a new term began, that he had appointed his own men and did not wish to reengage them. (*The Journal of Education*, 1899). That this was not an isolated instance is borne out by the evidence of one of the witnesses before the Royal Commission on Secondary Education (1895), who stated that “when you dismiss the headmaster you dismiss every man in the school”. Questioned further, he maintained that “unless the new headmaster cares to take them on, they must all go”. These statements were
accepted without challenge (Royal Commission on Secondary Education (1895), Vol. IV, Minutes of Evidence No. 13, 223).

7 The Act provided that, in an endowed school, “any master in the school, by whomsoever appointed, and whether appointed before or after the passing of this Act, shall be deemed to be in the employment of the governing body for the time being of the school”.

8 This was stressed with particular insistence in the Prefatory Memorandum to the Regulations for Secondary Schools (Board of Education, 1905). “Experience proves that in a school of the Secondary type full efficiency can be secured and the best teaching and organisational power attracted, only where the Head Master or Head Mistress is entrusted with a large amount of responsibility for and control over teaching, organisation and discipline. In particular the appointment and dismissal of Assistant Staff is a matter in which a voice ought to be secured to the Head Master. In the majority of Secondary Schools of the highest grade the appointment and dismissal of the Staff is entirely in his hands, subject to the obligation to report his action to the Governors and his liability to dismissal for improper exercise of his powers. In other cases he exercises these powers subject to the approval of the Governors. In any case, it is important that he should have formally secured to him the right to be consulted by the Governing Body and to submit his proposals to the Governors and have them fully considered, both as regards staff appointments and on all points relating to the conduct of the school as an educational organisation.”

9 Save by W. O. Lester Smith (1950), who has tentatively suggested that teachers of experience should be able to follow courses designed to illuminate in a liberal way problems of educational organisation and administration. He envisages that “such courses should serve education much as the Staff College serves the Army as a preparation for leadership”.

References

Endowed Schools (Masters) Act (1908) Section 1 (1) and (3).
MUSGROVE, F. (1971) Patterns of Power and Authority in English Education, Methuen.
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SCHOOLS INQUIRY COMMISSION (1868) Report.
During the past decade there has been a substantial increase of research activity in many varied aspects of educational administration. To provide an overview of the whole field is a task which is as impossible to achieve as it is fascinating to engage in. But an overview has to be attempted, if subsequent discussions in this seminar are to be based on a commonly available stock of knowledge. This then will be my first endeavour.

I shall go on to say what I consider to be the main characteristics of the research done up to the present.

Against the background thus established, I shall examine some main areas of debate and controversy.

Finally, I shall set out the various positions which may be taken in approaching research in the hope that in so doing I can throw light on the especial role of the British Educational Administration Society.

The scope and content of research in educational administration

It is not my purpose here to enclose what follows within a carefully delimited definition of educational administration and to set out the relationship between the various emphases on the behavioural, the economic, the managerial, and the political which can already be identified within the field. Nor shall I rehearse the possible contributions of the social science and other disciplines in its further development. These are tasks I have attempted elsewhere and there is a substantial amount of writing seeking to clarify the significance of the terms ‘administration’ and ‘management’.¹

In this chapter I shall extend my consideration to all, or at least most, of the themes and topics which appear in references to educational administration. Such references are scattered in a number of sources. These include books and articles dealing with general educational theory or with specific themes such as
curriculum development or the education of the handicapped, lists of theses and dissertations, and reports of complete work or of work in progress compiled by research foundations and funding bodies.\textsuperscript{2} In addition there is a growing amount of factual survey material collected by professional associations, unions, and voluntary associations.\textsuperscript{3}

In so far as there is any systematic ordering of this material it is in topic form, as in the Howell\textsuperscript{4} and Coulson\textsuperscript{5} bibliographies, rather than in terms of subject disciplines or research methodologies. I propose to adopt a broad classification which will reveal the main themes under which recent and current researches can be grouped. In no sense, of course, can my treatment be exhaustive and no doubt opinions will differ about my choice of examples to illustrate my argument.

**Leadership\textsuperscript{6} and the internal organization of schools and other educational institutions**

The first theme with which I wish to deal is that of leadership in the school or college, and in particular the role of the head or principal. It is within the individual institution that educational and administrative considerations are most closely interwoven and it is within the role of the head or principal that their relationship can be at its most sensitive. The form of providing agencies at national, federal, regional, or local level may be highly diverse, as may be also the nature of the relationships between teachers, officials, students, parents, and community, but leadership within the institution and its internal organization are the channels through which other elements in the process must express themselves in pedagogical terms. That this is generally realized is shown, I would argue, by the place occupied by the study of the principalship in North American literature and by the attention now being given to the training of principals in countries as far apart, in terms of geography and culture, as Sweden and Singapore.

In this country we have made a beginning, but only a beginning, in studies of the position of the head. Hughes\textsuperscript{7} has drawn on role theory to relate the professional and administrative aspects of the head’s task and Cohen\textsuperscript{8} has examined heads’ views of their role as modified by the nature and size of their schools. There is also a study of the development and selection of secondary school headteachers by Bispham\textsuperscript{9} and the analysis by Bernbaum\textsuperscript{10} of a national sample of secondary school heads in terms of their social origins, experience, values, and guiding ideas. The position of the deputy head in the secondary school has been studied by Burnham\textsuperscript{11} and this study was followed by an examination of the influence of school size on the deputy head’s role by McIntyre\textsuperscript{12} and by another of the deputy head in the primary school by Coulson.\textsuperscript{13} It is surprising, in view of the substantial amount of discursive and prescriptive writing on the theme of the head,\textsuperscript{14} that, apart from the studies named and a few others, it has attracted relatively little attention from researchers. The neglect of the headteacher position in the infant and the junior school is particularly marked.

Studies in school organization are also sparse. Here again there is much discus-
sion and accounts of current practice, but little in the way of major research save
that contained in a series of studies conducted by the National Foundation for Edu-
cational Research.15 But there is a wide-ranging survey by Halsall16 which also
includes North American material and the highly distinctive study by Richardson17
of interrelationships within a single school. The handbook by Lyons18 differs from
others of similar purpose by being based on empirical studies and points the way
to the translation of research findings into practical terms.

Closely related to the study of school organization viewed in terms of structure
and roles is the growing and important area of the administration of the curricu-
rum. Curriculum studies have, in recent years, come to constitute a major field in
their own right and increasingly they are extending their range, as indeed they
must, to take into account the political and administrative context. A pioneer study
is that by Marten Shipman,19 Inside a Curriculum Project, which gives a micro-
cosmic view of curriculum change in a small group of schools. Also falling within
the territory of educational administration as well as of curriculum studies is The
Dissemination of Curriculum Development, by Ruddock and Kelly.20 It is in this
context too that I would place the ongoing work at the University of Bristol School
of Education described by Bolam in his paper at this seminar.

Both general school organization and the administration of the curriculum in
particular are now, of course, being greatly influenced by the wave of interest in
evaluation and the related concern with accountability. The Assessment of
Performance Unit21 signalled a new interest in government circles in monitoring
the work of the schools and in developing, through research, sophisticated tech-
niques and tests to make this possible. Last summer a substantial programme in
studies in accountability in education was announced by the Social Science
Research Council. This programme is making grants totalling £200,000 available
to encourage studies seeking to clarify such concepts as democracy, professional
responsibility, and parental rights; to promote legal studies in the powers and
rights of the various agencies and groups concerned with the provision of educa-
tion; and to make possible studies in policy formation and implementation.22

The further itemization of research areas could, if space permitted, be
extended to embrace such distinctive fields as special education, adult education,
and the education of the young worker. In all of these, the translation of policy
into administrative action is attracting increasing attention.

Government of educational institutions

A clearly defined area of research has emerged, as a result of the increased inter-
est in the government of schools, further education institutions, and universities.
The first study to emerge in the schools field was my own, with D.A. Howell,
which resulted from my somewhat idiosyncratic concern with the (at the time)
neglected existence of school governing and managing bodies coinciding, by
happy chance, with the pending reform of local government.23 It is unfortunate
that a similar research survey has not been carried out into developments in the
government of further education institutions since the Weaver Report. There is, however, a well-designed study being made of the school councils set up in Scotland following the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973.24 This is an interesting and important exercise which traces in detail the action taken in every region in Scotland in response to legislation and government action. There is every reason for a study on similar lines to be made in England and Wales in respect to whatever changes result from the forthcoming Education Act.25 Research on a countrywide basis could then be followed by case studies of individual authorities, of the kind presented by Bacon26 in his detailed examination of school government in Sheffield and its decade of reform. It is interesting to note that a study has been made of school councils in Australia27 and that a major project is under way in Canada to examine public involvement in educational decision-making at all levels.28

In view of the significance attached to local education authorities in England and Wales and to the regional authorities in Scotland the amount of work done on their internal structures and their activities is disappointing. In the United States and Canada there are a very large number of studies of school boards and of their functions and membership. Here the field is only just being opened up, through such studies as that by David29 on local education of clerks as an occupational group; by Greenhalgh and Booth30 on local education of clerks as an occupational group; and by Bolam31 and others on the functions of local education authority advisory services. Individual local education authorities were studied some years ago by Peschek and Brand,32 who dealt with Reading and West Ham; Leicester has been the subject of research theses by both Brand33 and Mander,34 and there is a historical account by Gosden and Sharp35 of the superseded West Riding local education authority. A more general and very well-informed study of politics and policy-making in local education authorities is provided by Jennings,36 an American student of local politics in England, and there is the substantial and closely researched examination of the local allocation of resources by Byrne.37 Resources and particularly their allocation is also the subject of a major project being carried out in the University of Sussex.38 There is need for further comparative studies across a substantial number of authorities of both pre-Maud and post-Maud committee structures, of clerical roles, and community relations. Equally needed are studies comparing English and Welsh authorities and Scottish authorities. The advantage, for research purposes, of having two major and distinctive systems of educational administration in England and Wales on the one hand and Scotland on the other continues to be unrecognized.39

In the main, energies devoted to the studies of local education authorities have been directed to the reorganization of secondary education, of which the most scholarly is that by Saran.40 This topic features largely in several of the studies already mentioned and is a popular theme for theses and dissertations.41

A new factor in the situation, as far as local education authorities are concerned, is that the need for research or at least for scrutinizing some aspects of present practice is being felt by education of clerks themselves. Thus the Society
of Education Officers has published a study, *Management in the Education Service,* which looks at programme structures and objectives and resource allocation and management in four authorities. The society also commissioned a short-term empirical investigation of the reactions of chief education officers to the coming of corporate management.

Research studies of how the Department of Education and Science and the Scottish Education Department are structured, staffed, and shaped to meet new needs have not been undertaken, although there is a substantial amount of report material which has been brought together for governmental purposes. Still less can it be said that research as such has been carried out into the present-day inspectorate in either country although, as in the case of the departments, there is a substantial literature of analysis and comment.

**Teacher and other associations**

Beginnings have been made in the study of teacher associations which, together with the departments and the local authorities and their associations, constitute the main framework within which educational policies and their execution are determined. Manzer opened up this area in his *Teachers and Politics* and this study was followed by those of Roy and Coates, whilst Kogan has carried out a far-ranging analysis of the major interest groups involved in the decision-making process at both national and local levels. The field is a tempting one, with such topics to be explored as the changing roles of the local authority associations, the consequences for the teacher unions of TUC affiliation, and the rising power of unions of which nonteaching staff are members. There is certainly need for studies of strikes and other forms of industrial action by teachers, both because of their significance in delimiting many areas of administrative action and as elements in the wider arena of industrial relations.

More generally, the greatly increased weight of legislation (e.g., the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974; the Contracts of Employment Act, 1972; the Employment Protection Act, 1975; the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975; the Race Relations Act, 1976) have already revealed far-reaching implications for education. Furthermore, complaints against local education authorities can now be investigated by a Commissioner for Local Administration (Ombudsman). A new factor is a European presence in the shape of the European Court of Human Rights which has shown interest in the use of corporal punishment in our schools and in the teaching of the mother tongue to immigrants. In short, the whole area of the law relating to education needs to be systematically explored and studied in terms of the consequences of recent trends for our administrative structures and practices.

**Education in its wider social and administrative settings**

The relationship between school and community has long been one which has lent itself to exhortation and general discussion. Specific areas have attracted
political controversy, notably social class influences on education and education in deprived areas. Studies, too, have been made of the problems of immigrants and other minority groups. It is work in these areas which demonstrates the difficulty of defining what is to be classified as ‘administrative’ for my purpose here. Researches into the causes of educational deprivation and handicap are clearly of great general interest for those concerned with fashioning policy and giving it expression in administrative action; but a line has to be drawn somewhere between such studies and those which direct themselves at least in part to the specifically administrative role. A beginning has been made in the examination of the school welfare service by Macmillan, but otherwise there seem to be no research studies made of the various groups of nonteaching staff in the education service whose numbers and importance have increased so greatly in recent years.

Research into the administration of higher and further education

In higher and further education there has been, certainly since the publication of the Robbins Report, with its substantial research appendices, a constant flow of descriptive, analytical, expository, and polemical writing and also extensive statistical surveys of student numbers, qualifications gained, and financial costs. An appreciable amount of this effort has gone into the examination of major policy decisions (such as that which led to the introduction of the ‘binary’ system) or of social class influences on student recruitment. For some ten years much work was done by the Higher Education Research Unit of the London School of Economics, which was particularly concerned with problems of higher education and highly qualified manpower and which extended its range to the education system as a whole in some of its published studies.

To identify writing in this field bearing on the administrative as distinct from the economic or statistical aspects of higher and further education is a difficult task. But studies with a substantial administrative content include that on university government by Moodie and Eustace, the work of Burgess and Pratt on colleges of technology and the polytechnics, and the edited collection of papers by Lomax on the education of teachers. These and other studies utilize research findings from a wide range of sources, including the weighty appendices of the Robbins, Franks, and Murray Reports, and the statistics emanating from government departments, the University Grants Committee, and other agencies. They also draw on a considerable amount of comment, criticism, and minor research reported in such journals as the Times Educational Supplement and the New Universities Quarterly. A major piece of work, now being brought up to date by its author, is Berdahl’s study of the University Grants Committee. Other research studies are Taylor’s study of teacher education and Howell’s examination of the coming of the B.Ed. degree. Studies for higher degrees range over a wide field. Several deal with the economics of higher education and particularly with its cost-effectiveness. Others deal with resource allocation and with issues of structure and government.
Operational research at school system level

Any survey of developing areas of research in educational administration would be incomplete without mention being made of the detailed statistical studies essential for the maintenance and improvement of large school systems. Such studies, in some form or another, are carried out by government departments and local education authorities, and also by the Schools Council and examination boards. In more specific form they are found in the context of the Local Government Operational Research Unit which has, since its inception in 1965, made studies in pupil population forecasting, in school transport costs, and in computer-assisted timetabling.

The Inner London Education Authority has its own Research and Statistics Group which has made quantitative studies of school population projections and sixth-form patterns, truancy and non-attendance, and of the construction and use of priority indices of the in-service training and of the induction of probationary teachers. Somewhat similar studies are being carried out in other local education authorities.

Management development

Finally, I think that we should bring very much to the forefront of our minds the major thrust in educational administration at the present time. This is the effort being made to improve management effectiveness and to do this by staff development programmes which include carefully constructed courses built up from case studies and field experiences, and exercises based on the needs of individual course members. By its nature much of the exploratory work being done in polytechnics, in some local education authority centres and others such as the Further Education Staff College, does not easily fit into the accepted categories of academic research. Yet, because it is advancing into unknown and problematic territories, in which the guidelines of established disciplines and methodologies are soon found inadequate, it can constitute research of a high order. It depends upon intensive and exacting study of actual management situations in local education authorities, schools, and colleges, the laborious compiling of records, and the utilization of whatever is of use from the social and mathematical sciences. Glatter has given an account of work of this kind in connection with a programme financed by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and, with Piper, subsequently described the Staff Development in Universities Programme, financed by the University Grants Committee. There has, as yet, been no comprehensive presentation of the developmental work done in this area in the several polytechnics and other institutions which run their own or CNAA-validated programmes. There have, however, been a number of dissertations, one of which, by Bernard Baron, has recently been published.

Characteristics of research in educational administration

1 Educational administration, as a field of research, has very ill-defined boundaries. It can be taken to embrace planning, economics, and the politics of
education; and also substantive areas such as the administration of the curriculum or the recruitment and supply of teachers. But central to it, at least in the North American context, is the study of the behaviour of those who carry out administrative functions. Only isolated studies in this area (among them, those of Richardson, Shipman, and Tipton,\textsuperscript{70} throwing light on individual and group motivations) have so far appeared in Britain. In the main, attention has been directed away from the dynamics of interpersonal and intergroup relationships towards the structure and functioning of institutions, resource allocation and use, and policy-making and its implementation.

2 There has been little funding of research in educational administration from governmental or other sources, but there is increasing attention being paid to how research findings in curriculum development or educational technology are to be put into practice. Projects in such areas are thus tending to produce spin-offs for educational administration. In addition, inquiry into policy-making at national level has been encouraged by critical comment by the OECD\textsuperscript{71} and at local level by the after-effects of local government reorganization. But there has so far been no massive and continued research effort on the scale made possible by the Kellogg Foundation grants in the United States and Canada.\textsuperscript{72} Save in the case of studies by the National Foundation for Educational Research and, for a time, some studies of the Higher Education Research Unit of the London School of Economics, each project has stood in isolation and has operated through ad hoc teams recruited from young graduates in the social sciences, teachers on secondment, retired heads, or education officers. Indeed, most of the published research dealing specifically with educational administration has been the result of individual part-time work by graduate students in teaching or administrative posts or by junior academic staff. Under present conditions, such men and women, although virtually our only source of research expertise, have little prospect of being able to carry out further and more advanced work.

3 Factors determining the choice of research topics are varied. Governmentally funded research tends to be supportive of projects which can help in throwing light on immediate and urgent problems such as those associated with comprehensive secondary education and with resource use, evaluative processes, and ‘accountability’. And generally, and this is true of the National Foundation for Educational Research and the Scottish Council for Research in Education as well as the independent foundations, interest centres on pedagogical rather than on administrative issues. For this reason we owe a debt to visitors from North America (such as Manzer, Berdahl and Jennings), Australia, and elsewhere, who can take a broader view of our concerns and whose interests lie in policy-analysis and the working of our institutions.

4 Despite what has been argued so far, there are positive aspects of the present situation. There is a quickening of interest in the Department of Education and Science and in the Scottish Education Department in research designed to improve practice, an interest which, as has been seen, extends to local education authorities also. The old reliance on custom and use has been replaced by a
willingness to accept that research should be able to contribute to better decision-making and administrative action in education just as it contributes to improvement in other activities of modern life. But there is very genuine uncertainty concerning what research can actually achieve, in which areas rare resources should be deployed, and by what means research findings can be translated into practice.

**Problem areas**

Rather than attempt to answer directly the questions just raised, I think it may be helpful in structuring discussion to concentrate attention on debates in which we each individually have to take up positions. These I would characterize as the academic/practitioner debate, the theory/practice debate, the systems theory/phenomenology debate, and the relationship of educational administration to the social science disciplines.

*The academic/practitioner debate*

The conflict between academic and practitioner arises from each party necessarily inhabiting a different universe. As the researcher develops his approach to his problem, no matter how ‘practical’ its orientation, he draws on material and ideas from outside the immediate situation to help him in his analysis and his explanations. By so doing he distances himself from the administrator who, when subsequently reading the research report, is alienated by what appears to be irrelevant and extraneous material: furthermore, from his experience he brings to his reading a multitude of questions stimulated by the research but not answered by it. Discussing this conflict, Taylor writes:

>The roots of the problem lie in the fact that the knowledge about education that is possessed by all the people who are labelled teachers, administrators, inspectors, researchers and so forth, is to a large and increasing extent *role specific knowledge*.

This kind of conflict is not between different kinds of people, or even between different types of mind: it is a situational conflict, which occurs even if the researcher is an experienced administrator and the reader a career academic concerned with a practical problem which is the subject of the research. Moreover, we each have, or may have as individuals, two or more types of role-specific knowledge: for example, that which follows from being a practising teacher, that which follows from being a student of curriculum development, and that which follows from being a parent whose children are facing school-leaving examinations. Conflict of this kind cannot be resolved, although awareness of its nature may enable it to be contained and lived with.

Other problems arise which can be avoided by greater competence or good-
will on the part of those concerned. Shipman, in his capacity as a research worker with the Inner London Education Authority, wrote:

From within local government the research enterprise based in academia seems to deliver the wrong goods, at the wrong time, without an invoice. It also produces conclusions about education that are subject to gross misinterpretations. The net harmful impact arises from the combination of failure to help in the solution of practical problems, of the promotion of dubious theoretical notions and in the recommendations whose implementations are beyond the dreams of even optimistic administrators.\textsuperscript{74}

In reply to this, the comment by Brian Simon on the role of educational research in general is apposite:

The real issue is whether scientists are to operate as scientists, educationists as educationists, researchers as researchers; or whether all are to become service personnel, waiting cap in hand for orders in response to which appropriate methods will be sorted out to produce acceptable results or conclusions.\textsuperscript{75}

The tension is further increased, of course, when it is a governmental or public body which is the funding agency. The argument put forward some years ago by Lord Rothschild\textsuperscript{76} takes the hard line that the funding agency says what it wants and the researcher works within a defined brief. Against this, there is the broader view that research in the social sciences necessarily draws on concepts and knowledge of which the sponsors are not aware and which modify the content of the problem as work progresses.\textsuperscript{77}

It is, I think, helpful that the Department of Education and Science is now clarifying its position, by expressing its concern with policy-related research, by identifying specific topics within agreed areas, and by seeking early reconciliation between the interests of the parties involved.\textsuperscript{78} Such a stand makes possible a parallel clarification of positions by those primarily concerned with research and not directly concerned with policy matters. It is here that the Social Science Research Council has a major role to play and it is to be hoped that this seminar will assist it in establishing the place of educational administration within the total field of educational research.

\textit{The theory/practice debate}

To what extent should research in educational administration, whether serving the purposes of the practitioner or the academic, seek to be theory-based? This is the first question which confronts the nonsocial scientist who encounters for the first time the highly organized teaching and research programmes of American,
Canadian, and Australian universities. There the place of ‘theory’ in educational administration is accepted, though its content and its uses and abuses are vigorously debated: here there is still, in so many quarters, a contemptuous dismissing of any study going beyond the collection of opinions and facts.

In a recent book Rosamund Thomas has boldly contrasted the American and British approaches to administrative studies. She argues that, in Britain,

doctrines [of administration] remained essentially a philosophy and not a theory of administration, embodying description, subjective attitudes and explanations rather than rigorous, systematic analysis.79

On the other hand, she argues, in the United States respect for the expert in administration has led to more attention being paid to academics and more attempts being made to theorize, with the result that administration has advanced ‘from miscellaneous description to an integrated body of knowledge’.80

The absence of native-born theory in this country and of anything approaching ‘an integrated body of knowledge’ explains the fascination felt for the work of North American theoreticians as a source for conceptual frameworks into which schemes of research can be neatly fitted. This has dangers, if it results in our limiting topics to those which can be so treated, or in our setting out, once a problem has been identified, to unearth a theory to give it academic respectability. Certainly, the understanding of the researcher should be fortified by a thorough critical acquaintance with reading in the works of the major theoreticians in his field. But it would be unfortunate if it came to be a convention that each piece of work must be related to a specific theory or theories. Moreover, as Hughes81 has pointed out, research studies describing and analysing current administrative practice do not necessarily require highly sophisticated theoretical underpinnings to be of value.

There is a way of reducing unproductive conflict and of avoiding the reification of theory as being an entity or entities having some kind of existence independent of the world of real events. Glaser and Strauss82 advocate the notion of grounded theory, by which they mean the gradual generation and testing of explanatory concepts as a piece of research proceeds. The emphasis is on theorizing rather than on theory. Their approach means, of course, that the researcher is not only knowledgeable about existing theories but that he has a capacity for theorizing. It follows that the training or self-education of the researcher needs to be broad and diffuse: the aim of his reading of theory is to nourish his powers to perceive and to relate, rather than to lead him to work within the confines of the formulated perspectives of others.

The systems theory/phenomenology debate

To some extent the issue I have just attempted to present has bearing on the far-reaching debate which followed Green’s paper in the 1974 International Intervisitation Programme. This debate has been conducted with warmth by
many better fitted than myself. I refer to it because it bears so intimately on the uses of theory. One charge made against Green eld’s paper is that he has failed to provide a viable alternative paradigm to that provided by systems theory; another is that he has not shown how research can emerge from a phenomenological perspective. Both charges seem to me to sidestep his argument because implicitly, if not explicitly, ‘research’ and ‘paradigm’, in their taken-for-granted meanings, are within the world of systems theory and the positivist approach.83 To me, Green eld’s paper made its impact not so much because it put forward a ‘phenomenological perspective’ as an alternative to ‘systems theory’, but rather because it was a first frontal attack on the latter and particularly on the ‘emphasis which much of social science places upon quantification, more complex mathematical models, and bigger number crunchers in the shape of better and faster computers’.84 This explains, to me at least, why Green eld incurred the wrath of the ‘establishment’ of research in educational administration within which, at Stanford, Chicago, and Alberta, hypothesis-formulation has been a prevailing orthodoxy; it also explains the welcome accorded to his argument in Britain by academics uneasy with the formidable research apparatus of the North Americans and reluctant to acknowledge its achievements, and by practitioners happy to seize on any vindication of intuitive judgement.

**Educational administration and the social sciences**

Some years ago, in my contribution to *Educational Administration and the Social Sciences*,85 I sought to show how the latter could contribute to our field of study. My thinking was very much in venced by my contacts with American and Canadian scholars and with the work of Professor William Walker in Australia; and it was motivated by the political need to legitimate the study of educational administration in the university world in this country. Certainly, at the University of London Institute of Education, educational studies were and are regarded largely as the philosophy of education, the sociology of education, the economics of education, and the psychology of education. Difficulty then arises in arguing the case for fields of study, such as curriculum development, comparative education, and educational administration: in this context it is necessary and appropriate to stress the contribution of the ‘disciplines’. I do not wish to quarrel with the position I then took up, although I think I would now incorporate within it the idea of ‘squeezing’ the disciplines, which Glatter took over from Richard Snyder.86 But, when it comes to research in educational administration, I am much more aware than I was before of the problems which arise when subject specialists are recruited into the field after their primary allegiance has been established. I think that Brian Simon (in the paper already quoted) expresses my concern more adequately than I could myself in a passage relating to general research in education. He writes:

> The study of education has manifestly suffered from subordination to disparate modes of approach and methodologies deriving from fields
quite other than education which have simply been transferred into the educational sphere and which, once there, have tended to maintain their distinctive languages and approaches, or pursue their own ends.

Later, he argues that:

If he [the researcher] starts from the position established in a particular discipline with corresponding norms of its own, the research is likely to be primarily directed to adding to the capital of that discipline. Conducted by methods evolved within its confines it may well have a direct connection with education only insofar as use has been made in the given way of educational materials.87

In Britain, because of our high degree of specialization in university studies and the strength of the allegiance of the scholar to his initial discipline, the dangers Simon suggests are very real. But I see no justification for throwing up the barricades, even if that were possible. On the contrary, we need to seek to enlarge the field of endeavour so that all can play their part, no matter what their earlier academic affiliations. If this can be done, it may be possible to resolve some of the issues which I have put before you in this chapter.

Research for understanding, research for policy development, research into administrative structure and process, evaluative research

What are the various positions from which we can view research? I can identify four, but others may no doubt occur to members of this seminar and readers of this chapter.

1 Research for understanding

This, I suppose, is the position of the historian, who is concerned with explaining the past in terms comprehensible to the present. It is also the position of the anthropologist, concerned to explain in terms of his own culture the practices of primitive peoples. The results of such labours may be of use to the politician, the administrator, or the professional worker, but this is not their main purpose. The audience for research of this kind is composed of those with similar or closely related interests, able to cope with highly technical and esoteric language.

2 Policy-related research

I am indebted to Brian Kay for this term, which he uses for research promoting ‘the formulation of national policies on a more secure foundation of knowledge, and of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of such policies’.88 Such
research requires specialized knowledge combined with a readiness to work within the frameworks established by political and administrative practicalities. Much work on resource allocation falls within this category.

Policy-related research may precede and help in policy-formulation or it may monitor the working out of policies already being put into operation. In either case it is expensive, it is likely to take time, and it requires considerable adjustment of attitudes and working habits by both the academics and the administrators involved. Its immediate audience is relatively small, since by design it is directed at the limited numbers concerned with policy-making at national or local level.

3 Research into administrative structure and process

In putting forward this category I am very much aware of the difficulty of distinguishing usefully between ‘policy’ and ‘administration’. But it seems to me to be essential to give identity to that vast area of research concerned with the performance of administrative functions and roles, whether these be in relation to running a school, a college, a department, or a supporting service; or with the setting up and maintenance of structures for governing institutions and regulating their relationships with their environments.

This is the area in which I would argue that the maximum effort should be made at the present time; and it is also the area in which all members of the Society are concerned in one way or another.

4 Evaluative research

Evaluation is necessarily a part of any research project. But what I have in mind here is research which is able to stand outside the world of the policy-maker and the administrator and view their intentions and their activities from a variety of political, social, and cultural standpoints. It seems to me a main vehicle for research of this kind should be comparative studies, in which scholars and administrators from elsewhere would share in substantial projects in this country. A network of Commonwealth and European agencies exists to foster such exploration and we have our own affiliations with the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and the European Forum.

I have spent a little time in presenting these very tentative categories of research for consideration because I feel that it is important for this seminar to consider what should be its focus for the future activities and indeed for the efforts of the British Educational Administration Society in the research field. Clearly, we are interested and supportive of all four categories; indeed interest in the one presupposes at least some measure of involvement with the others, since they are interrelated. My own conclusion, however, is that we should at this time pay particular attention to that which I have termed ‘research into administrative structure and process’. It is in this area that most of the problems which beset
those responsible for the conduct of our educational institutions and those with similar responsibilities in other countries lie. It is also a major aim of this Society to advance the practice of educational administration.

Notes and references

* Paper given at the seminar on Research in Educational Administration held by the British Educational Administration Society, University of Birmingham, March 1979.
3 Notably in the journals and publications of the Advisory Centre for Education, the Educational Institute of Scotland, the National Association of Governors and Managers, the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education, and, latterly, the Society of Education Officers.
6 The term ‘leadership’ may, in this context, jar on the sensitive British ear, but it is widely used in the literature in Europe as well as in the United States, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere.
HISTORY AND RESEARCH

15 In particular the two reports (ed T.G. Monks) of the NFER Comprehensive Education Project, Comprehensive Education in England and Wales: a survey of schools and their organization, 1968, and Comprehensive Education in Action, 1970, both published by the NFER.
19 Shipman, Marten, Inside a Curriculum Project: a case study in the process of curriculum change, Methuen, 1974.
21 The work of the unit is briefly described in Assessing the Performance of Pupils, DES Report on Education, Number 93, August, 1978.
24 This study, supported by a grant from the Scottish Education Department, is being carried out in the Department of Education, University of Glasgow. An interim report has been published, Foundation Facts about Scottish School Councils, 1977.
25 The omens are favourable, as the department has already made a substantial grant to the Open University for the preparation of a course for school governors and to carry out research into the ways in which the course is used and its effectiveness.
28 This project is being carried out by the Canadian Education Association and is particularly concerned with public involvement in decision-making at school level. No reports are yet available.


This project, which is under the direction of Professor Eric Briault, was set up ‘to examine the curriculum and associated management problems and to set out the options open to local education authorities and secondary schools’.

But the way has been cleared for such comparative studies by the stimulating *Patterns of Education in the British Isles*, by Robert Bell and Nigel Grant, Allen and Unwin, 1977.


As, for example, in the Report from the Select Committee on Education and Science 1967–1968, Part I, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (England and Wales), HMSO, 1968. It should be noted that no attempt has been made in this paper to bring within its scope the growing number of historical studies of educational policy and administration (although some examples have been cited: Greenhalgh and Booth, Gosden and Sharp). Such studies have become increasingly attractive to historians with the coming of easier access to the twentieth-century file material of government departments and local authorities. A major study is *Education in the Second World War: a study in policy and administration*, Methuen, 1976.

Manzer, R.A., *Teachers and Politics: the role of the National Union of Teachers in the making of national education policy in England and Wales since 1944*, Manchester University Press, 1970. This is a much abbreviated version of a Harvard Ph.D. thesis for which the field work was done in this country. Unfortunately, chapters of the original thesis showing how Manzer relates his empirical data to Beer-Eckstein interest-group theory are not included in the book.


2 The Higher Education Research Unit was set up in 1964 and continued until 1974. Its successor was the Centre for the Economics of Education, which gave way in 1977 to the Centre for Labour Economics.


9 Taylor, William, Society and the Education of Teachers, Faber, 1969.


14 An early account of some of the applications of operational research to educational administration is given by C.L. Myers in chapter 9 of Baron and Taylor (op. cit.).


16 Inner London Education Authority Research Report, No 1 (1976) and Report No 2 (n.d.).

17 Studies recently reported to the National Foundation for Educational Research for inclusion in its Register of Educational Research and Development include the forecasting of pupil populations (Cheshire County Council Research and Information Department), and the development of a ‘central computer for each school, summarizing all the essential information such as accommodation, pupil numbers, teaching and nonteaching establishments’ (Hampshire County Council Education Department).
RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN BRITAIN


72 During the ten years from 1955 the Kellogg Foundation made available six million dollars for projects designed to improve school administration; substantial grants were also made available in Canada from 1952 to 1956.


80 ibid. p. 30.


84 ibid. p. 86.

85 Baron and Taylor, op. cit.

86 Glatter, op. cit., pp. 48–49, 68.

87 Simon, op. cit., p. 4.

88 Kay, op. cit., p. 8
To understand “Transformative Power,” the following question must be addressed: what are the components of an organization that can translate intention into reality and sustain it? The question itself contains a complexity and depth as well as a chronic elusiveness. The question, probably for the preceding reasons, tends to be avoided – though it is the essence of what is ordinarily meant to be organizational leadership. Even when it is obliquely touched on, the writer tends to avoid the orchestral richness which inheres in the question for the doctrinal, predictable, and prosaic clichés. Between the blur produced by trying to say too much at once and the banality produced by dismissing mysteries, there remains the possibility of articulating just what it is that causes some organizations to translate an intention into reality and sustain it. This is the starting point for an examination of what I am referring to as transformative power.

The environment of leadership in the 1980s

This much can be said about leadership for the ’80s: those responsible for governing the enterprise will be spending more and more of their time managing external relations. All organizations are surrounded by an increasingly active, incessant environment – one that is becoming more and more influential – the senior partner, as it were, in all kinds of decisions which affect the institution.

Leadership, and its companion decision-making, will become an increasingly intricate process of multilateral brokerage including constituencies both within and without the organization. More and more decisions made will be public decisions; that is, they will affect people who insist on being heard. Leaders will have to reckon with the growing role of media as a “fourth arm” of government available for use by the people who oppose a particular decision as well as the people who support it. The idea of a relatively small group of “movers and shakers” who get things done is obsolete. Increasing numbers of citizens and
stakeholders (and even those who are only indirectly involved in an issue) are interesting themselves in its outcome – and when the decision goes the “wrong way,” very noisily so. This state of affairs has led one writer to describe the organization-of-today as a “jungle of closed decisions, openly arrived at.”

The bigger the problem to be tackled, the more power is diffused and the more people have to be involved. Thus decisions become more complex and ill defined, affecting more different and sometimes conflicting constituencies.

Inevitably there will be frustration, not only among leaders but among followers who ask, “Who’s in charge here?” as more and more people and groups have to be consulted. Leaders ask, “How do you get everybody in the act and still get some action?”

The name of the game is ambiguity and surprise, and leaders have to lead under uncertain, risky conditions where it’s virtually impossible to get ready for something when you have to get ready for anything. Just as effective leaders know about and are becoming more competent in coping with the politicization of our institutions – by which I mean that institutions are becoming the focus for a new kind of politics, i.e., mobilizing public opinion or working more closely with legislative bodies at both the state and federal levels and other key constituencies – they are also learning more about an enlarged concept of the “management team.”

No longer can “managing external relations” be left in the hands of the public relations department. Top leadership must be involved – directly. In short, the political role of the organization leadership’s responsibility must be reconceived.

These trends, these changing characteristics of the organizational and managerial environment that we are now living with, will become even more pronounced and problematic over the next ten or so years.

The three components of transformative power

The leader

There are some important clues about the nature of effective leadership that have come out of a study I recently completed of 80 chief executive officers (CEOs) plus ten in-depth interviews conducted over the past few months with ten successful, “innovative” leaders (Bennis, 1983). These studies provide a basis for making some generalizations about those leaders who successfully achieve mastery over the noisy, incessant environment – rather than simply react, throw up their hands, and live in a perpetual state of “present shock.” In short, the study which I am about to summarize was able to illuminate some of the darkness around the question earlier posed: how do organizations translate intention into reality and sustain it? Leadership is the first component, though as we shall see later on, leadership must be held within a context of other interacting factors.

What all these effective CEOs shared and embodied was directly related to how they construed the role of the CEO/chairperson. To use a popular
distinction, they viewed themselves as leaders not managers, which is to say that they were concerned with their organization’s basic purposes, why it exists and its general direction. They did not spend their time on the “how to . . .,” the proverbial “nuts and bolts,” but with purpose and paradigms of action. In short, they were concerned not with “doing things right” (the overriding concern of managers) but with “doing the right thing.” They were capable of transforming doubts into the psychological grounds of common purpose.

By responding to the question which guided my study – what common set of characteristics, if any, did those leaders possess who were capable of translating intention into reality – I can clarify the role of the effective leader. In varying degrees, it seemed that all of the CEOs possessed the following competencies:

**Vision:** the capacity to create and communicate a compelling vision of a desired state of affairs, a vision (or paradigm, context, frame – all those words serve) that clarifies the current situation and induces commitment to the future.

**Communication and alignment:** the capacity to communicate their vision in order to gain the support of their multiple constituencies.

**Persistence, consistency, focus:** the capacity to maintain the organization’s direction, especially when the going gets rough.

**Empowerment:** the capacity to create environments – the appropriate social architecture – that can tap and harness the energies and abilities necessary to bring about the desired results.

**Organizational learning:** the capacity to find ways and means through which the organization can monitor its own performance, compare results with established objectives, have access to a continuously evolving data base against which to review past actions and base future ones, and decide how, if necessary, the organizational structure and key personnel must be abandoned or rearranged when faced with new conditions.

In short, nothing serves an organization better – especially during these times of agonizing doubts and paralyzing ambiguities – than leadership which knows what it wants, communicates those intentions successfully, empowers others, and knows when and how to stay on course and when to change.

**The intention**

The second element of transformative power refers to the “compelling vision” mentioned earlier that will now be referred to as “the intention.” The expression of an intention is the capacity to take an organization to a place it has never been before. The characteristics of the intentions that successful leaders employ include:

**Simplicity:** this characteristic is also known as or akin to Occam’s Razor, the Law of Parsimony. This implies that each assumption or element is independent. The word “simple” derives from the notion of oneness or unity.

**Completeness:** this criterion requires that all the facts that are available are included. In most organizations the bulk of the major tasks that have to be
accomplished are easily and readily incorporated within almost any kind of organizational structure. It is those few remaining tasks that test or prove the adequacy of the organization. Not only should the organization be capable of incorporating tasks that need to be performed at the time it is set up, it should also be capable of adjusting to and assimilating new tasks as they arise.

Workability: does it deliver the goods? Does the context achieve the organizational goals or contribute to them? William James, as usual, says it well: “By their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots.”

Communicability: this last criterion for judging contexts contains two components: the more obvious one relates to the ease in which the context is understood by the organization. The robustness of the organization, in terms of its empowerment, depends to a large extent on the degree to which the context is clear and understood. The other meaning of this criterion is alignment; not alignment, though, of organizational members, but alignment with other contexts indigenous to the particular organization. In other words, to understand organizational structure and its significance, it is important to keep in mind that its effectiveness is related to the mutual relatedness of its various contexts.

The problem with the above characteristics is betrayed by application of one of them, “completeness.” The list is not complete. Originality, muting of ego, subtlety, and an aesthetic are all important which space limitations preclude anything but their mention now. The one exception to this is “an aesthetic,” an exception based both on its significance and neglect. Indeed, I believe that the aesthetic of the intention plays an important, perhaps key, role in understanding how intention can lead to implementation, which is, after all, the whole point of leadership.

The organization

Transformative power implies a transaction between the leader and the led, between the leadership and some sort of participative response. If the leadership expresses the characteristics noted earlier and if the vehicle of this expression, the intention(s), are effectively expressed, the organization becomes a blending of each individual’s uniqueness into collective action.

Such an organization is similar to something observed in healthy individuals; in fact, it is isomorphic to a healthy identity in an individual. More technically, we can assume that an organization possesses a healthy identity – organizational integrity – when it has a clear sense of what it is and what it is to do.

Achieving “organizational integrity” is easier said than done. Part of the problem is the lack of understanding of the various substructures that all organizations, no matter how small, contain. One block to our understanding is perpetuated by the myth of organization-as-monolith, a myth reinforced almost daily by the media and the temptation of simplicity. The myth is not only grossly inaccurate but dangerous as well. When the evening paper, for example, announces that the Defense Department or the University of California or IBM (or any corporate
body for that matter) will pursue this or that course of action, the said action is typ-
ically consigned to a single, composite body, the administration. This administra-
tion, whose parts vibrate in harmony and whose acts, because we are denied a look
at the human drama that leads up to them, take on an air of superhuman detach-
ment, is as mythical as the griffin. Into every step taken by the administration goes
a complicated pattern of meetings, disagreements, conversations, personalities,
emotions, and missed connections. This very human process is bureaucratic poli-
tics. A parallel process is responsible for our foreign policy, the quality of our
public schools, and the scope and treatment of the news that the media choose to
deliver to us each day.

Our perceptions of organizational decision-making, based on such reports
and other stimuli, tend to emphasize the product of decision-making, never (or
rarely) the process. The result, of course, is false, at times destructively so.
Those elements of chance, ignorance, stupidity, recklessness, and amiable con-
fusion are simply not reckoned with; they are selectively ignored, it seems.
Thus, the public rarely sees the hundreds of small tableaux, the little dramas,
that result in a policy statement or a bit of strategy. It sees only the move or
hears only the statement, and it not unreasonably assumes that such an action is
the result of a dispassionate, almost mechanical process in which problems are
perceived, alternative solutions weighed, and rational decisions made. Given
human nature, that is almost never the case.

In order for an organization to have integrity, it must have an identity, a sense
of what it is and what it is to do. Perhaps an analogy taken from personality
theory will illustrate as well as foreshadow this point. Every person is a summa-
tion of various “selves.” If those units of the person are not in communication,
then the person cannot maintain valid communications with others. The problem
of integrity, which is central to much of the contemporary literature in the
mental health field, can in organizations be examined by understanding the
various “organizational selves” or structures that exist.

Every organization incorporates four concepts of organization, often at odds
with each other or existing in some strained coherence. There is the manifest
organization, or the one which is seen on the “organization chart” and which is
formally displayed. There is also the assumed organization, or the one that indi-
viduals perceive as the organization were they asked to draw their view of the way
that things work, very much like the legendary New Yorker’s view of the U.S. in
which the Hudson River abuts Los Angeles. There is further the extant organi-
zation, or the situation as revealed through systematic investigation by, say, an
outside consultant. Finally, there is the requisite organization, or the situation as it
would be if it were in accord with the reality of the situation within which it exists.

The ideal, but never realized, situation is that in which the manifest, the
assumed, the extant, and the requisite are aligned as closely as possible with
each other. Wherever these four organizational concepts are in contradiction, the
organizational climate is such that its identity is confused and its integrity diffi-
cult to achieve.
Another useful analogy to mental health shows up in this discussion. Many, if not all, psychotherapeutic schools base their notions of mental health on the degree to which the individual brings into harmony the various “selves” that make up his or her personality. The healthy person will be much the same person as he or she is known to others.

Virtually the same criterion can be used to establish organizational integrity, that is, the degree to which the organization maintains harmony – and knowledge – about and among the manifest, assumed, extant, and requisite concepts. It is not necessary that all four concepts be identical; rather, all four types should be recognized and allowance made for all the tensions created by imbalances. It is doubtful that an organization can or even should achieve total congruence. The important factor is recognition, a heightened consciousness of the confusions and contradictions.

To achieve openness, and through it integrity, in our organizations, each individual within the organization – particularly the leader – must strive to be open. From its embodiment in the individual, openness moves to the group level and, through individual and group interaction, infuses the organizational culture that sustains the characteristic of openness. The process is as slow as the building of a pyramid, and far more complex.

The artform of leadership

We have gone only partway in understanding leadership and transformative power by decomposing the three key elements at the political center of a complexly organized society, like an organization, into 1) a leader or governing elite or strategic core, 2) a set of symbolic forms expressing a tapestry of intentions, and 3) those constituent groups and individuals who make up the membership of the organization. The intention and its expression – crowns and coronations, limousines and conferences – give what goes on in organizations its aura of being not merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the world is built. The gravity of organizational leadership and the solemnity of high worship spring from liker impulses than might first appear.

The extent to which leadership is truly effective is based on the extent to which individuals place symbolic value on the intentions and their expression, the aesthetic referred to earlier. It is the relationship of the governed to the active centers of the social order that makes the difference between transformative power and other forms. Such centers have nothing to do with geometry and little with geography. Such centers have nothing to do with “humanizing the work place,” Theory X or Theory Y, the “quality of worklife,” or “participative management.” What is important is that the organizations and their members are essentially concentrated on what appears to be serious acts. They exist at the point or points in a society where its leading ideas come together with its leading institutions to create an arena in which the events that most vitally affect members’ lives take place. It is involvement, even oppositional involvement,
with such arenas and with the momentous events that occur in them that “translates intention into reality and sustains it.” *It is a sign, not of popular appeal or inventive craziness but of being near the heart of things.*

In sum, the transformative power of leadership stems less from ingeniously crafted organizational structures, carefully constructed management designs and controls, elegantly rationalized planning formats, or skillfully articulated leadership tactics. Rather, it is the ability of the leader to reach the souls of others in a fashion which raises human consciousness, builds meanings, and inspires human intent that is the source of power. Within transformative leadership, therefore, it is vision, purposes, beliefs, and other aspects of organizational culture that are of prime importance. Symbolic expression becomes the major tool of leadership, and leadership effectiveness is no longer defined as a “9–9 grid score” or a “system 4” position. Effectiveness is instead measured by the extent to which “compelling vision” empowers others to excell; the extent to which meanings are found in one’s work; and the extent to which individual and organization are bonded together by common commitment in a mutually rewarding symbiotic relationship.

**Reference**


THE CURRENT CALIFORNIA SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, WHO CAMPAIGNED ON A PLATFORM CELEBRATING A NORMAN ROCKWELL VIEW OF SCHOOLING, APPOINTED AS HIS DEPUTY A SAVVY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT WHO HAD DEVELOPED ONE OF THE FEW SYSTEMATIC EFFORTS IN THE STATE TO IMPLEMENT THE FINDINGS DRAWN FROM THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS RESEARCH. IN 1981 ALASKA GOVERNOR JAY HAMMOND APPOINTED THE TASK FORCE ON EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS THAT RECOMMENDED PRACTICES DRAWN FROM THE SAME BODY OF RESEARCH FOR ALL OF THE STATE’S SCHOOLS. ACCORDING TO A RECENT REPORT FROM THE EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES, EIGHT OTHER STATES HAVE ESTABLISHED SPECIFIC PROJECTS ANCHORED IN THIS LITERATURE. NEW YORK CITY, SEATTLE, PITTSBURGH, MILWAUKEE, ATLANTA, AND A SCORE OF OTHER CITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY HAVE INSTALLED PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS. CONSUMER REPORTS,
Parents magazine, and other popular journals feature articles entitled “How Effective Are Your Schools?” or “What makes a Good School?” Television programs portray “miracle worker” Marva Collins in her private preparatory school in Chicago as an examplar of a first-rate teacher who has established an effective school. Finally, in the surest test of popularity, the vocabulary of effective schools research has entered the daily language of school administrators: high expectations, instructional leadership, an orderly environment, a positive climate, and consensus over academic goals echo a trendy jargon.¹

The initial impulse behind the study of effective schools was to improve student academic performance in low-income, largely minority schools. Researchers in the mid- and late-1970s reacted sharply to the 1966 Coleman Report and its progeny, which suggested that teachers and administrators could have little effect on student achievement. One line of research was based on the linkage between teaching practices and improved test scores – the coin of the realm à la Coleman; another utilized investigations of schools which, given their ethnic and socioeconomic mix of students, produced unexpectedly high test score gains. Both strands of research identified teacher behaviors and school practices that intersected neatly with practitioner wisdom on what schools should do to become academically productive. Like the Coleman Report, these studies measured productivity in terms of performance on standardized tests in math and reading.²

Practitioners seldom wait for researchers to signal that school improvement can move forward. Nor have the substantial methodological problems in the research findings on effective schools halted policymakers from converting them into programs. With a quick look over their shoulders at a skeptical public, many school boards and superintendents, believing that tightly coupled organizations can affect children’s academic performance, have moved quickly to implement the growing body of research on effective schools. I do not suggest that policies anchored more in faith than in statistical significance are misguided. On the contrary, I suggest that policies are forged in a crucible that mixes political realities, practitioner wisdom, technical expertise, and whatever can be extracted from research. The task is difficult because the empirical research seldom reveals clear causal links to policy, and yet practitioners, who must make decisions every day, are anxious to locate those decisions in a technical rationality.

When I served as superintendent of schools in Arlington, Virginia, I initiated, with the school board’s blessing, a six-school improvement project. These schools contained predominantly minority children, many of them from low-income families, who scored in the bottom quartile of the district’s elementary schools. Lacking designs drawn from research or a tested formula that had worked elsewhere, we invited leading advocates of effective schools to speak to teachers and administrators. Resources, modest to be sure, were set aside to purchase staff time and materials for the six schools. Enthusiasm ran high, and my successor continues to support the project. Standardized test scores in the six schools have risen. The school board has identified the improvement of elemen-
tary schools as a top priority for 1983–84 and has expanded the mission of the district team of specialists to encompass all elementary schools in the county.

My own experience and that of other superintendents and school boards who have converted research findings into mandates for improvement informs the following policy discussion. I will concentrate on those policy issues with which local boards and superintendents must wrestle when transforming research findings into different administrative and teaching behaviors. Unlike the way things happen in fairy tales, school reform requires more than a kiss to convert a frog into a stunning prince. Furthermore, productive schooling entails more than raising test scores.

I want to be clear that, as a practitioner-academic for over a quarter-century, I share the commitment of colleagues across the nation to improve schooling. While these words may ring defensively, I write them to separate myself from the predictable academic challenge to the premature or selective implementation of any body of research findings. The familiar pattern of a burst of romance followed by frustration and disappointment appears to describe the trajectory of the effective schools enthusiasm (I was about to write the word “movement”). Notwithstanding recent criticism of the research methods, findings, and efforts to create effective schools, there is much to be learned from an analysis of what has and has not been done, from what is and is not known about local district initiatives in building effective schools. Experience outstrips research in districts implementing improvement policies; this experience may offer clues to other local policymakers and furnish promising leads for researchers to pursue. Several problems with the research on and practices in effective schools have already become evident.3

No one knows how to grow effective schools. None of the the richly detailed descriptions of high performers can serve as a blueprint for teachers, principals, or superintendents who seek to improve academic achievement. Constructing a positive, enduring school climate remains beyond the planner’s pen. Telling principals what to say and do in order to boost teacher expectations of students or to renovate a marginal faculty into one with esprit de corps remains beyond the current expertise of superintendents or professors. Road signs exist, but no maps are yet for sale.

There is no agreement on definitions. Half a dozen methodologically identical studies have produced as many different definitions of effectiveness. The concept of “climate” varies with the researcher and practitioner using it. Moreover, some feel that the term “leadership” is undefinable. “Instructional leadership,” for some, resides in the role of principal; for others, in the teaching staff; and for others, it is beyond definition.

The concept of effectiveness is too narrow. Tied narrowly to test scores in lower-order math and reading skills, school effectiveness research and programs ignore many skills, habits, and attitudes beyond the reach of paper-and-pencil tests. Educators and parents prize other outcomes of schooling that transcend current definitions of effectiveness. Some of these outcomes are sharing,
learning to make decisions, developing self-esteem, higher-order thinking skills, and a sense of the aesthetic.

*Research methodologies leave much to be desired.* Most of the studies that use multiple variables and regression models of analysis have failed to control for school populations and previous history of achievement. Similarly, because most studies sample a district at one point in time, determining which variables cause which outcomes is a thorny, if not impossible, obstacle. Do high faculty expectations produce higher student achievement, for example, or are the higher staff expectations a result of improved student test scores? Furthermore, because many studies are done on “outliers,” generalizing to the larger population of mainstream sites is, at best, risky.

*Most research has been limited to elementary schools.* With a few exceptions, effective schools research has occurred in the lower elementary grades. Junior and senior high schools are organizationally and culturally quite different from the lower grades.

*Little attention is directed to the role of district leadership.* Concentration upon the local school site and the principal’s leadership dominates the research. This implicitly ignores the pivotal role that school boards and superintendents play in mobilizing limited resources, giving legitimacy to a reform effort and the crucial interplay between central office and school site that can spell the difference between implementation success and failure. Few researchers stress the fact that schools are nested in larger organizations that constrain while permitting choice at the local site. Thus, the broader perspective of district administrators is often missing from the researchers’ analyses of effective schools. Yet, with all of these shortcomings in the literature on high-performing schools, school boards have mandated and superintendents have implemented effective school programs, showing little concern for the danger of converting correlations into policies.

Coincident with the rising interest in these research findings has been a gradual trend toward higher test scores among elementary students who previously had registered declines. The National Assessment of Educational Progress reports that reading scores have risen. Big city districts publish tests scores that register gains in skills. In my judgment, however, these changes reflect a steep rise in the learning curve of boards of education and school chiefs, rather than a causal linkage with school improvement programs. Administrators have discovered that forging tighter organizational linkages between what teachers teach and the content of test items results in higher reading and math test scores.

Let me now divide the discussion into three parts. I will discuss district policies to improve overall productivity (as measured by test scores), implementation strategies, and unanticipated consequences. Let me remind the reader that this is an exploratory analysis, since few effective schools studies have focused on district-level policies or given explicit attention to implementation strategies; the thrust of the research has been on the school site and classroom. Hence, citations will be few.
District policies

Districts that have embraced the mission of improving schools along the lines suggested in the literature of effective schools – that is, goal setting, targeting academic aims, establishing and maintaining high expectations, frequent monitoring, and so on – have assembled a roughly hewn set of policies drawn from state mandates, other districts, and previous experience. They are conceptually simple and targeted like a rifle shot on lifting test scores. These policies promote a tighter coupling between organizational goals and the formal structure, while relying on a traditional top-down pattern of implementation. Sometimes at the behest of a school board, but more often at the instigation of a superintendent, these policy decisions trigger a similar pattern of activities in all participating districts.5

This pattern includes the adoption of the following policies:

1. School board and superintendent establish districtwide instructional goals, often stated in terms of student outcomes – that is, improvement in test scores.
2. School board revises student promotion policies in line with stated outcomes for certain grade levels; board strengthens graduation requirements by making course content more substantive, increasing amount of seat-time during classes, and adding extra subjects.
3. Superintendent mandates planning process for each school. Each staff produces schoolwide and individual classroom goals targeted upon student outcomes and aligned with the district goals.
4. The district curriculum for kindergarten through twelfth grade is reviewed to determine if the objectives for subject matter and skills, the textbooks and other instructional materials, and both district and national tests are consistent with what is taught in classrooms.
5. Superintendent revises district supervisory practices and evaluation instruments used with teachers and principals to align them with district goals and the literature on effective teachers and principals.
6. Board and superintendent create a districtwide assessment program to collect information on what progress, if any, occurs in reaching system, school, and classroom goals. Information is used to make program changes.
7. Superintendent introduces a staff development program for teachers, principals, central office supervisors, and the school board. The program concentrates on effective schools and teaching, goal making, assessment procedures, evaluation of staff, and the steps necessary to implement each of these.

Few districts have installed all these policies at once or in a sequence resembling the one above. Often, superintendents begin on a pragmatic, ad hoc basis with, for example, goal setting and test analysis. They then become aware of the
crucial need to achieve a match among curriculum objectives, promotion policies, district goals, and test items. Or in the overhaul of staff evaluation, a school board member or central office administrator will ask if the new instruments and procedures should be keyed in to district goals for student performance, thus forging another linkage. Though serendipity plays a part, the drift toward organizational tautness is unmistakable.

From images popular in the academic journals of schools as loosely linked, amorphous enterprises with plenty of slack, a counterimage now emerges from such districts of organizations tightly coupled in both goals and formal structure, targeted sharply on academic productivity. District officials pursuing policies that fasten individual schools snugly to the central office believe they have found just the right hammer to pound in a nail.

There is a growing acceptance among practitioners that these policies work. Like a popular television show that begets clones in order to achieve a larger share of the audience, school boards and their executives seek out what works elsewhere and use exactly the same procedure in their own districts. Findings from the effective schools research spread through informal superintendent networks, national conferences of school board associations and administrators, journals read frequently by school officials, and other information on what pace-setter districts do. But the fact remains that no studies have yet shown which policies, independently or in combination, produce the desired effects. No research has yet demonstrated which strategies for executing policy decisions yield the desired results. While improved student performance on tests after the introduction of such policies has created some believers, it has not yet been established that the policies themselves have caused the improvement. Even more important, success in lifting scores exacts a price from the organization that few policymakers have yet calculated. In this brief summary of district policies aimed at improving systemwide effectiveness, I have failed to mention the bread-and-butter items, the staples of district policymaking: money and personnel.

Money

Born in the backwash of the 1966 Coleman Report and coming of age during a retrenchment on a scale unequaled since the 1930s, the effective schools research implicitly asserts that money does not make a difference. People do. Spending more is less important than strategically redirecting existing funds to promote effective staff performance. Given today’s shrinking enrollments and fiscal retrenchment, the prospect of converting ineffective schools into effective ones for pennies is most attractive. This message, however, is accurate only in a severely restricted sense. In my own experience and that of colleagues, a districtwide school improvement program involves large expenditures. While there are substantial indirect costs and modest direct ones in initiating a limited school effectiveness effort, far more important is the larger issue of total district
resources available to fund an entire improvement program of schooling. Teacher salaries, recruitment of new teachers, retention of gifted senior faculty, and the addition of instructional leaders to an administrative cadre are also linked to district improvement.

The primary costs of initiating and implementing systemwide policies to increase productivity arise from retraining staff, hiring consultants, and reassigning central office supervisors and administrators. Since 1979 New York City’s School Improvement Program has spent over $1 million a year in state and foundation grants on additional staff, teacher, parent, and evaluator time to introduce site-based programs in almost twenty schools. In most instances, however, far smaller sums have bought consultant and teacher time, materials, and supplies. Most costs are hidden, with no extra dollars added to the budget. In Arlington, Virginia, for example, $20,000 was added to the budget to initiate an effective schools project involving six out of twenty-one elementary schools. The 1980 operating budget for the entire school system of thirty plus schools and over 2,000 employees was in excess of $53 million.

Far more money, however, was spent in staff time to design, monitor, and assess annual school plans in relation to goals and objectives; to analyze test items in all standardized and locally developed instruments; to review current curriculum goals and their match with district tests and goals; and to revise existing evaluation tools for teachers and administrators to bring them into line with district goals. I estimate that for the Arlington school system, with a student enrollment of 20,000 in 1974 and 15,000 in 1981, the equivalent of $75,000 to $100,000 in staff time was spent for each of the first few years in getting policies in place, training staff, monitoring results, and returning information to principals, teachers, and the community. Because I had no specific staff assigned to do this work, I assumed a portion of the workload and directed central office administrators to do tasks beyond their assigned responsibilities until school board-approved reorganizations could realign individuals with the thrust of new policies on goal setting, annual school plans, curriculum revision, and the like. In Atlanta, Alonzo Crim, superintendent of schools, similarly reorganized and reassigned existing staff in order to concentrate upon student outcomes. Donald Steele, Seattle’s former superintendent, lacking funds yet embracing the effective schools approach, assigned central office administrators not involved in instruction to advise individual elementary schools in addition to their regular duties.7

These rough cost estimates are for policies implemented in a top-down manner; estimates would differ for implementation efforts that begin with the school site and proceed from the bottom up or for combinations of the two approaches. A careful analysis has yet to be done of direct and indirect costs associated with adopting and implementing district policies designed to improve school effectiveness. I suspect that when such a study is done, it will reveal substantial costs in redirected staff time, a modest investment of additional money, and foregone costs in neglecting other aspects of the district’s program.8
Personnel

Hiring, training, and evaluating staff, and increasing staff awareness of effective schools are the primary personnel tasks. In Arlington, a lowered budget ceiling made hiring new staff impermissible. The school board approved only new jobs supported by federal and state grants. I presume that few districts since the late 1970s have been able to hire new staff except with the help of private or public funding external to the school system.

In the literature on effective schools, establishing a staff consensus over an instructional agenda is a high priority. In each school the principal and teachers shape that agenda and consensus. A principal needs to judge which teachers will work best within that school’s culture. In the best of all possible worlds, the principal is free to choose the staff that he or she will need to make a school effective. The world that principals currently inhabit, however, offers severely restricted choices in assembling staff. Reassignment of teachers as a result of shrinking enrollment, the closing of schools, or similar events usually favors senior over junior teachers. When senior teachers come to a school involuntarily, bumping enthusiastic but junior teachers, the faculty’s commitment to certain goals, staff morale, and the continuity that is so important in constructing an effective school may suffer. Thus, teacher assignment policies, often embedded in contracts if not in tradition, may work against district efforts to implement effective schools, particularly when the system is retrenching. Although reduction-in-force policies vary across districts, I have observed that principals and personnel chiefs have developed informal ways of abiding by the letter of the policy, while eluding the policy’s intent by securing those teachers who might be better matched for one school over another. One tactic used by some principals who need teachers is to scan the recall list of teachers who have been pink-slipped because of shrinking enrollment. Knowing which teachers are viewed as weak, principals keep in daily touch with the director of personnel to determine exactly when to create a new class of students – the trigger for securing a teacher immediately. Invariably, the astute principal creates the class when a weak teacher has been assigned elsewhere and the next teacher on the recall list is more in keeping with what that principal seeks. These informal maneuvers are limited efforts to strike a practical compromise between conflicting policy aims in a district.

Selection and reassignment of principals involves less policy conflict but can generate opposition anyway. According to the growing literature, the principal is central to fashioning an improved school. Most districts allow the superintendent to choose principals for various schools. Career rotation, early retirement, and similar policies generate some turnover in school positions. But dilemmas persist. What can the superintendent do for a school with a high percentage of low-income children, where test scores are unacceptably low and no improvement has occurred for five or more years under the same principal. Transferring the principal shifts the problem to another school staff and parent community.
Due process and evaluation procedures usually prevent the transfer of a principal because of low student performance; few districts have included in their selection criteria or evaluation policies the clear expectation that principals will improve student academic performance. To move a principal on the grounds that he or she has failed to improve the school’s academic performance might be viewed as capricious, unless such a standard was embedded in existing policies and remedial help was offered.

In Arlington, where administrators are unionized, the school board approved the overhaul of the administrative evaluation policy. The new policy called for joint setting of goals and objectives by the superintendent and principal, a clear linkage between district goals and the principal’s school goals, and the development by the administrator of a professional improvement plan. Leadership, instructional improvement, and managerial skills were explicitly stressed in the process. My assistants and I met with principals individually two or three times a year to discuss both their professional and school plans and to help them revise their goals, if necessary. Workshops were held on instructional supervision, managing teacher evaluation, assessing school improvement, and analyzing test scores. When I brought before the school board the instance of a principal whom I had evaluated twice as unsatisfactory in instructional leadership and in managing the school program, most of my evidence rested on repeated efforts to improve the principal’s instructional management and the persistent erosion of student academic performance over a five-year period. The school board approved the transfer of the principal to a non-school post.

Buried in the language of principals as instructional leaders and effective teachers, then, is a crisp accountability for student performance – a steel fist encased in velvet. Boards and superintendents are driven by the inexorable logic of the research findings on effective schools to wrestle with the issue of marginal and incompetent staff beyond passing them from school to school or, as one superintendent put it, “engaging in the dance of the lemons.” Because so little has been written or discussed openly about teacher and principal incompetence in terms of technical inability to improve students’ academic performance, a district must often devise its own way of dealing with staff who cannot meet the higher expectations for their roles.9

Researchers interested in effective schools have yet to examine the cross-cutting policy conflicts that occur in selecting, assigning, and evaluating both teachers and administrators when districts embark upon an improvement program, especially when confidence in the schools is low and the climate is hostile to budget increases.

Implementation strategies

Current practitioner wisdom harnessed to effective schools research cultivates the image of a trim bureaucratic organization that can get the job done – that is, improve test scores. District policies on goals, school plans, revised curricula,
analyses of tests, new evaluative procedures, and frequent monitoring of systemwide progress, according to the growing consensus among boards and school chiefs, will produce outcomes that satisfy both professional and community expectations. But little notice has been given to how this will occur. Announcing a decision with a bang of the gavel is not the end of a process but merely the beginning of a sequence of events, many of them unanticipated, in the complicated process of implementation.10

A tighter coupling between the central office and individual schools along particular lines—such as goal setting, monitoring, evaluating, and specifying outcomes—often gets translated into the familiar pattern of top-down implementation. By that, I mean a strategy founded upon the belief that a chain of command, stretching tautly from the board of education through the superintendent, directs principals to lead teachers who, in turn, will raise student academic performance. Proponents of this strategy claim that the use of formal organizational tools such as technical assistance, rewards, and sanctions, increases both compliance and productivity. Central office administrators, viewing themselves as having the largest and most accurate picture of district needs, often see top-down implementation as efficient and swift. Their thrust is to set targets, establish control, and reduce discretion. According to this view, increased uniformity in practices will produce improved results. Two key assumptions guide this line of thinking: first, that there is a body of knowledge and expertise that can be used to produce high test scores in basic skills; second, that superintendent leadership and managerial savvy can weld a consensus in a mission and drive the organization toward its achievement. School districts from Portland, Maine, to Atlanta, Georgia, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Milpitas, California, have used this pattern of implementation. These assumptions reflect the bind that superintendents, principals, and teachers find themselves in when they are compelled to act in the face of acute external pressures, yet lack a complete technology to achieve outcomes.

School boards and superintendents commonly use these top-down approaches to translate policies into practice for a number of reasons. Pressure for results pinches the school board and superintendent far more than it does the teacher or principal. Community dissatisfaction with performance leads to far more turnover among board members and superintendents than among principals or teachers. Moreover, the implicit indictment in the literature on effective schools is that if teachers and principals would only alter their beliefs and practices, student performance would improve. To expect teachers and principals, who are street-level bureaucrats at the bottom of every district organizational chart, to agree that they are both the problem and solution is to ask them to become scapegoats for a district’s failure to improve academic performance. Few scapegoats have been noted for volunteering. Finally, more often than not, administrators who make the decisions believe that the top-down strategy works. Because time is often short, cries for results are loud, pressures pinch acutely, and routines are already in place, top-down implementation is administratively convenient.
In contrast, implementation strategies adopting a bottom-up approach would concentrate on each school’s determining its own agenda, monitoring and evaluating itself, and using district funds in the manner that staff and parents chose. In short, each school would decide for itself how best to reach district goals. Rooted in the literature on organizational development, the bottom-up strategy concentrates on generating among staff a shared vision of what the school might be, creating a team spirit, cultivating mutual trust, and building emotional bonds through collaborative decisionmaking on school issues. Many practitioners and researchers, convinced of the importance of staff commitment, local ownership of decisions, and joint efforts at the school site, have cited instances in the effective schools research where such implementation strategies have produced desired outcomes in test performance. Organizationally, such strategies sustain the existing loose linkages between central office and school; encourage more, not less, principal discretion; and produce redundancy and, for efficiency engineers at the top of the organization, untidy arrangements. Superintendents who find this arrangement congenial lean heavily on informal communication, use networks within the district, and adroitly handle organizational rituals and traditions. Although infrequent in occurrence, bottom-up approaches do appear in the literature on effective schools.11

So far, I have implied that a top-down strategy of implementation means that directions drafted in the central office will be executed in each school across the district. Similarly, a bottom-up approach means that school-generated decisions unique to each setting will vary from school to school in the district. Mixes of top-down and bottom-up strategies, which are not necessarily tied either to district or school-based applications, also occur. Consider the following diagram.

![Diagram of Implementation Strategies](image)

*Figure 1 Implementation strategies.*

For example, a superintendent can direct principals in each school to set goals, plan and establish programs, and assess outcomes. By directing from the top a process to occur at each school without prescribing the content of the decisions, a variation on the familiar bottom-up approach emerges. In short, seeking tighter coupling of district practices to school action does not necessarily mean mandating the same effort districtwide; it can be triggered by superintendent mandate but proceed gradually on a school-by-school basis.

Whichever strategy is proposed, policymakers need to address critical issues concerning voluntarism, inservice training for teachers and principals, incentives, sanctions, and related points. It is still not clear which implementation strategies are most effective because few researchers have investigated the
connections between strategies and outcomes. Most researchers have recognized
the tangled complexity of such diverse elements as context, roles, individuals,
organizational factors such as size, history, and culture, quality of leadership at
both district and school levels, timing, and other critical determinants of suc-
cessful implementation. Beyond recognizing this complexity, few researchers
have proceeded further than to construct inventories and taxonomies of essential
points in establishing causal relationships between strategies and outcomes.
Three issues illustrate the larger complexity involved in implementing policies
aimed at making schools effective.12

**Choice or mandate**

Many practitioners and researchers believe that volunteers bring high energy and
a positive outlook to producing an effective school, while draftees only find fault
and complain. What, then, do superintendents do with schools mired in low
performance for years, whose principals and faculties express great reluctance to
join in an improvement program? Mandates, as many school officials know, can
produce compliance with the letter of the order without also leading to improve-
ment. Even when the superintendent, in a heavy-handed compromise between
choice and coercion, advises a principal to volunteer, some grudging level of
compliance is about all that can reasonably be expected.

The strategies adopted by various school districts offer little guidance. In
New York City, the chancellor invited Ronald Edmonds, one of the effective
schools researchers, to introduce a school improvement program based upon his
research, and in which voluntarism played a major role. Schools were invited to
participate, and from the pool of volunteers Edmonds and his staff chose a
number for the project. In Milwaukee, the superintendent designated eighteen
schools with the poorest test scores for the effective schools project. In New
Haven, Milpitas, and Seattle, all schools participate in the program. In Arling-
ton, elementary schools other than the six initially selected may choose to enter
the program and receive the services. Of course, superintendents employ mixes
of choice and coercion. Generally, however, tight-coupling strategies favor man-
dating involvement, whereas bottom-up approaches favor allowing staffs to
choose. Although superintendents’ beliefs are strong as to which approach
works, no body of evidence yet supports one tactic or the other.

Local context and superintendents’ beliefs about change, rather than actual
evidence, may often determine whether requiring schools to participate or offering
them a choice is the tactic to use. In Arlington, the six schools which were at the
bottom in academic performance formed a natural grouping. For two of the six, for
example, opting out of participation would have left the school board and me
vulnerable to legitimate parent complaints that principals and teachers were insen-
tive to deteriorating student achievement and resistant to improving the situation.
The tradeoff in requiring all six staffs to join the program was apparent in the
varying levels of enthusiasm for the initial effort and, in some cases, foot-dragging
reluctance. In districts where there is a history of voluntary piloting of new approaches, tradition dominates. Thus, the issue of choice or mandate may hinge less on evidence than on local contextual conditions and on policymakers’ beliefs about which implementation approach works. The issue of choice needs explicit attention if for no other reason than to assess the anticipated trade offs.13

Inservice training

In mobilizing for an improvement program, the primary means of delivering help to schools is technical assistance. The implicit theory of change embedded in inservice programs is that faculties and administrators, as individuals and small groups, need additional knowledge and skills in order to implement research findings: change individuals and the school will become effective. But consideration of the impact of the school structure upon individual behavior is often missing from any discussion or analysis of inservice training. Organizational regularities involving teachers and students, principals and teachers, school staff and district office, parents and school – not to mention how the school is organized for instruction and its use of time – are rarely included in the usual technical assistance packages offered as part of school improvement.

Some researchers have suggested directions for altering a few organizational norms that shape teacher behavior. Judith Little, for example, has shown that breaking down teacher isolation and cultivating a norm of collegiality can lead to improvement in teaching practices.14 New work norms of teachers observing one another, talking frequently about pedagogy, and engaging in joint planning stimulate the sharing of values that nourish school improvement.

What is offered to teachers is all too familiar. Most teachers and principals know the concepts in the research on effective teaching and schools insofar as classroom instruction and schoolwide leadership are concerned, although the language and emphasis may be unfamiliar. For teachers listening to lectures and reading articles there is little that is complex in the research or that calls for major shifts in classroom practice, although evidence that teachers practice these concepts may be lacking.

On the other hand, the literature on instructional leadership calls for extensive inservice education for principals on the components of managing an instructional program, such as establishing and communicating a mission for the school, supervising instruction, and creating a positive climate. This emphasis does not mean that principals are unaware of instructional management or that they do not perform the function. However, principals themselves report that they give such managerial activities less time because the nature of the job forces them to concentrate on noninstructional tasks, such as maintaining school stability and coping with the often competing interests of the central office, school faculty, parents, and others. In addition to principals’ self-reports, observational studies confirm that instructional management is secondary to noninstructional tasks in the daily whirl of a principal’s life.15
Few training sessions for teachers or principals, however, make either aware that the sharpened expectation for the principal to exert leadership will end the silent agreement between administrator and faculty to honor each other’s separate domain. A principal who shifts into a mode of visiting classrooms daily, monitoring student achievement monthly, and evaluating teacher performance quarterly may become a threat to some teachers. Similarly, few inservice sessions deal with dilemmas touching teachers and principals who are asked to implement programs about which they have had little say and with which they may disagree, such as using test results as the major standard for judging success.

How is technical assistance delivered? Researchers agree that the one-shot workshop in the district office, with no follow-up, is at best symbolic, and at worst trivial. Numerous studies of inservice training state that encouraging teachers and principals at each school site to leave their fingerprints on the training format and content – even to the point of reinventing the obvious – is linked to improved staff performance. While partisans of organizational development note such findings, others have observed that local-site staff training permits teachers to adapt new knowledge and skills to their unique circumstances. Continuous sessions with ample and direct follow-up activities are commonly recommended in these studies.16

Who does the training? In New York City schools these liaisons, as they are called, are veteran teachers or supervisors in the system who are familiar with both the formal and informal structure of the city’s public schools. They work with staffs a few days a week in planning, implementing, and evaluating school improvement plans focused sharply on Edmonds’s five factors of effectiveness: strong administrative leadership, orderly school climate, high expectations for student achievement, basic skills emphasis, and frequent monitoring of pupil progress. In the process, they line up consultants and, whenever possible, provide expertise themselves. Arlington uses a team of central office teachers and supervisors in reading, math, and writing who spend concentrated periods at a school on particular tasks, such as coordinating the entire reading and writing program across grades, providing materials, and working with the school staff on a consulting basis for the rest of the school year. Other districts train a cadre of teachers from participating schools so that each school has an on-site trainer who is a resident member of the staff. Some school systems hold a series of workshops at a central location throughout the year, with follow-up done by designated supervisors. The common pattern, however, still seems to be a series of uncoordinated workshops for principals and teachers, with pounds of reading material circulated and a pat on the back.17

Technical assistance attempts to increase the capacities of the participants to do a productive job. It is the linchpin of any school improvement. Modest sums of money are needed. For programs aimed at delivering the training during the year at the school site, $3,000 to $4,000 a year per school is probably sufficient to purchase the consultant time, materials, and substitute teacher time involved
in getting a program solidly started. For programs using liaisons split between two or three schools, the cost would be higher initially, unless those liaisons are reassigned supervisors or other central office personnel who have themselves received some training.

**Incentives and sanctions**

In top-down implementation, formal and informal incentives and sanctions are organizational tools available to superintendents to shape what happens and to introduce managerial control into an ambiguous set of arrangements. With test scores as the coin of the realm, public recognition of school improvement – by such means as certificates of achievement awarded by the board of education or school-by-school scores published in newspapers – acts as an inducement for principals, teachers, and students. School board recognition of the academic achievement of both schools and individuals – such as higher test scores or winning of academic olympics – attracts media and citizen notice; far more important, however, is the fact that the top authority takes the time to acknowledge and honor academic excellence. Principals who behave in a manner consistent with descriptions of instructional leadership and produce higher test results become candidates for promotion. Similarly, teachers who develop reputations for consistently turning out classes with high test scores are sometimes viewed as potential principals.

Securing parental support becomes easier when a school’s performance is anchored in standardized test data that reveal promising achievement. For individuals who derive pleasure from a heightened sense of professionalism, attending workshops, reading materials unavailable to other staff, and participating in an effective schools program are rewards in themselves. For others, improved student performance at either the school or the district level encourages a sense of belonging and involvement in a larger, worthwhile effort. The last two are among the informal rewards associated with bottom-up implementation. An important incentive is the powerful feeling that can grow in a staff that works together and succeeds in producing higher test scores. The sense of shared purpose and pride in group achievement fuels further effort, increases participants’ self-esteem, and enhances their confidence in tackling tough jobs. Wise superintendents, aware of the influence of their positions and sensitive to the power of both formal and informal rewards, also know that their participation in teacher and principal work sessions tells staff and parents what is important in the district.

Sanctions also exist. When test scores plunge without recovering, the implied, if not actual, consequence for teachers and principals may well be criticism that escalates into warnings or even threats of removal. The effective schools research points inexorably to the conclusion that children can achieve. When test scores fail to rise or continue to decline, teachers and principals receive the blame. Although such severe penalties as removal seldom occur, the unspoken threat remains. Union contracts and due process requirements protect
instructional staff from swift termination on the basis of test results, but the pattern of long-term class or school deterioration has been used to institute charges of incompetence.

The issues of choice, inservice training, and incentives and sanctions are a few of the thorny questions that arise when embracing and executing policies presumably anchored in research findings. Another element missing in the literature on effective teaching and effective schools is the role of district leadership.

**Leadership**

Most studies of effective schools stress the pivotal role of the school principal. The research says that no school can be labeled effective (again, using the criterion of test scores) unless its principal exerts – and here the words vary – a strong administrative presence, an active style, or some other trait demonstrating leadership. But no study that I have seen lays out empirically-derived principal behaviors that produce the desired outcomes. Instead, there are recipe-like prescriptions stemming from personal experience, case studies of principals, or inferential leaps based upon theories or data drawn from other organizations. Thus, the connective tissue, the set of behaviors that principals engage in to develop a school climate that supports academic achievement – to gain staff commitment, to engender high expectations, to supervise individual teachers and the entire instructional program, while carrying on the varied and complex duties connected with maintaining order in the school – none of these complex, interacting behaviors has been linked in the literature to the production of higher test scores. So far, only a general notion of leadership is a correlate of high student achievement. Practitioner faith and folk wisdom sustain the conviction that school-site leadership makes a difference. Research has yet to catch up with this lore to either inform, shape, or contradict practice.18

Faith and folk wisdom also suggest that the superintendent exerts a critical role in establishing the district agenda, communicating the mission of the district to both the staff and community, creating a systemwide climate favoring achievement, targeting essential personnel and funds, and monitoring and assessing the overall program in order to implement school board policies directed toward school improvement. As with the principal, experience-based knowledge about superintendents as instructional leaders exceeds the present state of research-produced knowledge. The accounts by or about superintendents embracing an effective schools approach describe attitudes and activities typical of an earlier generation of superintendents – teacher-scholars who were deeply interested in the instructional process and active in schools and classrooms. A century ago, superintendents had to teach teachers what to do in classrooms; they inspected what was taught, listened to children recite, taught classes, and, in general, were unmistakably visible in the school program. That model of superintendent as instructional leader gave way to a managerial approach that has dominated the superintendency for the last three generations. With the mounting interest in using effective schools research, the older
model of a school chief knowledgeable about both curriculum and instruction and visible in the schools beyond the symbolic tour is reasserting itself.19

Given that the literature on effective schools suggests that no school can become effective without the visible and active involvement of a principal hip-deep in the elementary school instructional program, then it also seems likely that no school board approving policies aimed at systemwide improvement can hope to achieve that condition without a superintendent who sustains a higher than usual involvement in the district’s instructional program. Of course, there will be districts that have some effective schools regardless of the superintendent’s familiarity with instruction, just as in a school with a principal who is uninvolved with the instructional program and sees his or her task as keeping the ship afloat, there will nevertheless be first-rate teachers who maintain high standards of instruction. Moreover, the superintendent can delegate many tasks to subordinates; he or she cannot be everywhere at once, anymore than a principal can.

The size of a school system is also a factor. Can the Chicago superintendent with a half-million students perform as an instructional leader in the same way as her colleague in Alexandria, Virginia, who deals with fewer than ten thousand children? Yes, but large districts require far more symbolic and shrewd instructional leadership targeted upon principals rather than teachers. The superintendent’s personal, active involvement in the district instructional effort seems to be a necessary condition. I state the above as a proposition derived from the logic of existing practice in improving school productivity. No facts yet exist on superintendent behaviors that cause district improvement. Because of the absence of studies investigating the superintendent’s role in improving schools, the literature leaves us with discussions of the ineffable quality of leadership.

At a time when budget, program, and staff cuts and school closings are affecting most districts, when a crisis of confidence in schools is attracting media attention, and when administrators are privately and publicly bewailing the lack of money and the restrictions upon their power, policymakers and academicians are calling for inspired leadership. If the research on effective schools has yet to produce reliable prescriptions tested in numerous crucibles, the literature on leadership for both principal and superintendent reveals a similar barrenness. Long on rhetoric and dictates, much of what is written leans heavily on perceptions of what school leaders do. Within the last decade a few scholars have produced behavioral descriptions of principals and superintendents. Yet the tasks that administrators choose to work on, the language they use, the discretion they employ, the symbols they manipulate, the incentives they extend, the style and commitment they project – all dance beyond the grasp of researchers. There are also organizational theorists who argue plausibly that formal leadership is a myth constructed by those who need to attribute influence to incumbents. Hence, what principals and superintendents do daily to create the conditions for instructional improvement and to influence students directly remains in the shadows of research-produced knowledge, though honored by practitioners and sought by parents.20

I prefer to acknowledge that leadership is ineffable rather than to embrace
popular recipes that worked once in someone else’s kitchen. My experience and
that of other superintendents, however, presents some untested propositions that
researchers and policymakers may find worthy of consideration.

First, no superintendent can secretly improve a school district. The source of
formal authority for a superintendent’s initiative is the school board, which
needs to approve the general direction and to work in tandem with the superin-
tendent. Self-evident as this may seem, the commonplace needs to be stated.

Second, the superintendent sets the agenda and develops the mission, using
his or her managerial skills to decide when to open the gate to ideas and when to
close it, when to veto and when to support – in short, how to develop policy.

Third, the superintendent establishes a climate which nurtures instructional
improvement in the district. Once the superintendent becomes identified with the
mission of school improvement, even symbolic visibility in schools and class-
rooms carries weight. Encouragement and support (without conceding anything
on expectations) for principals and teachers, such as protecting the instructional
day and nourishing professional development, are also important.

Fourth, the school chief uses a number of managerial tools to implement the
mission: targeting limited resources on activities that promise a payoff; placing
like-minded, skilled staff in key positions that will advance the district’s
mission; and actively participating in monitoring and assessing the instructional
program.

Such behavior on the part of the superintendent describes a high-profile,
active involvement in the instructional side of school operations. Will it produce
improved student academic performance? Maybe. Experience-derived know-
ledge says yes, but no body of independent evidence yet exists to demonstrate
that engaging in these tasks will yield dividends. What these assertions about
superintendent behavior suggest is that some degree of direction and top-down
implementation is necessary in launching an improvement program. Once
launched, however, the improvement process can travel many routes, ranging
from organizational development techniques employed with small groups to
tightly managed, orchestrated tasks, resembling a chess game. Personal prefer-
ence and belief systems seems to determine the course adopted.

This description of superintendent behavior is narrowly targeted on the acade-
ic performance of students. The goals of schooling, however, go well beyond test
scores. If the mission of a district embraces many goals, some of which may require
substantial changes in teaching practice such as developing student initiative, deci-
sionmaking, and cooperativeness, other leadership tasks may also be involved.
Since a great deal of existing pedagogy and principal behavior is shaped by the
structure within which both teachers and administrators work, improved academic
achievement is well within the margin of change set by organizational boundaries.
Hence, changes directed toward test scores are incremental and very different from
a major overhaul of the entire district’s instructional program.

Whether or not such leadership activities as described here have, indeed, pro-
duced the higher academic achievement reported in districts across the nation
has yet to be demonstrated. But it is clear that there are many unanticipated consequences of tightly coupling the central office to the local school and of concentrating on raising achievement on tests.

**Unanticipated consequences**

**Increased uniformity**

The school effectiveness literature stresses the importance of managing the instructional program and coordinating the curriculum at the school site. Yet districts concentrating upon improving academic achievement experience a strong, irresistible tug toward a standard curriculum and systemwide use of the same textbooks and student workbooks. Tailoring supplementary materials to student differences becomes less frequent, as does grouping of students within classrooms on the basis of achievement. The notion of a single, best curriculum and managerial style echoing the pre-1900 years of public schooling reasserts itself. The press toward uniformity is neither good nor bad; every school district must strike some balance between uniformity and diversity in curriculum and program management. My point is simply that adopting the school effectiveness research will drive the curriculum and school management toward uniformity.

The same trend is visible in teaching. The research on effective teaching practices has singled out and emphasized particular techniques as being effective means of improving test results. The boosterism surrounding direct instructional methods such as teaching the whole class at one time, teacher-directed activities, and continual monitoring of student work, presses teachers toward these practices. What the literature has done is to certify direct instruction as the single best way of teaching. But uncritical cheerleading for this brand of teaching stamps whole-group instruction, lecturing, recitation, and seatwork as effective, going far beyond what the research findings promise or even suggest. Moreover, repetitive, low-level intellectual skills are now surrounded by a halo of legitimacy. Filling in blanks, getting test-wise to multiple-choice items, and completing exercises elevate tedious tasks to the status of effective instruction. Concern for student interest, motivation, and the life of the mind diminishes with accelerated use of dittos, seatwork, and pre-and post-tests. Learning becomes a series of repetitive tasks that need to be completed, placed in folders, and marked by the teacher. An increase in drill and routine is justified in the name of direct instruction and concentration on low-order but important basic skills. While mastery learning, the use of individual contracts, and small group instruction through teams stand as alternatives to direct instruction in producing academic gains, such approaches remain largely at the margins of the pedagogical radar screen.

The result is that the ineffable elements of teaching as an art – tempo, improvisation, drama, and excitement of performance – receive little acknowledgment as important qualities and even less attention from district policymakers. The pleasures that teachers derive from their relationships with children, the
unpredictable, the unexpected, the unplanned, and the joyful, go unnoticed by partisans of effective teaching. There is a danger in smothering the craft and rewards of teaching in the rush to make instruction scientific and efficient. The dream of an efficient one-best-system of instruction of an earlier generation of reformers appears to have resurfaced with the undisguised fervor for direct instruction.

**Narrowing of the educational agenda**

In the pursuit of improved test scores, areas viewed as nonacademic – such as music, art, speaking, and self-esteem – receive less attention. Partisans of effective schools seem to take the position that if a subject or skill cannot be directly linked to student academic performance, then the burden of proof that it is a legitimate part of a school curriculum rests on those who see schooling in broader terms than spelling bees and multiplication tables.

Narrowing the agenda for public schools was a necessary response to the ballooning expectations of the last half-century. But schools can do more than raise test scores of all children. Both citizens and educators must be concerned about shrinking the school district’s agenda to the least common denominator.

**Increased conflict between teachers and administrators**

Heightened interest in instructional leadership causes a shift in administrator behavior. The principal’s weekly presence in classrooms, periodic evaluations, and scrutiny of each class’s test achievement boosts teacher anxiety over potential loss of classroom autonomy. The principal’s insistence on the use of direct instructional methods may be viewed as a slur on the teacher’s ability to make pedagogical judgments. The likelihood of overt conflict increases when teachers feel that their professional domain is being penetrated by administrators who know little of the students they face daily and the craft they practice hourly.

Similarly, latent hostility between principals and the central office is produced by the differences between the view of the district from the principal’s office and the view from the superintendent’s desk. This conflict sharpens noticeably when the superintendent takes a greater interest in schoolwide test scores and holds principals accountable for meeting district goals. Revision in evaluation instruments for administrators raises the spectre that principals’ jobs are on the line if they don’t produce. Few researchers have pursued this potential conflict as a consequence of adopting policies based upon effective schools research.21

**Lack of focus on schools with high test scores**

Because the focus of recent efforts is on lifting test scores, little attention is paid to the curriculum, instruction, or organization of schools with median percentile ranks above 95 in math and reading. The presumption is that all is well, yet the
analysis of sub-groups in high-scoring schools often reveals that there are students who need remedial help. The high achievers in these schools may also receive inappropriate instruction if teachers are using only grade-level materials. And teachers may resist moving them ahead to advanced lessons because of the ripple effects upon the next grade’s teachers, whose materials are geared to a certain expected level. Also, low expectations of high achievers – “they are so smart, they will get it on their own” – often pervade such schools, insulating students from improvement, since the schools look terrific in terms of percentile ranks.

**Misapplication of research findings**

While there is an intuitive and craft wisdom to many of the findings, there are sharp limits on their application to the high school. One limit is that the organizational structure of the high school resembles that of the college more than that of the elementary school. In terms of size, mission, the structuring of time, student-teacher contact, previous training of teachers and their worldview of what is important for young men and women, the high school is profoundly different from the elementary school. Certainly high schools can become more effective, but to claim that formulas that have proved effective in the lower grades will also be effective in the upper ones is a misuse of research. The Charles Kettering Foundation, for example, sponsors a program that lists fourteen attributes of effective high schools. It is a melange of traits drawn from findings on effective elementary schools and from theory undergirding organizational development. The U.S. Department of Education has recently recognized as effective high schools across the country which possess these fourteen attributes. Principals are told that if they become instructional leaders, supervise instruction, coordinate curriculum, and evaluate classroom teachers, test scores will improve. Grafts of formulas used in elementary schools will fail, in my judgment, until a more sensitive, grounded organizational analysis is made of the high school. The misapplication of research findings is very tempting to policymakers who hear shrill criticism from taxpayer associations, government officials, academicians, and professional reformers. Conclusions from research studies that demonstrate high positive correlations between certain activities and improvement in test scores are often too seductive for district policymakers pressed to increase productivity to ignore. Accordingly, districts tend to perform the slippery twist that converts correlations into action agendas.  

These and other unanticipated consequences raise the obvious question: If productivity improves and parents and policymakers are pleased with higher test results, can we conclude that children are receiving a better education? Inner-city children across the nation who have received a schooling built upon false beliefs in their incapacity to learn are clearly the beneficiaries of effective school efforts. This fundamental first step is a moral as well as an educational one. No excuses are acceptable.

But improved test scores are simply not enough. To conclude that a school is effective once it demonstrates test-score gains is, implicitly, to conclude that
students need to develop no other capacity than to answer multiple-choice items correctly. The concern that drives many schools today — that of improving student performance on achievement tests — is a short-term, useful but constricting one. The framework for a response to this concern regarding elementary schools comes from research on effective teaching and schools. That framework, I am confident, is useful and will prove successful in lifting test scores. But, while it is a necessary first step, it will prove insufficient in reaching for broader, less easily measured yet fundamental goals of schooling. The dangers of confusing means (test-score gains) with ends (multiple aims of schooling) are real. Based upon my experience and an awareness of the inevitable trade offs in the implementation of effective school programs, I suggest that the expressed concern regarding test scores be reformulated as a question: In improving test results, how can the general, more complex and non-quantifiable goals of schooling be achieved? Such a question places test results in a ranking position in relation to such other important outcomes as problem solving, cooperativeness, independence in decisionmaking, positive feeling for learning, caring for others, an appreciation for the aesthetic, and similar aims.

To evaluate the effectiveness of such complex organizations as schools solely on the basis of a percentile rank is little better than to judge a car’s quality solely on the basis of its miles-per-gallon or a hospital’s effectiveness solely by the number of its vacant beds. School officials who have adopted effective schools research, concepts, and language need to use many policy tools to improve school productivity, not just standardized test scores. Tightly coupled organizational procedures sharply focused on academic goals, as measured by test results, are clearly among those tools. Too often, however, those who believe their only tool is a hammer begin to treat everything like a nail. For that to occur now would be, in my judgment, a mistake for the children of the nation.

**Acknowledgement**

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I wish to acknowledge the helpful comments of Steve Swerdlick.

**Notes**

TRANSFORMING THE FROG INTO A PRINCE


5 I draw from my experience in Arlington, Va. (1974–1981), from my observations of school districts in the San Francisco area that have adopted school effectiveness as a program, and from the following accounts: Alonzo Crim, “A Community of Believers,” Daedalus, 110 (Fall 1981), 145–162; Robert Benjamin’s chapter on Modesto, California, in his Making Schools Work (New York: Continuum, 1981); Bennett and Eastland, “Making a School System Work,” on Portland, Maine; and Wilson, “Do Seattle Schools Work?” The Summer 1982 issue of State Education Leader, published by the Education Commission of the States, lists the steps that schools, districts, and state agencies should pursue (such as setting goals, cultivating principal leadership, developing staff, and coordinating curriculum).


8 See, for example, the description of New York City’s School Improvement Project.
and the funding necessary to sustain central administration of the program, liaisons
for the schools, and other costs, in Terry Clark and Dennis McCarthy, “School
Improvement in New York City: The Evolution of a Project,” Educational

9 My colleague, Edwin Bridges, is completing a long-term study of how school districts
manage incompetent staff. His search of the literature produced very little on either
teachers or principals.

10 The literature on implementation grows yearly. Case studies and theoretical contribu-
tions have slightly increased our understanding of the complex process of converting
policy decisions into practice. See Richard Elmore’s “Organizational Models of Social
Program Implementation,” Public Policy, 26 (1978), 185–228. Elmore’s taxonomy of
implementation models is useful for differentiating the technical-rational approach, cur-
cently enjoying a vogue among school policymakers, from the bureaucratic, conflict-
bargaining, and organizational development models. Federal and state experience with
Title I, P.L. 94–142, and special projects since 1965 has demonstrated how legislative
intent is persistently twisted into shapes congenial to local needs. The tension between
securing compliance and releasing local capacities runs like a red thread through the
accounts of these efforts. The projects that were judged effective, according to the intensive
case studies of federal programs by Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin, were
ones that somehow put their unique stamp upon the federal project’s goals, activities,
and outcomes. See Berman and McLaughlin, Federal Programs Supporting Educa-
tional Change, Vol. VIII of Implementing and Sustaining Innovations (Santa Monica,
Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1978). In a critique of the literature on implementation of pro-
grams, Berman concludes that implementation is determined by so many factors and
circumstances that it is idiosyncratic; see Berman, “Educational Change: An Implementa-
tion Paradigm,” in Improving Schools, eds. Rolf Lehming and Michael Kane (Beverly
Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1981). “Mutual adaptation,” a phrase extracted from the Rand
researchers’ work, has become a shorthand expression for implementation strategies
that embrace grassroots participation. Whereas some efforts have employed the findings
of implementation researchers that staff commitment and a stake in decisionmaking are
of pivotal importance to effective schools policies, most programs implementing effect-
ive schools research employ top-down strategies.

11 The New York School Improvement Project is one instance of a top-down strategy
employing a school-based approach. For an analysis of bottom-up and school-based
strategies, see Jane L. David, School-Based Strategies: Implications for Government
Policy (Palo Alto, Calif.: Bay Area Research Group, 1982).

12 See Michael Fullan, “Implementing Educational Change: Progress at Last,” Paper
and Fullan and Alan Pomfret, “Research on Curriculum and Instruction Implementa-
tion,” Review of Educational Research, 47 (1977), 335–397. See also David Crandall,
Joyce E. Bauchner, Susan F. Loucks, and William H. Schmidt, “Models of School
Education Research Association, New York City, March 1982; and Meredith Gall,
“Using Staff Development to Improve Schools,” R & D Perspectives, Winter 1983.

13 Edmonds, “Programs of School Improvement,” pp. 4–11; and my own acquaintance
with efforts in Milpitas, Calif. Levine and Eubanks, “A First Look,” p. 702, recom-
mend mandating school participation if sufficient funds are available but do not
mention trade offs between choice and coercion.

14 Little, School Success and Staff Development: The Role of Staff Development in Urban

15 For teacher staff development and new work norms, see Little, School Success &
Staff Development. Among the many investigators of the role of principals, Harry

16 See Mary Bentzen, Changing Schools: The Magic Feather Principal (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974); for several productive discussions, see the essays in Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller, eds., Staff Development: New Demands New Realities, New Perspectives (New York: Teachers College Press, 1979); and Little, School Success and Staff Development.


18 A number of researchers have begun to investigate this critical area. Steven Bossert, David Dwyer, and Brian Rowan, all at the Far West Regional Lab, San Francisco, Calif., have undertaken a series of studies based upon their model of instructional management. So far, they have produced an explication of the model and five ethnographic studies of principals in effective elementary schools. Hallinger, in “Management Behavior of Principals,” discusses varied principal behaviors in ten elementary schools in a California district and concludes that the literature on effective schools is essential for improved student performance.


21 Identification of these potential sources of conflict comes from my observations in school districts implementing effective schools research; Hallinger’s observations in “Management Behavior of Principals”; and my own experience in Arlington.

22 I obtained these materials in May 1983 while serving as a site visitor for the U.S. Department of Education’s recognition program of exemplary high schools. The issue of generalizability surfaces whenever I speak to groups of administrators on effective schools research. I do not claim that the findings of the Kettering Foundation or the Department of Education are irrelevant. But in the few high schools identified as effective that I have observed firsthand, I saw organizational procedures and structural changes quite different from those of the typical high school.
IMAGES OF TEACHING AND PROPOSALS FOR REFORM

A comparison of ideas from cognitive and organizational research

William A. Firestone*


Organizational analysis and studies of teacher thinking both contribute to discussion about how to professionalize teaching, but these two bodies of research have not been well synchronized. Teacher-thinking research examines teachers’ thought processes and makes recommendations for training. Organizational analysis emphasizes the importance of teacher commitment and the redesign of existing schools to increase teacher collegiality and participation. This article juxtaposes these two literatures to clarify and suggest ways to combine divergent images of the good teacher. It also suggests that recommendations for reform are incomplete and argues that these ideas need to be put into a wider framework.

The most recent interest in teacher professionalism, heralded by the reports of The Holmes Group (1986) and the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986), is almost a decade old. Ongoing efforts to promote developments as diverse as professional development schools and site-based management (White, 1992; Wohlstetter, Smyer, & Mohrman, 1994) indicate that interest in enhancing teacher professionalism persists. Yet, debate about what it means to professionalize teaching and how it should be accomplished precedes these reports and continues (e.g., Burbeles & Densmore, 1991; Sykes, 1991). Two areas of research contribute to thinking about the teaching profession. Cognitive research provides an image of the professional teacher that can support arguments for the professionalization of teaching. Organizational analysis helps to clarify the conditions of work necessary for teachers to act as professionals, but its image of the good teacher is very different from what comes from cognitive research.
There have been a few efforts to link research on organizations and cognition (e.g., Murphy, 1991), but these have rarely focused on teaching. As a result, these two bodies of research have not been well-synchronized as they apply to teaching. When they turn from students to educators, cognitive researchers delve deeply into the thought processes of teachers and, for the most part, have made recommendations on the training and certification of (usually new) teachers. Organizational analysis in education draws on a long, out-of-education tradition of research on organizational behavior to suggest something close to generic prescriptions to reform schools in light of a universal image of the self-motivated worker. How those prescriptions are linked to the work of professional teachers is unclear.

My intent in this article is to juxtapose these two literatures in order to suggest some implications for the reform of schools. Table 1 provides a capsule summary of how I see the similarities and differences between these literatures.) I begin by clarifying the image of the good teacher inherent in each literature. The cognitive literature elucidates the knowledge and thought processes of teachers, whereas the organizational research stresses the importance of commitment. Then, I examine the reform proposals associated with each: teacher training and assessment in the cognitive literature, and variations on the themes of participation and collegiality in the organizational literature. Finally, I argue that both sets of recommendations are useful but incomplete and suggest some other reforms that need to accompany them.

Comparing these literatures is not easy, because both are rich and complex. Both are moving forward on a variety of fronts with a certain amount of ferment, differences of emphasis, and debates within each. Moreover, there is a substantial asymmetry. The cognitive literature explicitly analyzes certain aspects of good teaching while largely ignoring what schools are like. Organizational work focuses on schools while making (often ambiguously specified) assumptions about what constitutes good teaching. What follows then is necessarily a simplification of two dynamic fields of study.

Table 1 Comparison of implications of cognitive and organizational research for teacher professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of attention</th>
<th>Cognitive research</th>
<th>Organizational research</th>
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<tr>
<td>Focus of attention</td>
<td>Internal thought processes, usually students’</td>
<td>Organizational arrangements, including how they affect the work and attitudes of workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image of professional teacher</td>
<td>Knowledgeable, reflective practitioner</td>
<td>Committed practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach to reform</td>
<td>Pre-service education and (to a lesser extent) entry requirements</td>
<td>Structural changes such as site-based management and reforms to promote collegiality</td>
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The good teacher

Among the numerous efforts to define a profession and distinguish it from other occupations, a few themes repeat themselves and appear to be especially relevant to education. One rationale is that a profession provides a service that is difficult to monitor in a situation where the client knows less than the service provider or is otherwise vulnerable (Wise, 1989). Because of the uncertainty surrounding service delivery, quality control is maintained over the professional rather than over the service itself. Because discretion is required, it is necessary to assure that professionals have both the requisite knowledge and appropriate values (Darling-Hammond, 1989; Weick & McDaniel, 1989). The importance of knowledge is widely recognized, although the nature of that knowledge is currently the subject of considerable ferment (Schon, 1987). The values issue has received less attention. Still, professions have been defined as elites responsible for the protection of a social value (Weick & McDaniel, 1989). The importance of values becomes apparent from both the complexity of the task and the vulnerability of the client. Just as it is important (and problematic) that the medical doctor not prescribe unnecessary procedures to make money at the expense of the patient’s health or purse, it is crucial that the teacher’s primary concern be the welfare of the student, not him- or herself. The cognitive literature focuses on teacher knowledge. Organizational research gives relatively more attention to values by focusing on attitudes and commitments.

Teacher knowledge

Research on teacher knowledge is new, perhaps 15 or 20 years old. It is partially a reaction to the process-product research that focused strictly on teacher behavior; appeared to emphasize uniform, noncontingent recommendations for the improvement of teaching; and took existing definitions of student achievement as given. This new research is based on the assumptions that knowledge and thought are related to behavior, that teaching is contingent, and that much of what the teacher does is design and adjust teaching strategies and tactics in light of both the students and the content to be taught. It emphasizes the complexity and frequency of teacher decision making (on average one decision every 2 minutes), and it is more oriented toward developing higher-order thinking skills than is usually the case (Clark & Peterson, 1986).

This research draws on and parallels the cognitive science treatment of student learning (Bransford, 1979; Peterson, Fennema, & Carpenter, 1991). That research delves into the microparticulars of what it takes for students to understand a mathematics problem, a science lab, or a writing assignment. One analysis from mathematics suggests that understanding involves:

**Structures**, or kinds of content, computing algorithms, principles, ways of translating word problems into computations, and other things that must be known about mathematics. These are often implicit.
Representations, or ways of describing and presenting structures to oneself or others. These may be invented or include commonly accepted symbols, such as the formal symbols for addition, subtraction, and so forth.

Connections between various structures and representations. Deep understanding is often characterized by rich connections among various structures. Without such connections, for instance, it is difficult to apply structures learned in school (such as long division) to real-life problems.

Active construction of knowledge. Essentially, this means that students cannot accept or memorize structures or representations; these must be actively constructed through some kind of learning task, activity, or application.

Situated cognition, which means that understanding is intertwined with specific physical and social situations. The ability to estimate the time it takes to do a job, for instance, is a mathematical skill that comes from doing a kind of work.

(Putnam, Lampert, & Peterson, 1990)

This view of understanding is a way of thinking about what higher-order thinking is. Moreover, it has important implications for instruction. For instance, the principle of active construction means that teachers cannot effectively tell students about specific structures. Depending on the particular subject area, telling can help. However, students generally have to develop their own structures through some kind of work, and they develop best what they work on. Thus extensive drill and practice of mathematics facts does not help with the application of those facts to story problems or to problem solving in unknown situations. Another implication seems to be that it is not necessary to teach basic skills (computation) before more complex skills. The two can be learned together. Finally, because students do construct their own understanding, it is necessary to build from what they already know. A good deal of teaching then becomes making contact between the curriculum and students’ knowledge (Bransford, 1979; Peterson et al., 1991).

Similar analyses are being conducted of teacher knowledge. Inquiries into structures focus on what teachers must know. Shulman (1987) provides one of the most inclusive typologies of teacher knowledge. It includes content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge, including principles of classroom management; curriculum knowledge of the materials and programs with which teachers work; pedagogical content knowledge, the blend of content and pedagogy needed to communicate with students; knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts from the classroom to district governance to communities; and knowledge of educational ends and values. He argues further that pedagogical content knowledge is the special province of teachers, for they must know their content, not so that they can advance what is
known, but so that they can communicate it to students who often lack all or part of the necessary background understanding.

Because students usually lack either the structures or the connections to understand what the teacher has to offer, representation becomes a special challenge. Teachers must find ways to bridge the gap between what students currently know and what they should know. One way to do so is through the use of metaphor, and the kind of metaphor the teacher uses will highlight some aspects of what must be learned rather than others. For instance, Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* can be taught in ways that emphasize language, history, or moral conflict (Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987); but for some students, a teacher might better use an episode of *Star Trek* to get at the latter issue because it is more familiar.

Teachers apply static structures through complex reasoning processes that take place both in the classroom while working with students and outside while planning for an activity and assessing its effectiveness. For instance, teaching a lesson on a given topic requires understanding its purposes and the subject matter; transforming it into a set of representations and activities through which students can understand it better; actually conducting the activities while managing the presentation, interactions among students, group work, discipline, and so forth; evaluating student understanding; reflecting on the results; and creating new comprehension for later lessons (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Shulman, 1987).

Research on teacher knowledge helps describe the kind of teaching through which students can actively construct their own knowledge. Teachers must have the deep understanding of their content that helps generate multiple representations and activities and select those that best fit the students taught. These must be accompanied by a subtle ability to pick up cues emanating from students as the classroom activity unfolds and to adjust that activity to student progress. With this knowledge and ability, teacher talk becomes limited. Although teachers sometimes have to describe fundamental structures and cue students to what they are looking for, much more class time is spent in student activity and sometimes in dialogue than is usually the case. The art of teaching is not so much the good lecture or the teacher-dominated discussion as the good activity. Teaching is more interactive, and learning is more active than is typical of most present practice. Experimental evidence suggests that this approach to teaching effectively helps students develop higher-order capacities in both reading and mathematics. Moreover, where the teacher knows more about students’ current knowledge, those students learn more (Palincsar & Brown, 1984; Peterson et al., 1991).

The ability of knowledgeable teachers to promote higher-order thinking is crucial to the argument for professionalizing teaching. Efforts to change teachers’ status have been made previously with relatively little success. One thing that makes the current situation different is that the United States is now competing in a global, high-technology market where other countries often have the advantage. A literate, inventive, and socially responsible workforce will be
necessary for the United States to hold its own in the future. As the proportion of poor, minority, and immigrant children in the populace grows, such a workforce may become increasingly more difficult to achieve. If more knowledgeable teachers contribute significantly to that end, the public may be more likely to accept the professionalization of teaching (Devaney & Sykes, 1988).

Not all the research on teacher knowledge contributes to this picture of professionalized teaching. Although most of this work examines the application of pedagogical content knowledge, there have also been analyses of teachers’ knowledge of classroom management. Carter and Doyle (1987), for instance, describe teachers’ structures for organizing their classrooms. Some structures help teachers avoid disruptions, switch topics quickly to maintain student attention, and otherwise maintain the flow of classroom events. Others encourage teachers to challenge disruptive students rather than ignoring them or changing the flow of activity. The first structures are much more adaptive for maintaining a stream of instructional work than the second. This line of work suggests that the overwhelming imperative of classroom life is maintaining order and that teachers learn strategies of classroom management and presentation of lessons that facilitate that end. In fact, teachers may avoid the activities that facilitate deeper student understanding when they learn that such activities can be particularly disruptive.

**Values and commitment**

The organizational research on teaching is older than the cognitive. Most of this work is guided by theories of organizational behavior, a field that highlights the similarities among schools, universities, factories, and armies in order to develop general principles about how they work. Topics of interest include power, leadership, motivation, and structural arrangements (Boyan, 1988). Thus, whereas the cognitive research focuses on classroom particulars, the organizational research looks outside of education for general patterns. This generalizing nature has advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it can lead to solutions to problems that might not otherwise be considered. On the other hand, it can direct attention to solutions to nonproblems or to structural arrangements that better fit other situations.

Another important characteristic of the organizational research is that until recently, much of it was conducted in the service of administrators or at least to help them become more effective. The teacher variables of interest often include satisfaction, loyalty, and trust (Conley, 1991). Those characteristics make teachers more compliant and easier to work with but not necessarily more professional (because part of professionalism includes independence) or effective instructors.

Recently, however, some organizational researchers have begun to explore the characteristics of schools that facilitate or impede teachers’ efforts to act as professionals (Bacharach & Conley, 1989). One manifestation of this change is a shift from dependent variables, such as satisfaction to commitment. Although
this shift is not a complete solution, it is a distinct improvement. Commitment has been defined in many ways, including as internalized motivation, a partisan attachment to the goals and values of an organization, and the attachment of the personality system to social relations seen as self-expressive. A common theme in all these definitions is a psychological bond between the individual and the object of commitment, a bond that takes on special meaning and importance for that individual. The committed person should believe strongly in the goals or purposes associated with that object, be willing to exert considerable effort on its behalf, and desire to remain affiliated with it (Firestone, 1990).

Theoretically, commitment has two advantages over satisfaction. First, it is more stable, developing slowly but persisting (up to a point) through the bad times, whereas satisfaction diminishes swiftly. Second, satisfaction implies contentment with things as they are, whereas the committed individual should be open to improvements in line with the underlying values to which that person is attached (Firestone, 1990).

The effects of commitment must be understood in light of the market and demographic forces that hold people in teaching. As people become older, the costs of changing careers become high, even if the psychic bonds tying an individual to a line of work attenuate. Thus, especially as the teaching force continues to age, loss of commitment can have a substantial effect on teachers’ plans to leave teaching for another occupation but almost no effect on actual quitting behavior (Dworkin, 1987). As a result, many teachers feel trapped in their work and are no longer committed to providing the skill and effort they did earlier. This may be one reason for the repeated findings that teacher effectiveness peaks at about 5 years of experience and that almost a third of current teachers report that they would not choose the same occupation again (Dworkin, 1987; NEA, 1987; Rosenholtz, 1985).

Commitment is more closely tied to aspects of teachers’ work that are under their control. For instance, the attendance of committed teachers is higher than that of their less committed colleagues. Moreover, lack of commitment has been linked to teacher burnout. Burned-out teachers tend to be less sympathetic toward students, have a lower tolerance for frustration in the classroom, and feel exhausted and anxious. They also plan less for their future and develop fewer plans to improve the academic quality of instruction. In line with thinking about professionalism, they are also less likely than their more committed colleagues to challenge authority when they experience rules that constrain them from teaching in ways they see as effective (Farber, 1984; Rosenholtz, 1989).

Because organizational research typically focused on teacher behavior and orientations rather than the ultimate outcomes of student learning, and because attention to commitment is relatively new, there are not many studies linking it to student learning. However, the available evidence is suggestive. In Tennessee, Rosenholtz (1989) found that teacher commitment contributed to gains in elementary student achievement. In a better controlled study, Kushman (1992) also found significant associations between commitment and academic achievement.
One problem with this line of research is that it is not always clear to what teachers are committed. Their work commitments can compete with those unrelated to work. They can also become attached more to some parts of their work than others; hence the common observation that high school teachers become especially committed to their subjects, whereas elementary teachers are more committed to their students. Most research has been about undifferentiated commitment to teaching. A few more fine-grained studies are beginning to explore the variety of teacher commitments and their consequences. Firestone and Rosenblum (1988) found that high school teachers could be committed to any combination of their place of employment, their students, or their subject matter, suggesting that the nature of those commitments shape the educational experiences students have. Other researchers have found different organizational correlates for teachers’ sense of personal efficacy, community, and expectations for students (Louis, 1991; Newmann, Rutter, & Smith, 1989).

Although most of this research links particular commitments to teaching outcomes, Conley points out that teachers operate in an organizational context. This context may appropriately constrain (although not necessarily dictate) teachers’ educational commitments. Moreover, some of those commitments should be to their school and colleagues, because these will affect the quality of their instructional work. Such commitments also reflect the larger social responsibility of the professional (Conley, 1988).

This examination of microcommitments is important for three reasons. First, this more differentiated analysis parallels the treatment of values in discussions of professionalism. Generic commitment to teaching might not be all that different from satisfaction as a facilitator of managerial work because it contributes to a hard-working (if not always compliant) staff. Yet, the observation that professionals are committed to specific values—for example, the welfare of students—suggests the need for both normative analysis, to clarify what teachers’ commitments should be, and empirical analysis, to find out what they actually are.

Second, the focus on microcommitments is similar to the cognitive research on teaching, with its fine-grained analysis of kinds of teacher knowledge. Moreover, the distinction between knowledge and values breaks down at times, especially in areas like education, where disagreement about purposes is high. Even when knowledge and values are analytically distinct, they may vary together. Thus teachers with a deeper knowledge about their children’s mathematical skills also have a previous belief in the value of cognitively oriented instruction. That is, their attitude is that children construct their own mathematical knowledge, that instruction should help children develop their knowledge, that ideas should be sequenced according to what children already know, and that skill instruction should not be separated from problem solving (Peterson et al., 1991).

Finally, there is more evidence about the relationships between these microcommitments and student learning than there is about the effects of generic commitment. For instance, teachers’ sense of efficacy and expectations for
students are associated with conventional measures of student achievement, and teachers’ beliefs in cognitively oriented instruction are associated with learning more complex mathematical skills (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Peterson et al., 1991). Thus, although organizational researchers have not attended as carefully to what teachers know and think as the cognitive researchers, the focus on microcommitments provides an opportunity to join these two research agendas.

Recommendations for reform

The research on teachers’ knowledge and thinking has been used primarily to address problems of preparation and accreditation. This research suggests ways to rethink the content, methods, and policies of teacher education. Some suggestions do not change the form of preparation, but they do lead to ways to more effectively help prospective teachers develop their own structures for teaching and make the connections between those structures and application situations. Other changes, such as professional development schools that bring the classroom training of prospective teachers closer to a hands-on experience, should substantially facilitate beginners’ efforts to actively construct their approaches to teaching using existing knowledge as a guide (Floden & Klinzing, 1990; The Holmes Group, 1990).

The other development is in new forms of testing. These move away from past practice, which stressed either multiple choice tests or in-class observation of generic dimensions of teaching that do not take either students or subject matter into account. Instead, a variety of simulations are being suggested that force those tested to address problems more like those in real teaching situations and to articulate not only a solution but also the process of deriving that solution. Teachers must represent the structures with which they work and demonstrate the ability to make connections among those structures using materials closely related to real teaching situations. Such tests are likely to be part of a program for advanced or board certification of teachers, if not initial licensing (Haertel, 1991; Peterson & Comeaux, 1989).

If appropriately designed and implemented, improved teacher preparation and more rigorous entry and licensure requirements can be an important part of any effort to professionalize teaching. Such requirements model more established professions, so they should help to legitimate the occupation. At the same time, they are likely to ensure that the teaching force of the future is more knowledgeable in ways directly relevant to educational practice (Darling-Hammond, 1984). Nevertheless, by themselves they are not likely to make a great difference, if only because most teachers are old teachers. The proportion of teachers with less than 5 years of experience has fallen from 32% in 1966 to 10% in 1986 (NEA, 1987). Thus, even in times of expansion, change by regeneration progresses very slowly. Experienced teachers will establish the normative climate into which new recruits arrive. Past experiments at educational reform by bringing in cadres of fresh faces have not worked well (Corwin, 1973). Moreover, because
beginners can more easily leave teaching than those with more experience, many of those who have experienced new forms of training and passed new accreditation tests are likely to depart. In fact, the best, the brightest, and the most effective are likely to be among those who leave education most quickly under the current circumstances (Vance & Schlecty, 1982).

Thus a comprehensive effort to professionalize teaching will have to reform existing schools to both create a more conducive context for new cohorts of better trained teachers and to increase the knowledge and change the commitments of those already present. In fact, a number of proposals to reorganize teaching have been made over the last decade. Most attempt to increase teachers’ participation in educational decision making, their collegial interaction, or both. There are good reasons to believe that these kinds of changes will improve teachers’ commitment and either enhance their knowledge or allow them to use it better. However, the basic ideas of participation and collegiality also have important flaws that must be addressed.

**Participatory reforms**

The traditional distribution of influence in schools gives teachers substantial autonomy in the classroom but limited input to decisions made at the school or district level. The image of a profession as a self-regulating body of experts suggests that giving teachers more influence will substantially improve the quality of education (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Conley, 1991). Proposed changes in governance give teachers more influence over out-of-class decisions affecting such issues as curriculum, budget, and personnel. They go beyond past practices of delegating some decisions to departments or creating ad hoc committees.

One of the most popular approaches to increasing teacher participation is site-based management, where many decisions previously made at the district level are delegated to the school. When these decisions are not monopolized by the principal but made by a committee including the principal, teachers, and perhaps students and/or parents, and when the authority of teachers within such a committee is high, teachers become more empowered. There have been numerous studies of this phenomenon in the last few years (e.g., Carnoy & McDonnell, 1987; Weiss & Cambone, 1994; Wohlstetter et al., 1994). Although there have been fewer studies of such cases, teachers can also influence district decisions through district-established procedures or those negotiated with a union.

Empirically, teachers experience a lack of participation—especially with such issues as curriculum, grading, discipline policy, and reporting procedures—as a deficit, and that deficit has been linked to reduced commitment (Bacharach, Bamberger, Conley, & Bauer, 1990). Participation can contribute to commitment in a number of ways. When teachers have genuine in uence over a decision, their sense of autonomy increases, and they are likely to take more responsibility for that decision. The process leading up to the decision helps teachers understand the rationale behind it, so their purposes and those of
administrators become better aligned. The course of action thus becomes more meaningful to teachers. Moreover, by providing information about how decisions fit with existing practices and potential barriers to new courses of action, teachers increase the fit with the current context and the likelihood that necessary resources are provided. Thus the decision becomes more realistic and feasible. In effect, participation has the social psychological effect of increasing teachers’ ownership of the decision while allowing them to use their knowledge in another context. Teachers’ substantive input combined with the knowledge they bring permits a technically better outcome that should enhance their work (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Whether participation has the effects expected will depend in part on the nature of the decision (e.g., classroom, school, or district) and the particular microcommitments of interest. That is, certain participation experiences will affect some commitments but not others.

**Rank differentiation and collegiality**

A second set of reforms introduces rank differentiation to teaching. Included are career ladders and mentor teacher programs. The career ladder proposal of The Holmes Group and Carnegie Commission called for three ranks: novice, professional, and lead teachers. Novices would have reduced responsibility and receive extensive support and assistance from lead teachers. Professional teachers would operate much like most teachers today. Lead teachers would continue to teach but also take responsibility for mentoring novices, training and coaching all staff, developing curriculum, devising testing and measurement systems, conducting action research, and even contributing to building management (Sedlak, 1987).

Although the term career ladder became quite popular and was adopted by several states, few systems encompass the differentiation of rank, remuneration, and responsibility encompassed by the original proposals. Some are little more than merit pay under a different label. Others, such as Utah’s and Arizona’s, allow for real role differentiation so that teachers can interact with and offer support or assistance to colleagues. These programs are particularly difficult to describe because they allow for local program development so that important rewards, selection criteria, and role responsibilities vary from district to district (Brandt, 1990).

Mentor programs through which experienced teachers offer advice or assistance to beginners also permit such interaction and support. California’s program paid mentors $4,000 a year for special projects that were expected to feature giving help to new teachers. Connecticut’s system offered more structure, in that mentors were expected to help teachers prepare to pass 15 competency criteria required for certification. Like career ladders, these programs include differentiation of ranks and build interaction among teachers, but the emphasis on helping beginners and the limited responsibility of mentors often makes them more palatable to regular teachers (Little, 1990a).
These programs are expected to have a number of benefits. By staging teachers’ careers, they presumably provide incentives for continued professional development through the life cycle. Some career ladders offer the opportunity for increased participation for teachers with higher ranks. However, the focus of attention here is on the attempt to increase interaction and collegiality among teachers. Traditionally, teachers are isolated in their classrooms. They spend much more time talking to students than to colleagues; occupational norms reinforce organizationally enforced privacy. Whatever talk goes on among teachers tends to be social rather than discussion of the craft of teaching. This isolation limits professional group control; colleagues cannot monitor and enforce standards when they do not know what others are doing. In addition, it is difficult to develop a common professional language or conceptual base without sharing (Darling-Hammond, 1989; Little, 1990b).

It has been argued that more collegial interaction among teachers around issues of teaching should make teachers more knowledgeable and effective. In principle, collaborative action could range from the casual swapping of stories through providing advice and sharing materials to joint work where some aspects of actual instruction are done together. The latter could include team teaching with more than one teacher in the same classroom, but it could also include certain forms of communal planning and curriculum development. Advice giving and sharing can occur spontaneously where a school culture promotes interaction, but formal mentor-teacher and career ladder programs should enhance such interaction (Little, 1990b).

Collegial interaction significantly facilitates program implementation. It helps teachers better understand what is expected of them and how to accomplish it (Fullan, 1991). More generally, at least through informal advice giving and sharing, collegiality is indirectly related to both teacher commitment and student learning. When a school’s staff has common goals, sharing increases teachers’ opportunities to enhance their knowledge by learning from each other. Increased learning opportunities for teachers are associated with both increased student achievement and teacher commitment. The arguments here are fairly complex and especially interesting because they link knowledge and commitment. To simplify, collaboration can provide an opportunity for teachers to learn from each other. As a result, their knowledge increases so they are better prepared to face the challenges of teaching. This preparation pays off directly in increased student learning. Where teachers get feedback to this effect (and feedback from their peers about their own competence), they become more committed to their work (Newmann, Rutter, & Smith, 1989; Rosenholtz, 1989; Shulman, 1989).

**Problems with the proposals**

Studies and evaluations of these changes are beginning to appear; as often happens, ideas that appeared extremely promising in embryo turn out to have problems in practice. Some of these problems come from the different cultures of
adapting new ideas to current practice. For instance, efforts to promote collegiality run up against strong norms of privacy and equality among teachers. To offer advice is often viewed as putting oneself above others, whereas asking for advice is seen as a sign of weakness. Sharing practice information creates the risk of becoming indebted to or criticized by others who are more skillful or simply have different definitions of good teaching (Little, 1990b).

The heavy emphasis on differences of rank in programs that build collegiality add to the problem. Where special positions are distributed by administrators, there is a tendency to hoard ideas to compete more effectively for scarce rewards. Then the selection process actually works against collegiality. Where teachers play a major role in selection, they may use their power to chastise those who appear more ambitious than others by giving them low evaluations. Even after positions are obtained, teachers who have not taken on additional responsibilities may ridicule those who have as rate busters (Firestone & Bader, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1987).

Participation is also problematic. In spite of rhetoric about increasing teacher influence not reducing that of administrators, many view increased authority of formal subordinates as a threat. Even those who do not may fail to understand the implications of true sharing of influence; hence the apocryphal story about the superintendent who says “we are going to have site-based management, and we are going to do it my way.” Teachers may become embittered when opportunities to make decisions they thought were offered do not materialize. Even when opportunities to share influence prove genuine, the time involved often proves substantial. School- and district-level decision making competes with classroom demands, so teachers either become exhausted or let something slip. Moreover, when site-based management is mandated, teachers often find that the threats to existing relationships with administrators outweigh anticipated gains (Corbett, Dawson, & Firestone, 1984; Firestone & Bader, 1992).

Little (1990b) raises an even more fundamental problem when she asks,

Bluntly put, do we have in teachers’ collaborative work the creative development of well-informed choices or the mutual reinforcement of poorly informed habit? Does teachers’ time together advance the understanding and imagination they bring to their work or do teachers merely confirm one another in present practice?

(p. 525)

There is considerable evidence that most teachers do not know how to teach in the way suggested by research on cognitive science and teacher thinking. Moreover, the commitments that must go with that knowledge may also be absent in many instances. This becomes apparent from studies of the knowledge and norms of teachers. In many cases, much of that knowledge is tacit, unarticulated. Teachers often cannot represent what they know, nor can they reflect on the conditions under which particular strategies or tactics are most appropriate.
In some cases, norms of discourse actively prohibit reference to theory or any experience outside the classroom (Hargreaves, 1984; Little, 1990b).

Moreover, the typical pattern of educational practice is quite different from that recommended by cognitive scientists. Cuban (1984) describes a pattern of teacher-dominated classrooms that features whole-group instruction, teacher monopolization of classroom talk, reduced student movement, and the prevalence of worksheets and short exercises, a pattern that has persisted with only minor variations since before the turn of the century. Within this pattern, teachers appear to emphasize getting the right answer. They do not need to know much about how students do so and may not be able to model more complex cognitive capacities. This pattern is robust. It persists in spite of several previous aggressive efforts to propagate educational approaches similar to those advocated by researchers on teacher thinking (Cuban, 1984).

At the high school level, teacher-centered instruction frequently takes the form of a bargain or treaty between teachers and students. In this bargain, teachers reduce the intellectual demands they make on students in return for more pleasant social relations and a more orderly classroom. Often, teachers and students agree to engage in learning of ritualistic school knowledge that is not particularly relevant to the world around them, but is safer or easier for all concerned. Although this pattern may be more obvious in urban schools, it appears in schools teaching students of all races and classes (McNeil, 1988; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985; Sedlak, Wheeler, Pullin, & Cusick, 1986).

There are several possible explanations for the patterns noted here. First, insofar as teachers teach the way they were taught as students, they simply lack familiarity with alternative approaches and are unable to execute them. Careful observation of efforts to implement more cognitively demanding approaches to instruction through both local restructuring and state policy reveal that teachers who think they are implementing new approaches substantially misunderstand what is expected of them and how to achieve those ends. Their knowledge of how to teach and definitions of appropriate teaching behavior are thoroughly at odds with these changes (Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis [EEPA], 1990; McCarthey & Peterson, 1991).

Second, teacher-centered instruction and bargains may be a functional response to current organizational arrangements. Teachers must both maintain order and help students learn the curriculum. The prevailing system of age grading, self-contained classrooms, class sizes of over 25, and methods of accountability for student learning may create an imbalance in favor of maintaining order. Cognitively based, active instruction can be extremely difficult under these conditions; it may require more energy than most teachers are willing to commit, create too many problems, and offer too few rewards. Thus, many teachers may give order precedence over learning, not because of ignorance but because of a combination of physical constraints, their own values, and the values of those around them (Carter & Doyle, 1987; Cuban, 1984).

Beyond the typical schools are those most often found in urban settings,
where a combination of lack of administrative support and feedback from stu-
dents create times when, as one teacher explains, “you think you’re really
cooking and [students] say, ‘can I go to the bathroom?’ When you look into
their eyes and you can see clear out of the backs of their heads” (Firestone &
Rosenblum, 1988, p. 285; see also Metz, 1986). In these situations, teachers
become extremely alienated. To preserve their professional self-respect, some
teachers blame poor performance entirely on students and administrators and
refuse to take any responsibility for the results of their work. In fact, there may
be reason for some of these teacher views; Anyon (1994) graphically describes
the absurdity of focusing on professional development in dysfunctional urban
schools in dysfunctional neighborhoods, where just getting through the day
becomes a major challenge. Under these conditions of extreme disorder and
alienation, it may be futile to think about complex modes of teacher thinking or
active forms of student learning until more fundamental problems are solved.

Most teachers’ knowledge and values differ substantially from those congru-
ent with approaches to teaching that reinforce higher-order thinking, but what
teachers know and believe may be quite functional for the current way that
schools are organized. These circumstances limit the benefits to be expected
from both participation and collegiality. When teachers do not understand
alternative models of teaching, they will not use greater influence to create con-
ditions that support those models. As an example, effective schools programs
begun in the early 1980s often used a team of teachers and the principal to plan
improvements. In a substantial number of programs, the focus of these group
deliberations was on improving discipline and the physical plant. It was difficult
to get them to address issues more directly related to curriculum and
instruction.¹

Nor will collegial interaction allow teachers to share knowledge they do not
have. The knowledge that Rosenholtz’s collegial teachers shared among them-
selves frequently consisted of particular techniques to teach a specific concept or
work with one individual within the existing framework of educational practice
and goals. In a recent case study of a career ladder that successfully increased
both collegial interaction and teacher influence within the district, a great deal of
effort went into developing new curriculum. Examination of the products that
resulted from that work show serious efforts to improve teaching, but within the
currently typical model of instruction. Typical improvements included a new
Advanced Placement course, special programs for at-risk youth, and modifica-
tions of the way elementary art and music were taught. Although classroom
observations were not conducted, there was little reason to believe that major
changes took place (Firestone & Bader, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1989).

Toward a more comprehensive agenda

Research on teacher cognition suggests that professionalized teachers use understandings that are not now typical, to teach in ways that are not currently preva-
ent, to help students construct knowledge that is deeper and more interconnected than is now usually the case. Organizational reforms such as participation and collegiality can facilitate this professionalizing agenda. Such changes have motivational value; they help teachers share what they know; and they help ensure that teachers will operate in situations that facilitate their instructional efforts. These reforms help teachers reach their current images of appropriate pedagogical practice and even bring about new images of practice. They are secondary to changing how teachers teach, but they remain crucial. That is, changing organizational arrangements without helping teachers to become more knowledgeable is not likely to lead to great change. Yet, teachers are not likely to become more knowledgeable without the motivation to do so.

**Teachers’ knowledge and commitments**

A minority of teachers are probably already committed to facilitating the active learning advocated by cognitive science, which builds from what students already know. To most teachers, however, these ideas are likely to be foreign. These ideas were not part of how these teachers were taught as students or what they learned in college or graduate school. Three changes in their knowledge and commitments are especially crucial.

- Teachers will need different images of the good student. It is not enough for students to be cooperative and produce the right answers. They must become self-motivated learners who are curious and able to regulate their own learning. They will be more active (and noisy) than current students and more likely to challenge revealed authority if only to understand the evidence and reasoning behind conventional knowledge.

- Teachers will have to know more about teaching the curriculum. In many cases, they will need a better grasp of the content they teach in order to address topics adequately. They will have to understand how students learn what they teach and how to diagnose students’ existing comprehension structures. They will also need the pedagogical content knowledge to bridge the gap between the curriculum to be taught and students’ current knowledge (Shulman, 1987; Wilson et al., 1987).

- Teachers must understand approaches to classroom management that facilitate students’ active involvement in new learning experiences and are still orderly enough to allow groups to operate in limited space (Carter & Doyle, 1987).

Because these ideas are not yet widely accepted among teachers, they will have to come from the outside. Most teachers are not well-placed to learn about these ideas or share them with others. Administrators and district staff, who have better access to such knowledge, will have to play a major role. Where they are present, lead teachers may also contribute. If these ideas are to catch hold with
more than a minority of teachers, it will be necessary to turn to some of the large-scale staff development approaches that have been developed for upgrading the knowledge of whole schools. Most of these model with teachers the kind of active learning that is suggested for students. These include the Gheens Academy in Louisville, Kentucky, and the Schenley High School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where large numbers of teachers have had access to new learning opportunities. Professional development schools will also be important insofar as they include in-service for current teachers as well as contributions to preservice preparation (The Holmes Group, 1990; Wallace, Young, Johnston, LeMahieu, & Bickell, 1984). State-supported professional development networks, such as the California Subject Matter Projects may also prove important (Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992).

One dilemma to be faced here is that it is important for all teachers to be introduced to these ideas. However, these ideas cannot be mandated because of what we know about the importance of both teacher participation and autonomy and the need for active learning. If these ideas are to be widespread, it is important for district administrators to indicate that the ideas have top priority through (a) their own involvement in professional development activities (as both participants and facilitator); (b) the allocation of resources to the task; and (c) the creation of opportunities for teachers to discuss what they are learning and to act and reflect on their efforts (Corbett & Wilson, 1992).

Organizational arrangements

Two sets of organizational arrangements will have to be addressed: those that constrain teachers’ opportunities to use their knowledge to promote active student learning and those that undermine their commitment. Teachers may know correctly that active learning is extremely difficult in egg-crate schools where individual teachers work with classes of 25 to 35 students grouped by age and often by ability. The high school practice of moving students among courses every 45 to 55 minutes adds even further constraints. Elmore (1991) suggests that changing teaching practice will require modification in four regularities of schools: how students are grouped for instruction, how teachers’ work is defined with respect to groups of students, how content is allocated to time, and how students are assessed. He suggests that these regularities are like a genetic code that makes schools recognizable and constrains how the activities of teachers and students can be organized. Only certain approaches to teaching are possible within specific arrangements, and some of those will be easier than others. Thus, an elementary teacher can use activity centers in a regular classroom, but it is extremely difficult (Elmore, 1991).

One difficulty for reformers is that when one moves away from the conventional structure, it is not clear what range of options exists, and whether some more effectively promote active learning and flexible teaching for higher-order thinking than others. It does appear that teachers trying to adopt these ideas find
constraining the current age-grade grouping structure, the division of content into discrete topic areas, and—especially where the stakes are high—conventional approaches to assessment. Some efforts to restructure schools around the country are experimenting with more flexible grouping arrangements, but it will be some time before we know a great deal about which ones are preferable. At this point, the experimentation itself is important and should be expanded.

More is known about the factors that affect teacher commitment, an important issue if—as it appears—these new approaches to teaching require educators to work consistently harder. To simplify a great deal of literature, these factors can be divided into those that will require more money and those that can be provided by administrators within existing parameters. The financial issues include time, salary, and materials. The absence of free periods for teachers is a recurring barrier to staff development, as are the implementation of new practices and teacher participation in decision making. Buying teacher time can facilitate these activities. Moreover, new approaches to active learning are likely to require more than current levels of teacher planning and preparation. Right now the amount of time devoted to planning varies greatly from teacher to teacher (Corcoran, 1990; Firestone & Bader, 1992; Hansen & Corcoran, 1989; McLaughlin, Talbert, & Bascia, 1990).

Salary is intimately related to professionalization. One reason teachers want to become professional is to increase their salaries. Salaries also help the field retain the knowledgeable people needed to professionalize it. Low salaries are an important reason why teachers leave the occupation, and higher salaries contribute to the retention of the more academically talented teachers needed to implement these new instructional strategies. Treating time separately from salary raises questions about whether it is more effective to buy more time for teachers to increase their income or to raise their salary with the expectation that their working year and day will be routinely longer than that of students. However one addresses the issue, it is clear that teachers work fewer days and hours per year than most professionals. It is reasonable to link increased salary to the expectation that teachers put in more time. Finally, especially in urban schools, the absence of necessary books and materials can be a significant impediment to teaching (Corcoran, 1990).

Administrative contributions come through maintaining an orderly environment, providing additional support, and respecting teachers. Generally, teachers expect teachers to maintain an orderly environment in a building so they can concentrate on their own teaching (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988). The meaning of order in a school where students’ active construction of knowledge is the norm has not yet been fully worked out. Although it probably does not mean empty hallways (students may have to move into hallways to work on projects), silent classrooms, and students always under direct teacher supervision, it certainly does not mean a setting where students or adults feel unsafe. Given the typical space use of most American schools, there will also have to be some adjustment so that various groups of active learners do not disrupt each others’
work. Administrators are likely to be involved in negotiating the new meaning of order in schools characterized by active learning. The major responsibility for maintaining an environment conducive to learning in the public spaces between classrooms is likely to fall to administrators.

Teachers also expect that administrators will support them by trouble shooting on special problems and protecting them from bureaucratic and parental interference. Finally, teachers are often discouraged by what they see as a lack of respect that is apparent in informal interactions with administrators, isolation from those administrators, and failure to recognize (even informally) good performance (Corcoran, 1990, Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988; Louis, 1991).

Conclusions and questions

The image of the professional teacher that is developing through the cognitive and organizational research on teaching is of an individual who is committed to helping all children understand more challenging content. To meet this objective, professional teachers must be more knowledgeable about their subjects and their students and about how to make the connection between the former and the latter. A substantial body of research is helping to clarify what this knowledge is, but that work could be expanded by considering as well the microcommitments of expert teachers. It is already becoming clear that knowledgeable teachers will use approaches that move away from the adult-centered pedagogy that dominates American schools today; such approaches may require substantially more effort than the bargains that many teachers now strike with their students.

Recommendations to make schools more professional workplaces by increasing teacher collegial interaction and participation in decision making are important, but they only address part of the agenda for professionalizing teaching. These recommendations make inadequate assumptions about teachers' present knowledge and only address relationships among adults, not those between teachers and children.

A more complete agenda will include several additional elements. Provision must be made to improve the training, recruitment, and selection of new teachers, an issue to which much attention is currently being given. More attention, however, must be given to upgrading the knowledge and changing the commitments of current teachers. In addition, it is necessary to attend to the regularities of schooling that affect the joint assignment of teachers, students, and content and the assessment of student progress. Finally, it is important to address some more mundane aspects of school organization having to do with time for planning and interaction, salaries, material, discipline, support, and respect for teachers.

Juxtaposition of the cognitive and organizational literature raises a number of theoretical and practical issues. Perhaps the big theoretical question is how to synthesize these two literatures into a more coherent theory of schooling and
school administration. The premise that organizational technology should determine organizational design suggests that a major effort is needed to deduce principles of school structure and operation from new research on student learning; the cognitive literature should be in the driver’s seat. Rowan (1990, 1995) has taken important steps in trying to link these literatures, and too few are following his lead. Nonetheless, there are likely to be a number of problems with a simplistic cognitive-technological determinism. For instance, in people-processing organizations such as schools, technologies are socially constructed and therefore malleable. Although cognitive approaches dominate thinking about teaching for the moment, there is a strong body of process-product research suggesting a rather different approach to instruction from what comes out of cognitive science research and constructivism (see Rosenshine, 1983). As far as I can tell, the process-product research was never “disproven;” it seems to have gone out of style for esthetic and normative reasons that to my knowledge have not been clarified. Thus the selection of a theory of instruction to guide organizational design is problematic and should not be made casually although the intellectual winds are clearly blowing toward constructivism and active learning at the moment.  

Moreover, instructional strategy and organizational structure may turn out to be loosely coupled, in that organizational form may not clearly preclude or facilitate certain approaches to teaching and learning. Observers of current restructuring efforts seem to disagree as to whether the current way of organizing schools really precludes significant instructional change (compare Prestine & Bowen, 1993, with Peterson, McCarthey, & Elmore, in press). Moreover, the technology problem of schools is more than cognitive; there are also motivational dimensions. My discussion of teacher commitment raises the problem of obtaining the cooperation of staff; the more challenging problem may be getting student concurrence. Although there are indications that more active approaches to student learning are more intrinsically motivating than teacher-centered instruction, it remains to be seen what range of students will take to these new approaches. 

In addition, classical analyses of organizational structure suggest that it mediates between technology and environment. If, as Thompson (1967) suggests, organizations buffer their technologies from an uncertain environment, structures will have to reflect these external uncertainties. In institutionalized sectors such as education, organizational forms are likely to be adopted as much for their cultural and political relevance as for their technological rationality (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991). Thus the task of combining cognitive research with organizational studies to rethink how schools should be redesigned is extremely challenging. 

At a more practical level, this analysis raises questions about the contribution of administrators to the professionalization of teachers. As schools and districts are presently constituted, it is clear that administrators can play a major role by arranging for and emphasizing the importance of appropriate staff development,
obtaining resources, and supporting teachers in a variety of ways. On the other hand, schools and districts now assume a hierarchical relationship between teachers and administrators that is not easily reconciled with professional status for the former. In particular, many administrators feel threatened by efforts to expand teachers’ influence through greater participation.

In fact, there are two important questions about administrators. First, what should be the division of labor in schools designed to facilitate knowledgeable professional teachers—how should present administrative functions be assigned? Because structure should follow in large part from technology (Mintzberg, 1983), the current arrangement is likely to change. Second, how can administrators help schools and districts move from the present configuration to one more conducive to professional teaching, and what will motivate them to do so?

Although these and a number of other questions need to be addressed, it is fairly clear that attending to the knowledge base of teachers without considering organizational arrangements is likely to lead to a situation where new ideas are only adopted by a minority of practitioners and are weakly institutionalized. However, changing organizational arrangements without a clear sense of what teaching and learning should be like can lead to goal displacement, where these arrangements become ends in themselves and do not contribute to the educational outcomes they are expected to produce. An adequate program to professionalize teaching must address both sides of the coin.

Notes

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1 For the description of effective schools programs, I draw upon private conversations with Thomas Corcoran, former director of the Research for Better Schools program, and Matthew Miles, who did a national survey of such programs.

2 I do not have normative problems with this constructivist revolution. I find both the vision of what students should learn and the ideas of instructional processes embedded in it very attractive. I do, however, question the process by which the current cognitive view of student learning and teaching work has taken the field.

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Images of Teaching and Proposals for Reform


89


A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Kenneth Leithwood and Daniel L. Duke

Educational administration scholars have devoted considerable time over this century trying to understand school leadership and leaders. They have done so for several reasons. Some assumed that a concept of leadership would be of assistance to them in describing the behavior of individuals in the roles of leaders. Others apparently were prompted to conceptualize leadership in ways that could help explain school outcomes or effects. Still others seemed intent on developing concepts of leadership for such prescriptive purposes as guiding the preparation of future administrators or the further education of incumbent administrators.

This chapter explores two major sources of insight about school leadership. Concepts of leadership found in the educational literature are the first source of insight. In order to facilitate the empirical study of schools as organizations, school leaders, and school effects, a number of scholars have tried either to conceptualize leadership in general and school leadership in particular or they have endorsed an already existing concept of leadership. To appreciate work of this kind, the next section of this chapter describes the results of a review of all articles dealing with leadership in four major educational administration journals over approximately the past decade. These results suggest that six major categories of leadership dominate contemporary writing about school leadership.

A second major source of insight about school leadership, explored in the third section of this chapter, is the historical and theoretical sources to which alternative conceptions of school leadership appeal for their authority. These sources—tradition, religion, and fields of inquiry such as psychology, sociology, social psychology, and philosophy—help to explain why each leadership concept at some point during the century has had a dominant influence on both the understanding and practice of school leaders. They also explain why that dominance eventually was overshadowed by an alternative. Educational leaders
have both changed and expanded the number of such sources as the century unfolded in response to changing social forces impinging on schools.

It is important to be clear at the outset that what has been learned about leadership in schools over the century has not depended on any clear, agreed-upon definition of the concept, as essential as this would seem at first glance. Indeed, Yukl argues that:

It is neither feasible nor desirable at this point in the development of the discipline to attempt to resolve the controversies over the appropriate definition of leadership. Like all constructs in social sciences, the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no correct definition.

(1994, p. 4–5)

This observation, echoed by other respected students of leadership (Bennis, 1959; Burns, 1978; Bass, 1981), might be viewed as casting a pall over the central purpose of this chapter. Clark and Clark, for example, argue that you cannot talk about leaders with anyone until you agree on what you are talking about. That requires a definition of leadership and a criterion for leadership acts that can be agreed on (1990, p. 20). In the same vein, Rost begins his analysis of leadership and leadership literature in non-school organizations by arguing that lack of attention to definition has been one of the main impediments to progress in the field. Indeed, he notes that over 60 percent of the authors who have written on leadership since about 1910 did not define leadership in their works (1991, p. 6).

One wonders how so many smart people could have overlooked such an obvious issue. Or did they? More likely, we think, they were at least in implicit agreement with Lofti Zadeh, the father of fuzzy logic, who framed the Law of Incompatibility: As complexity rises, precise statements lose meaning and meaningful statements lose precision (McNeil & Frieberger, 1993, p. 43). As these authors go on to point out, the Law of Incompatibility captures a feature common to most complex disciplines, that is, they teem with complex concepts. Responding to worries over the lack of precision in defining the meaning of strategic management, for example, Thomas and Pruett (1993) ask: “how much more precise are economists when they discuss ‘innovation’ or ‘regulation,’ or psychologists when they talk about ‘intelligence’?” Whereas simple concepts are typically open to crisp definition, complex concepts are usually defined vaguely. Persevering on the development of a precise definition of a complex concept like leadership is likely to be counterproductive, following this line of reasoning.

Although Yukl pointed to lack of consensus about the precise meaning of leadership, he did discern a core of agreement across definitions very similar to what Bass (1981) detected a decade earlier. “Most definitions of leadership,” Yukl claimed, “reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or
organization” (1994, p 3). In uence then seems to be a necessary part of most conceptions of leadership. It suggests, as Yukl does, that most of the variation in leadership concepts, types, or models might be accounted for by differences in who exerts in uence, how in uence is exerted, the purpose for the exercise of in uence, and its outcomes. In the conclusion to this chapter, we begin to develop a relational conception leadership by identifying the “elements” potentially interacting to generate in uence and the different types of in uence that may be generated.

**Models of contemporary leadership practice**

Six distinctly different models or approaches to leadership are described in this section. These models were identified through analyses of a representative sample of contemporary literature concerning leadership in schools, a sample intended to reflect the result of this century’s quest. The sample consisted of all feature length articles concerned with leadership published in four representative English-language educational administration journals. These journals were reviewed at least as far back as 1988, the year in which the *Handbook of Research in Educational Administration* (Boyan, 1988) was published. The chapter in that text by Immegart entitled “Leadership and Leader Behavior” provided a point of departure for the present chapter.

Two of the four journals selected for review in this section, *Educational Administration Quarterly* (EAQ), and the *Journal of School Leadership* (JSL), publish work largely from North America. Papers in the *Journal of Educational Administration* (JEA) reflect perspectives from Australia, New Zealand, and other countries, as well as North America. *Educational Management and Administration* (EMA) primarily reflects contemporary thought on leadership in the United Kingdom, but some other countries as well. Because of the reputations of each of these journals and the relatively broad theoretical perspectives they reflect collectively, it seems likely that most significant contemporary conceptions of leadership would find some expression in their contents.

Table 1 notes the total number of volumes reviewed in the case of each of the four journals and the total number of articles included in each volume. Approximately eight volumes were reviewed for each journal, several less in the case of JSL because it was not established until 1991, and several more in the case of EMA so as to balance the almost exclusively North American perspectives reflected in EAQ and JSL.

Table 1 also shows how many articles were concerned directly or indirectly with leadership and were therefore used as the basis for helping answer the questions of interest in this section of the chapter. These articles, totaling 121, were of several types, including descriptions of leadership theories, reviews of literature, empirical reports, and critical analyses.

Table 2 lists 20 different leadership models or concepts explicitly mentioned in the 121 articles (the category label “participative” was not explicitly
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>EAQ1 Total articles</th>
<th>EAQ1 Leadership articles</th>
<th>JSL2 Total articles</th>
<th>JSL2 Leadership articles</th>
<th>JEA3 Total articles</th>
<th>JEA3 Leadership articles</th>
<th>EMA4 Total articles</th>
<th>EMA4 Leadership articles</th>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
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<td>1986</td>
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<td>1987</td>
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<td>1988</td>
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<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 + (2 issues missing)</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
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<td>1994</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes
1. Educational Administration Quarterly
2. Journal of School Leadership
3. Journal of Educational Administration
4. Educational Management and Administration
mentioned). We applied it as a category label to include “group,” “shared,” and “teacher,” leadership). Noted, as well, are the number of articles from each journal, and the total number of articles from all four journals mentioning each concept. Based on Table 2, the three most frequently mentioned conceptions (versus categories) of leadership over the past decade were instructional leadership (13 mentions), transformational leadership (11), and contingent/leadership styles (9). Instructional leadership appeared almost exclusively in the North American journals or in papers written by North Americans published in the non-North American journals. Although most often mentioned in North American journals, all four journals also contained papers about transformational leadership. Mention of leadership styles was distributed across the journals. The next most frequently mentioned leadership concepts were moral leadership (8), managerial leadership (8), and cultural leadership (6). The remaining 14 leadership concepts were found in five or fewer articles. Some articles explicitly

Table 2  Categories and concepts of educational leadership mentioned in four journals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership category and concept¹</th>
<th>Journals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EAQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Instructional</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Transformational</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charismatic</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>visionary</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cultural</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>empowering</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Moral</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democratic</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>normative-instrumental</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>symbolic</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Participative</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>group</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>shared</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Managerial/Strategic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organizational</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Contingency/Styles</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problem solving</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>craft/reflective</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Explicit Concept</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note

¹ The number of articles listed for each “category” (such as transformational or moral) refers to the number of articles that explicitly used the category label. Subcategory citations are independent. For example, charismatic leadership was the explicit focus of one article (in EML) and this is in addition to the 11 articles explicitly concerned with transformational leadership, the superordinate leadership concept.
discussed as many as three or four such concepts (such as Cusack, 1993; Walker, 1989; and Gronn, 1996). This is why the number of mentions of leadership concepts exceeds the total number of articles reviewed.

In the case of 54 articles, the focus was on leadership but no attempt was made to label leadership or to conceptualize it as a particular form of leadership. Some of these articles supported multiple perspectives on leadership, while others treated leadership as a generally understood phenomenon without specific discussion of its meaning. There were also many instances in which an implicit leadership concept was evident, such as Hayes’ (1995) study of collaborative relationships (or “shared leadership”) in a British primary school, and Goldring’s (1990) examination of principals’ boundary spanning activities (or “organizational leadership”).

Finally, as is also evident in Table 2, each of the 20 separate leadership concepts has been assigned to one of six broad categories. These categories cluster together leadership concepts sharing the same primary focus and key assumptions. The remainder of this section describes the central focus and assumptions of each of these categories and summarizes what the review articles had to say about each. Where one was available, a relatively well-developed exemplar of each leadership category also is described as a means of further clarifying the features of each leadership category. The sources of these exemplars are not confined to articles included in the four journals.

**Instructional leadership**

This concept of leadership was mentioned in 13 of the 121 articles selected for review. Instructional leadership, a single, separate category, typically focuses on the behaviors of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students. Many versions of this form of leadership focus additionally on other organizational variables (such as school culture) that are believed to have important consequences for such teacher behavior. This has led Sheppard (1996) to distinguish between “narrow” and “broad” views of instructional leadership. Most conceptions of instructional leadership allocate authority and influence to formal administrative roles (usually the principal), assuming as well considerable influence through expert knowledge on the part of those occupying such roles.

Lack of explicit descriptions of instructional leadership (Foster, 1986) makes it difficult to assess the extent to which such leadership means the same thing to all those writing about it. Geltner and Shelton (1991) modified the term, referring to “strategic instructional leadership,” but offering no notion of what non-strategic instructional leadership might mean. Stallhammar (1994) used the term “pedagogical leadership.” Kleine-Kracht (1993) differentiated between “direct” and “indirect” instructional leadership, noting that principals alone cannot fulfill all of a school’s need for instructional leadership. Others argued that original beliefs concerning the principal as the primary or most important instructional
leader required rethinking. Davidson (1992), for example, argued for the value of teachers serving as instructional leaders, while Floden et al. (1988) focused on district-level instructional leadership. Achilles (1992) challenged the idea that instructional leadership (or any form of leadership for that matter) was necessarily a substitute for capable management.

Examples of extensively elaborated contemporary models of instructional leadership include Duke (1987), Smith & Andrews (1989), and Hallinger and his colleagues. In each case, this orientation to leadership is described along multiple dimensions, each of which incorporates a number of functions or behaviors, and evidence is reviewed concerning the effects of these practices on important outcomes. The most fully tested of these models, the one developed by Hallinger and his associates (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger & McCary, 1990, for example), consists of three broad categories of leadership practice: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting school climate. Associated with these broad categories of practice are a total of 21 more specific functions (such as supervising instruction). Using a teacher survey developed by Hallinger (1992), considerable empirical evidence has accumulated in support of the contribution these leadership practices and functions add to student achievement as well as other types of outcomes (see Sheppard, 1996, for a review of this evidence).

**Transformational leadership**

In addition to writing that refers explicitly to transformational leadership (11 articles), included as part of this leadership category are writings about charismatic, visionary, cultural, and empowering concepts of leadership. Mentioned in a total of 24 articles, the focus of this category of leadership is on the commitments and capacities of organizational members. Higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity. Authority and influence are not necessarily allocated to those occupying formal administrative positions, although much of the literature adopts their perspective. Rather, power is attributed by organization members to whomever is able to inspire their commitments to collective aspirations, and the desire for personal and collective mastery over the capacities needed to accomplish such aspirations.

In the literature reviewed for this study, the concept of transformational leadership was subject to varying interpretations. Kowalski and Oates (1993), for instance, accepted Burns’ (1978) original claim that transformational leadership represents the transcendence of self-interest by both leader and led. Dillard (1995, p. 560) preferred Bennis’ modified notion of “transformational leadership—the ability of a person to ‘reach the souls of others in a fashion which raises human consciousness, builds meanings, and inspires human intent that is the source of power.’ ” Leithwood (1994) used another modification of Burns, this one based on Bass’ (1985) two-factor theory in which transactional and
transformational leadership represent opposite ends of the leadership continuum. Bass maintained that the two actually can be complementary. Leithwood identified seven factors that make up transformational (and transactional) leadership. Hipp and Bredeson (1995), however, reduced the factors to five in their analysis of the relationship between leadership behaviors and teacher efficacy. Gronn (1996) noted the close relationship, in much current writing, between views of transformational and charismatic leadership, as well as the explicit omission of charisma from some current conceptions of transformational leadership.

The most fully developed model of transformational leadership in schools has been provided by Leithwood and his colleagues. This model conceptualizes such leadership along seven dimensions: building school vision, establishing school goals, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, modeling best practices and important organizational values, demonstrating high performance expectations, creating a productive school culture, and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (Leithwood, 1994). Each dimension is associated with more specific leadership practices and the problem-solving processes used by transformational leaders has also been described (Leithwood, Steinbach, & Raun, 1993).

A recent review of empirical research on transformational school leadership offers modest amounts of evidence for the contributions of such leadership to student participation in school with a variety of psychological teacher states mediating student learning (such as professional commitment, job satisfaction), as well as organization-level effects such as organizational learning, and the development of productive school climate (Leithwood, Tomlinson & Genge, 1996).

Downton’s (1973) study of rebel leadership is often cited as the forerunner of systematic inquiry about transformational leadership in non-school organizations. However, charisma, often considered an integral part of transformational leadership, has substantially more distant origins, typically attributed to Max Weber’s (1947) efforts almost five decades ago. James McGregor Burns’ (1978) prize-winning book first drew widespread attention to the concept of transformational leadership. Based on a sweeping historical analysis, Burns argued that most understandings of leadership not only overemphasized the role of power but held a faulty view of power, as well. There were, he claimed, two essential aspects of power—motives or purposes and resources—each possessed not only by those exercising leadership but also by those experiencing it. The essence of leadership is to be found in relationships between motives, resources, leaders, and followers: “the most powerful in uences consist of deeply human relationships in which two or more persons engage with one another” (p. 11). Burns’ distinction between transactional and transformational types of leadership hinges on this appreciation of power-as-relationships.

In contrast to transformational leadership, transactional leadership occurs when one person takes initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of exchanging valued things (economic, political, or psychological “things,” for example). Each person in the exchange understands that she or he brings related
motives to the bargaining process and that these motives can be advanced by maintaining that process. But because of the nature of the motives at issue, those involved are not bound together in any continuing, mutual pursuit of higher purposes. With this form of leadership, motives or purposes may well be met using the existing resources of those involved in the exchange. Neither purposes nor resources are changed, however.

Transformational leadership entails not only a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship, but an elevation of both—a change “for the better.” With respect to motives or purposes: “transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus has a transforming effect on both” (Burns, 1978, p. 20). This form of leadership, according to Burns’ view, also aims to enhance the resources of both leader and led by raising their levels of commitment to mutual purposes and by further developing their capacities for achieving those purposes.

Burns’ seminal work provided a solid conceptional footing on which to build the distinction between transactional and transformational types of leadership, and it also illustrated the meaning of these forms of leadership in many different contexts. Not to be found in this work, however, was a testable model of leadership practices or any empirical evidence of their effects. The prodigious efforts of Bass and his associates have responded to these limitations. Bass’ (1985) book *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations* provided an impressive compendium of survey research evidence about the effects of one model of transformational leadership. Among the most important features of this model are the dimensions of leadership practice it includes and the proposed relationships among these dimensions.

Referred to in more recent publications as the four I’s (Bass and Avolio, 1993, 1994), Bass and his colleagues consider transformational leadership to include idealized influence or charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In addition to these dimensions of transformational leadership, three dimensions define the meaning of transactional leadership: contingent reward, management-by-exception, and a laissez-faire or a “hands off” form of leadership.

Whereas Burns considered transformational and transactional practices as opposite ends of the leadership continuum (essentially more and less effective forms of leadership), Bass offers a quite different conception, a “two-factor theory” of leadership; transactional and transformational forms of leadership, in his view, build on one another (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Waldman, Bass & Yammarino, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1993; Howell & Avolio, 1991). Transactional practices foster ongoing work by attending to the basic needs of organizational members. Such practices do little to bring about changes in the organization, however. For this to occur, members must also experience transformational practices. Enhanced commitment and the extra effort usually required for change, it is claimed, are consequences of this experience.
Transactional practices were the traditional focus of attention for leadership theorists until the early 1980s. Disillusionment with the outcomes of that focus, however, gave rise to a number of alternative approaches, among them transformational leadership. These approaches are referred to collectively by Bryman (1992), Sims and Lorenzi (1992), and others as the “new leadership paradigm.” Empirical studies of transformational leadership, reflecting this pessimism with transactional practices, often give them minimum attention. This is the case with Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990), for example. Although Podsakoff and his associates adopted a quite limited conception of transactional leadership for their research, they offered arguably the most comprehensive set of transformational leadership dimensions available to that point, dimensions based on a synthesis of seven prior perspectives on transformational leadership.

Moral leadership

As a category, moral leadership includes those normative, political/democratic, and symbolic concepts of leadership mentioned in a total of 16 articles included in the review. During the 1990s, the normative dimension of leadership has been one of the fastest growing areas of leadership study (Duke, 1996). Those writing about moral leadership argue that values are a central part of all leadership and administrative practice (Bates, 1993; Evers & Lakomski, 1991; Greenfeld, 1991). Indeed, Hodgkinson, one of the best known proponents of this orientation to leadership, claims that “values constitute the essential problem of leadership . . . If there are no value conflicts then there is no need for leadership” (1991, p. 11). The focus of moral leadership is on the values and ethics of the leader, so authority and influence are to be derived from defensible conceptions of what is right or good. Nevertheless, much of the writing about moral leadership, as in the case of transformational leadership, adopts the perspective of those in formal administrative roles.

Many of those writing about moral leadership over the past decade take, as their point of departure, Herbert Simon’s claim that values have no place in administrative decision making as well as positivistic conceptions of knowledge assumed by the “Theory movement” in educational administration. Attempts to cast the study of administration in purely rational terms unconcerned with values are seen as dangerously misguided because, as Hodgkinson points out, “The intrusion of values into the decision-making process is not merely inevitable, it is the very substance of decision” (1978, p. 59).

The papers reviewed from the four journals illustrate quite different approaches to moral leadership. For example, Duignan and MacPherson (1993, p. 10), in discussing their concept of “educative leadership,” contended that leadership should be concerned with right and wrong, not attitudes, styles, or behaviors. William Greenfeld (1995) maintained that leadership entails five “role demands” or “situational imperatives,” including the moral, instructional, political, managerial, and social/interpersonal. Reitzug and Reeves (1992)
argued that cultural leadership involves defining, strengthening, and articulating values but warned that leaders may manipulate culture to further their own ends. Reitzug (1994) argued further that leadership is moral, but only under certain conditions. Lees (1995, p. 225) argued that leadership in a democratic society entails a moral imperative to "promote democracy, empowerment, and social justice."

Among the issues of greatest concern to those exploring moral perspectives on leadership is the nature of the values used by leaders in their decision making and how conflicts among values can be resolved. A brief synopsis of the well-developed positions of Hodgkinson, Evers and Lakomski, and Slater help illustrate the range of views on these issues evident in contemporary literature.

At the heart of Hodgkinson’s position on the nature of administrative values is an “analytic model of the value concept” (Hodgkinson, 1978, 1991). This model includes three categories of values, distinguished from one another by their adequacy in justifying administrative choices. In general, the model recommends that leaders choose higher over lower level values when confronted with value conflicts. Related to this general position, however, are refinements allowing for difficult cases to be addressed in authentic and morally responsible ways.

The least adequate set of values are “subrational” and encompass the leader’s self-justifying preferences, manifestations of feeling and emotion. More defensible are a set of “rational” values. Leaders using this set of values justify their choices based on either consensus among those effected, or an appeal to some future consequences of choice held to be desirable. The most defensible set of values on which to base decision making, according to this model, are “transrational.” No particular set of values is associated with this category. Rather, Hodgkinson refers to such values as having a metaphysical grounding: they are principles that “take the form of ethical codes, injunctions, or commandments . . . their common feature is that they are unverifiable by the techniques of science and cannot be justified by merely logical argument” (1991, p. 99).

Evers and Lakomski (1991) offer a thoughtful analysis of Hodgkinson’s position on moral leadership and go on to develop their own. A fully adequate description of their position is beyond the bounds of this chapter. Central to their position, however, is the claim (after the importance Dewey attributed to the virtues of problem solving as a means of improving the human condition) that “the basic normative framework for educational administrators is provided by the general requirement that decision and action should be, in the long term, educative; that the growth of knowledge be promoted” (1991, p. 186). Because administrative structures are not morally neutral, Evers and Lakomski advocate forms of educational leadership that enhance organizational learning. In these respects, the views of Evers and Lakomski are essentially similar to those of Willower (1994).

A third position on leaders’ values and how value conflicts are to be resolved is political in its origin. In addition to a concern for specific sets of values, this aspect of moral leadership focuses on the nature of the relationships among those within the organization and the distribution of power between stakeholders both...
inside and outside the organization. This form of leadership assumes that even though the formal organization may clearly specify power relationships, lines of communication, and procedures for carrying out the organization’s work, the informal organization may be quite different, as well as providing a more authentic explanation for organizational activity.

Forms of leadership referred to as “symbolic,” “democratic,” or “political” can equally well be placed in either moral or participative categories of leadership because the central argument for participation is justifiable by democratic theory. Slater (1994) illustrates this orientation to moral leadership. Because democracies value freedom, he argues, they are opposed to traditional sources of authority and encourage “fresh examination and scrutiny” (p. 98) of almost everything. But for reasons related to lack of time, energy, or capacity, this examination does not often happen and there is a tendency for majority opinion to prevail and for the meaningfulness of community values eventually to be eroded. Under such conditions the purpose of leadership is to correct the tendency to rely only on majority opinion “which in very large groups tends to be lowest common denominator” (p. 98). Leadership should also “help restore meaning and common purpose to daily life” (p. 99). School leaders, from this perspective, should be committed to the democratic ideal and work toward replicating that ideal in the life experiences of students in school organizations.

As Slater makes clear, political and symbolic versions of moral leadership value wide participation as a reflection of the society in which we live. Public institutions, such as schools, cannot be governed or administered in ways that violate democratic principles no matter how cumbersome some might think those forms of governance and administration to be.

Participative leadership

The term “participative leadership” was adopted from Yukl’s (1994) description to encompass a total of 10 articles concerned with “group,” “shared,” and “teacher” leadership. Participative leadership stresses the decision-making processes of the group. One school of thought within this category of leadership argues for such participation on the grounds that it will enhance organizational effectiveness. A second school rests its case for participation on democratic principles, such as those discussed above in relation to moral leadership. Additional reasons for participation emerge in the context of site-based management approaches to participatory leadership. In the case of this form of leadership, authority and influence are available potentially to any legitimate stakeholder in the school based on their expert knowledge, their democratic right to choose, and/or their critical role in implementing decisions.

A majority of the 10 articles associated participative leadership with enhanced organizational effectiveness. For example, evidence from Hayes’ (1995) study in a single primary school demonstrated that the head’s success in managing the government-driven change agenda depended on forging mutually
bene cial relations with all signi cant groups of internal and external stakehold-
ers. Johnston and Pickersgill (1992) as well as Vandenberghhe (1992) argued that
the substantially increased demands placed on school leaders by changing con-
texts and expectations could best (or only) be met by moving toward forms of
shared or team leadership. Citing such changes as increased complexity, uncer-
tainty, ambiguity, workload, and expectations for innovation, Murphy and
Hallinger (1992) and Hallinger (1992) conclude that school leaders will need to
adopt more participatory forms of leadership, forms of leadership that are more
consultative, open, and democratic and that involve teachers and parents much
more in school decision making.

Savery, Soutar, and Dyson (1992) illustrate approaches to participatory
leadership driven largely by arguments for democratic processes. The frame-
work for this study included seven categories of decision making (such as school
policy and student discipline), each of which incorporated from two to ve more
speci c decision categories. Teachers were asked to indicate their preferences
for five different types of participation in each decision category ranging from
the principal making the decision herself to staff deciding themselves. This
study began to illustrate what would be required to develop a fully speci ed
model of participatory leadership in a school, viewed from a democratic
perspective.

The centerpiece in a majority of the past decade’s school restructuring ini-
tiatives, site-based management (SBM) is arguably the most fully developed and
widely advocated conception of participatory leadership available. Murphy and
Beck (1995) suggest that SBM usually takes one of three forms; administrative-
controlled SBM, professional-controlled SBM, and community-controlled SBM.
Much less in evidence but still visible is a fourth type of SBM in which power is
exercised equally by school professionals, parents, and other community
members.

Administrative-controlled SBM is aimed at increasing accountability to the
central district or board of ce for the ef cient expenditure of resources on the
assumption that such ef ciencies will eventually pay off for students. These ef-
ciencies are to be realized by giving local school administrators greater authority
and in uence over such key decision areas as budget, personnel, and curriculum.
Advocates of this form of SBM reason that such authority, in combination with
the incentive to make the best use of resources, ought to get more of the
resources of the school into the direct service of students. To assist in accom-
plishing that objective, the principal may consult informally with teachers,
parents, students, or community representatives. Site councils are typically
established to advise the principal.

When teacher-controlled SBM is advocated, the goal is to make better use of
their knowledge in such key decision areas as budget, curriculum, and (occasion-
ally) personnel. Basic to this form of SBM is the assumption that profes-
sionals closest to the student have the most relevant knowledge for making such
decisions (Hess, 1991) and that full participation in the decision-making process
will increase their commitment to implementing whatever decisions are made. Participatory democracy, allowing employees greater decision-making power, is also presumed to lead to greater efficiency, effectiveness, and better outcomes (Clune & White, 1988; David, 1989; Mojkowski & Fleming, 1988). Site councils associated with this form of SBM typically have decision-making power and although many groups (parents, students, administration) are often represented, teachers have the largest proportion of members.

Increased accountability to parents and the community at large along with “consumer satisfaction” are the central purposes for establishing community-control forms of SBM (Lee, et al., 1993; Malen, Ogawa & Kranz, 1990; Wohlstetter, 1990; Wohlstetter & McCurdy, 1991; Wohlstetter & Mohrman, 1993). The basic assumption giving rise to this form of SBM is that the curriculum of the school ought to directly reflect the values and preferences of parents and the local community (Ornstein, 1983; Wohlstetter & Odden, 1992). School professionals, it is claimed, typically are not as responsive to such local values and preferences as they ought to be. Their responsiveness is greatly increased, however, when the authority to make decisions about curriculum, budget, and personnel is in the hands of the parent and other community constituents of the school. School councils in which parent and other community constituents have a majority of the membership are the primary instruments for the exercise of such authority.

Community-control SBM aims to increase the authority and influence of parents and community members. There is, however, another focus of community control in which parents are given a choice of schools, the most direct form of accountability by schools to the community. Although analysis of such choice is beyond the boundaries of this chapter, it is part of some forms of community control found, for example, in England. It has been suggested that, as SBM evolves and schools become unique, choice will eventually be an integral part of the SBM approach to participatory leadership.

Finally equal participation forms of SBM attempt to accomplish the purposes of both community control and professional control forms: making better use of teachers’ knowledge for key decisions in the school and being more accountable to parents and the local community. Unlike the pure community-control version of SBM, the equal control versions assume that professionals are willing to be quite responsive to the values and preferences of parents and the local community under conditions in which parents are in a position to act as partners with schools in the education of their children. Both parents and teachers, it is assumed, have important knowledge to bring to bear on key decisions about curriculum, budget, and personnel. Site councils associated with this form of SBM have decision-making power and their membership is balanced between school staff and parent/community members.
Managerial leadership

In addition to explicit concepts of management, this leadership category subsumes a form of leadership referred to as organizational in a total of 10 articles. Managerial leadership focuses on the functions, tasks, or behaviors of the leader and assumes that if these functions are carried out competently the work of others in the organization will be facilitated. Most approaches to managerial leadership also assume that organizational members behave rationally. Authority and influence are allocated to formal positions in proportion to the status of those positions in the organizational hierarchy. The terms “management” and “manager” frequently appear, especially in papers originating in the U.K., but without explicit attempts to conceptualize their meaning.

Several studies included in the review characterized management as a form of leadership to be replaced or supplemented in the face of present organizational challenges and the need for change (Cusack, 1993; Hallinger, 1992). Lesourd, Tracz, and Grady (1992) contrasted “managerial leadership” with “visionary leadership,” for example. Others assumed the utility of managerial tasks and inquired about how they had been intensified by recent changes (Dunning, 1993) or how they affected the quality of teachers’ work lives (Rossmiller, 1992). Other articles continued the long-standing debate over the relationship between the concepts of leadership and management. The majority of these articles (Achilles, 1992; Atkinson & Wilmore, 1993; Bolman & Deal, 1992; Bolman & Deal, 1994; Reilly, 1993; Whitaker et al., 1991) treated leadership and management as distinct and, to some extent, as competing concepts. But two articles (Leithwood, 1994; Reitzug & Reeves, 1992) regarded leadership and management as complimentary concepts that should not be considered separately.

The distinction between leadership and management found outside these papers usually entails allocating management the responsibilities for policy implementation, maintaining organizational stability, and ensuring that routine organizational tasks are “done right.” Classical management theory (March & Simon, 1958; Massie, 1965) assumes that these purposes are likely to be accomplished through such functions as planning, organizing, supervising, coordinating, budgeting, and staffing. Leadership, in contrast, is assigned the challenges of policy making, organizational change, and making sure “the right things get done” (Zaleznick, 1970; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Hodgkinson, 1991).

The exchange relationship between leaders and followers, which Bass’ conception of transactional leadership is based on, points to one of the central psychological mechanisms through which this view of managerial practices provides the organizational stability on which transformational leadership builds. “Transactional leadership,” according to Bass, “is contingent reinforcement. The leader and follower agree on what the follower needs to do to be rewarded or to avoid punishment. If the follower does as agreed, the leader arranges to reward the follower” (1985, p. 121).

In school contexts at least, justifying a conceptual distinction between
management and leadership is difficult. For example, Duke’s (1995) historical analysis of one school’s struggle for survival over a 63-year period provides vivid evidence that maintaining organizational stability in a turbulent environment requires the same types of responses on the part of organizational leaders as does organizational change. Furthermore, close analysis of the actual activities of formal school leaders (Kmetz & Willower, 1982; Harvey, 1986; Davies, 1987) indicates that whatever in uence they exercise in their schools takes place through their responses to a host of often seemingly mundane tasks that they face from day to day. As a minimum, school leaders need to adopt a “bifocal” perspective (Deal and Peterson, 1994) in carrying out their tasks.

To what does management refer, however, when it is treated as a unique form of school leadership in its own right? Those studies explicitly responding to this question illustrate a range of possibilities. For example, Rossmiller identi ed two broad functions: buffering the technical core (curriculum and instruction) of the school from excessive distractions and interruptions, and smoothing “input or output transitions [such as organizing support groups for students experiencing stress]” (1992, p. 143). This study also described a number of subdimensions, speci c ways in which principals carried out each of the two broad functions. In a second example with private sector origins, managerial functions in Myers and Murphy’s (1995) study included six “organizational control” mechanisms: supervision, input controls (such as teacher transfers), behavior controls (such as job descriptions), output controls (student testing), selection/socialization, and environmental controls (community responsiveness). Goldring (1990) inquired about the “boundary spanning” function of school principals. Caldwell (1992) argued that leaders of self-managing schools should engage in a cyclical process “of goal-setting, needs identi cation, priority-setting, planning, budgeting, implementing, and evaluating in a manner which provides for the appropriate involvement of staff, and community” (1992, p. 16–17).

Duke and Leithwood’s (1994) review of five different types of leadership literature identi es a relatively comprehensive set of school management dimensions. Two of the five sets of literatures addressed managerial issues most directly; these included 21 original studies of principal leadership speci cally in the context of school restructuring and an additional 19 studies describing principals’ practices and effects across varied contexts. These studies provided evidence of many aspects of leadership encompassed in other categories. As well, there were 10 sets of managerial tasks or functions described in these 40 studies as a whole:

- Providing adequate financial and material resources;
- Distributing financial and material resources so they are most useful;
- Anticipating predictable problems and developing effective and ef cient means for responding to them;
- Managing the school facility;
• Managing the student body;
• Maintaining effective communication patterns with staff, students, community members, and district of ce staff;
• Accommodating policies and initiatives undertaken by district of ce in ways that assist with school improvement goals;
• Buffering staff so as to reduce disruptions to the instruction program;
• Mediating con ict and differences in expectations;
• Attending to the political demands of school functioning.

These 10 functions summarize most of the explicit as well as implicit conceptions of managerial functions in schools as they have been portrayed in writing over the past decade, separated from those leadership dimensions associated with other models. As Rost (1991) suggests, there is evidence of considerable support in the literature and among practicing leaders for managerial approaches to leadership, but this support and the meaning of such leadership often has to be inferred. As a whole, these functions convey an orientation to leadership similar to the orientation found in the classical management literature. This is quite different from the relatively entrepreneurial, creative, and change-oriented view of leadership referred to as “strategic management” in the non-school literature (Thomas & Pruett, 1993; Spencer, 1993). Those writing about educational leadership in the past decade appear to have incorporated such orientations in other, non-managerial models.

**Contingent leadership/leadership styles**

Included as part of this category are leadership “styles” and “problem-solving” concepts referred to in a total of 18 articles (including “re ective” and “craft” views of leadership). The focus of this approach is on how leaders respond to the unique organizational circumstances or problems that they face as a consequence, for example, of the nature and preferences of coworkers, conditions of work, and tasks to be undertaken. This approach to leadership assumes that there are wide variations in the contexts for leadership and that to be effective these contexts require different leadership responses. Also assumed by this approach to leadership is that individuals providing leadership, typically those in formal positions of authority, are capable of mastering a large repertoire of leadership practices. Their influence depends, in large measure, on such mastery.

While sharing the same focus and assumptions, the “styles” and “problem-solving” orientations to contingent leadership are otherwise quite distinct. Leadership styles have been the stimulus for extensive empirical investigation in both school and non-school organizations. Examples of earlier research include the Ohio State studies, which led to the widely used Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire and subsequent work by investigators such as Blake and Mouton (1964) and Hersey and Blanchard (1977). Nine studies included in this review made explicit reference to leadership style. Dimensions of leadership
style investigated in these nine studies varied considerably: task versus relationships (Heller, Clay & Perkins, 1993), managerial versus visionary (Lesourd, Tracz & Grady, 1992), initiating structure versus consideration, autocratic versus facilitative (Cheng, 1991; Fenech, 1994; Hoy & Brown, 1988; Johnston, 1986; Uwazurike, 1991), and male versus female (Coleman, 1996). Bredeson (1993) inquires about the relationship between an individual’s leadership style and the role strains resulting from restructuring efforts in schools.

The literature on leadership styles focuses on overt leadership practice, attempting to define a relatively small number of coherent, effective patterns of such practice. In contrast, the literature on problem solving focuses on the internal cognitive and affective processes engaged in by leaders as they ponder the challenges facing them and decide how best to act. From this perspective, there is a virtually unlimited universe of leadership practices. Leaders choose or invent those patterns of practice that appear to make most sense to them in response to the challenges they are addressing. What leaders do depends on what they think.

Problem-solving orientations to leadership, reected in nine studies included in the review, are of two types. Those describing leadership as a reective or craft-like enterprise stress the importance of leaders’ internal processes without attempting to explicitly model such processes. For example, Sergiovanni (1989), Battersby (1987), and Clark (1988) use Schön’s (1983) concept of reective practice, or knowing-in-action, to explore the limited utility to practicing leaders of formal, scientiﬁc theory. Bredeson (1988) advocates the use of metaphors as stimulants for administrators’ thinking and problem solving, whereas Willower (1994) invokes Dewey’s method of inquiry as a frame to use in developing habits of reection on the part of school leaders.

Also focused on leaders’ thinking were four articles explicitly framed by contemporary cognitive science models of such processes. Three of these studies appeared in a special issue of EAQ entitled Cognitive Perspectives On Educational Administration (see also Hallinger, Leithwood and Murphy, 1993). Leithwood and Hallinger (1993) and Leithwood (1995) argued for the usefulness of cognitive perspectives on leadership and outlined what inquiries guided by such an orientation would entail. Allison and Allison (1993) invoke schema theory in their comparison of the domain-speciﬁc knowledge structures of novice and experienced school principals. Elsewhere, Allison (1996) reviews the literature on cognitive processes associated with problem interpretation and its application to the thinking of school leaders. Leithwood, Steinbach, and Raun (1993) describe the problem-solving processes of superintendents within a framework that attends to those cognitive processes entailed in problem interpretation, goal setting, anticipating constraints, the use of personal values and principles (see also Moorhead & Nediger, 1991), solution processes, and the mood or affect. Based on this framework, Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) offer the most comprehensive set of research results to date, exploring the nature of expert school leaders’ problem-solving processes and their consequences for leadership practice.
Summary

What have been the results of a century’s quest for a conception of school leadership? The six different categories of leadership described in this section is one answer to this question. These approaches include instructional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial, and contingent forms of school leadership. Although they have been presented as distinctly different leadership models, they are by no means pure types. The six approaches are most distinct with respect to their basic foci and the key assumptions on which they are premised. Significant differences also exist with respect to the nature and locus of leadership power.

But there are many aspects of these approaches that are quite similar, depending on whose version of an approach one adopts. For example, although moral leadership was the approach most visibly concerned with leadership ethics and values, there is a value position at least implicit in all six approaches. And transformational and participative approaches are quite explicit about the centrality of specific types of values to leadership. Additionally, whereas transformational approaches are arguably most explicit in their concern for organizational culture, many forms of instructional and moral leadership show evidence of a similar concern.

In sum, then, approaches to conceptualizing school leadership in contemporary literature offer eclectic and overlapping perspective on what should be the focus of leaders’ attention and how leadership manifests itself in practice. Five of the six approaches (instructional leadership excepted) have well developed counterparts in the non-school literature and this literature figures prominently in how school leadership is conceptualized. This is probably both good and bad, good because there is an extensive academic and popular leadership literature that in our view has too often been ignored when it could have enriched thinking about leadership in schools, and bad because most of the literature included in our review that relied on a concept of leadership developed outside school contexts failed to address sufficiently the significance of that context for how leadership ought to be conceptualized.

Historical and theoretical sources of school leadership authority

Described in this section are the sources of authority that those writing about leadership in schools have appealed to over the century. One purpose of the section is to show how those sources have evolved and multiplied. A second purpose is to explore the extent to which contemporary models of leadership, summarized in the previous section, depend on one or more of these sources including tradition, religion, psychology, sociology, and a combination of social psychology, philosophy, and critical theory.

After Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (1967), authority is
defined as “the power to influence.” Herbert Simon (1965) defined authority as the power to make decisions that guide the actions of others. Extending Simon’s definition to focus more clearly on the consequences of decision making, Daniel Griffiths, in his theory of administration-as-decision making, argued for an understanding of authority as:

the willingness of some to accept the power of another. That is, members of the organization acknowledge the legitimacy of the decisions made by some to control the decisions of others.

(1959, p. 88)

Conceived of in this way, the meaning of authority is essentially the same as Weber’s concept of domination, “the probability that a command will be obeyed” (Roth & Wittich, 1968, p. 53).

Although status in the organizational hierarchy is the source for authority most readily evoked by Weber’s definition, he argued that there were actually three “pure types of (or grounds for) legitimate domination,” in addition to any other “less pure” grounds, such as habit, persuasion, and the like. These included rational or legal grounds (essentially the commonly evoked grounds mentioned above), traditional grounds (rooted in widely shared beliefs of the sort that allowed males to be the taken-for-granted heads of the households in many Western cultures until quite recently, for example), and charismatic grounds (the authority that flows from the perception that a person possesses exceptional or exemplary characteristics).

The meaning associated with the term “authority” as it is explored in this section includes but is not limited to the control-oriented views of authority offered by Simon, Griffiths, and Weber. Also included is, for example, the authority or power that a person or group is awarded as a consequence of special or highly valued knowledge (about the nature of human learning, for example), expert levels of skill in the execution of a task or performance considered important by others (such as the facilitation of group problem solving), and exceptional capacities for appreciation (such as understanding the hostile behavior of a student at school). Kenneth Benne’s concept of anthropological authority, “a teaching authority who seeks to both mother and wean the young relative to the wider life in a community” (cited in Maxey, 1991, p. 9) is relevant as well. This section demonstrates that the historical sources for understanding the authority that contemporary leadership models rest on include but extend considerably beyond Weber’s “pure types.”

This section also demonstrates that the history of educational leadership and administration in North America, as it has been told in the most frequently cited and widely respected sources (Tyack, 1976; Tyack & Cummings, 1977; Tyack & Hansot, 1982; Callahan, 1962; Campbell, 1972; Campbell et al., 1987; C ulcerston, 1981, 1988; Griffiths, 1959), does not fully reflect the variety of grounds that have been appealed to historically as sources of authority by prac-
ticing school leaders. Rather, with the notable exception of Beck and Murphy’s (1993) recent text, the story captured in these scholarly sources appears to have been influenced, to a fault, by efforts to establish and maintain a distinctive discipline of educational administration within the university.

**Tradition**

Tradition, one of Max Weber’s three “pure types of legitimate domination” (Roth & Wittich, 1968, p. 215), is defined by Weber as “belief in the everyday routine as an inviolable norm of conduct . . . (and as) piety for what actually, allegedly, or presumably has always existed.” He further argued that:

> Patriarchalism is by far the most important type of domination the legitimacy of which rests upon tradition. Patriarchalism means the authority of the father, the husband, the senior of the house, the sib elder over the members of the household and sib; the rule of the master and patron over bondsmen, serfs, freed men . . . of the patrimonial lord and sovereign prince over the subjects.

(Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 296)

The system of norms associated with traditionalism is typically considered sacred and there is an element of arbitrariness associated with enforcing these norms on the part of the leader who judges primarily in terms of personal as distinct from functional criteria. Traditional authority is in this sense irrational (Gerth & Mills, 1946).

Traditional authority is, of course, an important instrument for cultural transmission and the preservation of community. As Slater points out, in the absence of tradition “old attachments to family, neighborhood, and community, attachments upon which and out of which one’s sense of self developed, lose their vitality” (1994, pp. 98–99). Evidence available concerning the effects of using tradition as a source of leadership authority in schools suggests that those effects have been largely negative, however.

Traditionalism based on patriarchy has manifested itself in prejudicial hiring practices applied to women in favor of an “old boys network” (Miklos, 1988), widely shared, male-dominated, leadership stereotypes that result in perceptions that women lack critical leadership skills and dispositions (Riehl & Lee, 1996) and ostracism from informal leadership networks (Shakeshaft, 1987). Factors such as these help explain the continuing disproportionate number of males occupying formal, especially senior, leadership positions. Tallerico and Burstyn (1996) cite evidence indicating that between 1928 and 1993 the percent of all U.S. superintendents of K-12 school districts who were women changed from 1.6 percent to only 5.6 percent. Cummings (Appended to Tyack, 1976) reported that 99.4% of American superintendents were male in 1952; typically, they also have been overwhelmingly Protestant, white, middle-aged, and from a rural
background with no experience in a job outside of education (Tyack, 1976). In 1993, Montenegro reported that in the U.S., 71% of all K-12 teachers were female, whereas only 7.3% of superintendents, 24% of assistant superintendents, and 34% of principals were female. In addition to gender biases, tradition also has introduced bias into the ecology of school leadership based on culture, language, and race (Anderson, 1996; Mitchell, Ortiz, & Mitchell, 1987).

The influences of tradition on the development of contemporary leadership models appears to have been neither direct nor clear.

Religion

Protestant religious values were the source of authority appealed to by pre-1900 public school leaders, especially in the United States. These were men, not infrequently ministers, who preached both the value of public schooling and aims for such schooling based on their interpretation of the virtues required to lead a “good” life. These values were considered both absolute and equally appropriate for all students, even though a very high proportion of such students were not of the Protestant faith.

In these early years, religious values served as the base for determining the more exalted aims of education, but they were considered values that school leaders should themselves live by and model as well. Based on a reading of superintendents’ own writings from that era, Tyack suggested that: “superintendents in the nineteenth century conceived of their task in part as an evangelical enterprise, a search for organizational means to realize the goal of creating a ‘redeemer nation’ ” (1976, p. 258).

Certification of superintendents, Tyack also concluded, was based not so much on possession of some body of professional knowledge as by their church membership and a shared earnestness. Superintendents in homogeneous small communities personified and enforced the official morality of the village. Tyack refers to the image that many superintendents of this period had of themselves, which was as “aristocrats of character” (1976, p. 258) who helped create an ideal of heroic leadership.

That school leaders of this period should look to religion as the basis for their legitimacy is not surprising. Many Victorian Americans believed that their country had been chosen as the preeminent Christian nation and that good citizens acted in accord with Christian values. The public school was viewed by these people as a key instrument for institutionalizing their beliefs and so they were among the most vigorous in the development of such schools (Smith, 1967; Tyack, 1970).

The influence of religious values as a source of public school leadership authority persisted well into the 1920s (Beck & Murphy, 1993) during which time it was invoked alongside “scientific management.” But as the Protestant church and its values gradually relinquished its hold on the public school, the leadership of those schools turned to other sources of authority. By the 1930s,
religion was rarely seen as a source of authority among public school leaders. During the 1990s, public schools have been reintroduced to the political power of religious values as a source of leadership authority. This has occurred as the “religious right” has challenged the leadership provided by local trustees and senior administrators to set outcomes for student learning that appear to usurp domains of children’s development traditionally assumed to be the responsibility of families and the church (Spady, 1994). In many instances, these challenges have been successful with majority representatives from the religious right elected to local school boards.

Throughout the twentieth century, religion consistently has been a critical source of leadership authority in a significant proportion of North American schools established with the express purpose of transmitting the values of specific religions. Catholic schools are the most conspicuous examples, attracting 5.4% of the student population in the U.S. (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). Although Catholic school leaders are the largest single group of North American educational leaders continuing to use religion as a significant source of their authority, many in North America were established to transmit the values of some other religion. It is safe to infer that religion remains a strong basis for the authority of leaders in these schools as well.

Contemporary approaches to moral leadership, as described in the previous section, rarely consider religion a source of values, preferring instead to draw on democratic traditions and values. Nonetheless, in making the case that leadership authority should be based on concepts of what is right and good, religion provided one of the earliest roots of today’s concept of moral leadership.

**Psychology**

The contributions of psychology, both positive and negative, typically are underestimated in the most frequently cited accounts of the evolution of sources of school leadership authority. However, developments in psychological theory and research begun in the 1880s have informed and helped legitimate the decision making of school leaders about both students and teachers throughout the twentieth century. These developments also have assisted in the understanding of school leadership practices directly.

**Students**

As Campbell et al. (1987) argue, “science” as a source of leadership authority was founded originally on the early work of Cattell, James, Thorndike (in particular), and others who extended and applied the ideas of these pioneers beginning in the 1880s:

Thorndike’s work, perhaps more than any other single factor, imbued the scientific movement in education with its psychological and statistical
In 1902, Thorndike offered a course in the application of ‘psychological and statistical methods to education’ . . . [this course] outlined what would be the emphasis and content of educational research for at least the next three decades. (Campbell et al., 1987, p. 30)

As tools for the measurement of intelligence, aptitude, and achievement were further developed, school leaders were provided with a basis for managing students: grouping, sorting, and advancing students, as well as screening them for subsequent levels of schooling. The birth of quantitative student testing arising from this early work in psychology persists with many re nements and modi - cations as a major in uence on decision making in schools to this day. Debates also continue to rage about issues such as the validity of information collected through standardized achievement tests for decision making (Worthen, 1993), the meaning of “intelligence” and its educational role (Sternberg & Wagner, 1986), and the effectiveness and equity of tracking decisions based on pupil achievement and aptitude tests (Oakes, 1985).

During the 1940s the emphasis in psychology began to move from its interest in human traits and their measurement toward the development of formal behavioral theories of human functioning. Due in no small measure to the seminal work of B. F. Skinner (1938), educators found themselves being admonished to approach curriculum, instruction, and student discipline using theories of contingent reinforcement.

These contributions by psychology to student testing practices, along with the implications for instruction flowing from behaviorism, were perceived to establish a highly “scienti c” basis for managing the technical core of schooling. In combination with those methods of job analysis initially developed outside schools and associated with the scienti c management movement, these developments in psychology provided considerable impetus for managerial approaches to leadership.

During the past 20 years, developments in psychology with clear relevance to education have rejected behaviorism in favor of attempting to better understand mental processes (Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1997). Cognitive psychology has made considerable progress in developing constructivist (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1996), connectionist (Rumelhart, 1989), and social cognitive (Vygotsky, 1978) understandings of the nature of student learning. These more recent understandings have resulted quite directly in the development of such student-related educational innovations in North America as discipline-based curricular frameworks (Robitaille, et al., 1993) and curriculum guidelines, as well as content and performance standards (National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, 1989) developed by many states and provinces.

Such developments demand high levels of professional expertise and judgment on the part of teachers to implement. So, while a potential source of leadership authority, they do not justify highly control-oriented approaches to such leadership. Depending on the amount of discretion left to school leaders in
implementing such changes and the extent to which further local development of these changes is required for actual use, these sources of power nourish a view of school leaders as either middle managers or instructional leaders.

*Teachers*

At least four lines of psychological research and development have been especially influential as sources of authority for school leadership. One line of research was the extension of tools for student testing, initially developed in the early 1900s, to the evaluation of teachers. This practice became especially pronounced in North America in the context of the behaviorally-guided “process-product” era of research on teacher effectiveness (Brophy & Good, 1986). Research with this focus produced lists of discrete teacher behaviors that correlated positively and significantly with student achievement. These behaviors, in turn, became the basis for summative evaluation instruments, often checklists, used by administrators while observing classroom teaching (Popham, 1987). These contributions of relatively behavioristic forms of psychology to the supervision of teaching have been widely criticized, for example, as assuming a labor- or craft-like view of an activity and role better conceived of as a profession or an art (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985) and providing no information to assist in the explanation for observed practices (Stiggins & Duke, 1988).

Widespread use of these approaches to the evaluation of instruction was fostered by the parallel work of Madeline Hunter (Hunter, 1976) and her associates, along with the calls for a simple, managerial, and control-oriented form of instructional leadership emanating from the effective schools research of the 1970s and early 1980s.

Results of psychological research describing the career stages of teachers is a second source of leadership authority with respect to teachers (Fuller, 1969; Huberman, 1989). Evidence from this research indicates that teachers pass through a relatively predictable set of stages over the course of their careers. These career stages intersect in crucial ways with broader life stages and cannot be separated from them. Furthermore, early career stages are formative and administrative decisions concerning teaching assignments and the like make an enormous difference to long-term career success and satisfaction. This evidence also suggests that, during the middle stages of a career, teachers are highly motivated to experiment with change initiatives. Most teachers become especially interested in their own classrooms as distinct from the school or district as a whole during the later stages of their careers.

This research is a rich source of understanding about the motivational predispositions of teachers, helping to match expectations for improvement efforts in the school, with the interests of individual staff members (Leithwood, 1989). As a source of authority most consistent with transformational approaches to leadership, it also offers useful guidelines to educational leaders for the continuous professional development of teachers (Oja, 1979).
As a third source of leadership power with respect to teachers, psychology has provided theoretical tools for better understanding forms of leadership that are appropriate in influencing a host of teacher variables considered to be critical mediators standing between leaders’ practices and the effects of these practices on students. Throughout the century, research about school leadership has inquired about forms of leadership that influence, for example, teacher job satisfaction (Conley, Bacharach, & Bauer, 1989), teachers’ commitment to change (Leithwood & Menzies, in press), and willingness to participate in school decisions (Kushman, 1992). For the most part, this line of research is a source of power for participative and transformational approaches to school leadership.

A fourth and final line of psychological research serving as a source of leadership authority with respect to teachers is to be found in applications of cognitive psychology to a better understanding of the nature of teachers’ thinking and decision making (Clark & Peterson, 1986). Although the results of this research had a considerable impact on some teacher preparation programs, there is little evidence of their application as sources of leadership authority. This is in spite of their considerable potential to help those providing transformational leadership to develop a better understanding of the thinking of their teacher colleagues and to inform them about how to exercise influence with their teacher colleagues in ways productive to them both.

**Expert leadership**

Research on teacher thinking, however, did provide a well-developed set of theories and methods to help guide parallel research on the nature of school leaders’ thinking and decision making (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995; Hallinger, Leithwood & Murphy, 1993; Allison, 1996). This quite recent research, a source of authority for contingent approaches to leadership, offers insights concerning the nature of leaders’ expertise (Leithwood and Steinbach, 1995) as well as experiences useful in the development of such expertise (Bridges & Hallinger, 1992).

In addition to the work on teacher thinking and decision making, current research on expert leadership thinking can be traced back to a much earlier preoccupation with administrative problems and decision making. Allison (1996) dates the beginning of this line of work to Strayer’s 1925 volume *Problems in Educational Administration* and describes an ongoing interest in the use of case problems in textbooks for the purpose of helping to teach conceptual material throughout the subsequent 70 years (Hoy & Tarter, 1995; Culbertson, Jacobson & Reller, 1960). Griffiths’ (1959) theory of administration as decision making provided the pre-cognitive framework for a substantial research effort by Hemphill, Griffiths, and Frederiksen (1962) to understand the nature of administrators’ problem interpretation. Curiously, in spite of its scope, the work begun in this study does not seem to have been pursued by others between its completion and the quite recent spate of cognitively-oriented research on leadership expertise and its development.
Sociology

Two distinct lines of theory and research have been appealed to by school leaders as sources of authority for their practices during the twentieth century: theory and research about organizational change and about organizational design.

Organizational change

One of the main sources of school leaders’ power in implementing change can be traced to the seminal works of Everett Rogers (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) and Ronald Havelock (1971). In both cases, the primary focus of attention was on what would now be called the pre-adoption and adoption phases of the change process. During the 1960s and 1970s, this phase of change also was the object of attention by those interested in school leadership. Carlson’s (1972) study of the processes used by superintendents in the adoption of innovations in school districts exemplifies this work. In this work, roots can be found leading not only to a middle manager view of school leadership but also aspects of participative, instructional, and transformational approaches to leadership.

Although knowledge about pre-adoption and adoption processes offered some useful guidance, especially to senior school leaders, it soon became apparent that adoption decisions by such leaders did not have much to do with actual uses of whatever was adopted in classrooms. Charters and Jones’ widely influential paper, On the Risk of Appraising Non-Events in Program Evaluation (1973), made this point from the perspective of those evaluating the impact of changes on classroom practices and student achievement. John Goodlad’s widely cited study, Behind the Classroom Door (1970), also made this case in an especially compelling way for school practitioners. His League of Cooperating Schools focused attention on implementation processes within the school as the unit of change and on the principal as a key agent of change.

The Charters and Jones and Goodlad papers were among the more visible early stimulants for a line of sociological research about implementation processes. This research acquired considerable currency as a formal source of authority for how leaders should approach change in their schools during the 1970s and 1980s. Early stages of this research entailed mostly case studies of failed change initiatives in schools. For example, Gross, Giacquinta & Bernstein (1971) described the troubled path of an elementary school staff faced with implementing an activity-based curriculum without adequate material support or consistent, supportive leadership; Smith & Keith’s (1971) ethnography documented the gradual “normalization” of a much-publicized, newly constructed public school built around the ambitious and innovative open education visions of the district superintendent and the school’s first principal, both of whom exhibited strong transformational and participative leadership features.

This early work contributed in turn to a line of essentially sociological
research and development about educational change and school improvement processes that had become a dominant source of authority for many school leaders by the mid-1980s. This source supported a more decidedly “change agent” view of school leadership than had any other prior source. In relation to the six categories of leadership concepts outlined in the previous section, this source provided support for some elements and versions of participative, transformational, instructional, and managerial orientations to leadership.

Among the more noteworthy large scale research efforts aimed at providing a data-based set of prescriptions for practice were the Rand Change Agent studies (Berman et al., 1975) and the “DESSI” study (Loucks et al., 1982). Michael Fullan had begun his career-long effort to synthesize research on educational change and to make it accessible to educational practitioners (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Fullan, 1982; Fullan & Steiglebauer, 1991).

Also by the mid-1980s, Gene Hall and his associates had fully developed their Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM). Used widely in the U.S., as well as in parts of Canada, the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, and elsewhere, CBAM provided school leaders with tangible tools for diagnosing key aspects of their organization and specific strategies for implementing innovations (Loucks, Newlove & Hall, undated). Although clearly one of the best researched and disseminated, CBAM was but one example of a genre of R&D products, school improvement procedures, of which there were many others. Indeed, one outgrowth of the effective schools movement was a set of models specifically designed to implement the correlates of effective schools.

Common among all these products was an attempt to simplify the complex processes of school change and make them more manageable for school leaders. Usually this meant conceptualizing the change process as a series of temporally sequenced stages, each focused on a key set of functions or tasks such as diagnosing readiness for change, developing goals for change, choosing programs to achieve the goals, and the like. School improvement models served as the basis for considerable in-service training of school leaders and became for a while the official approach to change not only in many school districts (Stoll & Fink, 1994) but in whole states and provinces as well. (Matthew Miles [1993], a seminal figure throughout this 40-year period of research and development, provides a much more extensive and reflective analysis of the evolution of approaches to change).

Approaches to change described to this point, emerging largely from sociological inquiry and serving as major sources of power for several different approaches to school leadership, evolved through three stages. The first stage documented failure and drew general implications or guidelines for success; this stage assumed that the seeds of success are evident in failure, a risky assumption. The second stage found examples of successful practice and recommended they be used by others; this gives little weight to the importance of the context for change, also a risky approach. At a third stage are efforts to prescribe a set of sequenced tasks to be carried out in order to manage the change process in an
orderly fashion; the obvious flaw in this approach is the assumption that an invariant set of tasks is useful for all changes and for all points of departure.

These shortcomings, among others, gave rise to school restructuring, an elastic concept often including many components of change (Murphy, 1991) but usually including at least some form of school-based management (Murphy & Beck, 1995). School-based management brings together sources of school leadership authority based on knowledge of change processes and knowledge about organizational design, largely in support of participative and transformational models of leadership.

Organizational design

Throughout the twentieth century, organizational design theory has provided another, primarily sociological, source of authority for educational leadership. The story of how this source of authority evolved in schools begins with Frederick Taylor and the scientific management movement, transforms itself into a preoccupation with bureaucracy, and then moves on to an interest in open systems theory. The atheoretical correlates of effective schools’ research then supplants formal open systems theory, although the correlates themselves contain an open systems perspective. During the past 10 years, a resurgence of interest has occurred in a more complex, open systems theory that has yet to be synthesized into a formal theory. This more complex design characterizes the school as a learning organization or a learning community.

Managerial leadership has its genesis most directly in scientific management. This approach to organizational design emerged as a significant source of leadership authority in the second decade of the twentieth century (Tyack, 1976; Campbell et al., 1987; Callahan, 1962). At the core of this form of organizational design was the time and motion study, a procedure to be used by supervisors to find the best way for carrying out a task and then telling the workers responsible for the task how to do it. The initial attractiveness of scientific management was as a response to two problems. First, traditional forms of control, authority, and communication, as well as existing methods to measure productivity, had proven ineffective in dealing with modern industrial problems. Second, industry was marked by intense labor unrest stemming from substantial changes in the nature of the work; there was an absence of effective supervisory procedures and uniform production standards required in a modern industrial organization.

Within education, scientific management offered itself as a solution, particularly for superintendents of large city school districts, to managing rapid growth in facilities, school staffs, and increasingly diverse student populations. The immense growth in school systems during this time also prompted growing concerns among the public about the costs of education and the need for greater financial accountability. These were problems scientific management seemed to have the potential to solve. Callahan (1962) argues as well that the high social
status of business leaders who were promoting efficiency through the use of scientific management in their own organizations, in combination with the low status and public vulnerability of school leaders, made it inevitable that such practices would be adopted in schools for purposes of self-preservation, whether or not they had any effect on the quality of education. Pajak (1993) claims, however, that although scientific management was the focus of considerable writing in education, it had very little influence on the actual practices of educational leaders at the school level.

Although explicit interest in Tayloristic versions of scientific management (Taylor, 1947) had dissipated by 1930, it continued less explicitly as a part of the classical approach to administrative study into the 1940s that was reected, for example, in the work of Fayol, Gulick, Urwick, and Mooney (Campbell et al., 1987). It also was reected in analytic approaches to administration, part of the Theory Movement in educational administration during the '50s and '60s.

As originally conceived by Weber, bureaucracy provides the organizational basis for one of his three pure types of authority (rational grounds) and another key source of power for managerial approaches to leadership. According to Weber, this source of authority rests on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands (Roth & Wittich, 1968, p. 215). Conceived of as an especially enlightened form of organization, Weber described it in terms of rule-governed systems of relationships defined by a hierarchy of roles and duties (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 196).

The translation of Max Weber’s work into English (Gerth & Mills, 1946) prompted considerable attention outside of education to the study of bureaucracy between the mid-1940s and mid-1970s. Particularly influential were the extensions and critiques of this work by the influential sociologists C. Wright Mills, Talcott Parsons, and Amatai Etzioni. Bureaucracy became a popular focus of study within education especially after 1960 “when students of educational management began to work within the framework of general administration and began to employ behavioral science approaches to organizational study” (Campbell et al., 1987). Its attractiveness can be partly explained by its following on the heels of the Human Relations movement in school leadership, which gave no attention to structure and organization.

At the same time, post-war expansion of the educational system created levels of administrative complexity that added to the hierarchical character of school systems; in the U.S., for example, the number of school districts went from 100,000 (Campbell, et al., 1987, p. 86, originally reported by the National Commission on School District Reorganization) to 16,000 between 1948 and 1980.

Bureaucracy is rarely viewed today as the enlightened form of organizational design conceived by Weber. Nevertheless, the work of Eliot Jaques (1989), a scholar and consultant to governments and private enterprise, continues as a powerful justification for hierarchy in organizations. This work is presently an
important and growing source of leadership authority outside education and may be instrumental in fostering renewed interest in bureaucracy in school organizations (see Gronn, 1996). Other aspects of Weber’s work also served as important elements in the attack led by Green eld (Green eld & Ribbins, 1993) on positivistic and rational approaches to educational administration and, ironically, managerial approaches to school leadership.

From the late ‘50s to the mid-’80s, considerable effort was made by organizational theorists inside and outside education to formulate a clearer conception of the place of the wider environment in the functioning of schools and other types of organizations. Interest in the development of open systems theory was stimulated in part by growth in skepticism on the part of the public concerning all social institutions, changing social values, and a general questioning and reexamination of the traditions and cultures of North American society. Considerable efforts were made to rid social institutions of racism, for example, including school desegregation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Also evidence of the emergence of a newly dominant set of values was the youth revolt against the Vietnam war, rise of a new individualism, and the women’s movement.

These social forces created a substantially changed milieu within which educational leaders had to work. Changing the context of leaders’ work even more directly was a loss of consensus about the purposes of education in the U.S. (Ravitch, 1983). Collective bargaining for teachers was widespread by the mid-1960s and there emerged a strong trend at this time toward federal intervention into education: PL 94–142 (education of students with special needs) and PL 92–318 (end of sex discrimination in schools and colleges) are just two examples of such intervention.

During this period, schools also experienced a rise in the number of special interest groups trying to influence their programs. Educational administrators now had to work not only with parents and trustees, but the wider community as well. Increased demand for parental choice helped create alternative schools (Raywid, 1985) and gave rise to experimentation with voucher systems (Hertling, 1985).

Many of these pressures on schools to envision themselves as more integrally connected with their wider environments continue to evolve unabated to the present. Rooted directly in these earlier pressures are current efforts, such as altering the governance of schools to give greater control to the local community (Malen, et al., 1990) to develop “full service schools” and to redesign secondary education so that it is more sensitive to the needs and demands of business and wider public interests (Hogan, 1992).

Open Systems theory stresses the complexity and variability of component parts of the system (both individual and subgroups) and the looseness of the connections between them. The interdependence of the organization and its environment shifts attention away from structure and purely managerial orientations to leadership, as in the case of bureaucracy, to process in organizations
Outside of education, the theory is illustrated in Talcott Parsons’ (1960) concept of formal organizations including three levels, systems, or functions, the technical, managerial, and institutional or community systems. According to this conception, no organization is wholly independent, especially in the relationships between the managerial and institutional systems. Three types of institutional control stand over the managerial system—generalized norms, interstitial organization (trustees, for example), and governmental structure to oversee the interstitial and managerial levels (such as state education agencies).

Another example of Open Systems theory, one providing sources of power for political versions of participatory leadership, can be found in the work of David Easton (1965). Schools are viewed as political subsystems, the larger social environment providing input to the subsystem. The idea of systems, including schools, operating in a “loosely coupled” fashion (Weick, 1976) is also part of the Open Systems’ rationale that has received considerable attention in the literature aimed at school leaders (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Conceiving of schools as learning organizations (Watkins & Marsick, 1993) or professional learning communities (Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996) can be considered a continuation of the interest in Open Systems’ theory. Knowledge generated from research about this design is a source of power for transformational approaches to school leadership.

The so-called correlates of effective schools were and in many places continue to be unprecedented in the extent of their use as sources of authority for instructional approaches to school leadership created by the academic community. Research to discover these correlates was initiated more or less in parallel in U.K. secondary schools (Rutter et al., 1979) and in U.S. inner city elementary schools (Edmonds, 1979). By 1980, the original empirical work from this perspective had accumulated to a corpus of at least a dozen studies. Reviews and critical analyses of these studies were being widely published and explicit efforts were underway to bring results of this research to the attention of school leaders (Duckett, et al., 1980).

For academics conducting the original effective schools research, controversial evidence presented by James Coleman (1966) concerning the small proportion of variation in student achievement accounted for by schools, as compared with other factors, was the main stimulus for their inquiry. They viewed schools as a primary instrument for the achievement of social and economic equity and were alarmed that Coleman’s findings would be used by policy makers as a reason to allocate fewer resources to public education. Thus it was crucial from their point of view to find evidence to dispute Coleman’s claim and to embark on efforts to recreate as many schools as possible in conformity with this evidence.

For school leaders, the attractiveness of effective schools research as a source of authority could be accounted for by its accessibility and the straightforward, “implementable” nature of its findings. Creating a safe and orderly environment,
providing strong leadership, monitoring student progress, and engaging in active instruction, while not simple tasks to carry out in schools, were at least on the surface clear and familiar. Furthermore, the inner-city, economically-disadvantaged context in which much of the research had been carried out was the same context in which many school leaders were experiencing their greatest challenges.

Diffusion of effective school research also was speeded up considerably by the unusually well-targeted communication channels used for disseminating the research results; the emergence of a widespread perception that education was in crisis; and the fact that effective school research does not require fundamental revisions in the way schools are run, which rather works on improving existing practices; and the amount of effort devoted by districts, states, and professional associations to creating in-service programs for school leaders built around effective schools correlates (such as the Harvard principal center, and so on).

By the time Louis and Miles were ready to undertake their study of effective secondary schools in the U.S. (1990), they were able to select their sample from a population of schools claiming to be implementing effective school research results, estimated to be approximately 279.

**Philosophy, social psychology, and critical theory**

These three sources are discussed together because, although independent in their genesis, they combine in giving rise to and sustaining interest in participative and democratic forms of school leadership. These forms of school leadership came to prominence first in the early 1930s, and interest in them in their original form was sustained into the 1960s, especially in the teacher supervision literature (Pajak, 1993; Lindsay & Schwarcz, 1960). Support for these forms of leadership initially arose in response to the dehumanizing aspects of scientific management, greater community involvement in schools because schools were increasingly situated in suburban areas and in closer proximity to parents, and a trend toward administrative decentralization.

During the early development of participative and democratic concepts of leadership, “educational” philosophy was an important source of authority. In this context, educational philosophy refers to a position initially developed by Dewey (1916, 1929, 1946) concerning democracy and scientific inquiry. In Dewey’s view, the challenge to democracy lay in extending the spirit of participation at the heart of the American political system to the economic world of men and women at work. The long standing goal of political and social equity was to be erected in participatory forms of organizational governance, allowing the benefits of production and decisions about work to be shared by all. These decisions would be arrived at through consciously reasoned, cooperative problem solving (reflective inquiry).

This position was further developed by others in education and promoted as an ideal form of school organization and leadership. As Kilpatrick explained,
“education will not contribute to the reconstruction of the social process until it seriously experiments with the reconstruction of its own procedures” (1933, p. 210). Although somewhat dormant for several decades, this basic position has been resuscitated more recently by critical theory, as we explain below.

Although democratically-oriented educational philosophy promoted participatory forms of leadership on essentially moral grounds, parallel developments in social psychology provided evidence that such participation was an effective means of achieving organizational goals. The Hawthorne Studies carried out by Mayo, Lewin, and others (Mayo, 1933) are typically cited as the genesis of this work. The ideas of Mary Parker Follett (Metcalf & Urwick, 1940) concerning the nature of power and decision making were almost identical to those expressed in the current literature on educational restructuring and teacher empowerment (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991). Reflecting these ideas, the 1943 ASCD Yearbook portrayed leadership in schools as an educative force. Its aim, according to the authors, was to expand the horizons of the group by encouraging group members to think beyond the level of existing opinion and practice. This perspective is remarkably similar to Argyris and Schön’s (1978) concept of “double loop” learning.

Although early interest in participatory and democratic forms of leadership were promoted by Dewian philosophy and social psychology, the emergence of critical theory, along with post-positive orientations to the philosophy of science, has resulted in them being attributed renewed relevance in response to contemporary problems. Evers and Lakomski (1991) characterize critical theory approaches to administration as complex and covering ethical, political, social, linguistic, and personal dimensions. This analysis is limited to features of both post-positivism and critical theory stimulated in response to three features of the theory movement in educational administration: a positivist orientation toward knowledge, a structural-functionalist conception of organizations, and a control-oriented, managerial, view of leadership. Critical theory, arising in objection to these features, among others, is defined for our purposes by the positions it has developed as alternatives.

Structural-functional assumptions about the nature of school organizations are rejected by critical theory. Such “system-based functionalism” in Foster’s terms (1986, p. 3) includes assumptions about a high level of consensus in respect to existing school goals, the appropriateness of such goals for all stakeholders, and the non-political nature of defensible processes for arriving at an agreement about such goals. These assumptions also treat as unproblematic contemporary developments in science and technology, as well as the hierarchical nature of relationships traditionally found within the school organization. According to Maddock (1995), the task of critical theory is to subject such contemporary developments and relationships to continual scrutiny on their own terms and to demonstrate the contradictions and limitations of these ideas and practices.

Critical theory also offers a more decisively normative, socio-cultural analy-
sis of schools. This analysis points out how structural-functional assumptions have encouraged schools to establish structures of authority and control, both mirroring and reproducing systematic inequalities in the wider society. These inequalities arise from differences among groups of people in race, class, religion, gender, and geography. Cultural analysis, explains Bates:

insists that the culture of a society cannot be understood unless the nature and organization of the relationships and struggles between dominant and subordinate cultures are taken into account. Indeed, it is the struggle among such cultures that constitutes the major dynamic of cultural change.

(1987, p. 90)

Structural-functional views of the school organization remove the possibilities of schools serving as agents of democracy and social justice.

This basic objection to how school organizations have been conceptualized in the context of the theory movement in educational administration has given rise to a view of leadership that, although somewhat distinct in its emancipatory emphasis, supports at least three of the leadership models described in earlier sections of this chapter. Critical theorists argue that a managerial conception of leadership has dominated the field over the past several decades (Smyth, 1989; Bates, 1993; Foster, 1986). This conception of leadership assumes dominance or control over organizational members and separates educational from administrative concerns, privileging the latter (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988; Bates, 1993). The genesis of critical theorists’ orientation to leadership is its responsibility to develop educational organizations whose fundamental purposes are to nurture not only equity among organizational stakeholders but also the freedom and autonomy of individual members. A control orientation to leadership and administration flies in the face of these emancipatory intentions. Foster (1989), as a consequence, argues that leadership must be critical, transformational, educative, and ethical.

Critical leadership assumes that because existing conditions of social life have been constructed by people (rather than simply received), they can be reconstructed to be more equitable, democratic, and just if they are found wanting in these respects. One of the key responsibilities of leaders is to engage colleagues in self-reflection on and analyses of existing social and organizational conditions, along with the social cultures of both the school and the local community.

When these analyses reveal room for improvement in social and organizational conditions, leadership also entails assisting colleagues to envision more suitable social and organizational conditions appropriate to the social culture. Foster (1986) refers to this visioning process as “educative leadership,” a process that enables colleagues to consider alternative ways of ordering their lives and raising their level of consciousness about social conditions.
Leadership also entails ethical commitments. Building on Burns’ (1978) conception of how transformational leadership functions, such commitments are the elevation of colleagues’ moral consciousness about the social conditions in which they find themselves. As part of their ethical commitments, leaders should be advocates for principles of democracy, respect for others, social justice, and equality. According to Foster (1989) and Bates (1987), leaders always have a moral agenda.

Given a vision of a more desirable set of social and organizational conditions, transformative leadership entails assisting colleagues in making judgments about suitable courses of action to achieve these conditions (Bates, 1987; Foster, 1986) and implementing these actions. Judgments about suitable courses of action require:

- a balancing of theory and empirical understanding, of political and ethical factors, and of traditions and customs. It is in this way that administrators’ approaches go beyond the scientific without becoming arbitrarily subjective.

(Maddock, 1995, p. 66)

The contributions of critical theory to conceptualizing leadership have been quite significant. As the exercise of critical theory matures, its potential contributions promise to be far greater, not least because of the balance it provides to the neo-conservative philosophy presently raging through most Western political systems and posing unprecedented threats to equity and social justice as goals of education systems.

We are much less positive, however, about the contemporary contributions of philosophy in educational administration to the development of concepts of leadership. Clearly this is a contrarian view, one that flies in the face of judgments by many presently writing in the field. We refer here to the extensive literature in educational administration devoted to post-positive or post-empiricist conceptions of epistemology and the role of science in informing leadership practice. Greeneld is generally acknowledged as having initiated (Greeneld, 1975) and nourished this literature along (Greeneld & Ribbins, 1993), in concert with scholars who joined him in debate (Grifths, 1979; Willower, 1985). And Evers and Lakomski (1991) have offered cogent overviews, analyses, and extensions of their own.

What this line of theorizing in educational administration adds up to, stripped of its often obtuse references and dense, abstract language, appears to be as follows:

- Agreement with and understanding of knowledge as personally constructed;
- Claims that organizational behavior is often not especially rational, not only because people lack information but also because organizational members pursue their own goals and values;
• Most decisions faced by administrators are value-laden;
• Human systems are by definition less predictable than physical systems;
• What passes for “scientifically objective knowledge” in human organizations is more adequately characterized as “socially shared” knowledge;
• The meaning people give to events is shaped by their goals, values, feelings, existing knowledge, and past experiences.

Perhaps there is more to it than this, but not much. And what it adds up to is a series of “blinding flashes of the obvious”—obvious in terms of existing understandings from other scholarly sources, not to mention the common understandings of most school leaders. At least for the purposes of this chapter, it is remarkable that, whatever current writings in educational administration philosophy might have contributed, a more sophisticated conception of educational leadership is not one of them.

Summary
This section of the chapter identified, as historical and theoretical sources of leadership authority, tradition, religion, psychology, sociology, and a combination of philosophy, social psychology, and critical theory. Knowledge developed through psychological and sociological inquiry have been especially influential in justifying the exercise of leadership, but most contemporary approaches to leadership in schools have significant roots in at least several different sources of power and authority. Further, each source of power, while capable of nourishing several different leadership offspring, is relatively hostile to others. Finally, this section also has shown that all the sources of leadership authority, save postpositivism and critical theory, are quite mature. To the extent that these sources are central to concepts of leadership, as we have argued, contemporary leadership approaches are best characterized as evolutionary in nature.

Conclusion
Few attempts have been made to look broadly at the quest for an adequate conception of leadership in schools as it has unfolded over the twentieth century. Beck and Murphy’s (1993) work is likely the most recent among these efforts. Having attempted the task ourselves, we are especially aware of the many different ways in which any single description of the quest could be viewed as missing essential understandings critical in someone’s view. In this concluding section, we briefly reflect on the nature of the quest itself, offer a synthesis of results to the mid-1990s, and identify some priorities for future theory and research.
Nature of the quest

Viewed up close or at one point in time, it would be easy to conclude that efforts to conceptualize leadership in schools over the past century have been going in circles. From an upclose perspective, it is especially difficult to understand several issues with which this chapter has been centrally preoccupied: the genesis of different concepts of leadership; why a leadership concept falls into favor at one point in time only to fall out of favor eventually, overshadowed by a different concept; and whether the multiple leadership concepts encountered in the literature are truly competing with one another or, rather, reflecting different elements of some, as yet to be described, more sophisticated conception of leadership in schools. Chaos or complexity?

Although chaos seems to be the fashionable answer among most of those who have written about development in the field of school leadership, the inquiry described in this chapter arrived at a moderately more optimistic conclusion. Unquestionably, conceptual development related to educational leadership over the century has not occurred through any widely agreed on, explicit game plan (more like the flight of the bumble bee than a bullet, to use Phil Jackson’s metaphor). But then what social science concept has? Rather, the developmental process seems to be well captured by Hutchin’s (1995) view of organizational learning as a process of mutual adaptation manifest in the actions of individual members of the leadership community as they reacted to, criticized, and built on one another’s ideas. It is neither necessary nor likely that many individual members of the leadership community have understood the pattern of actions represented in the community as a whole. So justifying the claim that the concept of school leadership has developed through some defensible process does not also require justifying the claim that those in the midst of the process intentionally designed it that way.

From the perspective of our own analysis, the mutually adaptive process through which concepts of school leadership have developed over this century has consisted of conceptual differentiation, recalibration, and elaboration. This seems to be the case for all leadership concepts. Some version of each category of leadership concept, if not the specific models that each subsumes, was evident by the middle of the century. Differentiation is evident, for example, in the gradual increase in number of sources of power and authority used by scholars to justify the exercise of leadership and in the further clarification of implications of each of these sources for leadership practice. Recalibration is visible in the adaptation or updating of the meaning and expression of enduring leadership concepts in acknowledgment of changing problems and contexts. Elaboration is illustrated in efforts to deepen understandings of those sources of leadership legitimization as well as to extend knowledge of the practices associated with each different approach to leadership. The outcomes of this process, although not synthesized well to date, are conceptions of leadership in schools that are increasingly complex (a good thing), multi-dimensional, ecologically valid, defensible, and user-friendly.
A relational conception of leadership

A type of synthesis of contemporary leadership literature has been accomplished through the six-fold classification of leadership concepts that subsumes an initial, more specific set of 20 (refer to Table 2). These categories, however, are not directly comparable. They do not provide alternative solutions to the same problem. Rather, these concepts focus attention on different aspects of the organization. For instance, managerial leadership awards considerable importance to organizational policies and procedures, whereas instructional leadership focuses on the organization’s core technology. The six leadership categories also attend to different pieces of the leadership puzzle. Contingency approaches, for example, focus on leaders’ problem-solving processes whereas moral leadership attends to leaders’ values. Finally, the six sets of leadership concepts also concern themselves with different aspects of those designated as followers. Transformational leadership emphasizes the importance of followers’ commitments whereas participative leadership concerns itself largely with followers’ roles in decision making, as an illustration.

Thus these six approaches to leadership do not explicitly represent a set of discrete dimensions that, taken together, provide a comprehensive account of what is entailed in leadership. They still place excessive emphasis on the practices or internal processes of an individual person designated as “leader,” for example.

In this concluding section of the chapter, we explore and illustrate the possibility of developing a more comprehensive account of leadership based on relationships. After Wheatley (1994) and others, such a conception views leadership as a more or less complex set of relationships cohering around a core of common intentions. The ways in which existing leadership concepts differ from one another suggest three of the four sets of elements likely to be interacting in such relationships: the leader, the follower, and the organization. The fourth element is the environment within which the organization and its individual members find themselves.

Leaders and followers

For purposes of developing a more comprehensive account of leadership, these elements of both leader and follower that interact might be conceptualized as capacities (knowledge and skills), attitudes, values, and goals (elements of motivation), and practices (more or less overt behaviors). School leadership literature is replete with treatments of leadership defined by the relationships between one or more of these elements of leaders and followers; for example, the relationship between a principal’s vision (goals) and a teacher’s classroom practices (as in instructional leadership), or a principal’s practices and a teacher’s motivations (as in transformational leadership).
Organizational theory offers several ways to conceptualize relevant elements of an organization. By way of illustration, we have found significant relationships in some of our own work (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1995) between leadership and a set of six organizational elements derived from such a theory (Daft, 1988; Banner & Gagné, 1995; Galbraith, 1977; Bolman & Deal, 1991). These elements include mission and vision, culture, structure, information collection and decision-making processes, programs and instruction, strategies for change, and policies and resources. The literature on school leadership also provides many examples of leadership defined in terms of the relationships between some of these elements of the organization and one or more of the other sets of variables included in this conception. Symbolic leadership, for example, describes relationships between the values both implicit and explicit in a leader’s practices and the culture of the school. Participative leadership focuses attention on, among other things, the relationships among teachers’ practices, principals’ practices, and organizational structures.

Environment

A fourth element interacting in a relational conception of leadership is the environment within which the organization functions (in other words, whatever is defined as outside the “boundaries” of the organization). Although given considerable attention in organizational theory, this element is not well represented in most existing categories of leadership concepts: the subcategory of moral leadership referred to as “political” in Table 2 is the primary exception, sometimes focusing on the relationship between the interests of those inside and outside of the organization. Our review of the historical and theoretical roots of these concepts suggests that this is an unfortunate shortcoming. The perceived value of a leadership concept at any point in time, as well as its eventual fall from favor, seem largely to be explained by events in the larger environment within which the organization finds itself.

As with organizations, critical elements of the environment in which schools find themselves can be defined in a variety of ways. Daft (1988) offers a set of elements with demonstrable relevance to schools:

- The pool of human resources which employees are drawn from (such as the extent to which talented college graduates choose to enter or not enter teaching);
- The market for services provided by the organization (the challenge to public schools’ quasi-monopoly on students provided by the recent charter schools movement);
- The availability of financing for the organization’s initiatives (erosion of support for school funding by increased public demand for health care and other social services);
• New technologies in the environment that may threaten the need for the services provided by the organization (the extent to which computer-based technologies provide access to educational services and information outside the bounds of formal educational institutions);
• Economic conditions that influence the volume of business (the impact on support for school bond issues of recessionary business cycles);
• Governments and the nature of their policies and regulations (the extent to which many current western governments are embarked on major educational restructuring initiatives);
• Sociocultural conditions such as social value systems and demographics (generational shifts in the size of the school age population and the effects this has on support for education of youth).

These elements making up the wider environment of schools and other organizations offer leadership some of its greatest challenges, as just the handful of examples provided here demonstrates. Some recent leadership inquiries have begun to take them explicitly into account. For example, an interest in the relationship between leader practices, teacher practices, and government restructuring initiatives is evident in recent research on leadership in the context of school-based management (Murphy & Beck, 1995). Goldring and Rallis (1993) explore the meaning of school leadership through the relationship between leaders’ practices and most of the elements of the environment identified by Daft (1988). But the importance of most environmental elements has not been well reflected in efforts to conceptualize school leadership to date.

Relationships

Although it is necessary to specify at least illustrative elements of each of the constructs interacting in a relational conception of leadership, the most complex and important aspects of leadership are to be found in the nature of the relationships themselves. How can such relationships adequately be conceptualized? The generic definition, with which the chapter began, of leadership as an influence process concerning the choice of goals and the development and implementation of the means for their achievement, is one starting point for answering this question. Additionally, these relationships can be viewed from both descriptive and normative perspectives. With purely descriptive purposes in mind, variation in influence processes can be explored within such dimensions as strength, direction (one way, reciprocal), and type, for example. Normative interests in the relationships of a leadership act require exploration of additional dimensions of influence. For example, transformational theorists argue that such influence ought to elevate the motives of both leaders and followers (Burns, 1978). Critical theorists argue that in influence exercised through leadership ought to stimulate analysis and reflection about collective intentions and the means of their achievement, as well as be empowering (Foster, 1986). Warwick and
Kelman (1976) provide an illustration of the different forms that in uence can take and how these forms vary in the autonomy and freedom they offer individuals affected by them, an essential condition of empowerment. At the least empowering end of their continuum of influence types is coercion, “[a situation in which] one person or group forces another person or group to act or refrain from acting under the threat of severe deprivation” (1976, p. 484). Facilitation, the most empowering form of influence according to this view, is “designed to make it easier for an individual to implement his own choice or to satisfy his own desires” (1976, p. 491). Between these two extremes is persuasion (the use of argument and reason to influence a person to change), and manipulation (altering factors that in uence a person’s choices without their knowledge).

The distinction between management and leadership contributes little or nothing to an understanding of leadership conceived of as a set of relationships. Relationships simply vary in their complexity. At the least complex extreme, such relationships entail a relatively small number of transparent interactions. Someone in a formal leadership role, for example, tells a willing member of the organization to undertake a non-trivial task, understood by leader and follower in the same way, in order to accomplish a goal of the organization that both leader and follower value. Although this interaction might be considered a prime candidate for classification as “management,” it still conforms to the basic properties of leadership conceptualized from a relational perspective.

Given this conception of leadership, such simple forms of leadership are probably the minority, however. The potential complexity arising from varying forms of relations among leaders, followers, organization, and environment helps explain the difficulties leadership theorists have experienced in developing a widely agreed-upon understanding of leadership. Stimulated by complexity theory (Waldrop, 1992), it is reasonable to represent the relationships constituting many individual leadership interactions as forming a system. Although each such system may include some relationships that are linear, many are likely to be dynamic, reciprocal, and, therefore, highly unpredictable. Potential followers, for example, may develop quite different interpretations of the same influence initiative, interpretations sufficiently varied as to make the same initiative both facilitative and coercive, depending upon who is doing the interpreting. What distinguishes a relationship defined as leadership from some other type of dynamic, non-linear, social interaction is its intentionality.

Implications for future research and theory

It is possible to imagine a large number of promising directions for future theory and research about school leadership in light of our relational conception of leadership. Two directions stand out as deserving special attention. First, rather than devoting exclusive energy to the development of new leadership concepts, there is much to be learned from further development of existing concepts such as the six categories of leadership summarized in this chapter. In particular, it

132
would be useful to pursue such questions as: What are the similarities and differences among these leadership categories in terms of key relationships? What is the nature of the influence evident in these relationships? and What are the consequences of these key relationships for followers and the organization as a whole?

The second promising direction for future theory and research would be to extend the small body of recent research examining, in particular, the relationships between leadership practices, capacities, and motives, and selected elements of the environment in which schools are located. An especially neglected aspect of that environment is social values. Although such values appear to be of increasing salience in a rapidly globalizing world (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Wong & Cheng, 1996), all six conceptions of leadership reviewed in this chapter reflect western values and have been developed within a framework of western assumptions, problems, and evidence. “Which cultural values have different conceptions of leader capacities, motives, and practices most adequate?” is a question that needs to be pursued as part of the agenda for future research and theory concerning school leadership. Part of the inquiry required by this question includes the identification of additional leadership concepts, those with their genesis in non-western cultures.

Note

Because of space restrictions, references are made in the text only to examples of articles in each category. A complete bibliography is available from the first author on request.

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A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP


HISTORY AND RESEARCH


138
A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP


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HISTORY AND RESEARCH


A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP


Anniversary reflections

Recent education reforms have produced some unintended effects. Measures taken to subject a vast area of public spending to greater predictability and control, to by-pass bureaucracy and give back initiative to teachers and parents, seem to have encouraged quite different and unforeseeable developments.

One of these is that education, as an institution, has become more reflective upon itself. From its beginnings in the nineteenth century, public education was dynamic with a sense of missionary social purpose. Dissemination of knowledge, cultivation of enlightenment and provision of opportunity for all were goals which positioned teachers and schools centrally within the nation state’s modernising, civilising, project.

Today, we are not so sure of ourselves. Politicians focus on mini-max strategies, re-casting policies which generate least opposition in order to yield as much recordable improvement as can be squeezed from inelastic resource levels. But parents and teachers are more sceptical and unsure; emerging ‘partnerships’ between them are understood as collaborative, discursive encounters in learning, for their own and their children’s personal bene t. Missions are for marketeers, whilst there is ‘no mission’ for traditionalists clinging to earlier beliefs in ‘social progress’. Local ‘communities’ are now atomised, fragmented, disempowered. Increasingly, individuals search for alternative networks in search of companionship or a livelihood, grasping electronic access to virtual communities for meeting and for learning opportunities which their particular locality is now unable to provide. Access, rather than provision, is the most that can be offered close to home. Education has slipped, somewhat unwittingly, it seems, over the precipice of post-modernity.

Another approach to the past, at a moment of anniversary, is to re-examine the recorded events themselves over the period of 25 years. It was a most turbulent period in the history of British education; Labour’s incomplete
efforts to introduce comprehensive education were followed by more than fifteen years of Tory reforms, still being implemented and extended, even, most recently, under a New Labour government. LEAs once ‘owned’ their schools, and, in the 1970s, were urged to adopt corporate management techniques to replace their historic tradition of local or municipal stewardship. The Houghton pay awards acknowledged the increased complexity of schools and encouraged teachers to think that at last they were not only socially valued but would be financially and commensurately rewarded. Implementing ROSLA was on the horizon; then came the ‘oil crisis’. Interesting and progressive new curricula were being developed such as MACOS, Nuffield science and the School Council’s history project. The main anxieties were about a shortage of student places and teachers, and providing physically and educationally for ROSLA pupils.

Now, 25 years later, we have been ‘reformed’, yet everyone is searching for a ‘role’. The LEA’s is diminished and unclear. Parents want to be more actively involved in their children’s learning but too few know how, with any confidence. Some schools are still short of teachers, but there is no physical shortage of student places. Most young people stay in education until they are 18 but then enter an adult world undermined by a bewildering array of ‘risks’ and unequal opportunities (see pp. 30–31). Instead of ‘mission’, the contemporary climate is one of ‘panic’, confusion and the search for ‘security’. Preoccupations of this generation of parents are about standards, testing, drugs and unemployment. Neither rationality nor its applications in the natural and calculative sciences seem to secure the requisite freedom from life’s anxieties.

This book is offered as a celebration of work published in the BEMAS journal between 1972 and 1997, a resource to assist critical review and reflection and, in the limited space available, provides challenging and at times provocative comment by four editors who have collaborated in the selection and editing of the material. The first issue of the journal appeared in the Summer of 1972 as The Educational Administration Bulletins, under the editorship of Meredydd Hughes. It was renamed Educational Administration in 1975 (Hughes, 1997) and after 1979 was edited by Ray Bolam (1979–1983), under whom it became Educational Management and Administration, published by Longmans. Michael Locke was editor between 1984 and 1991 and Peter Ribbins from 1991 to the present.

This review considers a sample of all the papers published over those 25 years. They vary widely in quality, content and approach. Some of them expose earlier research agendas, others illustrate and explore the flux of professional concerns and uncertainties. All the papers identified for discussion will, it is hoped, repay re-reading. One of their most striking features is the extent to which action and outcome have become more important than knowing for its own sake. Theoretical questions, once examined for their intrinsic epistemical significance, are now considered primarily for their methodological or positional implications. Performativity, consideration of, for example, what will strengthen
the position of educational research in a wider and more open marketplace for research funds, dominates institutional and individual incentive structures. Public policy issues in education are discussed in *EMA* in the early 1980s, but become gradually less prominent as professional and organisational controversies assume increasing importance. Many of these issues form the subject matter of four short editorial commentaries which introduce the four sections of selected papers.

We think some of those papers are outstanding and regret the extent to which they have been abridged. They are felt to be representative of the experience of those engaged in education during that time, as well as indicative of the journal’s significant achievements over the period. In contrast, this essay attempts to anthologise, illustrate and critically review the whole of the journal’s output from 1972 to 1997, in its ever-changing historical and educational context. An impossible, perhaps, but not unrewarding task.

### I Saying and doing

Meredydd Hughes’ first editorial stated the aims of the new Society and its journal as: ‘to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge about research, training and practice in educational administration, and also to provide a forum for the discussion of new approaches to the preparation and development of administrators and new developments in research’ (Hughes, 1972c). He expressed the hope that *EAB* ‘will help to forge the links of the dynastic alliance which will surely follow the obsequies of the old order’ (Hughes, 1972b). The ‘old order’ referred, in William Taylor’s phrase, to ‘the tired old dichotomy between theory and practice in education which ought to have been dead long ago’ (Taylor, 1973, Chapter 8). But was the dichotomy really dead? Recent experience supports scepticism; reforms are increasingly devised and formulated with scant attention to professional or academic advice. Under Sir Ron Dearing the National Curriculum had to be rescued by teachers and academics and the government’s recent Green Paper on the Learning Society (DfEE, 1997a) seems to have incorporated few of the insights offered, for example, in the Fryer Report (DfEE, 1997b).

#### Theory and practice: views of practitioners

Yet questions concerning relations between theory and practice in education are enduring and deep-lying. In an early article by H. L. Gray (1972, p. 1), the training which senior teachers received was said to be based on ‘the learning of practical skills and self-knowledge’; theory was ‘a support to an understanding of . . . skills and self-knowledge’ and, through its capacity to explain, can ‘provide useful models for analysis and prediction.’ The imputed ‘power of prediction’ itself generated suspicion regarding the value of research. This is evident in the comment of another headteacher (Morrison, 1973) on contributions by aca-
demics (McKenzie, 1973; Cumming, 1973). Behind an otherwise restrained endorsement by teachers for the work of academic colleagues, there seems to have lurked a fear that academic research might lead to a loss of professional autonomy for teachers and the replacement of schools as ‘communities possessing a kind of organic solidarity’ with ‘mechanical contrivances powered by direct command.’ Another ground for practitioner suspicion emerges from the reference by Cumming (1971) to his classic (and in many ways still isolated) study of educational costs. His article illustrates the inherent futility of conceptualising educational research in manipulative or instrumental terms, an error into which researchers themselves sometimes fall. ‘Persons at all points in the education business, including researchers themselves, often unconsciously expect the system to be changed by research as it is currently conceived.’ This, for Cumming, is not only a ‘crass naivety’ but endangers the positive functions of research in fields of social and institutional life. He agrees with Gass (1971) in his OECD review of Educational Policies for the 1970s that there is ‘an argument against the support of basic research with the objective of obtaining “results” which may be “applied”’. Short-termism and instrumentality are exemplified in the reported response of Scottish Education Department officials to his work. They were ‘surprised’ to be asked how and when the research data on school and college costs could be used, though it had been gathered in institutions they administered. For ‘they, like other administrators, desire, albeit unconsciously, to keep the mystique of their work to themselves and see researchers as the providers of facts which others (themselves) can interpret’. There is more than a suggestion here that identifying clearly what educational research is to be used for will assist definition of what it should be.

**Greenfield and the positivists**

Green eld (1976) made his first appearance among contributions to a symposium which he led at the IIP Conference in 1974. None of the reviewers is outrightly opposed to Green eld’s position; Michael Harrison is warmly appreciative of Green eld’s ‘connectivity’, and its recognition of the human constructedness of organisational life (ibid., p. 3). Pat and John White (ibid., pp. 6–10) are severe on Green eld’s subjectivism and an inconsistency they detect in his rejection of both ‘realism’ and ‘idealism’. They suggest his insights might have been more cogently developed if they ‘were not entangled with the trendy nonsense of “phenomenology” ’. Hoyle’s commentary (ibid., pp. 4–6), though short, is both thoughtful and synoptic in its range of suggestion. He reminds us that phenomenology reveals how individuals make their roles rather than take them. Today, we might say that they both make and take them, from the patterned, differentiated historical circumstances of their lives (Giddens, 1995). But this is an excellent and instructive short essay in criticism; constructive and balanced. It opens windows and invites the reader to explore theoretically what is
meant by the organisational dimension of the teacher’s role in the management of learning.

Green eld himself, in his rejoinder (Green eld, 1978a), takes Hoyle’s comments very seriously, though the tone of much of his piece is one of quiet resignation in the aftermath of an unholy row at the 1974 IIP in Bristol. He clings tenaciously to what are still today important questions: ‘What is real about organisations?’ and ‘What can theory about them mean, if we do not agree on that reality?’ (p. 86). That ‘reality’ is frequently, for many individuals, a prison, formed of ignorance, poverty, and the unequal distribution of human power to effect change in the disposition of institutional possibilities in the social world. To Grif ths (1977), Green eld was contesting the self-evident:

I also wonder about Green eld’s basic contention that organisations are not ‘real’. To me, New York University is ‘real’, the Salvation Army is ‘real’, IBM is ‘real’ and the Catholic Church is ‘real’.

Green eld, for his part, wanted to change the way in which such organisations served human ends. Some of those institutions had not always acted in ways bene cial to human development. They tended to pursue their own organisational aims by dedication to internally coherent and ‘rational’ rules. Yet, as Bauman, Chomsky and countless millions of twentieth century victims of injustice and barbarism have shown us:

The greatest crimes against humanity (and by humanity) have been perpetrated in the name of the rule of reason.

(Bauman, 1993, p. 238)

Green eld’s integrity of social purpose and justi cation as a theorist shine through in this paper: ‘Social and organisational theories are thus perhaps seen as visions of the world which people act out. In this view, “veri cation” of theory becomes as much a moral judgement as an empirical process’ (1978a, p. 88).

**Wisdom and knowledge**

Kendell and Byrne (1978), two less well-known American academics, continue the debate, observing that so far it had been concerned with ‘victory’ rather than ‘demonstration’ and was therefore essentially a political controversy (pp. 107–8). But there is little evidence in this debate of awareness of the insights of Kuhn (1974), of the work of Bernstein and the sociologists of knowledge, or of the emerging assaults (Feyerabend, Lyotard, Derrida) upon the very concept of knowledge as truth authorised by application of heuristic method. Methods are tools not forms of underwriting truth; their selection is value laden. Similarly, the Vatican’s treatment of Galileo turned on issues of core belief and values; an allusion taken up by Green eld in response to Hoyle:
The image of the telescope is fortunate, since it evokes the history of another ideological battle about nature and how we should perceive it . . . Only faith in a new order of things, in a new method of enquiry, and in a new cosmology could bring one to see the rightness of the heliocentric view.

(Green eld, 1978a, p. 91)

Here perhaps is the root of Green eld’s vulnerability. Since the Reformation, a single, authorising ‘faith’ (in Scripture) had been ‘defeated’, at least in principle, by the claims of empirical rationality. Green eld hoped that phenomenology’s superior capability to ‘account’ richly for the experiences and exigencies of lived reality might redeem the failure of positivistic educational theory to show how teachers could enhance what they provided for learners, in particular learning settings. The utter poverty of positivism’s contribution to educational practices is revealed starkly in the use made by Kendell and Byrne of Patrick Suppes (1974):

It is often thought and said that what we most need in education is wisdom and broad understanding of the issues that confront us. Not at all, I say. What we need are deeply structured theories in education that drastically reduce, if not eliminate, the need for wisdom. I do not want wise men (sic) to design or build the airplane I fly in, but rather technical men who understand the theory of aerodynamics and the structural properties of metal. And so it is with education. Wisdom we need, but good theories we need even more.

Green eld saw that this was wrong; that in education we need wisdom more than anything else. Ask any child what is most desirable in a parent – wisdom and goodness or knowledge and power? What Green eld could not perhaps realise in 1975 was the impossibility of any single theoretical or political perspective providing the necessary ground from which to remove the baneful influence of ‘theory’ and its instrumentalities. Only now can we dimly perceive that wisdom and its ethical postulates must in future be plurally articulated, contested and found room for in a disharmonious social world, replete with disjunction, indeterminacy and radical uncertainty. Different ethnicities, genders (including their transformations) and value systems must be given freedom to cohabit with their differences intact.

Contested control

It would be mistaken to see Hughes’ editorship (1972–1979) as dominated by theoretical confrontations. Management training (Vols. 1.1; 3.2; 4.1), the relation between the professional and educational roles inherent in Headship (Vol. 2.1), current innovations in management within local government (Vols. 1.1;
3.1; 7.2), in-school evaluation (Stanton, 1978, 42–53) and the implications for professional as distinct from lay participation and responsibility in the curriculum and, more particularly, in the management of schools, received increasing attention. The publication of the Taylor Report (DES, 1977) was highly influential and perhaps stimulated interest in ‘innovation’ and ‘change’ (Vols. 4.1; 4.2; 6.1). A response to Taylor in early 1978 (Barnes, Humble, Davies and Lyons, 1978) concludes with some prescient reservations:

- it is important not to expect too much from structural reform – people and processes will begin to change things but structure by itself will not do. Further attention to decision-making processes and the style of leadership of heads is thus needed.
- there may be no discernible relationships between ‘better education’ (whatever that may be) and this type of structural change.
- there are other pressures leading to centralisation of decision-making which will effectively counter the decentralisation movement – control of the curriculum, the economic circumstances, declining school populations, etc.
- we are still left with the fundamental dilemma that, within these proposals there may be little congruence between public and social accountability (embracing the wider community) and financial accountability (still through the LEA).

Indeed, though Taylor turned out to be formative in altering the public and professional ‘terms of reference’ within which these questions came to be examined, and its core proposal that the curriculum could no longer be a matter solely for teachers (DES, 1977, p. 49) was implemented with increasing specificity in the Acts of 1980, 1986 and 1988, some crucial qualitative improvements (participative school leadership, understanding of the relation between forms of school organisation and their educational effects, closer ‘t’ between pupils’ school experience and the requirements of the social and economic conditions for which they are being prepared), remain as elusive as ever. And the apparently unsolvable conflict between the interests of individuals, localities and central government in matters of social policy are still as much a source of parental discontent as the conflicts between teachers and parents which led to the William Tyndale débâcle (ILEA, 1976) and the establishment of the Taylor Committee itself.

II Educational agenda in a more politicised environment

The Society’s first Research Seminar 1 in Birmingham in March 1979 produced a volume rich in historical knowledge and illumination. Current British research is reviewed and there is a comprehensive post-mortem on transatlantic bickerings about ‘Theory’. Greenfield’s reflections (Greenfield, 1979a) and Hughes and Ribbins’ (1979) astute and pragmatic commentary are most valuable.

George Baron (1979a) surveys a decade of ‘Research in Educational Admin-
The conflict between academic and practitioner arises from each party necessarily inhabiting a different universe. As the researcher develops his approach to his problem, no matter how ‘practical’ its orientation, he draws on material and ideas from outside the immediate situation to help him in his analysis and explanations. By so doing he distances himself from the administrator who, when subsequently reading the research report, is alienated by what appears to be irrelevant and extraneous material: furthermore, from his experience the administrator brings to his reading a multitude of questions stimulated by the research but not answered by it.

(Baron, 1973, pp. 13–15)

Different mental worlds are revealed here, arising from the multiplicity of interests, knowledge, goals and motives of research users and makers of educational knowledge. There is also a particular kind of knowledge possessed by those professing education, as distinct from the knowledge claimed by colleagues in the social sciences and other disciplines (Taylor, 1973, p. 194): ‘... knowledge about education is to a large and increasing extent role specific knowledge.’

Dissatisfaction among users of research is summed up by Shipman (1976): ‘From within local government the research enterprise in academia seems to deliver the wrong goods, at the wrong time, without an invoice.’

Lord Rothschild (CPRS, 1971) exemplified for Baron the central government interest being articulated with increasing force in the 1970s, foreshadowing those orthodoxies later enunciated by the Office of Science and Technology (OST, 1993) in Realising Our Potential: ‘the funding agency says what it wants and the researcher works within a defined brief.’

Believing that the DES, aided by the SSRC, would protect the research community from these onslaughts, Baron separates out ‘Policy Related Research’, the particular interest of government, from other areas in which the majority of academics can work relatively free from outside interference. He suggests the following four categories:

- Research for Understanding
- Research for Policy Development
- Research into Administrative Structure and Process
- Evaluative Research.

The purpose of Baron’s distinction was to protect academic freedom. But today, a different division seems to be emerging; one in which educational research is parcelled into ‘soft’ areas (action research, school effectiveness studies,
curriculum evaluation and monitoring), safely entrustable to the weaker, less well-resourced institutions (obtaining Grade 4 or less in the Research Assessment Exercise), and ‘hard’ research, large-scale critical investigations of educational structures and goals, which can be cross-fertilised and strengthened by links with contributory social science disciplines, of the kind envisaged by the ESRC thematic programme areas (ESRC, 1997).

**Interests and approaches**

The phenomenological ‘shift’ and its applicability to ‘case study work’ is exemplified by Best, Jarvis and Ribbins (1979) on pastoral care in the comprehensive school. The gap between the (functional) realities of practice and the (heavily prescriptive) rhetoric of practitioner accounts is neither ignored nor allowed to inhibit discovery and innovation. Attempting ‘to marry the logic of Falsificationism with the Phenomenological premium on meanings’, hypothesis testing is undertaken through questionnaires and a ‘Rhetoric Detector’ designed to untangle and expose intricacies and substitutions in the language of justification used by practitioners (pp. 64–6). The language in which teachers account for their actions and their pupils’ unrealised attainments is as thoroughly permeated by the child-centred philosophy of the Plowden Report as the explanations of their successors today are imbued with terms drawn from accountancy and management. For example, the learner’s ‘busy-ness’, an indication then of fruitful learning in process, is now expressed as an aspect of **efficiency**; the learner’s ‘readiness’ to move forward at an appropriate stage, significant then diagnostically, is taken now as evidence of attainment and becomes an index of the school’s **effectiveness**.

At around the turn of the decade, a new and more urgent preoccupation with the relationship between educational research, public policy and the needs of pupils and practitioners is discernible. Policy ‘directions’ were becoming more prominent in researchers’ agenda, at the expense of methodological concerns. Interestingly, Lakomski (1989, p. 43) notes a similar shift in her consideration of Australian work at about the same time:

> This move makes possible the focus on political values, and power, and thus helps address normative issues in educational administration hitherto neglected.

In a brief Conference introduction, Glatter (1981) observes that:

> Whatever the precise meaning of ‘research into educational policy-making’, it seemed to be agreed that not much of it had actually been done.

(p. 5)
This would soon change, along with a developing awareness in the DES of an urgent need for harder-edged, policy-related information and research. Following the publication of the Yellow Book, the Ruskin College Prime Ministerial speech of 1976, and LEA responses to Circular 14/77, in which the disparate and passive role of many local authorities in curriculum matters was exposed, the new Conservative government brought a fresh impetus to the need adumbrated in the Taylor Report to remove control of the curriculum and organisation of schools from its long-standing niche within the traditional ‘partnership’ shared by teachers, LEA of cers and DES of cials. Central government (at least, certain political groupings within it) soon began to dismantle fences and poke more intrusively and purposefully among the intricacies of what had been cultivated as a ‘secret garden’.

**Externalities**

Education was being compelled to answer more specifically to its natural aspiration to contribute to the welfare of society at large. Educational research was being required to answer empirical questions, illuminate the relationship between normative changes and their implications for educational organisation and practice, and specify appropriate action which could win public support.

In the terms of Drake’s (1981) paper, attending to externalities required a more forceful determination by educational researchers to assist with the discovery of modes of educational and training delivery which were consonant with internal and external efficiency.

> By internal efficiency is meant that combination of resources which yields the maximum achievement of [educational] objectives for a given commitment of resources. By external efficiency is meant the gearing of [education] to objectives external to the [education] system, e.g. production of a desired flow of skilled manpower or meeting certain equity objectives for employment.

(p. 15)

The introduction of GNVQ and, more recently, Ofsted’s campaign to eliminate ‘progressive teaching methods’ (TES, 1996) may be considered thinly nourished legates of that rationality. Yet, sadly, too little of the rigorous method of enquiry outlined in Drake’s paper has contributed to either educational policy or its implementation in succeeding years. For example, greater attention to ‘the effect of financial arrangement on the parties to the [educational process]’ has for almost ten years now been used to justify delegation of local financial powers. Schools and colleges will, it may reasonably be claimed, make more efficient and effective decisions if the power to allocate resources is more generally available to them. Yet the equity consequences of assessment-led teaching and the ‘marketised’ environment in which schools compete on the basis of
accredited results have been ignored by central government (Simkins, 1995). Even now, more than twenty years after OECD articulated the need for a shift of resources within education systems from the front-end of statutory provision (5–16) to a more ‘end-loaded’ investment in ‘lifelong’ education, with all the implications of such a shift for more equitable and socially relevant patterns of both distribution and learning outcomes, only fragmentary indications of such a redirection, chiefly bearing upon HE funding and in response to fiscal pressures, are apparent.

A noteworthy attempt (Pascal, 1987) to remedy the ‘scarcity of empirically grounded studies’ is evident in a subsequent study undertaken from 1981 to 1985 in the University of Birmingham. The work of governing bodies and their working relationships with parents, teachers, other politicians and administrators is examined and discussed by reference to four different dichotomies which were identified. The effectiveness and appropriateness of recent reforms of the composition and functions of school governing bodies were studied from four conceptually different but related perspectives: elitist and pluralist models of the distribution of power in the practice of decision-making, assessment of the relative claims of centralised and devolved approaches to the distribution of powers and duties, the extent and consequences of role ambiguities experienced among professional and lay representatives, and the incidence and implications of functional conflict arising from contradictory expectations of support and accountability on the part of parents and the general public. The report concludes that the distribution of powers ‘embodied, but not clearly defined, in the 1944 Act, is inadequate and out of date’ and that ‘major redefinition’ is required, beyond that provided in the 1986 Act. Unfortunately, the grant of extensive additional powers to governing bodies in the 1988 Act, as well as in the Teachers’ Pay and Conditions of Service Act of 1991 (DES, 1991b) clarified matters only by adopting a thoroughly managerialised concept of the governing body, without resolving the ambiguities and conflicts inherent in the continuing and extended exposure to the twin claims of accountability and a delegated managerial function. Governors retained responsibilities to represent the community, fulfill the requirements of central policy and regulation, and account to both parents and legally constituted authorities (LEA, employment tribunals, admissions appeal boards, residual powers of the Secretary of State) for what schools managed to achieve within their own exigencies of devolved budgets, subject both to centrally approved formulae and centrally imposed rate capping.

Quality and satisfaction

More generally recognisable than the somewhat forbidding abstraction implied by ‘externalities’, the term Quality Control in Education was the focus of discussion at the Society’s Ninth Annual Conference in 1980 and was accorded a special issue of the journal (Vol. 9, No. 2, 1981). Taylor (1981) points out that quality is a relational, not an absolute property. Indeed, it has no meaning except
in relation to some generally understood function (ibid., pp. 2–3) and, as such, bears a cost derived from society’s agreed allocation of available resources, earmarked to secure desired social outcomes. Quality control, far from being a technically discrete operation, lies at the heart of the political process, in which rival claims on social resources are contested and resolved. Quality always carries a price tag. Achieving it requires intricate estimations of needs and satisfactions which must be explored at the level of both individual and collective consequences (Drake’s externalities once again). It is the ‘public good’ component and its relation to individual consumption and investment considerations which make simplified ‘objective’ measures so dangerous and lead to Taylor’s forthright reminder that ‘customer satisfaction is not the sole criterion of satisfaction in educational provision’ (p. 6). The ambiguous and underdeveloped role and contribution of the Inspectorate in relation to these issues is brought out in the succinct conclusion of Young (1980) to her review of HMI’s Aspects of Secondary Education in England.

What was difficult to discern, however, were the underlying models or theories of the nature of teaching and how schools function that were used to make the professional judgements contained in the survey; no framework of theoretical and methodological assumptions was apparent with which to assess the quality of the evidence. I find this a serious omission.

III Change and continuities

Professional development for senior teachers

Fittingly, Hughes (1982) contributed the opening paper of Volume 10.1 to report on a two-year research project, funded by the DES, to study the extent and nature of courses of professional development. The 1978 Conference had chosen a similar theme and two papers from that earlier conference are also examined here (Glatter, 1979; Baron, 1979b). Under review at the conference had been an issue which, in the words of Royston McHugh, ‘was of direct professional relevance and of major importance to all members of the Society’, as well as that of the future development of the Society itself.

Hughes’ report argued for the establishment of a School Management Unit under the general oversight of the Schools Council, itself at that time the subject of review by Mrs Nancy Trenaman. However, the Trenaman recommendation ‘that the Schools Council should continue and with its present functions’ was not accepted by the government. Her recommendation ‘for a representative Schools Council’ and a ‘new initiative in management development and training for headteachers and senior staff . . . associated with a widely representative educational body such as the Schools Council’ (Hughes, 1982, pp. 13–14) was ignored. The aftermath is well known. Extended powers for governing bodies
were introduced in 1986 and 1988; locally delegated schemes of financial management and school admissions and a prescribed pattern of curriculum and assessment have followed from the 1988 Act. But little was done to prepare senior staff in relation to their new management duties until the recent initiatives by the Teacher Training Agency. Hughes’ recommendation had been for:

- a structured programme of award bearing courses . . . to meet the long term career needs of those involved in, or aspiring to, management responsibilities in education;
- a flexible programme of short courses of more immediate relevance, focused on particular topics or skill requirements and possibly aimed at specific levels of responsibility. (p. 9)

Teacher unions and the Society of Education Officers were to have had a major role in the provision to be organised by the School Management Unit. BEMAS too was to have lent at least some form of regional support. A question uneasily forming itself on reading these deliberations of more than ten years ago is: could our educational establishment have done more to provide a more secure and well-founded future, at least in relation to a structure of provision for professional development which ensured a constructive and innovative role for members of the profession itself?

**Dualism in practice?**

The 1978 conference had produced two papers, by Baron (1979a) and Glatter (1979), setting out contrasting approaches to professional development, two quite different conceptions of how the Society and the activity and aspirations of its members should interact to enhance ‘effective practice’. In Baron’s paper, a pervading dualism, of theory and practice and of thought and action, is evident from the first page:

> educational administration . . . a field of study which contributes to effective practice.

(p. 1)

Starting from two key propositions, that educational administration is a field of study, practice and training distinct from other forms of administration and that it should be studied systematically, alongside planned periods of practice, by those holding administrative positions, firm conclusions follow: more resources, more academic departments, more recognised courses and a national accrediting body responsible, among other things, for ‘preparing the ground for’ a national policy for recruitment and professional development. The paradigm position adopted here appears to be one in which the University/Academy/Professional Body is the significant creator, coder and repository of knowledge, prerequisite for the shared
Glatter’s approach and perspective is very different. While Baron sets himself explicitly to review ‘what we have achieved, as measured against the aims . . .’, Glatter entitles his paper ‘Future Directions . . .’ and begins by setting out biographically his entry position as ‘humble administrator’, a practitioner who became an academic in order to ‘understand something of the processes in which I was engaged’ (p. 19). Dichotomies for Glatter are to be sought out as potential fault lines in a network of social and professional relations, the originating source of practice, not as orienting contours in a process of conceptual clarification and systematisation. The potentially restrictive implications of the term ‘professional development’ should not be allowed to create an enclave within which professional insiders can more readily arm themselves with jargon, ‘psychobabble’ and other protective devices. Provision, he argues, should be extended to lay participants, politicians and governors.

On a conceptual level, an emerging dichotomy between policy and management is deplored both because it conflicts with the reality of how educational and governmental institutions actually work and, even more importantly, because ‘the separation of values from techniques always seems to me potentially dangerous’. Surveying briefly some current developments in North America and Northern Europe, Glatter argues unequivocally for educational administration, not as a discipline or field of study in its own right but as an applied professional field requiring a theory of practice (italics added) ‘based much more than in the past on the special features of leadership, management and change in educational institutions’, rather than relying on ‘general theories drawn largely from the social sciences and the broad literature of administration’ (p. 25). Much more clearly in Glatter, theory is drawn from practice rather than developed in enclaves in order to contribute to practice.

What Glatter does most valuably here is to provide colleagues with a contextualized agenda and orientation on the basis of a clearer and more purposeful specification of role and action for those engaged in professional development. Many of the features put forward for emulation in his 1978 paper are now routine currency. In the meantime, however, the ‘social sciences and the broad literature of administration’ have themselves undergone a sea-change, emancipating themselves and voyaging far from the well-defined territory and positivistic rubrics of functionalist theory and associated research designs, diversifying in terms of their relationships with other disciplines and modes of thought and inquiry. Can education, and the study of education management and administration in particular, attentively serve the interests of learners and absent itself from this plural and formative process, excluding itself from the role which social science now fulfills within a much larger context of radical social change?

The social and natural worlds today are thoroughly infused with reflexive human knowledge; but this does not lead to a situation in which
collectively we are masters of our own destiny. Rather to the contrary: the future looks less like the past than ever before and has in some basic ways become very threatening . . . In most aspects of our lives, individual and collective, we have regularly to construct potential futures, knowing that such very construction may in fact prevent them coming about. New areas of unpredictability are created quite often by the very attempts that seek to control them.

(Beck et al., 1994, p. vii)

Thus defined, the role of social science, within which education is surely a key location, is becoming coterminous with that very process of social re-definition and reconstruction. Is not the paradox of having ‘regularly to construct potential futures, knowing that such very construction may in fact prevent them coming about’, precisely what teachers experience when they implement a ‘whole school’ approach to Special Needs and find that the school’s curriculum policy has also to be redefined in consequence, or when they establish planned provision for the less able, only to find that it impacts unexpectedly on pedagogy and assessment practice across the school? Glatter’s reflective and speculative thoughts in this paper capture, I believe, something of these ‘reflective’ uncertainties which are inherent in the task of management in educational settings.


**Micropolitics**

The conditions of endemic and constitutive uncertainty (Preston, 1996) in which British education is now conducted were the focus of the Society’s Tenth Conference, held at Bristol in 1982. The highlights of that collection are three papers by Glatter (1982), Hoyle (1982) and Bailey (1982), which contribute significantly to an understanding of educationalists’ managerial tasks. Bailey’s rejoinder to Hoyle tries to integrate ‘the study of micropolitics into the broader framework of organisational theories’. This is a balanced and pragmatic, more philosophically detached contribution which relates the topic to more enduring and important implications, especially in relation to our obligations to children, as well as to all learners.

School is for most children their first experience of organisational life and of the wider society beyond the family. The quality of its micropolitics is in itself a powerful educational force maintaining or denying the quality of life in our society.

(Bailey, 1982, p. 105)

Pratt (1982) notes changing perspectives within these contrasting approaches. In the decade 1972–82, the preoccupation, associated with the process of local government reform (DoE, 1972) had been ‘one of designing structures for the achievement of specified purposes’. This approach came increasingly to be chal-
RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT

lenged by an opposing camp of ‘realists’ who resisted imposition of a ‘“managerial” view of reality’, phenomenologists by method, who looked for theory to be ‘grounded’ in reflection drawn from practice. What was being questioned by some and rejected by others is the domination in organisational and management studies of a narrowly rational view of human action. Glatter (1982) supports these endeavours to reveal the micropolitics of schools in their conduct of the daily work of teaching. Yet, he points out, the attempt to form and implement policy on a rational basis is also a human propensity which can be and sometimes is attempted with success (p. 161). More significantly, Glatter warns of the danger implicit in expecting too much from a single model. Just as the dominant ‘rational’ models of the 1960s and 1970s ‘were based on an underlying set of values, connected with optimism and a belief in the possibility of progress largely through “technical” means, so the micropolitical approach, which at times comes close to nihilism, is in tune with the cynicism and demoralisation of our age.’

Hoyle exposes a somewhat gloomy picture of school organisations; as Machiavellian, darkly imbricated within a-a-like intrigues and ‘hidden agendas’. But he is concerned also to find realistic and illuminative strategies, with a ‘theory-for-understanding’ which might help schools examine and extricate themselves from obstructive growth, lurking in their routine dynamics of interaction and control, hitherto neither fully understood nor confronted. The paper is a lucidly and economically written introduction to a carefully selected range of writers and ideas drawn from organisational theory.

The politics of management

Pratt (1982) seems to have marked a turning point when he summarised the concerns of members as moving away from the ‘management of politics towards . . . “the politics of management”’. Acknowledging the importance of Greenfield’s contributions he notes evidence in the educational literature of a growing recognition ‘that structure, function and process [are] interactive.’ The shift of focus (from macro to micro) and of method (from technical/instrumental to discursive/interactive) may have been symptomatic of an increasingly general readiness to acknowledge that educationalists were less sure of the direction in which they should go and of the purposes for which their skills should be employed. This sense of a ‘turning point’ and a felt need of directions amidst the encircling gloom may have prompted the title of the next Conference: Education Today and Tomorrow: Challenge and Response (Vol. 11, No. 2). At any rate, out of the turbulence surrounding the discussions and emerging research agenda of the period up to 1982, a new, more exploratory focus on practical problems and the feasibility of their solution is discernible in the period 1983–1995.

Volume 11 also exemplifies the journal’s continuing double achievement in identifying new professional perspectives and disseminating studies of organisational practice. 11.1 considers ‘the Role of the Deputy Head in Secondary
HISTORY AND RESEARCH

Schools’ (Owen, Davies and Wayment, 1983), ‘institutional Factors and School Absenteeism’ (Reid, 1983) and ‘Microcomputers in Secondary Schools’ (Pratt, 1983). This last paper contains an interesting nugget on the role now termed IT co-ordinator. Pratt, drawing upon an NFER study of LEA Advisers and Innovation (Bolam et al., 1979) and an unpublished Bristol MEd dissertation (Reilly, 1982) advocates reversal of received wisdom regarding dissemination of IT expertise: instead of appointing substantive experts as consultants and advisers, ‘experienced process experts [should be] required . . . to acquire the substantive expertise’ (p. 61). This approach now characterises professional good practice (North, 1991).

In the next volume, a new political focus is followed up by a fresh and more rigorous economic approach to organisational and policy questions (Thomas, 1984; Hough and Warburton, 1984; Crispin and Marslen-Wilson, 1984). New structures and mechanisms which would have significant implications for education at all levels were also being examined in the journal. A small-scale study of the impact of the National Advisory Body on the management of a large college appeared (Bush and Goulding, 1984). The NAB was precursor of the national funding councils (FEFC, HEFC, Funding Agency for Schools), and the Cambridgeshire (Hinds, 1984) and Solihull (Humphrey and Thomas, 1986) pilot schemes of school delegation paved the way for the national introduction of LMS. Two of these authors (Hough and Thomas) were subsequently appointed to Chairs in the Economics of Education and their Inaugural Lectures have now been published in *EMA* (Hough, 1991; Thomas, 1996). In the next section, a number of these papers on financial and economic issues will be discussed as indicative of the journal’s contribution to the promotion of studies in this field.

IV An economic approach

Education, like many public services, only recently came to be subjected to economic analysis. The ‘dismal science’ connotes aims, values and methods of enquiry unrelated if not alien to the aspirations of teachers, carers and healers. Brian Knight expresses similar observations in his short paper ‘Attitudes to Educational Finance’ (Knight, 1984).

Why is it that those who work in maintained schools and colleges believe that outside certain limited areas financial information is not important; that they are not concerned with the detailed costs of the work they do; that the financing of a school and college is not a subject for serious study; that interest in such finance is misplaced, even sinister or odd?

A peculiar English sensitivity regarding explicit discussion of money matters may also have inhibited application of economic theory to educational contexts. R. H. Tawney, as Hough (1991, p. 219) reminds us, described the economics of
education as ‘that repulsive hybrid’. The socialist tradition in general, so in u-
ential in parts of the English educational tradition, has been especially resistant
to application of an ‘economic’ approach. But those thought worlds, if they ever
existed in such a rare ed form, have now disappeared utterly, as schools con-
front, within a framework of delegated school budgets, the challenges of com-
puter-based Management Information Systems and the opportunities to be made
available by the ‘Superhighways’ Initiative (DfEE, 1995).

The recent origin of the subject is usually dated to the address by Thomas
Schultz to the American Economic Association in 1960 and his enthusiastic
advocacy of a human capital approach to investment in education (Schultz,
1963). Attention to the subject in this journal may be traced to the pressure of
more pragmatic concerns, in particular to the modifications made to local
government finance after 1972, which eroded the independence of LEA financial
decision-making, to the cumulative effects of associated overall expenditure
reductions on education, and to the pressure on schools in particular, following a
chronic fall in birth-rate after 1964. Volume 12 is notable for its preoccupation
with the consequences of these structural and seemingly irreversible changes, by
attention to issues such as: managing effectively in ‘small’ schools (Mountford,
1984), LEA responses to the effect of the 1981 Block Grant (Crispin and
Marslen-Wilson, 1984), and the quality consequences for teachers and pupils of
the ways in which contraction of the teaching force was being effected (Thomas,
questions of individual school costs, in a short paper whose citations reveal both
the dominance of American work in this field and the relative lack of attention
hitherto accorded to such questions in the journal. This has been remedied to
some extent in subsequent issues, notably by the contributions of Simkins (1986,
Thomas and Bullock (1992) and Thomas (1996). Noteworthy too is Bondi’s
Manchester-based study (Bondi, 1988) of the relation of school costs to policy
and community variables. In what may be an undeservedly overlooked contribu-
tion in this area, her conclusion, that falling school rolls have less in uence than
had generally been supposed on variations in costs, and especially on premises-
related costs, is surprising, and, in view of what is now known about some of the
effects of formula funding, worrying.

‘Patronage, Markets and Collegiality’ (Simkins, 1986) exempli es what few
individual papers fully achieve, namely illumination of a general institutional
problem through analysis which maintains positive interaction between school-
based research data and a simple, but robust, conceptual model. The literature
cited is apposite, selective and suitable for the widest possible readership.
Simkins (1986, p. 17) argues, perhaps presciently, that ‘something of a move-
ment to broaden the scope of schools’ financial responsibilities’ is afoot. What
strategies are available to schools for ensuring that often crucial marginal
choices within tightly constrained limits of discretionary decision are made most
effectively in terms of both the school’s internal ef ciency and its broader,
underlying effectiveness as a learning institution in the care of a committed and motivated staff? The paper deserves to be read for its intrinsic qualities, and is a most valuable teaching resource. After almost ten years now during which schools have been working with greater freedom to make independent resource decisions, perhaps it would be timely and profitable to reassess some of the paper’s conclusions (pp. 28–9). To what extent have participative decision processes survived? How closely related are current school resource allocation procedures to processes of curriculum decision-making? How widespread and effectively are formulae in use in schools (Boulton, 1986)? Some recent findings (Webb and Vulliamy, 1996) point to the emergence of a damaging divide between the needs of the curriculum and seemingly inescapable organisational pressures within schools. The impact of these has been ‘to create “a new headteacher”, with more hierarchical forms of management style creating a gulf between headteachers and the staff’ (p. 313). In the case of primary schools, Webb and Vulliamy conclude:

Thus, not only is there currently a tension between the administrative and curriculum leadership demands of primary school headship, there is also a growing tension between collegial and top-down management strategies at the whole school level . . . The current climate thus encourages headteachers to be powerful and, if necessary manipulative leaders in order to ensure that the policies and practices agreed upon are ones that they can wholeheartedly support and defend.

(p. 313)

**Structural and qualitative change**

A new employment structure embracing both pay and conditions for teachers was established between 1986 and 1992. The professional implications of these impending changes were considered by Henson (1987) in a brief but usefully synoptic review of the literature and the implications of a more hierarchical set of relationships implicit in the Baker proposals. A fundamental question, which has been obscured if not suppressed by the *dirigisme* employed by recent governments in relation to education and by the historically diminished influence of the teacher unions on both government and public opinion, is whether learning can and should be *controlled* by teachers and whether the schools are to be institutions in which learning will be ‘delivered’ as product, or ‘nurtured’ as a process in which all are expected to participate. If teachers cannot or should not control the conditions and processes of learning, how can they be ‘managerially’ responsible for attainment of stipulated learning outcomes? If schools are to belong meaningfully to the communities they are there to serve, can and should they be required to operate with a centrally imposed specification of required learning activities and outcomes?
Perhaps a more inscrutable factor which has inhibited sharply focused consideration of these questions has been the nature and rapidity of changing social and economic conditions. The Callaghan initiative in 1976 to steer schools more pragmatically to meet the needs of the workplace was almost certainly premised upon a conception of work, its nature, value and availability, which is now seriously obsolete. Succeeding governments have moved forward with an ideological, some might say quasi-religious belief in the social and economic virtue of establishing market conditions as prerequisite for the efficient operation of almost every social activity and service. Yet in the globalised economy which every day impinges more directly upon the lives of each individual, it is becoming apparent that the scope for markets is increasingly constricted to the *stimulation of the consumption and distribution* of goods; creation and production require the distributive, co-ordinative, informational, and creative qualities and capabilities of a kind which are achieved more effectively within network relations. Levels of mutual trust and qualities of human interaction which suffice in exchange relations are inadequate for an increasing number and variety of human interactions and institutional formations. Might not learning be one of them?

Two contrasting papers (Glatter, 1987; Dennison, 1988) made their contributions to this continually emerging debate by setting an educational agenda for the year 2000. Glatter considers current attitudes and practice with regard to management and policy and identifies five specific issues: staff management; profession/parent relationships; institutional effectiveness; the management/policy interface; and the role of BEMAS. He found it disturbing that the issue of parental involvement seems ‘to have been appropriated by one part of the political spectrum.’ With hindsight now we are beginning to see some of the consequences of crude attempts to redefine parents and learners as ‘consumers’ and ‘users’ and must surely hope that the ‘upheaval of reaction’ which Glatter refers to will be successful in identifying and winning support for more enlightened community involvement in education. On institutional effectiveness he draws attention to a neglected aspect of the self-concepts of members of organisations, a theme addressed more philosophically by Patricia White (1987). On policy and management Glatter challenged the current ascendancy of the ‘accountancy’ approach to education policy-making and in particular points to the detrimental effects of an unsustainable separation between policy and management, despite the stubborn refusal of the Audit Commission ‘to comment on issues of education policy’. Referring to Maw (1984) and Inglis (1986) he just hints at the threat to professionalism inherent in attempts to separate policy and management, which Glatter (1987, p. 9) believed to be ‘even more closely intertwined’. If authority over educational values is reserved to ‘policy’ bodies, the teaching profession may be stripped of the moral basis of its professional role, increasingly technicised, refashioned as chief instrument or conduit for the implementation of policy (Hargreaves, 1994; Webb and Vulliamy, 1996). Implications of these developments were to be explored later in contributions by Ranson (1992).
HISTORY AND RESEARCH

and Strain (1993) and elsewhere, with particular reference to curriculum management, by Hargreaves (1994) and Ball (1993a).

Dennison’s paper, ‘Education 2000 – Trends, Influences and Constraints to the Turn of the Century’ is more avowedly futurological in both aims and approach. Four ‘dominant factors’ are identified as demanding attention:

- the changing nature and structure of skill requirements in response to technological change;
- the consequences of consumerism on schools and the teaching profession;
- continuing reductions in the volume of public expenditure on education;
- the extended application of IT in learning, school management and staff development.

What we have learnt since then has revealed how little is yet understood which might help us respond practically to these challenges. A further train of thought is suggested; if Dennison’s predictive agenda were aptly chosen, have those issues (work-related education, the implications of social change, resources in education and the application of IT) been adequately represented in contributions to this journal? It is hoped that this review might prompt readers to consider such questions.

Financial management in schools and colleges

Notable among papers given at the 17th Conference (Volume 17.2) was Levacic’s (1989) discussion of the rules to determine LEA’s distribution of formula-based budgets to schools and colleges. She shows how schemes of delegation require a balance to be struck between conflicting sets of preferences regarding anticipated outcomes. Since decision-makers will use formulae to achieve their particular interests and objectives, explicit normative criteria should be stipulated. This enables self-interested or sectional purposes to be disentangled from those based on the values (efficiency, effectiveness, equity, accountability) which the scheme is intended to promote. Schemes are intended to encourage schools to be more efficient by generating savings and using them for chosen purposes; schools are therefore permitted to carry forward budget surpluses. Other elements of the formula, however, seem to allow schools to operate self-interestedly without regard to general principles. In Northern Ireland, for example, the inclusion of a weighting to support provision for children from materially or socially deprived backgrounds encourages schools to admit as many children as possible within that category but to spend resources differentially in support of learning by those children most likely to succeed in external examinations. In Levacic’s words, ‘reference to general principles helps in reaching agreed and consistent solutions to specific issues’ (p. 89).

Professional understanding of the relations between policy intentions and educational outcomes is indebted to the work of Levacic (1992) and Thomas
and Bullock (1992). Both reveal interim indications that some significant improvements in efficiency and accountability may be attributed to the operation of LMS. Cost information is more transparent, inducing more focused accountability, and school autonomy, particularly in respect of virement, is resulting in more efficient resource allocation within schools (Levacic, 1992, p. 27). Some more equitable patterns of distribution are also evident, arising from instances where discretionary funding has been replaced by application of general rules. Yet, some disturbing contrary tendencies are also revealed and the interim verdict on the extent to which the reforms have increased equity or contributed to enhanced teaching and learning is sceptical and mixed. Though opportunities for the exercise of parental choice have been increased, resources seem to be shifting away from smaller primary schools in favour of larger ones and away from secondary schools (Thomas and Bullock, 1992). On qualitative learning outcomes, ‘important factors found to be associated with school effectiveness – purposive leadership, positive school climate . . . high expectations, curriculum planning, work-focused activities, recording pupils’ progress’ are not specifically enhanced by LMS reforms (Levacic, 1992, p. 27).

**Competing values**

‘The Equity Consequences of Educational Reform’ are scrutinised a little later in an excellent paper by Simkins (1995) in which he discusses a range of ‘input’ and ‘output’ definitions of equity, and points out that a formula and local market circumstances ‘only determine the degree of equity between schools in the system and hence place constraints on the opportunities which schools can provide for individual pupils’ (p. 224). In his conclusion he argues that LMS ‘clearly embodies a concept of procedural equity but has consequences for distributional equity too’ (p. 230). In this respect, the ‘input-based definition of equity with pupils classified primarily on the basis of age’ may result in further disadvantage for primary school pupils, especially those in smaller schools, or who have special educational needs or who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Some of the conceptual difficulties inherent in attempts to resolve these problems are explored further in Thomas (1996, pp. 40–1; on the use of weighting procedures which incorporate non-utility information based upon underlying principles) and Strain (1996, pp. 55–6; on the ‘endowment effect’ and school strategies to avoid instances of ‘local injustice’).

How economic concepts illuminate education policy choices and assist practitioners at the institutional level in their efforts to achieve learning aims for pupils is explained by Thomas (1996).

A ‘market’ . . . represents those circumstances where decision-making is decentralised and self-interest is assumed to be the motive force of human action.
The education system in England and Wales is a ‘mixed economy’ embodying market-like aspects, where agents make decisions on the basis of self-interest, as in circumstances where parents choose a particular school or a teacher chooses to take up a professional post, as well as extensive features of a ‘command’ economy, one in which the resources judged necessary for particular productive processes to take place are commanded by a central agency which enjoys authority within a hierarchical set of institutional relations. As Thomas reminds us, even in today’s devolved conditions of school management:

the maintained school system is almost wholly funded by general taxation and, for parents and pupils, is free at the point of consumption. The overall level of spending is determined by government (central and local), and the means of production are largely owned or employed by the government, which also determines the rules for allocating funds to schools. More important still, the curriculum and assessment of pupils is largely determined by the Secretary of State.

Whether the consequences are efficient and equitable is then examined in relation to an earlier study (Thomas and Bullock, 1994). This raises questions such as whether the ‘current [irregularly stepped] funding profile’ of LEAs in relation to Age-Weighted Pupil Units (AWPU) is consistent with what is inherently required by ‘the continuous nature of the education process’. The Isle of Wight is now known to allocate 2.9 times more to provision for 16-year-olds than it does for 8-year-olds, compared with 2.08 times by Sunderland. In the (primary) school size range 122–3 the level of funding per pupil may vary by as much as 25 per cent. With these findings it is indeed possible and necessary to ask more pointed questions about the efficiency and equity effects of current funding practice.

Is it necessary, for example, for comparable schools to be funded at such different levels in order to provide the same national curriculum? Are the schools with comparatively high levels of funding providing a superior experience and achieving more than the less well-funded schools?

With wry, ironical detachment, Thomas goes on to observe that:

It is only as a result of the new system of funding schools that there is evidence which enables these questions to be considered – a clear benefit from introducing a greater emphasis on ‘command’ in the funding of schools.
V New ways of examining old questions

In this final section, the focus is deliberately restricted to a small number of papers in search of possible new ways of thinking and learning about educational management. Some of these experiments with new methods emphasise continuity with earlier approaches; others attempt radical redefinition of professional and organisational agenda. All assist our understanding of emerging requirements of organisational leadership in schools and colleges and of the role and purpose of ‘public’ education ‘systems’, within a ‘Learning Society’.

Leaders and followers

Gronn (1996) exposes some significant defects in the ‘new’ cult of ‘leadership’, whose rise to prominence he dates from the early 1970s. Recent conventional conceptions of ‘leader-followership’ posit a cause-effect relationship between leaders and followers, consistent with a range of self-justifying, instrumentalist assumptions associated with ‘managerialism’ (‘the manager’s right to manage’; ‘the government’s right to govern’ etc.).

Leadership is seen as something performed by superior, better individuals (invariably, ageing white males), rather than by groups, located in top positions, and as something done to or for other inferior, lesser people. Causal significance is achieved when relevant counter-factual conditions are satisfied (e.g. the outcomes for followers otherwise would not have transpired but for the leader’s leadership; all rival candidate explanations for the outcomes have been eliminated).

(Gronn, 1996, p. 12)

Recalling the ‘critical role’ accorded to followers by Max Weber, Gronn most persuasively cites ‘an emerging consensus that leading is an inherently symbolic activity’, an activity imbued with the intrinsically human capacity to frame meaning, ‘to make sense of one’s own and others’ experiences of the world’. If leadership activities are to contribute as we would wish to the construction of a shared social reality, support of the group must be mobilised through exchange of shared symbols and meanings. This is how identities are formed (Anderson, 1991). For these processes to be active, a level of consent and participation will be necessary on the part of the group. Transforming organisations is part of a cultural project. Identifying the extent and organisational forms by which this can become operative and fruitful, is a central task in a continuing, interdisciplinary endeavour.

It is enduring moral values and culture which give organisations their distinctive characters and styles. Any cult of efficiency and effectiveness is of secondary import; these are essentially instrumental and
operational values, necessary conditions for the persistence of the co-operative system that constitutes organisation . . . but not sufficient. For, antecedent to both efficiency and effectiveness is some overall abiding purpose or end, a moral economy, which provides people’s willingness to co-operate with its justiﬁcation from the outset.

(Gronn, 1996, p. 24)

Gronn’s paper accords well with the aims and methods attempted by Ribbins and Sherratt (1992) in their efforts to supplement a large-scale research project examining ‘the changing patterns of governance and management . . . in response to recent legislation’ through the use of ethnographic accounts of what is actually happening in schools. As well as using traditional sources of evidence, such as collections of documents, interviews, diaries, discussion and observation, they try to set the Head’s accounts against those of other key actors and to involve Head, teachers and researcher in a process of reﬂection and interpretation which they term ‘a dialectic of biography and autobiography’.

**Professional implications and principles**

Busher and Saran (1994), after exploring ‘the various models which might be used to illuminate the work of headteachers’, argue convincingly for ‘the need for micropolitical theories of organisational life to be inclusive of both formal and informal aspects of organisations’ and to support positively the development of ‘consensual interactions’ without neglecting conﬂictual elements. They identify the main features of leadership activities in schools as: constructing an organisational culture which embraces the shared values and beliefs of members, managing the external environment and ‘using and diffusing power to handle conﬂicting values and interests between stakeholders’ (p. 8). Their distillation also retains the essential characteristics of a political model of organisation, in essence a human social construct whose purpose and processes are deﬁned through uncoerced discourse which responds primarily to moral, rather than technical, claims. These purposes in turn derive from ‘a duty to serve the best interests of the pupils’:

heads who acted in this way built their credibility as professional leaders with teachers.

(pp. 11, 12)

Further exploration of how these qualities of leadership might be developed and practised in a morally defensible organisational framework (Hodgkinson, 1993) can be found in Volume 21, No. 3. The merits of generic as distinct from sector speciﬁc standards of competence are reviewed by Earley (1993); Ouston (1993) examines management competence speciﬁcally in relation to the ﬁndings of school effectiveness studies and teachers’ assessment and training needs. Eraut
RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT

(1993b) delves more analytically into what must be a prerequisite for signifi-
cant advance on these fronts by arguing the need for a new epistemology to ful-
al the aims outlined in Schön’s Reflective Practitioner. Such a model incorporates the
personal and professional knowledge which teachers actually draw upon in their
teaching and managing in schools. The paper is both carefully constructed and
conceptually rich. Following Argyris and Schön (1976), listening and actively
seeking feedback from colleagues is encouraged in order to correct for the tend-
ency ‘of people’s perceptual frameworks to be determined by what they want or
expect to see’ (p. 230). These are termed ‘meta-processes’, which assist contin-
uing critical adjustment of cognitive frameworks and assumptions. They are
essentially processes concerned with self-knowledge and self-management.
Eraut later adds ‘the conception of a meta-evaluation framework’ as central to
the notion of professionalism. In the case of teachers, he suggests, such a frame-
work should be founded on two moral principles: the twin obligations to practise
child-centredness and, for the sake of future generations, continuously to
improve one’s professional expertise.

The learning society

The importance of principles, assumptions or values such as these lies not in
their embodiment of intrinsic authority or some immanent guarantee to practi-
tioners of being ‘right’, or of enabling them through practising them more reli-
ably to ‘do things right’ – their signifi cance is, much more elusively, that they
constitute the foundation of any education system. One Head’s expression of
belief in his own school’s constitutive values was recorded by Ribbins (1992):

it has to do with how we value children; all children and not just some
children. We believe that all children have a right . . . to achieve. Our
first job as teachers is to enable them to achieve. This still applies even
if they don’t want to achieve. I do not believe that children always
know what is best for them . . . I think also we have sometimes to say to
parents as well that something is good for their child. Within this we
have a firm commitment to equal opportunities. We want to help all
children to broaden their horizons and visions. We want to help them
all to understand there is a world beyond the one they know and that
they can all participate in it. The school is just a step to this and
teachers are there to help to make it possible. My task is to create the
conditions which make this possible for teachers and children to
achieve. It is not a task I can achieve alone.

(p. 67)

Of course, values espoused are not always or entirely matched by results in prac-
tice. In particular, entrenched historical and social patterns of underachievement
are hard to change. Introducing his seminal essay ‘Towards the Learning
Society’, Ranson (1992) notes the ‘stubborn statistic’, recently acknowledged by HMI (DES, 1990), of one in three children receiving a poor education, under-achieving. He attributes this to ‘the long cultural tradition of educating a minority’.

Underachievement, Ranson argues, is institutionalised in our schools ‘because of principles and assumptions which are constitutive of the education system’. Many of these assumptions, by their appearance of being ‘only common-sense’, conceal the shaping force of underlying values which contribute to the ‘distribution’ of unequal, unjust or undesirable educational consequences, such as under-achievement. Ranson lists some of these in ential and readily recognisable ‘principles’. Education is an activity for schools and parents, when children are young; training is for colleges and employers. Learning involves instruction by those whose authority to teach derives from their knowledge and skills. The Curriculum should also transmit skills in identified areas of (objective) knowledge. The learning outcomes of education processes should be measured by universal objective tests whose results should be published to reward and enhance the credibility of the successful, encourage the average and penalise the ‘failing’ institutions. By these latent mechanisms or constitutive principles, failure to ‘deliver’ what central government specifies to be the appropriate ‘outcomes’, which may or may not match the kind of organisational values articulated by the Head quoted earlier – to enable children to achieve even when they don’t want to achieve – is transmitted and explained publicly as the failure of the school itself, a failure of professional competence or application, or, more unfairly still, the fault of the individual child and its family.

The remedy proposed by Ranson is to alter fundamentally many of these constitutive principles by replacing them with new, socially agreed conceptions of the place of learning in society and of a more ‘civilized’ working relationship between working, civic, learning and caring roles in the lives of individuals. These constructs, institutions which sustain and mediate our social relations and experiences, are the responsibility of all, in common. Learning is an indispensable part of such a polity at all stages of an individual’s life. This is the conception of ‘The Learning Society’ whose advocacy Ranson concludes with:

A different polity, enabling all people to make a purpose of their lives, will create the conditions for motivation in the classroom. Only a new moral and political order can provide the foundation for sustaining the personal development of all. It will encourage individuals to value their active role as citizens and thus their shared responsibility for the common-wealth. Active learning in the classroom needs, therefore, to be informed by and lead towards active citizenship within a participatory democracy. Teachers and educational managers … can, I believe, play a leading role in enabling [original italics] such a vision to unfold not only among young people but also across the public domain.
RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT

The end is where we start from... 

This review has attempted to sift and encourage a second reading of some of the enquiries and debates which have been published in this journal. It has not attempted to assess their intrinsic merits as publications but from them to recapture and re-present still pertinent ideas, experiences and ways of examining the challenges now facing teachers and learners.

Our practical understanding of the relation between theory and practice in education has changed beyond recognition since the early days of the Bulletin and the 1974 IIP Conference. The recognition of the value of action research for teachers as both practitioners and researchers has been crucially influential in this respect. Yet the logical and conceptual foundations underpinning such activities still exercise the concern of theorists. Evers and Lakomski (1993, p. 150) opt for explanations of social behaviour which are reconcilable (coherent) with those of natural science. Others, notably Hodgkinson (1993, p. 184), resist tenaciously all attempts to blur the line between ‘fact and value’, insisting on the separate, moral, humanistic nature of administration. The domain of the ‘social’, what is experienced routinely, intersubjectively and in common among human beings, is almost lost sight of in this long-running battle between positivistic ‘coherentists’ and humanistic ‘idealists’ (Bates, 1993, p. 174–5). My own preference is to insist, with Bates, on the primacy of the intersubjective and the ‘social’ (Strain, 1996, pp. 50–51), to continue to search for ‘real’ possibilities of learning.

Notes


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SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

A day in the life of a headteacher

Angela M. Thody


Introduction

The late twentieth century in England has witnessed what might be described as a ‘back to the past’ movement in education, its management and administration. Devices last utilized in the nineteenth century have re-emerged with minor variations. There are, once again, for example, a National Curriculum for schools, apprenticeship ‘on-the-job’ training for teachers, performance-related pay for staff and institutions (at least in higher education), school governors with real power, proposals for smaller, dedicated, local government units to replace the all-purpose local authorities, a requirement to re-introduce the monopoly of the Christian religion in schools and a ‘back to basics’ call for teaching methods. All these requirements impact on systems of management employed in schools although so far there have been no requirements for this to return to nineteenth-century arrangements. If, however, this ‘back to the past’ movement is to be successful, perhaps it will need reinforcement with the appropriate management techniques.

What were these techniques? This article reports the outcome so far of an attempt to discover how schools were managed in nineteenth-century England. If our dilemmas appear to be persistent, then perhaps the managerial solutions will prove to be likewise and we may then have some ‘new’ ideas to guide our schools’ leaders.

This topic has not previously been researched, as far as can be ascertained. This article was intended as an exploration to see whether there was sufficient material to make such a study possible and this has proved to be the case, although little of it is directly on school management. The sources used are...
discussed in the methodology section at the end of this article, together with reflections on the value of history in the study of education management.

The author, having used observation techniques to describe and analyze the work of twentieth-century school leaders, decided to adopt a similar approach to recording the work of a mythical headmaster of the nineteenth century. Hence readers are invited to follow a day in the life of Mr Thody, headmaster of Reynold Street Board School, London. The observation had, perforce, to be second-hand having been ‘factionalized’ from various nineteenth-century sources.

**Back to the past: the headmaster’s day**


**Place:** The lodgings of Mr Thody, proximate to the school.

**Subject:** Mr Thody, age 30 years, unmarried. In his first year of headship following Assistant Teacher status at another London Board school. He became a Pupil Teacher at fourteen and then progressed into provisional certification followed by full certification.

**School:** Reynold Street Board School – 360 scholars including 80 infants. Two certificated teachers, one provisionally certificated (Mr Thody, headmaster; the Senior Assistant, Mr Davison; the Assistant, Miss Sinclair) each deemed responsible for 40 pupils each (‘By Article 84, a woman over 18 years of age, and approved by the Inspector, is accepted in mixed, girls’ and infants’ schools as equivalent to a pupil-teacher’. Two pupil teachers, each allowed to supervise 40 pupils, and one candidate for pupillage permitted 20 pupils. There are seventeen on the managing body.

**Context:** Mr Thody has completed his ablutions, personal devotions and dressing. School paperwork is habitually undertaken at this time of day. During school hours, he will have his own teaching to conduct or will be otherwise engaged in superintendence. The lunch time, and before and after school, are his management times.

**6.00–6.30 a.m. Registers/administrative tasks**

Mr Thody commences by checking that the pupil teacher delegated to take the register daily has marked in ink only, with no erasures and with no pencil entries inked over, boys’ names in the upper part, girls’ names in the lower part and a daily total noted for numbers present. He then works out, and records the average daily present for the past week, notes the numbers of unexplained absences and the reasons for other absences. Today, he has the additional task of ensuring that the admissions, progress and withdrawal records are complete, together with the summary book, log book, fee book and stock book. Each child is numbered in order to avoid double counting and Mr Thody is very proud of his work.
his accurate date of birth records. He informs the observer that he has had to visit the registrar’s of ce to obtain the details of ten of his pupils whose parents had been unable to supply the information.

All this is a final check to reassure himself that all is ready for the inspectors’ visit next week. He is nervous at the prospect of his first inspection and there is a managers’ meeting this afternoon as a preliminary in order to see that all is ready. He has his own pupil progress book ready for display; he is hoping the managers will approve the idea for all his teachers to adopt. Mr Thody explains to the observer that the importance to school management of the correct keeping of the registers arises from the relationship of attendance to grant received and to examination results. The school is paid according to how many children attend and what results they achieve in examinations. Keeping the registers is an extremely time-consuming element of a head-teacher’s management tasks and Mr Thody is hoping that the National Union of Elementary Teachers will make representations to the Board of Education to lessen the detail required. The Union generally concerns itself with curricular matters, such as the representation made earlier in the 1880s that parsing should not be required from 4th Standard children studying grammar. Mr Thody hopes the Union will bring pressure to bear on management issues too.

6.30–6.45 a.m. Daily planning

Mr Thody shows the observer his timetable for the day. He says he usually glances over it to remind himself of the day’s outline. He re ects how pleased he is that he decided to have a timetable since it enables him to ensure that when one class is doing something noisy, such as reading, then other classes in the same room would be doing quiet work while the infants should not undertake more than three hours’ work. Mr Thody had discovered that advance timetabling means he is less harassed since he does not have to decide what to do next when he is busy with the activities of the day and can concentrate better on what is in hand. The children bene t since it enables planned progress, and impresses them with the value of time and the morality of obeying routines. ‘A timetable is to a school what grammar is to a language’, quoted Mr Thody.

6.45 a.m. Equipment orders

Mr Thody selects the order book for equipment. He is listing the number of slate pencils required. He pauses to consult a supplier’s catalogue for guidance on the appropriate lengths of pencils for different ages of children.

6.46–7.05 a.m. Management meanings

Mr Thody ﬂexes his hand and rests his quill. Leaning back in his chair he ruminates aloud to the observer. ‘Strange how one’s training never seems to cover the
essentials of management. Now if only I had known how to judge the minimum length of slate pencils. Still, things have improved. Consider the syllabus through which I must guide my pupil teachers. School management is a compulsory subject.’ He hands the observer the 1887 General Syllabus for Certificate Examinations:

\[\text{School management}\]
\[\text{First year}\]

1. The methods of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic with special reference to the development of the intelligence of children.
2. The form of school registers, the mode of keeping them, and of making returns from them.
3. The training for the senses and of the memory, and the order in which the faculties of the children are developed.

\[\text{Second year}\]

1. To teach a class in the presence of Her Majesty’s Inspector.
2. To answer questions on the following subjects:
   a. The different methods of organising an elementary school.
   b. The form of the school registers, the mode of keeping them, and of making returns from them.
   c. The ventilation and drainage of school premises.
3. The processes of reasoning; the order in which the faculties of children are developed; the formation of habits and of character; all considered in their application to the methods of teaching and of moral discipline.

[The syllabus for female candidates was identical except that Notes of Lessons did not appear in the Second Year and Methods of teaching Infants and of organising Infants’ Schools were included in the first year]

Mr Thody continues: ‘I like the way the syllabus acknowledges that curriculum management and teaching methods are all seen as part of school management. The objective of management is to maintain the conditions for the implementation of good teaching. One can trace this back to Bentham’s 1818 Chrestomathia, which could be considered to be one of the founding books of our discipline. Bentham stated that the objective of good school management should be effective delivery in the minimum of time with the maximum of uniformity but he didn’t neglect the registers of course. Providing evidence of different pupil outcomes through “his book keeping function [is] one of the more important responsibilities of the master”. Bentham, however, failed to separate the major and the minor tasks as Gill has now done in his latest textbook.
‘I support Gill’s separation of school management and school keeping. He defines management as not being my responsibility but being that of the “body termed school-managers over the appointments and labours of the teachers, the school buildings, furniture and apparatus and the income and expenditure . . . [school keeping is that branch of management] by which a master becomes fully conversant with the . . . attendance, payments, instruction, progress of the scholars . . . their health and comfort’.15 He’s been one of the best selling authors on school management16 and he has not significantly changed his ideas over time. In fact, I have not needed to buy this 1883 edition although it does elevate school keeping to a branch of management.17

‘There have been changes in how we see management, of course. We have progressed since the limited view that management simply comprised how best to classify the scholars18 or was seen as just the Mechanical Arrangements (the whole building, its furniture and apparatus), Systems of Organization, Time-Tables, Monitors, Discipline.19 Naturally, all the authors this century have made teaching methods an integral part of school management. Indeed, as late as 1842,20 they were virtually the whole of school management but now we headmasters no longer do all the teaching ourselves so that our management must include managing those who teach for us. “Management is now as essential to success as the power to teach, or the ability to govern.”21 My aim is to make school a pleasure and, therefore, school should be “invested with attractions and associated with agreeable feelings”.22 Hence, I must ensure that classes are not disarranged, that pupils do not display slovenly posture, that they are punctual, march in an orderly fashion and do not hear improper words in school.23 Without good management, there can be no effective teaching;24 system is essential if the importance of childhood development is to be realized.25

‘Oh yes, you may smile at that, but I am a modern headmaster. Things were different in my father’s time – he kept a school in the 1850s when it was a matter of coping with children rather than developing them. The average child then was described as “in a state of constant irritation; its matted hair – its filthy flesh – its skin a prey to foul insects . . . corroded with disease – its clothes tattered, or so coarsely botched or, it may be, secured with string and nails . . . soiled with nameless dirt and reeking with disgusting odours – his shirt a foul rag, his stockings in pieces, and his shoes scarcely clinging to these feet”.26

‘And it was everywhere much the same; the United States of America, for example, struggled with similar difficulties of school superintendence.27 My father’s contemporaries could be called first-generation school managers. Even the great Matthew Arnold saw management simplistically as the arrangement of the rooms28 but he recognized even the importance of that to good organization . . .

‘Good Heavens, is that the time? I must breakfast soon if there is to be any good organization today at Reynold Street.’
Mr Thody explains that his landlady brings his breakfast to him on a tray to enable him to work through the meal. Today, he has Blakiston’s school management hints propped up against the teapot. In the evening, he takes his tea in the downstairs front parlour on his own; when he was an assistant teacher he ate with the family.

7.20–8.30 a.m. Finance

Mr Thody began a report for the managers’ concerning the fees that should be charged. He commented on how he enjoyed the financial aspects of management despite the time needed to see that grants were earned according to examination passes, that money was accounted for and that the books balanced. ‘School management’, he said, ‘is no different from factory management . . . [we are well] aware that [we are] dealing with the allocation of limited resources, and consequently that it [is] essential to effect economies in time, labour and expense’. In his report, Mr Thody wrote that fees charged ‘should always be such as shall honestly avow to the parents the true market value of the education imparted’, a statement he felt would encourage the managers to increase the fees which currently contributed just under 30% to the total expenses of 53/5d per child (£2.66) per annum. ‘At threepence per week fees,’ continued Mr Thody’s report, ‘Reynold Street has a reputation as a school only for the poor. If fees are raised, the school would attract a better class of entrant. The consequent rise in examination passes would increase the government grants and permit the school to increase its attractiveness.’ The Form IX returns were attached as an appendix to the report, together with some examples of other schools’ expenditure to demonstrate how well Mr Thody was managing this school’s finances (e.g. rural school, £98 11s 4d [£98.56] income from school fees, subscriptions and proceeds from a bazaar; £36 8s 8d [£36.43] expenditure on salaries, books, coal, consumables etc; £62 2s 8d [£62.13] balance in hand).

8.30–8.45 a.m. Travel

Mr Thody collects his papers and books and walks to school.

8.45–9.00 a.m. Admissions

Two parents have come to request admission for their children. Both families have relocated from other areas of London. Mr Thody informs them that the school is full and the managers have decided not to admit new children above Standard One. One parent states that his two sons have always achieved highly in examinations for both class and specific subjects. Mr Thody asks the parent if this year’s examination results are at hand but it seems that the inspector has not
yet reported them. Mr Thody promises that he will review the request for admission when the examination results are available. [Observer’s note: Mr Thody seems willing to ignore the managers’ decision if there is a possibility of attracting able children. Presumably this accords with his policy of upgrading the school by increasing fees.]

9.00–9.25 a.m. Walking the school/staff management

Mr Thody walks round the school to check its readiness for the pupils. He notes cleanliness, asks that the windows be opened, it being a fine day promising growing warmth. He reminds a pupil teacher to ensure that all slates are in the desk racks. He commends the map drawn by the senior assistant teacher in readiness for the geography class in the gallery. The Infant Mistress, Miss Johnson, proffers the needlework being gathered in preparatory to the inspectors’ visit and Mr Thody discusses with her how it might best be displayed. He praises her introduction of different coloured cotton threads to denote each stage of needlework achievement which will make it easy for both him and managers unfamiliar with domestic sewing to assess pupils’ progress at a glance.

Mr Thody returns to his desk in the centre of the hall to await the pupil teachers after they have completed their pre-school tasks. He explains to the observer that ‘the encouragement and stimulation afforded to staff by my morning perambulation makes them feel important’. ‘Often, at the end of my tour, and as the outcome of my observations of staff throughout the day, I enter into a reference book my criticisms and suggestions for improvement which I will discuss with them privately at the end of the day. They are aware that I constantly appraise them. I will have “none of this half apologetic way which some head masters have of coming into the class of an assistant with some pretext as if they felt they were intruding”’. Of course, the teachers’ classification also depends on the examination results of their pupil and the inspectors’ reports but they ask for my comments. I hear that the same system was introduced as long as forty years ago in New South Wales, so highly is it regarded. It is an effective means of ensuring quality teaching although I hear there are still cases where “Whitehall trembles when it seems the weakest of the N.U.T.s”.

‘The effective management of staff is so important’, continues Mr Thody. ‘We are all so aware of the need to maintain a high morale – fortunately it has been rebuilt since the first shock of the introduction of the Revised Code in 1862 but one must be vigilant. We do not suffer the same teacher absenteeism and rapid turnover of staff as do the poor rural schools and we insist on good healthy teachers. The best come here, of course, because we can pay more than the voluntary schools which do not have the benefit of public money from the rates, but only of fees, subscriptions and the grant from the Committee in Council. Being a headmaster must have been so much easier when Lancaster’s Mutual Instruction system was in vogue, during the early years of this century. Of course, I could not approve of all the teaching being delegated to the
untrained monitors but at least it left the schoolmaster free to manage the school.41

9.25–9.30 a.m. Classification

Miss Sinclair, Female Assistant, asks about transferring a pupil to a higher class. Mr Thody suggests they must wait until after the inspectors’ examinations the following week when Mr Thody also wishes to reconsider the whole school’s classification. It would be a major management task to alter this, Mr Thody explains to the observer and to Miss Sinclair.

The school had adopted Matthew Arnold’s recommendation that children of all abilities should be age-grouped for collective teaching into one section and subdivided into smaller classes for desk work to test individual attainment and then into smaller groups of ten (known as ‘drafts’) for sessions facilitating individual practice. The school hall was partitioned (with curtains and temporary boarding about three-quarters the height of the room) so that a semblance of the classroom system could be essayed but Mr Thody said that he would prefer a full classroom system with ability dictating a child’s place in the Standards in order to improve school results and attract a better class of parent. Classification by ability was the best way to excite ‘emulation and vigorous exertacion’42 although Mr Thody reminded Miss Sinclair that there had been a time when scholars were classified according to the level of fees they paid; the more they paid, the higher the class they were put in irrespective of their abilities or previous learning.43

9.30–9.45 a.m. Pupil teachers’ lessons

Mr Thody listens to the home lessons of the pupil teachers who will later listen to the other children. He also listens to some of the senior scholars’ work as it cannot all be fitted into the time allotted later in the day. Usually, this would be done during the school hours by the pupil teachers but, with the inspectors’ visit imminent, it is important that the headmaster does it. He tells the weaker scholars that he will hear them again after school has finished in the afternoon.44 He hands the pupil teachers their rotas for the week; their teaching duties are assigned so that they do not miss the same classes each week.

9.45 a.m. School begins

The headmaster walks to unlock the school door to admit the scholars, lamenting that he is not leading a school in his father’s day when headmasters were paid extra for instructing pupil teachers. He recalls Gill’s advice that headmasters must demonstrate a love of school by always being present before the children arrive.45 He shouts to the stragglers only just entering the yard and remarks sotto voce ‘but I blame the parents. I report to them when their children are late...
and it should be their responsibility to ensure they are here on time. It is part of basic family values’.

9.55–10.00 a.m. Cleanliness inspection

Mr Thody gives a ‘hasty glance’ at the children’s hands, faces and hair as they file past him. He then oversees the movement of scholars to their places. They appear to know which of them is to go to the gallery, which into the desks within particular partitions and which to the drafts, without being told, so Mr Thody clearly has well-established routines. All the teachers are present, to Mr Thody’s obvious relief. Absentee teachers mean that the headmaster has to double his class in addition to the supervision of the school.

10.00–10.30 a.m. Seniors’ dictation, desks in partition one

Mr Thody checks their home lessons. He calls each draft of pupils and completes two large drafts in the half hour; pupil teachers hear the rest. Drafts not being inspected read silently under the care of the head pupil. Mr Thody explains to the observer that he has arranged the timetable to ensure that all pupils have contact with him at some point in the week. When not teaching, he superintends to ensure that all are in ‘perpetual employment’ but he feels it important that all pupils should have the benefit of his expert teaching which would also enable all the teachers to learn from his example.

10.30–11 a.m. Juniors’ dictation, desks in partition three

Mr Thody sits at his desk in the centre of the room. His attention is directed to the pupil teacher who is guiding this class. The pupil has dictated the passage and then leaves the scholars to make corrections while she completes hearing the home lessons. Mr Thody leaves his desk to give the children help with the correct holding of pens and to make them aware that the ‘presence, example, and spirit of the master must pervade in every class, and must especially be felt in the weak ones. All temptation to idleness must be prevented.’ He returns to his desk to commence the monthly pupil references which he thinks will increase parental interest in the school.

11.00–11.30 a.m. Seniors’ writing, desks in partition one

Mr Thody informs the observer that he only superintends this lesson on a Thursday usually but he is supervising today because of the impending inspectors’ visit. The pupils work silently from their own books. The candidate pupil is instructed by Mr Thody in how to check the writing. There is some classroom disturbance and Mr Thody has to move to the Infants’ room to assist Miss Johnson.
11.30–12 noon Seniors’ arithmetic, drafts on the floor

One of the most important lessons of the day and always managed by Mr Thody. Arithmetical tables and mental arithmetic are taught to two drafts concurrently. He achieves this by having them stand in a large circle instead of in two semi-circles, each facing the wall. The other two drafts are working on slates on exercises dictated by the pupil teachers.

12.00–12.30 p.m. Break – buildings, staff, reputation management

Mr Davison supervises the yard. Mr Thody completes his daily tour of the buildings. He checks that the drains, urinals and WCs have been flushed for the second time today. He notes where the dark chocolate paint below the dado needs retouching before the inspectors’ arrival and enters a request for a blackboard pointer into the stock book for perusal by the managers at their meeting later that afternoon. He comments to the observer that they would probably discuss whether or not the school could adopt a full classroom system to replace its current tripartite division. He explains that the classroom debate is a major issue for school boards at the moment and the schools’ managers were wanting to put their views to the boards. Many felt that there were insufficient pupils at the same standard in a division to make the gallery sessions, for a full division, really useful. His solution had been to propose the floor partitions which permitted small class work while still enabling him to see the whole school at once. He was concerned that if full classroom divisions were introduced then teachers would be permanently attached to one class or to one subject to the detriment of their whole-school knowledge.

Mr Thody gathers the papers wanted for the managers’ afternoon meeting. He calls to a pupil teacher to go round and retie those corks which have become detached from their ink bottles. He remarks to the observer that he was pleased with that particular pupil whom he had recommended as a teacher because of her good attendance and ability in all subjects.

He begins to arrange ‘specimens of [the childrens’] fine handwriting [for an exhibition] to attract parents’. Mr Thody also intends to ask the managers to see the display and to bring their acquaintances. He feels that this is important to the school’s reputation management. There are already strong school community links but he wants to obtain the attention of ‘in essential persons in the neighbourhood’. He wants to show them that his school represents ‘the moral code of an ascendant bourgeois culture’ which they might feel able to support. He laughingly recollects, for the observer, that there are still those who need to be disabused of views such as those of Lady Ludlow as portrayed by Mrs Gaskell in her 1858 novel: ‘if our lower orders have these edge-tools [reading and writing] given to them, we shall have the terrible scenes of the French Revolution acted over again in England’. Mr Thody adds that there is also competition from the voluntary schools in the area. ‘They continue to thrive despite their higher fees and lower salaries so we must look to our reputation.’
12.30–1.00 p.m. Seniors’ geography, gallery

The topic is taught by Mr Thody to the whole group utilizing the map drawn earlier by Mr Sinclair. Mr Thody occasionally turns during his lesson, to frown at the over-loud rendition of poetry by the junior class in the drafts. Mr Matthew Arnold’s praise of rote learning of poetry resulted in the teachers trying to ensure that the whole school has the requisite 200 lines by heart for the following week. Mr Thody interrupts his lesson to move to partition one in order to quell an incipient pupil disturbance but ‘modern ideas of schoolmastering prevent[ed him] from falling upon [pupils] and murdering [them], so that [he] could do no more than hurl a book or a bit of chalk’.

1.00–1.30 p.m. Junior girls’ needlework, desks, partition two

The headteacher is superintendent but the work is led by the female candidate. Mr Thody’s presence helps secure concentration for needle drill.

1.30–2.00 p.m. Juniors’ reading, drafts on the floor

This is the first of four days on which Mr Thody will be in charge of this activity. The division is divided into three drafts, each of 20 pupils and, of these, the pupil teachers take two and the headmaster takes one. The master first glances to see that the senior division are well engaged then begins to question his draft. The pupil teachers listen to the other two drafts. On subsequent days, the headmaster will question the drafts heard by the pupil teachers.

2.00–2.30 p.m. Seniors’ geography, gallery

Mr Thody examines the scholars’ recall of his earlier lesson and then the remaining time is spent on Africa and Zululand again because of Matthew Arnold’s preference for geography to be more than one’s own parish.

The managers’ meeting

During this lesson, three of the school’s managers cross the school room to commence their meeting in the vestibule. They acknowledge Mr Thody who steps from the gallery to meet them and to pass over his registers and report. After dismissing the young children, Mr Thody leaves the school to the care of Mr Davison and proceeds to the managers’ meeting. They agree with him to recommend to the School Board that nine long desks be removed and 22 dual desks substituted; that the few remaining copies of Hughes’ stories for Standards I–IV (no longer approved by the School Board) could be given away; that marching lines could be painted on the floor of the Infants School and that six chairs, a long pointer and an inkstand could be ordered.
2.30–2.35 p.m. Dismissal and break

Infants and lower standards are dismissed and the headmaster superintends their leaving. Mr Davison supervises the older pupils marching in the yard and eating lunch packages.

2.35–3.40 p.m. Reading

Mr Thody hears the oldest children reading while the pupil teachers hear the others. During the week, the groups will rotate so that each child will be heard by the headmaster. Home tasks are announced and Mr Thody watches their dictation by the monitors. He sets home tasks because then ‘the parents get the impression that their children are well looked after’. The last ten minutes are for his reading to the whole division.

3.40–3.45 p.m. Good conduct and dismissal

Good conduct and achievement badges are awarded on the basis of last week’s results. Mr Thody reminds the pupils of the importance of competition. While the pupils hurry out, he comments to the observer that rewarding merit has a long tradition since Lancaster originated weekly medals for outstanding performance and small cash prizes for good work. ‘As long ago as 1804’, intones Mr Thody, ‘Lancaster allocated 22% of his budget for prizes and rewards’.

3.45–4.30 p.m. Pupil teacher training/managers’ meeting

In continuance of the five hours’ teaching he is supposed to give the pupil teachers each week, Mr Thody directs them to revision of the names of rivers. He requires them to read Chapter V of Joyce’s 1864 Handbook on School Management and Methods of Teaching which explains how to plan a geography lesson. He discusses with them Joyce’s views that pupils should know the geography of Britain better than that of any other parts of the world. This view conflicts with that of Matthew Arnold who thought it could be just as interesting to learn about the four quarters of the globe.

He leaves them to complete their tasks alone (although he expresses concern about his lack of time to supervise them adequately) as he goes to say goodbye to the managers. He states that the correspondent will become ‘fairly mothered’ unless he goes to help him write up the minutes neatly. Mr Thody expresses his relief that his managers do not have the responsibilities of those of voluntary schools but says that he thinks all managers’ responsibilities should become those of the Boards.

Only three managers attended the meeting (a usual number, states Mr Thody) one of whom was female [Observers comment – she certainly reflects Mr Sneyd Kinnersley’s description of a lady manager:}
There was a time when she was a prominent personage: she assisted at the inspection, and waited for hours that she might see the inspector blundering over the ‘garments’. She called his attention to specially meritorious stitches, and deplored the blindness of My Lords in their selection of sewing tests; she deprecated mathematics and urged the superior claims of housewifery. She gave private information on the characters of the pupil-teachers and the children generally hinting that the pretty ones were undesirable . . . It was not only at inspection that she appeared: in many schools she was to be found without fail two and three days a week; possibly assisting in the needlework; possibly taking a general interest in the girls; always full of good works.[68]

4.30–5.00 p.m. Staff management/quality assurance

Mr Thody holds a weekly short conference for staff. Today he reminds them of the importance of the merit registers and the regular reports to parents who would thereby know their children’s position in class.[69] He reads out the programme for the Inspectors’ visit. He tells them that after this visit, he will be instituting half-yearly examinations so that the scholars’ development can be more accurately known.[70] He reminds them to prepare their lessons tonight, telling them he will be spending the evening ensuring that the feared Form IX gives an accurate picture of the state of the school in respect of attendance, instruction and pupils’ ages.[71] He informs them that the inspectorial system is so well respected that New South Wales has adopted it. [72] He bids them good-night, expressing his confidence that they will do well at the examinations next week.

5.00–5.15 p.m. School closes and walking home

After checking that the school will be locked, Mr Thody walks back to his lodgings. He tells the observer that he has heard that the London School Board may be introducing ‘organizing teachers’, copying the 1856 system of the Irish Commissioners of National Education. Their job was to improve and bring uniformity to national schools and to educate teachers in school keeping. The organizing teachers themselves received lectures on the science and practice of school management.[73]

5.15–6.15 p.m. Tea

This is served to him in the front parlour. He has a newspaper beside him, which he would usually read at this hour. He asks if he might have conversation with the observer instead as it is rare that he has a social evening. ‘It is so difficult’ he states, ‘to find the right people with whom to meet socially. One feels the general disdain for teachers amongst the upper classes[74] but parents are generally too low with habits and thoughts repugnant to mine. Small trades people seem to
feel I will be critical about their speech while better trades people feel above me. Professionals distrust my learning and I can hardly consort with masters of private schools. A manager may give me leave to walk in his grounds but could scarcely expect me to be his guest.75 He brightens when the observer asks if there are fellow elementary school heads with whom he might discourse and he responds with comments about two heads he has recently encountered at a London School Board meeting for newly appointed headmasters.

6.15–8.00 p.m. Managing change

Mr Thody completes the school log book for the day. Usually he writes it once a week but with the inspectors’ visit imminent he is punctilious about the niceties. He selects Trollope’s Australian travelogue for personal reading76 but finds he cannot settle. He says his mind is too much occupied with the inspectors coming. Like the teacher in Crabbes’s The Borough, he must set aside his personal reading and ‘To this sad duty his sound mind apply, And Vex’d in spirit, throw his pleasures by’.77 He wonders whether he has been long enough in this job to introduce major changes at Reynold Street. He feels he has ‘sufficient experience of the school to enable [him] to judge of their expediency’78 but recollects Gill’s advice that ‘No wise man will rashly innovate’.79 Mr Thody is aware of the disorder and confusion that can arise from hasty change and knows that what he chooses to do must be apposite to the character of the district.80 He feels strongly, however, that better class children must be attracted to the school. At this point, the observer leaves.

Learning from history?

The value of lessons from the past

Has Mr Thody presented us with approaches we have not adopted? Do his methods strengthen our own by demonstrating their earlier applicability? Do these questions suggest that historical examples ought to be useful if a study of history is to be justified? Usefulness has been seen as dangerous since if we look at past events as a source of advice on today’s practicalities, we may select ‘only those facts which suit our present interests, [so that] we may distort the past and merely find in it what in some respects we have put there ourselves’.81 Readers may wish to reflect whether or not this has happened in the foregoing account. I chose to categorize Mr Thody’s work in twentieth-century terminology (e.g. Reputation Management) which serves to stress similarities rather than the differences which Seaborne feels should be what we should try to comprehend. Is there more merit in perceiving differences rather than similarities?

Seaborne argues that the reasons for studying history ‘must rest, in the last analysis, on the intrinsic interest of the study of past events’82 but is it not because of similarities to our own time that past events become of interest?
Once such interest is aroused, it becomes possible for ‘historical study to trace the development of education . . . and so to reach a deeper understanding of the function it ful ls today’. The functions of school management have become of major political, practitioner and academic interest since the mid-1970s, the time when Silver was criticizing research on the Victorian period for neglecting the content of schooling and educational processes because only those issues in Victorian education that had ‘meaning in twentieth century terms have been admitted to the de nition of the history of education’. A neglect may, however, begin to be recti ed when current interests invite comparisons.

Silver feels, like Seaborne, that selecting history for twentieth-century needs precludes the Victorian period being understood in its own terms because this may make us question our cherished assumptions. Silver’s views gain credence from, for example, Hogan’s reassessment of Lancaster’s system of monitorialism. Hogan demonstrates that it is from this system that the current competitive individualism in classrooms began, although we might not like to admit it. Further, how many of us readily accept the criticisms of Lancaster’s system while at the same time thoroughly commending our own system of peer tutoring? The Lancaster and Bell monitorial schools are also credited with having been the basis of the incorporation of business management methods into schools; we may think that managerialism in schools is new and unwelcome but it appears to have been deep in the English education system since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The monitorial schools transferred to education the factory methods that were just beginning to be incorporated into industrial processes, hence providing ‘a kind of innate characteristic or psychological trait which has helped form . . . a characteristic approach to the problems of public school administration’.

If we accept this last view, it seems to reinforce the value of selecting issues that link the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To claim, as Silver appears to do, that there was a Victorian interpretation seems surprisingly singular since views changed during the century. It could even be unreasonable to claim that any Victorian interpretation of their own and proximate times has more claim to veracity than views from the twentieth century. Reactions from all periods could be said to be subjective. Using history as a tool in education management lies between the realist and subjectivist schools. Real data are used but as one time-travels, subjectivity is revealed as one reads how each generation tends to revile the choices of its immediate predecessors in order to justify their own activities. Such subjectivity should not be seen as a cause for disallowing twentieth-century interpretations of earlier periods: ‘case study and comparative and historical methods become the preferred means of analysis [for research which] aims at dealing with the experience of people in speci c situations’.

**History for education management**

The speci c situation of school management would bene t from a historical base. In an elegantly argued paper, Sungaila suggests that such a base would
contribute to the emergence of shared values amongst academic and practitioner managers. Part of her argument centres on the Heideggian realization that truths about a discipline are apparent the more one understands ‘having been-in-the-world’. People are perceived as a continuum of past, present and future which ‘allows man [sic] to perceive the possibilities that he has inherited and realize in the historical “moment of vision” what he can be for his own time’.

This is to move our discipline on from being a practical response to a practical need (borrowing from business management and basing itself in being a technical discipline arising from information gleaned from collating and categorizing information about current management practice). Already, our discipline has acknowledged the value of experience in the establishment, since 1991, of a mentoring scheme whereby newly appointed headteachers are guided by experienced headteachers acting as mentors. Similar acknowledgement is apparent in the movement to school-based management, and intending-teacher education. This acknowledgement needs extending to include historical knowledge about what it means to be an education manager.

Such a study would accord with Seaborne’s views that education history is more interesting if studied thematically than chronologically. For education management, there is more at stake than interest alone. Education management emerged in the 1950s from social sciences, building also from business management. The latter began around 1900, apparently full grown with its theories of scientific management. What happened before then seems blank, yet a discipline surely needs a strong origin if it is to grow to maturity. Its origins can become apparent from studies such as this.

As the concept of educational administration as a profession and social science gains ever wider recognition and acceptance, it becomes appropriate to examine the theory and assumptions which underlie the field. In particular we need to ask whether the theory and assumptions still appear to hold in settings where they were developed before they were recommended and applied in totally new settings.

History is our laboratory and it may yet rescue us from our current preoccupation with regarding quantitative proofs as the only ones of any value in the testing of our ideas.

The nineteenth century and the history of education management

Having indicated the value of history and its particular relevance to education management, why then select the nineteenth century particularly? First, I must confess to a personal interest as a reason for this choice, arising from work completed as a student teacher in the long forgotten days when the history of education was a compulsory subject for study. Second, although there may be concerns that this period is already well researched, the studies have not con-
considered school management. There is a great deal of work on the development of
the government of the system, on the curriculum and on teaching methods.
There are many individual school histories (though relatively few on state ele-
mentary schools, and these, being singular, leave us with inadequate notions of
what typical schools were like). It remains true that the research on the educa-
tional history of the nineteenth century could be described as limited to very few
areas and approaches with gaps to be filled, notably in the format of the educa-
tion of the poor.96 Third, it could be said that this is the only century, other than
the twentieth, in which there were schools of significant size to be managed.

Methodology and sources

This study intended to illuminate what it meant to be a nineteenth-century edu-
cation manager through creating an image that:

... re ect[ed] [a school’s] character and quality and that [told] us some-
thing of what the experience of schooling is like. Since schools are
made up of different people in different times and places, it is to be
expected that images which re ect the experience of schooling must be
many and varied . . . [they are] sets of ‘one-sided viewpoints’.97

This particular one-sided viewpoint explored the possibilities of ‘factionalized’
shadowing, hoping thereby to respond to Seaborne’s plea for writing history
comprehensibly so that it can be understood easily98 through using the advan-
tages of observational techniques.99

This account was created as far as possible from contemporaneous sources. It
was constructed around school timetables published in Joyce and Currie.100 On
to these was built information from other management textbooks published
during the century. Material published before the period to which this account
directly refers was incorporated in the form of the headteacher’s re ections on
times past in order to provide a flavour of how school management changed
during the century. It was assumed that the headmaster would still be using
some of the methods of the past; headteachers today do not all use all the most
recommended modern methods and Victorian school leaders presumably
behaved similarly. One feature had to be invented (pupils’ lunch) since no refer-
ence could be found to it in the texts consulted. Various texts outlined daily
timetables but none exhibited more than very short breaks. It seems unlikely that
the children went all day without either breaks or food so five minutes have been
permitted in the above account. Whether or not this is accurate awaits informa-
tion from further research.

In attempting to ascertain how far the textbook accounts were translated into
practice in schools, the books themselves were first compared to see how far
they all agreed. Where several books suggested the same ideas, these were
incorporated into this study. Recourse was also made to novels, poetry, source
books on childhood in the nineteenth century, school log books, managers’ record books, autobiographies and biographies and inspectors’ reports. A small sample of each was used in order to assess the value of each as a potential source for more extensive use later. Secondary sources which utilized other nineteenth-century sources were also used.

Reflecting first on novels and poetry, it ‘has long been recognised that imaginative literature can be used to infer contemporary assumptions and accepted social values’. Novels, however, depend on creativity, ‘selection . . . interpretation, on a personal vision of social fact’ and, hence, literature is not usually a good source of commonplace fact. This is borne out by the relatively few sources located on public elementary schools and the recognition that, for novelists, a drama is more interesting that is everyday procedure. References are scattered and short and locating them is not easy, which explains the value of biographical guides to fictional sources.

Novelists do not seem to have been attracted to school leaders as heroes. They appear in novels briefly (Sue’s headteacher in Hardy’s *Jude the Obscure* for example). Combined with other sources, however, novels help to fill out a general picture. Trollope’s *The Claverings* reminds us of the social opprobrium faced by teachers as the hero, Henry, rises in status when he departs education to become an engineer. Mrs Gaskell’s *My Lady Ludlow* well illustrates the changing attitudes to popular education over the first fifty years of the century. I often wonder if Matthew Arnold was inspired by a school inspection to write ‘And we are here as on a darkling plain, Swept by confused alarms of struggle and fight, Where ignorant armies clash by night’.

Accounts of peoples’ childhoods were investigated as a source but these were found often to be written by those outside the social bracket that would have patronized the state-supported schools. Alternatively, autobiographers found school not worth writing about. In Armstrong’s *Victorian Peepshow*, for example, he recounts his governesses in some detail and those of his siblings, merely recording that ‘I was by that time at day-school’ with no details. He later recounts two humiliations at the hands of schoolmasters and that ‘I don’t remember to have been in the least interested in what I learnt’. For girls, there was the added issue of writers despising girls’ education and being concerned that girls were being educated outside the home at all. Autobiographies of adults operating the education system as teachers, inspectors or administrators appear to be a more fertile source.

Log Books and Managers’ Minute Books provided useful outlines of what happened on a daily basis in schools and have the advantage of providing the headteacher’s viewpoint, which few of the other sources do. On the other hand, they are usually very brief and records for individual schools are patchy.

Inspector’s Reports provided a further perspective. Those of Matthew Arnold tended to comment on major issues in the system rather than on the minutiae of school management but there is material to be culled from them, especially as his reports cover such a long period. Sneyd-Kinnersley’s autobiography was
used. The reports and reminiscences used for this article, although published in collections in 1908, related to the period selected for this observation. The value and availability of other inspectors’ reports and government documents are discussed in Sutherland.111

This pilot study has demonstrated that there is more than enough material to make a fuller study of nineteenth-century school management worthwhile. In addition to the sources outlined above, there are also investigations to be made of periodicals, of school histories and of many secondary sources.112 The study has found that some approaches were more prevalent at particular times in the century so that further research might be able to characterize different periods. A brief foray into the literature of New South Wales, Tasmania, Ireland and the USA indicates that research material is available. An interesting development of this research would be to compare Anglophone countries, at very different stages of development in the nineteenth century, but with similar expectations of schooling, to see if they had common patterns of school management.

Tale end

Sadly, the study of the history of education as an element in the training of intending teachers has long been abandoned in England and Wales despite the assertion in 1966 that its value was so self-evident that there was ‘no need to make out a case for the study of the history of education as an essential aspect of the course offered to intending teachers’.113 In contrast, the management of education has recently been recommended as an essential element of the training of intending teachers.114 Combining the history and management of education might help tomorrow’s school managers (and today’s) to achieve a fuller appreciation of possible solutions to managerial challenges – at least they might have more arguments to advance for or against reintroducing payments by results.

Notes

In sourcing this article, the assistance of Mr Roy Kirk, Librarian at the School of Education, University of Leicester, is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to Emeritus Professor Brian Simon who has commented on the text. Any errors are the fault of the author.

1 In contrast with the rest of the world, common practice in the UK is to use the term ‘management’ for ‘administration’. To attempt to avoid confusion, ‘management’ is defined here, as it was in nineteenth-century textbooks, as the activities of the head teacher (see note 3) in running the school. These activities encompass strategic and tactical matters, such as planning, curriculum and staff management and detailed ‘administrative’ tasks such as keeping the registers and arranging lunch for the inspectors. Administration in nineteenth-century England appears to have referred to the local and central levels of the government of education rather than to the institutional level which is the subject of this article.
The term ‘headmaster’ seems to have emerged in the latter part of the nineteenth century, developing first from its usage in the public schools for upper class children. It became accepted terminology in the state elementary schools as they increased in size and employed more certificated teachers who became known as ‘Assistant Teachers’. Prior to 1870, the word, ‘schoolmaster’ was the more common description of he who managed the school. There were often no other staff so the schoolmaster did not need to be distinguished by title. Assistants would be monitors or pupil teachers. In this article, ‘headmaster’ or ‘headteacher’ is generally used though ‘schoolmaster’ sometimes appears in references to pre-1870 material. The modern, international term, ‘school leader’, is also utilized occasionally. Writers of nineteenth-century texts concerning school management pre-date our era of political correctness. They therefore assumed that man embraced woman, that he subsumed she and that headmasters represented the unalienable, dominant order. It was decided to retain masculine terminology in reporting their words and ideas in order to recount their views with contextual sensitivity.

Reynold Street is a mythical school since records available for individual schools are vestigial. Some creative licence has been needed in order to ensure that many elements of management are touched upon in one day. Further discussion of ‘factionalization’ is to be found in the methodology section at the end of this article. The London School Board was real; it was one of the many local authorities for education established after the 1870 Education Act to provide schools which would fill the gaps not covered by voluntary schools. The London School Board commenced work immediately after the 1870 Act in view of major deficiencies in the capital’s educational provision; elsewhere, the voluntary authorities were given several years’ grace to provide more schools before the School Boards commenced. Board Schools were financed from fees (until 1896), local property taxes and central government grants (the latter dependent upon attendance and examination results).


In some areas, including London, the School Boards had opted to have managing bodies for their individual schools but they were not found in all areas. Voluntary schools all had managers. The definitive work on Victorian school managers is P. Gordon, The Victorian School Manager (London, 1974).

Pupil teachers were only allowed to complete the registers during their final two years of training but it remained the headmaster’s job to complete the compilations and he was, of course, the responsible agent.


J. Gill (1883) op. cit., Ch. V.

P. W. Joyce, A Handbook of School Management (Dublin, 1864), 37.

This topic formed the subject of a question in the 1897 Queen’s Scholarship examination so its importance was eventually recognized.

Collins (1887), op. cit., 91.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

16 1869 was Gill’s 12th edition so he appears to have been a popular author.
17 Gill (1887), *op. cit.*, 101.
19 Joyce, *op. cit.*
20 Collins (1842), *op. cit.*
21 Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 90.
22 Ibid., 101.
23 Ibid., 103.
24 Collins (1887), *op. cit.*, 5.
30 Miller, *op. cit.*, 11.
31 Fitch, *op. cit.*, 63.
32 Arnold *op. cit.*, 199.
33a E. M. Sneyd Kinnersley, H.M.I. *Some Passages in the Life at One of H.M. Inspectors of Schools* (London, 1908), 162.
34 Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 106.
35 Fitch, *op. cit.*, 29.
37 Sneyd-Kinnersley, *op. cit.*
38 The Revised Codes were the first English National Curriculum. For each standard there were attainment targets in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic in which all pupils were examined. Other subjects were optional but likewise had targets. Achieving the targets meant that the pupils earned grant for the school (known as payment by results). Matthew Arnold, the famous poet and one of the HMIs for London, resolutely opposed the Code and criticized what he saw as its stultifying effects. Others were, however, in favour and it was viewed as a means of raising standards and of ensuring that all children received the same entitlement to the curriculum. The Codes were abolished at the turn of the century but the arguments for and against them have become apposite again since England reintroduced its National Curriculum in 1988 (in much greater detail, and with many more compulsory subjects than in the nineteenth century).
41 Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 86.
42 Ibid., 93.
44 Joyce, *op. cit.*, 74.
45 Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 107.
46 Joyce, *op. cit.*, 61.
47 Medway, *op. cit.*, 17 September 1886.
48 Collins (1887), 23.
49 Joyce, *op. cit.*, 15.
50 Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 104.
51 Ibid., 103.
52 Fitch, *op. cit.*, 75; Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 105.
55 Dunn, *op. cit.*, 17.
57 E. Gaskell, *My Lady Ludlow* (Guernsey, 1985 edn, 1858 original), 55.
59 Ibid., 200.
61 Arnold, *op. cit.*, 90–91.
62 Gladstone, *op. cit.*, Minutes, April, 1883.
63 Gill, *op. cit.*, 108.
64 Hogan, *op. cit.*, 402.
65 Miller, *op. cit.*, 13.
66 Arnold, *op. cit.*, 90–91.
67 Sneyd-Kinnersley, *op. cit.*, 162.
68 Ibid., 168.
69 Currie, *op. cit.*, 203.
70 Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 105.
71 Currie, *op. cit.*, 204.
72 Mumford, *op. cit.*, 10.
73 Joyce, *op. cit.*, 9.
75 Anon, *op. cit.*, 142.
76 A. Trollope, *Australia* (Gloucester, 1987 edn of 1873 original).
77 Hartcup, *op. cit.*, 18–19.
78 Collins (1883), *op. cit.*, 29.
79 Gill (1883), *op. cit.*, 102.
80 Ibid.
82 Ibid., 41.
84 Silver, *op. cit.*, 62.
85 Hogan, *op. cit.*
86 Miller, *op. cit.*, 10.
88 Ibid., 13.
90 Ibid., 64.
91 Ibid.
94 Greeneld and Ribbins, op. cit., 94.
96 Silver, op. cit., 58.
97 Greeneld and Ribbins, op. cit., 19.
98 Seaborne, op. cit.
100 Joyce, op. cit.; Currie, op. cit.
101 Grylls, op. cit., 45.
102 Ibid.
104 Dover Beach, 1867.
105 Avery, op. cit., 145–9.
106 Armstrong, op. cit., 85.
107 Ibid., 135–6.
108 Ibid.
113 Simon, op. cit., 91
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References

General introduction


GENE R A L INTRODUCTION
PART 1 Values and religion


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These semantics are instructive. Innumerable assertions, laudatory or pejorative, can be made about the executive, the administrator, the leader—but what cannot be said is that the office, the role, or its incumbent is without power. This drives home to us what we already know at the deepest level, even though it may take some semantic conjuring to raise it to the surface of consciousness. What is then revealed is the absolute necessity for power in administrative affairs. Power is the first term in the administrative lexicon. 1

Without defining, or confining, this primal concept of power, it may be said that it is the human analogue of the physical science term energy, that is, the ability to do work, to accomplish ends. But in administration, in human affairs as opposed to the simplicities of physics and mechanics, power is much more. It is above all else the ability to impose one’s will. Here the contrast with natural science is revealing. In physics power is equivalent to force and is measurable in quantitative terms such as watts, joules, ergs, or pounds per square
inch. But physical events are not human events. At most they are only com
ponents of human events. In science one presumes a
determinism, a mechan
ism, a law of causation—notwithstanding that at the quantum
level of analysis
(that is, subatomic particle physics) strange paradoxes and
‘irrationalities’ are
observable that seem to defy our ordinary understanding of
cause and effect. In
human events a new factor appears. In addition to the
mechanistic–determinis
tic laws of cause and effect to which human beings are
themselves subject there
is now introduced a concept of will or voluntarism. Thus the
human agent in
the total equation of determining forces is felt to possess
a freedom of choice—
whether that sense of freedom is illusory or whether or not
it is an epiphenom
enon, a psychological by-product of unconscious vectors
that are the real
determinants. Administration cannot exist without either
the reality or the illu
sion. And science itself stops short at the edge of
voluntarism, at the frontiers
of conscious choice. For this reason a distinction between
administration and
management is essential: 2 the former opening upon the
limitless horizons of
philosophy, the latter upon the restricted field of vision
right and proper to
science and technology.
It follows that administration is a form of life in which wills enter into a
complex domain of conflict, reconciliation and resolution. In other words,
adadministration is politics: the creating, organizing, managing, monitoring and

resolving of value conflicts, where values are defined as concepts of the desirable. 3 In principle or in theory the accomplishment of administrative ends, goals, targets, aims, purposes, plans and objectives is no more than the imposition of a putative collective will upon the resistant and countervailing forces of matter, circumstances, materials, resources and contending wills. To be without will would be to be without power and, conversely, to have power is to have the ability to impose will. And here for the tender of heart and the already disaffected it may be allowed that ‘to impose’ can also be rendered as ‘to change’. The will to power.

At this point one may consider a deeper motivational concept: the will to power.

This formulation is central to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche 4 although its origins can be traced through his mentor Schopenhauer (the will to life) back to Vedantic Indian philosophizing about the life-force and the eternal dynamic of creation, preservation and destruction. 5 Less metaphysically and more simply, in
administrative terms it can be said to refer to the primal maxim; self-preservation is the first law of nature. I have represented this elsewhere as the first of the metavalues. 6

How does the will to power bear upon administration? It does this in obviously fundamental ways. For example, inasmuch as administration is an attempt via organization to control the future, it is a philosophical activity: Genuine philosophers, however, are commanders and legislators: they say, ‘thus it shall be!’ . . . With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their ‘knowing’ is creating, their creating is a legislation, their will to truth is—will to power. 7

Conway expands upon the theme in this way: As commanders and legislators, they must introduce order and discipline into the formless economy of Nature, thus ‘correcting’ for Nature’s profligacy. Toward this end philosophers legislate a hierarchy of values that both promotes the flourishing of certain forms of life and excludes other forms . . . 8

This point is directly relevant, we may note, to postmodern and politically correct conceptions of inclusion. The will referred to here is of course, despite the totalitarian nuance, the nomothetic will, the will of the collectivity. Corporations, organizations and nations can in this sense be said to be imbued with the will to power.

But now the problem of will has ramified. It can be seen as deriving from the individual, from the group and, as Weber made specific, from the environment,
In essence Weber argues that, on the one hand, the administrator takes cultural values as given and is, for example, ‘politically correct’ in the contemporary sense. This would allow the administrator to assume the mantle of self-righteous ‘responsibility’ and to steer a satisficing course to given ends as per the doctrine of H.A. Simon. On the other hand, the administrator may embody convictions (and commensurate will) towards ends which may or may not be either cultural or those of the corporate entity he represents. This leads to the potential for ‘irresponsibility’ or bureaupathology, as when the interpretation of orthodoxy (Weltanschauung) is appropriated by the leader. Will to power here acts as an administrative countervailing force to the downward impress of cultural and organizational dictates. Yet even in the case of the administrative factotum—administrator as Simonian agent simpliciter—will to power as a depth motivation is a powerful determinant in the overall collective equation. Granted that administration is the very business of power, that power is its preeminent characteristic, it is somewhat curious that (with a few exceptions, notably Machiavelli) the standard literature glides so smoothly and blandly over the prob...
lematics of power. Two very deep-seated assumptions seem to underlie this phenomenon: assumptions so entrenched and buried that they might be regarded as meta-assumptions, 12 or assumptions at the unconscious level that pass without question, scrutiny or examination. Before we examine them, however, it should be repeated that these are assumptions in the literature, in the theory of administration, in the conventional wisdom and orthodoxy. It should also be noted that the assumptions selected for critique are only two examples of presumptive error in administrative thought and praxis; others such as the naturalistic, homogenetic, militaristic and excisionistic fallacies have been dealt with elsewhere. 13

The first of these meta-assumptions or presumptive fallacies is that ‘We are all honourable men’ (and/or women, to satisfy the politically correct). The second is that authority and leadership in and of themselves legitimize power.

Taken together these two unspoken assumptions effectively divorce the administrator from problems of ethics, morals, values, axiology or philosophy—leaving their place only problems of technique, of managerial efficacy and efficiency; problems in decision-making and implementation that can in principle be solved
by the application of rationality and technology. Systems theorist MacNamara’s

belated apologia for the Vietnam War is a case in point. 14 Flowing from these assumptions is the concept of power as neutral instrumentality; a means to righteous ends (derived from outside the system) which means are also the profes sional property of a managerial elite. Thus honourable men and women pragmatically muddle through to resolve the ongoing problems of their particu lar organizational interest—making a profit, breaking even, delivering quality services, satisfying educational demands, winning the war against crime, or drugs—whatever it might be. Or else the same honorati apply the full force of rationality, systems theory, technocracy, bureaucracy and quantitative methodology to produce pro tem solutions that satisfy or satisfice the stakeholders and constituencies involved. Either way, ends are achieved and our leaders rise above their earthbound followers, escaping the bonds of gravity by means of their virtue, borne aloft on the wings of these grand assumptions, and falling from grace only with failure to maintain the proper altitude and attitude for air borne manœuvring.

Alas! neither assumption withstands the light of conscious scrutiny. The first
assumption can be rejected not on the grounds that fools and knaves assume the administrative mantle—fools and knaves know no boundaries of role or occupation—but on the simple logic of universal self-interest. Self-interest, when it takes the form of egoism, vanity and careerism, is often (but not always) antagonistic to the organizational and higher interests. But more subtle considerations compound the potential for pathology. For example, consider, as Nietzsche does, the feeling of power, the affective quality of power. Nietzsche’s analysis in the Gay Science dissects this in ethical terms: By doing good and doing ill one exercise one’s power upon others—more one does not want! By doing ill upon those to whom we first have to make our power palpable [. . .] By doing good and well-wishing upon those who are in some way already dependent upon us [. . .] Whether we make a sacrifice in doing good or ill does not alter the ultimate value of our actions: even if we stake our life, as the martyr does for the sake of his Church—it is a sacrifice to our desire for power or for the purpose of preserving our feeling of power. [. . .] Certainly, the condition in which we do ill is seldom as pleasant, as unmixedly pleasant, as that in which we do good—it is a sign that we still lack power [. . .] 15 This analysis hardly needs explication for the practicing administrator. It is a matter of simple experience, even if that experience goes unscrutinized and unexamined. It penetrates and permeates the affective life and insidiously subverts the claim to honour. It is at the root of Lord Acton’s aphorism that power corrupts, and its little known corollary: ‘Great men are almost always bad men.’ 16 V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N The second assumption, the assumption of formal legitimacy, falls even more calamitously and precipitously into the pit of decadence. This is because it is entirely a dependent function of a special perception, namely, the perception of the common good, the common interest, of, in a word, the commons. Before legitimacy can be assigned to the formal role of leader there must be agreement upon the collective purpose or the public interest or, simply, the larger
interest. But what is this legitimizing interest in a neo-feudal, 17 corporatist 18 social structure where everyone is obliged to defend the parochial interest of some organization or subset of an organization, the interests of which may well be antagonistic to the whole? This is a system wherein the first duty of each administrator is to ‘fight his own corner’: where everyone and anyone is a ‘stakeholder’; and where devices for litigation and conflict resolution and power equalization (ombudspersons, equity and harassment officers, quotas, commissars for this and that perceived abuse) proliferate ad absurdum. In all of this is there somewhere a commons, a source of legitimacy, or has it nihilistically gone to the wall in the general pandemonium of postmodernism? Is it not fair to say that our present condition is one wherein the sense of commonality tends to dwindle to the vanishing point among contending ideologies? In this condition, paradoxically, the demand for conformist orthodoxy and political correctness frustrates the use of reason and speech and inhibits dialogue and dialectical examination of values. Surely any experienced academic or politician would vouch for the resultant bad faith and loss of community? Surely also every practising administrator knows the meaning of political expediency and has faced the choice between personal welfare and the common good on some occasion? And yet the myth remains. The leader represents and embodies the good of the whole and thus has the authority and power of a legitimized will. L’état, c’est lui, c’est elle. But, despite the assumptions and presumptions of the textbooks, administrative reality is less a field of honour than a battleground of wills, a domain of confused, confusing and conflicting values and, as often as not, a ‘darkling plain . . . where ignorant armies clash by night’. Will, affect and circumstance

On the darkling plain victory is a function of will. Will and power, the will to power, these concepts are correlative, they are aspects of one another. In Nietzsche’s view, and he was as much psychologist as philosopher, there is nothing simple here. Willing goes beyond both feeling and thinking; it transcends the affective and the cognitive faculties. But it is essentially an experience of com
manding—whether this be of others or of oneself. T H E T R I U M P H O F T H E W I L L What is called ‘freedom of will’ is essentially the emotion of superiority over him who must obey: ‘I am free, “he” must obey’—this consciousness adheres to every will, as does that tense attention, that straight look which fixes itself exclusively on one thing, that unconditional evaluation ‘this and nothing else is necessary now’, that inner certainty that one will be obeyed, and whatever else pertains to the state of him who gives commands. A man who wills—commands something in himself which obeys or which he believes obeys . . . 21

Here, it seems to me, Nietzsche is alluding to what I have elsewhere described as a Type I level of valuation. 22 In the face of this charismatic quality of will, lesser individual wills are, as it were, psychologically disempowered. Resent fully or otherwise one either submits or, aligning with the leader, gains force from a psychological identification with the stronger ‘freer’ power. . . . he who believes with a tolerable degree of certainty that will and action are somehow one—he attributes the success, the carrying out of the willing, to the will itself, and thereby enjoys an increase of that sensation of power which all success brings with it. ‘Freedom of will’—is the expression for that complex condition of pleasure of the person who wills, who commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the command—who as such enjoys the triumph over resistances involved but who thinks it was his will itself which overcame these resistances. 23

There is enough in these enucleated Nietzschean insights to preoccupy the reflections of the thoughtful administrator for a long time but it must be noted that what they are pointing towards is the triumph of the will, not its defeat, not its failure nor its décadence. 24 The healthy will derives its exuberance and its
power from a clarity of interest and a commitment to
values—whatever the
content of those values. Technical competence or expertise
doesn’t enter into it.

But the will, free or unfree, always encounters
circumstance. For the most part we delude ourselves about the freedom of our will because we are not con-
scious of the extent to which we are mechanistically
determined or programmed
by external, subjective and objective, factors. Our
capacity to shape events, for
ourselves and others, is much less than we might think.
Nothing new in this. The
Romans said it: Fata viam inveniunt, things happen by
themselves. In complex
circumstances things just happen and consequently the
honorific of leadership
(or administration) is often falsely attributed to an actor who is simply in the
right place at the right time. Fate has smiled upon him. His plan has worked out.
His enterprises have been successful. All of which, pace Nietzsche, speaks
nothing to either his virtue or his will. ‘Yes. But he brought this great matter to a successful conclusion.’—
That means something, but not enough; for we rightly accept the VALUES AND RELIGION maxim which says
that plans must not be judged by results. The Carthaginians punished bad counsels in their captains even when they were put right by a happy outcome. And the Roman people often refused to mark great and beneficial victories because the qualities of leadership of the commander were inferior to his good luck. In this world’s activities we often notice that Fortune rivals Virtue: she shows us what power she has over everything and delights in striking down our presumption by making the incompetent lucky since she cannot make them wise. She loves to interfere, favouring
those performances whose course has been entirely her own. That is why we can see, every day, the simplest amongst us bringing the greatest public and private tasks to successful conclusions. 25

To sum up: will is one thing, affect is another, and fate and accident are always administrative parameters. Malaise

Let us move now from the Renaissance and classical allusions to our own post modern times. The practical wisdom of Montaigne has long since been forgot ten. Nowhere are fate, accident, affect and will explicated or seriously discussed in the management literature of our day. The managerial technopundits have no vocabulary to comprehend or cope with such untidy concepts. In the dialectic between the philosophy of administration and the science of management the latter has achieved a salience unthought of or undreamt of in earlier epochs.

Thus today the president of a Canadian bank can confidently assert that ‘The manager’s principal aim is to remove uncertainty.’ 26 And MacNamara in his apologia still maintains, ‘To this day, I see quantification as a language to add precision to reasoning about the world. 27

Paradoxically this very modernist orientation occurs in a condition of post-modernity and questions arise as to whether it is a triumph or a failure of the will. Is it victory or defeat, affirmation or negation, health or pathology? Is this
tacit administrative philosophy—one could call it managerialism—an aspiration
towards the ultimate Apollonian ascendancy over the Dionysian forces of
passion, violence and unreason which might threaten it?

To answer such questions or to try to is to engage in philosophy, more pre

cisely, in axiology: the problem of values. Doing philosophy and doing axiology
can be demanding—such efforts require will. The line of least resistance is to
retreat into managerialism, to stick to the book and the numbers, to become a
functionary, a factotum. To abdicate one’s will in the face of complexity is all
too understandable, if not entirely forgivable.

This malaise or failure of the will is a pathology. Its therapy requires some
understanding of the morphogenetics of value. The distinctive value dimensions

bearing upon administration can be visualized as a series of concentric spheres T H E T R I U M P H O F T H E W I

of influence. These descend from a cultural level (V 5 ) through subcultural (V 4 ),
organizational (V 3 ) and group (V 2 ) levels to the irreducible level of the indi
vidual (V 1 ). This whole constitutes the morphogenetic field, a complex of value
forces, an ecology of interests and will, which forms the axiological context of
practical administration (praxis). This schema allows us to identify the central
value conflict and source of contemporary malaise. It points to the hypothesis

that the root conflict is not the conventional idiographic contest between V 1 and

V 3 but rather a dual conflict. There is first the tension between individuals (V 1 )
and their organizations (V 3 ), the orthodox idiographic-nomothetic dissonance.

Second, there is the conflict between the state as representative of (V 5 ) culture
and its component corporate units (V 3 ), where the terms of interest conflict can
be specified in economic terms: the greed of the parts being in opposition to the
welfare of the whole. This in turn leads us to the idea of neo-feudalism.

As society becomes organizational, with large, complex, bureaucratic corpor
ate entities increasingly dominant and increasingly international and global in
scope, so the phenomenon of the individual deriving psychological identity from
the organization which dominates that individual’s life as the source of livelihood

becomes more and more the norm. Saul has defined ‘corporation’ as any interest group: specialized, professional, public or private, profit-oriented or not. The one characteristic assured by all corporations is that the primary relationship of individual members is to the organization and not to society at large. In a corporatized society the group replaces the individual and therefore supersedes the rule of democracy. In their own relationship with the outside world corporations deal whenever possible with other corporations, not with individuals. The modern corporation is a direct descendant of the medieval craft guild. 28
To whom then is one beholden as liege lord? The more one is beholden in a hierarchical structure, the more one is in the power of one’s immediate superiors, as well as one’s peers!

Such dependency throughout the working life is not necessarily to be condemned out of hand. This is exemplified by the Japanese experience but theirs, of course, is a culture of the East and Japan, we must acknowledge, can lay claim to having been the modern world’s first police state. Neo-feudalism is also familiar to the West in all its forms of military organization. But its scope and ramification, its penetration of the public mind at the unconscious level, is a novel aspect of contemporary rational-legalistic, bureaucratized, scientific-technological mass society. Those who have such neo-feudal affiliations—that is to say, us—are the fortunate. Those without liege lords, the unemployed for example, are the unfortunate. Such ronin suffer economically but worse, they find no modality for self-identification, for self-worthiness, for life meaning, save perhaps in so far as they can accept the label of victim and alleviate their resentment through political action. 29

In Saul’s view, corporatism represents the triumph of fascism over demo
cracy; democracy in the romantic Athenian or practical
Swiss sense, fascism in
its proper original sense as a collectivity of V 3
interests bound together by the
State—the emblem of which was the bundle of sticks (fasces)
bound together
around an axe and carried before the Roman senators by the
lictors as a symbol
and reminder of the common good. One can easily break one
stick but the
bundle of them is invincible. (It is interesting to see how
Greece and Rome part
company.) Examples of contemporary sticks (and feudal
identities) are the pro
essions, the bureaucracy, the corporations of industry,
trade, commerce and
entertainment. Rather thick sticks, one must admit, but by
them we come to
identify ourselves to ourselves not as individuals, as
persons, but rather as
doctors, or lawyers, or civil servants, or educators, or
administrators. Thus we
leach our individuality, our wills and our very
consciousness into the roles pro
vided by the organizational forms.
The administrative implication of this malaise is that it
tends to exacerbate the
imperative to fight one’s own corner, whatever that might be: the department or
section or company or corporation or private practice. The
larger good is always
decided elsewhere and, increasingly, if at all. Our eyes
are on the next prize and
prizes are bestowed close to home. One is not rewarded for blowing the whistle
in the greater interest. In this state of affairs our consciousness of ourselves is
defined and limited by our roles and our wills are weakened by corporatist and
subcorporatist myopia. What is good for General Tobacco may be good for the
nation or not but it is certainly good for a GT chief executive officer. And as to
democracy, with respect to the greater good of the commonwealth, what dif
fence does one-man-one-vote make in a mass electorate? What is one vote
among a million? What power attaches to a drop in the ocean? What is one will
against the will to power?

Again, and at a larger level of generality than the organizational, there is a V 5
examination or value impress stemming from the Zeitgeist, the spirit of the
times. To this can be assigned the descriptor postmodernism. 30 For administra
tive purposes, postmodernism can be described simply as that condition where a
loss of value coherence typifies the overall culture. Its hallmarks are, variously:
pluralism, relativism, nihilism, multiculturalism, bien-pensant liberalism, iden
tity politics, anomie, alienation, victimology, eco-activism, terrorism, meaning
lessness, ressentiment, political correctness. One merely peeks beneath the lid of
the Pandora's box before snapping it shut, remarking only
that Nietzsche pre
dicted such outcomes a century ago, not least as a
consequence of his most
famous utterance that God is dead. 31 This selective
catalogue may seem like a
vision of hell and the worst of worlds but it must be
remembered that it is simply
a partial assortment of value ills associated with the
postmodern condition and,
in any event, it is ‘where we are at’. Each epoch has its
own ‘worst of times’ and
this is merely ours. Our concern here is not with the
putative glories of our era,
which are surely many, but with its malaise, with those
aspects that confront the
will to power and that dissipate and enervate the will to
lead. T H E T R I U M P H O F T H E W I L L
The point for administrators is that, to the extent that
postmodernism consti
tutes a discernible condition of organizational context,
they have the onus to
become aware of the issues it entails, of the philosophical
arguments and of the
postmodern polemic itself. Failure to take up this onus
again means loss of con
sciousness, loss of meaning, submission to mechanical
determinism, failure of
nerve, and weakening of the will to power. The outward
manifestation of this
weakening appears in the declension of leadership towards
pragmatic mediation
of interests, in pandering to designated minorities and
vocal activists, in the
compulsive search for consensus, in the reluctance or inability to say no, in the
endless oiling of squeaky wheels, in meek surrender to group-think or politically
correct orthodoxy. The postmodern administrator harbours a fear of violating any
norm. In the words of the Comte de Mirabeau, ‘There go the mob and I must
follow them for I am their leader.’ Recuperation
Restoration, reclamation of the will, the justification and recovery of power,
consciousness: what can be done to achieve such aims?
First of all let us acknowledge the administrative-managerial distinction. 32 It
can then be asserted that in the preparation of administrators generally the man
agerial side of things is fairly well taken care of. We can even commend our
selves on this. Managerial science (or proto-science), systems theory,
quantitative methods, rational problem-solving and inquiry, research methodol
ogy and so on, are with varying emphases well covered in the curricula of our
professional schools. The administrative side is more open to critique but even
here commendation is possible. Sampling only from the subset of educational
administration there is a quite respectable endowment. One need only consider
the highly sophisticated common sense of Willower and Sergiovanni 33 or the
highly sophisticated uncommon sense of Evers and Lakomski. 34 To these can be

added the ethnological work of Gronn and Ribbins 35 and, of course, the radical

insights into the social construction of organizational reality of the late T.B. Greenfield. 36 One could of course go on and still leave many contributors to this

side of the equation unacknowledged. Indeed the temptation is to say that, as

compared with other disciplinary subsets, educational administration is in the

van of curricular progress. In any rigorous comparison, however, the differential

emphases of subsets would have to be taken into account. 37 Nevertheless, what

falls short generally, or at least what tends to receive cavalier treatment, is what

might be called administrative philosophy, or the humanities in so far as they

exceed or transcend conventional social science and social psychology. So

called human relations, group dynamics, personnel ‘management’ and the like

are de rigueur. Even ‘leadership’ in a sort of reductio ad absurdum to anecdote or pencil-and-paper tests is often a required study. But what I have been

talking about and reaching towards in this paper is conspicuously absent. By

philosophy here I do not mean what goes on by and large in academic depart...
logic and rhetoric, and focusing above all on the nature and problem of value,

which are directly relevant to administration and leadership praxis. Such an

administrative philosophy would also subsume every aspect of Realpolitik of

bureaupathology, and of contemporary polemic. Begley has recently expressed

in succinct and persuasive form the practitioner argument for axiology in leader

ship training and preparation. 38 The case for the components of logic and

rhetoric is equally cogent, while the case for the education of the will has, so far

as I am aware, not even been thought of in any serious manner. Curricular

change in these directions, while it cannot of itself bring about rebirth, or the

rejuvenation of a flagging and failing will, could hypothetically provide a

preparatory educational context that would be supportive of recovery, simply

because its manifest function is to enhance and deepen understanding. The

ability to understand and penetrate issues, to reveal fallacies and to lay bare

faulty reasoning and indefensible sentiment is a prerequisite to the health of the

will to power.

Yet in the end we are inexorably returned to V 1 , the value-phenomenology of

the individual, and to the character of the leader. This is the elusive central vital
element in the entire complex of mysteries conjured up by the terminology of
will, power, value, consciousness and leadership. The education of the will

The will to power is an abstraction. Nietzsche himself refused to advance posit
ive characterizations of the will to power. It was simply that which 'resides at
the most basic level of intelligibility', 39 in other words, the primal motivation. It
becomes reality as it is embodied and manifested in the individual. Moreover it
must be understood that, at the individual level, will (intention) is a faculty dis
tinct from either thinking (cognition) or feeling (affect). What commonly passes
for will is not that at all but simply an unconscious resultant of competing affec
thereafter rationalized (if it is thought about at the conscious level) as an 'act of
will'. Actually it is the act of an automaton. ‘Thus I chose’ could be translated
‘Thus it chose for me’. Let us discriminate then between apparent will and real
will, between mechanical will and free will. The question before us then
becomes: is it possible to acquire the free will, to become free? To put it another
way, can one achieve self-mastery?
The general answer to this question is yes. But the education or training
necessary to achieve this affirmative is unlikely to be found in the schools of
leadership, management and administration in the West. 40
The military disci
plines of leadership training practised in officer schools
of both West and East,
while they clearly confront part of the problem through
go-submission tech
niques and anti-akrasia do not thereby educe freedom of the
will. On the con
trary, it could be argued that such education is moral
programming or T H E T R I U M P H O F T H E W I L L
conditioning rather than any inducement to Socratic
examination of self or ques
tioning of authority. With reservations, much the same
might be said of elite
schools of administrative preparation generally. Indeed,
short of adopting Ori
tal, monastic or Zen principles of character development
and training, all that
can be reasonably said or done is to hypothesize the
psychological sequence
implicit in these more esoteric methods of training and
offer them up for reflec
tion and consideration.
The essential central and primary element in all such
methods would appear
to be introspection. In our society, the administrative
leader, man or woman, is
engaged continually in action, in affairs, in gossip, in
the hurly-burly and the
rough and tumble of politics, calendars, schedules,
meetings, conferences and
human contacts which, if not always abrasive, are always
demanding of energy.
In consequence, the psyche is drained. Any spare time is occasion for guilt that there is spare time. Such time is not generally conceived as retreat, as space for solitary reflection, or for the inward look of contemplation. (Vampires don’t like looking in mirrors either!) Such time is more generally regarded as an opportun
ity for well-earned egoistic self-indulgence (and possibly more wear and tear).

Now from the standpoint of the emergence of true will I would like to plead that, whether action and contemplation are conceived of as being at opposite ends of a psychic continuum, or whether they are just plain dichotomous, either without the other is insufficient. I would go further and assert that the one without the other is a vanity and a futility.

Let us return to the hypothetical psychological sequence implicit in will development. Such an hypothesis would be verifiable not in the empirical scien
tific mode but in the sense of individual experience or personal experimentation.

Reflection or introspection or self-observation is then assumed to lead to an inner understanding which is accompanied by increased awareness or conscious
ness of one’s being and of one’s actions. This sensibility is then directly trans
ferable to others because it increases the capacity for Mitfühlung, for empathy
and insight into the motivations of one’s fellows. One becomes a Menschenkenner; one senses or knows what makes people ‘tick’, and this knowledge is power. But power also comes from another direction, from the hypothesis that consciousness and will are correlative. 41 The increase of the former creates at least the potential for a corresponding increase of the latter.

None of this is novel. It takes us back a very long way, to pre-Socratic times when the Delphic oracle answered seekers after power with the maxim, ‘know thyself’. This may be called the ultimate leadership imperative. 42 It is quite safe because in truth we actually know so little of ourselves—we do not see our selves as others see us, for example—and indeed we tend to avoid or shy away from such knowledge even if we firmly believe in the maxim that knowledge is power. The education of the will is then inseparable from the revelation of the self. The approaches to this have been alluded to above but, in the West at least, it appears to be something of a lost art.

At a minimal level any new curriculum with the radical objective of the independence of the will would have to aim at self-discipline and self-mastery in the domain of emotion, particularly negative emotion. The assumption is that
one can control one’s emotions, one can be detached, indifferent. In the vernacular, one can keep one’s cool, or as Kipling puts it so perfectly, keep one’s head while all about are losing theirs. 43

Of course there is a great caveat here. In all of this there must be authenticity or else it is mere dramaturgy, and dangerous contemptible dramaturgy at that.

Sartre, who had an exaggerated and in my view fallacious notion of the degrees of freedom in human will, nevertheless followed his existential logic through from a false premiss to a true conclusion. Sartre emphasized that man must never disclaim the responsibility for his actions. Nor can we avoid the responsibility of making our own choices on the grounds that we ‘must’ go to work or we ‘must’ live up to certain middle-class expectations regarding how we should live. Those who slip into the anonymous masses will never be other than members of the impersonal flock, having fled from themselves into self-deception. On the other hand our freedom obliges us to make something of ourselves, to live ‘authentically’ or ‘truly’. 44

To live authentically and truly would be to have acquired sufficient strength of will to be ‘unimpressed’ (literally so) by all value levels above V 1 . Such a degree of freedom does not mean that those levels would be disparaged but that the leader would use the levels V 2 -V 5 to the end of the common or organizational good without being used by them. That is, the leadership agenda would be neither unconscious nor reactive. It would be a function of a value system
which is itself a reciprocal function of will and consciousness. It would imply at least the embodiment of some Type I values in the leadership. 45 Does this prospect distress the more managerial amongst us? Tant mieux! Such leadership may also be, is likely to be, politically incorrect. Again tant mieux! This follows because it is the manifestation of an authentic Socratic individualism; this kind of leadership would always be a challenge to social norms and hence it is not without risk. Ideally one could imagine a full comprehension and sensibility of the entire V2 – V5 range, yet with an independent V1 interpretation which, while often held in restraint to subserve the consensus, nevertheless at its greatest moments becomes in truth a triumph of the will. This is clearly what we do not have today and so the question is, can such an authentic integrity of will and praxis be taught? It probably cannot, save by osmosis and, perhaps, mimesis; by the coming into contact and communion with an exemplar. The education of the will may of course happen by chance; by some happy accident or through association with a mentor or patron or peer, or by some inherent personal quality of natural charisma that achieves this consummation autonomously. Such patterns are not only informal but they are improp
erly understood and far from being transparent in nature. They can as well have THE TRIFLUS.

outcomes contrary to the notion of freedom of the will: for example, in the crys

'tallizing of a learner’s will in the image of the teacher or in the Christian and

Islamic paradoxes of ‘In His service is perfect freedom’ and ‘Inshallah! (As God

wants!’) Once again it becomes important to remember the distinction between

training and education. That these two pedagogical strategies can run at cross

purposes is always a hazard to any educative project of the will. If the will is

free then it cannot be said to be trained, only to be educated. But are these strat

gies independent or symbiotic?

Even if these problematics remain intractable that does not mean that they are

imponderable. Surely we can, and should, teach about them. Surely we could

include them within the compass of our total research effort? Is not administration

a specially important part of the general search for meaning? Axiology, value

analysis, value auditing: all deserve a better place in the professional sun. The

 gods of passion also deserve to be restored to the administrative pantheon. Dionys

sus and Apollo are brothers after all.

What I have crudely sketched here is but a prolegomenon to potential years
of labour in the academic vineyard. Such a tentative
reconnaissance of the terri
tory probably does not warrant any pointed conclusion.
Nevertheless, in the

spirit of the text one might essay a latter-day postmodern
Nietzscheanism: The Song of the Herd is We shall overcome.
The Song of the Leader is I have overcome . . . Myself!

Dare one, could one, ought one then add the words ‘For
them’? Endlogic

The point of this exploration has already been made: to
repeat the peculiar onus

upon the leader to acquire self-knowledge and self-mastery.
This is not an ethereal or impractical conclusion but rather an
ultra-practical or even hyper-practical suggestion. That it is avoided as often as not is
merely the mark of malaise,
of the flight into reason rather than beyond it.

The more pedestrian practical inferences to be drawn can be summarized as

follows:

1 There is never any shortage of leadership positions.
2 There is never any dearth of aspirants for those positions.
3 Therefore the problem is now, as it was in Plato’s time, curricular.
4 The administrative curriculum is lifelong.
5 The managerial side of this curriculum is currently adequate, the administrative or leadership side inadequate.
6 The inadequacies are axiological not epistemological.
7 Axiology is defined as: The philosophical theory of value
in general, embracing ethics or the philosophical theory of morality, but extending far beyond it to include aesthetic, technical, prudential, hedonic, and other forms of value. Any field of human discourse in which the general value-terms ‘good’ and ‘ought’ figure falls within the range of axiology, even that of scientific method with its principles about the degree of belief we ought to give to a hypothesis in the light of a given body of evidence.

8 Hence, the emergent curriculum would include consideration of the problem of the will, the problem of the commons, Realpolitik, social critique and bureauopathology in all its forms.

9 At a minimum, the emergent curriculum would incorporate practical training in the arts of common-sense logic, rhetoric and polemic.

10 Administration proper is a high-risk, high-reward vocation. Notes

Paper given at the Toronto Conference on Values and Educational Leadership, OISE Centre for the Study of Values and Leadership, University of Toronto, October 1996.

1 Christopher Hodgkinson, Towards a Philosophy of Administration (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982), prop. 6, p. 217.


4 Considering the administrative theorists’ concern with power, it is curious that Nietzsche is so rarely cited or referred to in the literature. A text in English exists—The Will to Power, tr. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1968)—and it can be noted that this concept recurs...
throughout all the Nietzschean opus as a dominant leitmotif or threnody in his philosophy.

5 Nietzsche sees it as an ultimate driving force in the economy of life and nature going beyond merely human affairs: ‘Life itself is essentially appropriation, injury, over powering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and, at its mildest, exploitation . . . Life simply is will to power.’

Beyond Good and Evil, tr. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Penguin, 1976), 211.

6 Hodgkinson, Philosophy of Administration, 180 ff.

7 Nietzsche, Beyond Good, 211.


11 See n. 8 and Nietzsche, Beyond Good, s. 46.

12 See n. 5.


14 Robert S. MacNamara, In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam (New

16 Lord Acton, Historical Essays and Studies Appendix.


19 Ibid. 38-71 gives an independent treatment of this problem.

20 Matthew Arnold, ‘Dover Beach’.

21 Nietzsche, Beyond Good, s. 19.

22 Hodgkinson, Philosophy of Leadership, Educational Leadership, Administration Philosophy.

23 Nietzsche Beyond Good, s. 19.


27 MacNamara, In Retrospect, 6.

28 John Ralston Saul, The Doubter’s Companion: A Dictionary
of Aggressive Common

Sense (Toronto: Viking, 1994), 74.

29 While this led to outlawed status and brigandage in Japan, its correlation with crime and violence, with sabotage and terrorism, is not unknown in the West either.


31 Nietzsche claimed to have been ‘born posthumously’: Ecce Homo (London, Penguin, 1972). The origin of the graffiti, ‘God said to Nietzsche/That’ll Tietzsche/You irritat ing little Krietzsche’, is unfortunately unknown.

32 Hodgkinson, Philosophy of Administration, 4 and passim. Cf. also Derek Allison, Canadian Administrator n.d.


37 I have been impressed, for example, by the military employment of the history of philosophy, business administration’s concern with ethical practice, and public administration’s experimentation with social equity.


40 The Matsushita School of Government and Management, Tokyo is, from the author’s experience, a clear illustration of the contrary. Cf. PHP Institute, Osaka, Japan.

41 Hodgkinson, Philosophy of Leadership, credos 10, 11, p. 229.

42 Hodgkinson, Educational Leadership, 153.

43 Rudyard Kipling, ‘If–’; more fully: ‘If you can keep your head while all about you/Are losing theirs and blaming it on you?’


45 For a discussion of Type I values see Hodgkinson, Philosophy of Leadership, Educational Leadership, Administrative Philosophy, passim.

Christopher Hodgkinson


Abstract This chapter critically surveys the cultural and educational context of the period 1960-2020 and seeks to analyze the implications for educational leadership. Sources range from early contributions of Donald Willower to the latest prognostications of experts in Cambridge and the USA. Both general and special conclusions are drawn and a new test, the A3M3, is introduced as part of the presentation. Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, Creeps in this petty pace from day to day, To the last syllable of recorded time; And all our yesterdays have lighted fools The way to dusty death (Macbeth)

These words of Shakespeare seem to imply a deep despair or cynicism about the possibility of benevolent change in human affairs. They are surely the very antithesis of American optimism and progressivism. For organizations they bespeak drudgery, wage slavery, Dilbertian anomie, pathological compartmentalization, ennui. They deplore meaninglessness. But they refer not to some sort of Nietzschean eternal recurrence of the same but simply to the line of time each one of us inhabits, a line which never wavers and always runs from past through present to future.

As one ages (and there’s an absolute for you) one automatically has more
past and less future. More behind, less in front. Less hope, more regret. And so

the very natural tendency is to approach the future, as McLuhan once put it,

looking in the rearview mirror. I shall try to struggle against this tendency. To

that end the bulk of this paper will deal with what is to come, with what might

be and the lesser part with the past, with what might have been or seemed to be.

But what of that past? It cannot be ignored. The way it might have been

One of the aims of this chapter is to heighten our sensitivity about the cultural

impress that is always determining, subliminally and subconsciously, our value

orientations and judgments. We are always creatures of our times and the times

themselves are a flood of events that are always somehow out of focus. In short

my topic is what used to be called history but that word has fallen into con

tention 2 and today is being displaced by exotica such as cultural anthropology,

sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, and bio-genetics. Yet history or tempo

rality conceived as the intellectual linkages between past, present, and future is

the very province and substance of administration. Certainly it is the meat of

leadership 3 in that administration is the management of the future and its

achievements become the legacy of the past. The conference for which this
chapter was originally prepared hardly came about without past planning and a complex cascade of policy and managerial decisions, each of which was present in its own instance. Administration is also karma-in-action for the past comes back to haunt it. As an eminent management consultant recently put it, some what facetiously, ‘The leader knows the future and has agreed to share it with the company instead of using this awesome power to make a fortune gambling.’ 4

But to comprehend or understand the future – the way things might be, it is logi cally necessary to understand the past – the way things were or, at least, seemed to be. As for the interim between these two things – the so-called present – let’s leave this for the moment; I’ll come back to it.

Shortly before my lamented and esteemed colleague Donald J. Willower sadly left us to join what he would call the Great Majority he gave me a now treasured possession. This was an inscribed book he had edited, together with Jack Culbertson, back in 1964 (Willower & Culbertson, 1964). It is a chorus of voices from the past and serves to remind us, as Nietzsche put it, that ‘The living are only a species of the dead, and a rare species at that.’ Included in the contrib utors were such greats as Roald Campbell, Dan Griffiths, and Joseph Schwab.
Also among them was a professor of medicine, George Miller. The book taken as a whole presents a vision of what educational leadership was seen to be and what the preparation of educational leaders might have been at the beginning of my survey period (c. 1960–c. 2020). These clearly were the days of a new dawn.

A heady sense of the importance and virtue of our professoriate existed. The Midwest Administration Centre at the University of Chicago was the centre of the world. Nevertheless, the general tenor and gist, if not the explicit agenda of the work, was to establish the intellectual credibility and respectability of a new discipline, grounding itself if not in science and theory per se then certainly in the social sciences and even in philosophy. Its place in the academy was formidably asserted. There was a distinct flavour of elitism and the development of the professorship in educational administration was favourably compared to its equivalent in medicine. Schwab, a ‘mathematical geneticist by training and a philosopher by choice’ (Willower & Culbertson, 1964, p. 48), felt it reasonable to commend to administrators ‘a sophisticated and cynical grasp of about a dozen separate and distinct bodies of theory’ (1964, p. vii). And even though the young Don Willower’s contribution was more down to earth,
it too stressed the

ideal and the philosophical components of our art. The field was to appeal to

‘the imaginative, inventive individual who wants to work in a profession which

seeks to contribute to human progress and growth’ (1964, p. 150). He had

already enunciated the theme he was to pursue throughout his career: a pragmatic reconciliation of theory and practice but with a marked stress on reflection and reflective methods concomitant with a commitment to educational ideals.

Dewey revivibus. All in all it was an inspiring manifesto, both dignifying educational administration and projecting for it a future where, as once perhaps in the past, men of action were also men of contemplation, of wisdom, of passion and honour. Did all this what-might-have-been come about? You be the judge. Well, perhaps the timing was a little out.

Recall the 1960s. Remember San Francisco where, then, one wore a flower in one’s hair. I was at Berkeley at the time. Momentarily it was the epicentre of a new revolution: the counter-culture. Wonderful as it all was in its beginnings things soon soured. In the end they even had to create concentration camps in California to hold some of the more exuberant dissidents. And the challenge to authority had slogans like ‘Burn, baby, burn’. Mao buttons
were de rigueur,

Minutemen and Black Panthers were lionized as were
communes, long hair, and

free casual sex. It was the time of Sharon Tate and the
Manson gang, Vietnam.

Drugs. Sex. Dionysus. (we’ll return to him later.)

In the end order was restored. But by then Thom Greenfield
had fired the

epistemological shot that was heard around the world of
educational administra
tion. The authority of science itself was now challenged.
Reality was a social
construct. Organizations were moral entities, or should be.
Camps formed and
camp followers lined up. In Canada Royal Commission
followed Royal Com
mission, each more eager than the rest to overturn the
traditional order. Change

was equated with progress. Permissive lib-chic became the
orthodoxy of the
day. (It still is, only now crystallized into a
non-permissive political correctitude.

The University of Alberta extended its influence, via
educational administration,
to Australia while the newly formed Ontario Institute for
Studies in Education
became a world-class centre for our subject. This too still
is. Heady times. Great
debates: Greenfield-Griffiths, Greenfield-Hills,
Greenfield-Willower. Back then

only 6% of the population in Canada had a university
degree. Now 90% of

school superintendents have a master’s and 10% the
Between past and future lies a mystery. The present. Now. ‘Now’ in logic is a very fuzzy term. Taken as the moment it doesn’t exist, in the same sort of way as it doesn’t make sense to talk of instantaneous velocity in the differential calculus. But the calculus works and our sense of time seems real enough. Yet subjective experience and inner attention are always a mixed-up blodge of the past (memory) and the future (hopes, fears, and expectations). Unless you want to go the Zen route and aspire to be like the samurai who can pick a mosquito out of the air with his chopsticks, ‘now’ would not be precisely meaningful. I fancy, however, that most educators inhabit a permanent state of bell-ringing anticipation: blissful if it signifies the end of a class or a lecture, and the contrary otherwise.

Collectively the same holds true. ‘Today’s news wraps tomorrow’s fish’, ‘You can’t step into the same river twice’. Postmodernism, the label for our now, is a-historical and chimerical. Fuzzy logic writ large. So ‘now’ does not mean right now. It means rather a blurry spread of contemporary events stretching back a bit and forwards a bit. In administration it may be fairer to say that it stretches back a lot and...
forward a lot for we stumble

into the future hobbled by plans and commitments made in
the past and our

forward reach exceeds our grasp. As for the present as
often as not there’s no

‘there’ there. For our purposes then it is sufficient to
simply regard the now as

the last decade or so together with the shadow it extends
into the future. This

historical sound-bite (sub specie aeternitatis) is
increasingly recognized and

classified as postmodern and postmodernism is something we
must look at more

closely. This NOW is, however, radically different from its
predecessors. The

following items are indicative of this difference: the pill
(perhaps the most revo

lutionary technical advance since the wheel), the chip, the
micro-chip, the PC,

the global village, day-trading, cloning, genetic
engineering, social engineering,

E-commerce, E-everything, Mars orbiter, jumbo-jets,
Concorde, neutron bombs,

cell-phones, websites, quantum physics, astrophysics,
astroturf . . .

All this and much more comprise the technological
infrastructure of our

present culture. All in the ‘now’. Technology has always
been around but previ

ous infra structural changes like the Industrial Revolution
occurred over much

larger sweeps of time. The present curve of change (and its
learning curve) is, in
comparison, exponential. All such changes affect the social superstructure or
culture because they change context: the mise-en-scène. But there is a complica
tion. Culture is dependent on science and technology but it is also autonomous.

It’s not simply a matter of correlative dependency and interaction. The explana
tion for this is a logical difference between value and fact. Science speaks on
facts but is silent on values. The humanities speak (or used to speak) on values
but have to accept whatever facts are placed before them. The gulf between
these two realms of discourse is radical. To try to get values from facts is to
commit the naturalistic fallacy - a fallacy that has never been refuted. You can’t get an ‘ought’ from an ‘is’. But you have to take the is’s into account. As Third Reich scientist Werner von Braun used to say, ‘I send the rockets up - Who cares where they come down?’ Worrying about where or when they should come down is not science, it’s administration.

For example, will the final mapping of the genome change human nature?
No, but it will give us more power perhaps, and certainly it will add to the
information overload that we have already. Great changes occur; the scientific sands are shifting underfoot. But the really interesting thing is that human nature
changes very little. Crucifixion is out of fashion at the moment but a Roman
soldier returning to earth today, after due wonderment at the technical changes
about him and a sigh of despair at the state of the Colosseum, would soon feel at
home. Genocides and holocausts, man-made events, are still around. On the
other hand there has been no nuclear war (yet) and no world war since
Hiroshima. (And no army used gas in World War II.) This emphasis on human
nature is important because to be an educator is by definition to be a humanist,
maybe even a classicist. Certainly there are two Greek gods we should get to
know. Their names are Apollo and Dionysus. Apollo is blond and beautiful,
impeccable, he is the god of the sun, of light, of reason. A worthy representative
of science but also a bit of a fascist. Dionysus is dirty, dishevelled, wild, the god
of orgies and sensuous destructive abandon; the god of all things irrational,
against all order, for all chaos, all indulgence, a sort of über-hippie. These two
gods represent a dialectic ever-present in human nature and human history. Very
crudely put the post-Enlightenment period of modernism could be called Apol
Ionian and the philosophical confusion that followed on Nietzsche's lament of
God's death in the late Victorian era with its consequent cataclysm in 1914 -
postmodernism in other words - can be called Dionysian.

This dialectic occurs at many levels in human nature. It is exemplified in our
times as a psychological contest between reason and
passion; desire for order

and rebellion against restraint; the triumph of science and
the naturalistic fallacy

concomitant with the malaise of moral relativism and the
malaise of totalitarian

political correctness. You can apply this analysis to
education for yourself and

all of you have been exposed and are being exposed to the
stress and tension

which these two immortal archetypes, these two gods, create
in our cultural

fabric. Listen for a moment to Nietzsche commenting on the
death of God: . . . Are we not plunging continually?
Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there
any up or down left? Are we not straying as through an
infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space?
Has it not become colder? Is not night continually closing
in on us? . . . God is dead. God remains dead. And we have
killed him . . .

Not too bad a description of the postmodern condition. But
postmodernism is

not merely relativistic about value it is also nihilistic
about truth. Our Roman

soldier could well ask Pontius Pilate's famous question
with even more justification.

What is truth? What is the truth about truth?
(Anderson, 1995). That there is

no truth. There are only Nietzschean 'perspectives' or
'interpretations'; only

Lyotard's 'incredulity towards meta narratives'; only
Derrida's 'il n'y a pas de
hors-texte’ – there’s only a text, and its only meaning is that provided by its reader.

This then is the structure of NOW. On the one hand hyper-rational bureaucratic legalistic complex organizations (school systems, multinationals, governments), on the other hand increasingly stressed individuals and small groups divested of, but searching for, meaning and value in an endless variety of ways from hedonistic materialistic consumerism to profound and authentic spiritual search and striving.

The Way it is becoming. What comes after postmodernism? Such a question invokes the great imponderable – the future – which, while it extends to infinity really only concerns us within the range of our immediate mortality. Soon we too will be part of the Great Majority. And, as always, there is a dialectic of opinion: the sun of Ecclesiastes under which there is nothing new and the river of Heraclitus into which one cannot step twice. Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose . . . and yet the new forever being born. With this dialectical tension in mind let us look fleetingly at the short term ahead. To help us do this I have resorted to alma mater Cambridge. From those hallowed cloisters emerges a picture of post-postmodernity based on Cantabridgian expertise. This in very digested and kaleidoscopic form I now present for your
But first a Persian thought, even a Caribbean one? . . . Ah, fill the cup - what use is to repeat how time is slipping underneath our feet. Unborn 'Tomorrow', and dead 'Yesterday'. Why fret about them if 'Today' be sweet! Population

By 2050 two-thirds as much more protoplasm than we have today: 10 billion bodies. But food production efficiency outpaces population growth. Risks to the environment, however. 'Better governance, better institutions, better markets, better schools' will be necessary. But desire for progeny may decline. Climate

Nothing really bad until at least 2050. Need to get rid of present type of cars, however. Scientific opinion is split. Hotter? Colder? We don't know. Water

Massive pipeline shifts, Canada to U.S. Also, dams don't exist forever, they're aging. Water will soon be metered like electricity. The poor already have a water crisis. A problem of equity rather than engineering.

C O N C L U S I O N

Energy Plenty of it but again the environmental problem. Correlated to living standards as one might expect. New cars needed. 'Globality and 24-hour, hyperactive, inter-connected, e-mail fuelled, sleep-deprived' new millennium is upon us. Superpowers

Present condition an historical first (if one excludes Rome). Other powers on the rise, e.g., China and a revitalized Russia. And ethnicity a problem. Presently Pax.
Americana. Trouble Spots


Terrorism. United Nations

Richest 20% have 86% of the world’s wealth. Poorest 20% have 1%. U.N. is aging now, too. Like the dams. East and West

China’s tough line on population control has been a great contribution to human


Germany a ‘state’. But all very exciting and Europe could become number one

in 30-40 years time. Money

Capitalism is ‘the permanent equilibrium state of human society. Everything else was a sideshow.’ ‘The motivation to compete, to own and acquire wealth is a fundamental fact of human existence, just like the need to eat or have sex.’ But

the mixed economy form now well established and no more crises for at least 15

years. Markets

Stock markets will be electronic and global. Big problem of regulation. Com panies must grow or die. But double-entry bookkeeping will remain, as it has,

since the 15th century. VALUES AND RELIGION

Electronics
The symbol of the 1980s was the personal computer. The symbol of the 90s was the web. The next thing will be sensors. These will be low-cost, very high performance, and they’ll be everywhere, ‘from Macdonald’s fries to insulin delivery for diabetics’. We will soon have entire PCs on a chip. But information technology will be supplanted by biotechnology. The genome and all that. Internet This could be a liberating force in the Third World. Can also be cultural dumbing-down (Hollywood and porn). It’s an information toy but how long can interest be sustained? Cars Next big step the automated road: regulating vehicles in convoys. Sensors can make this a reality. ‘You would just pay a toll, couple your car into an electronic convoy and sit back to enjoy the ride’. Adelaide already has automated bus routes. Aircraft Flight has lost its glamour. Passengers are bored and uncomfortable. The aim will be speed. Airlines will either have to get you there faster or make flying more enjoyable. Fuel and turbulence set technological limits and problems. Space Lots of other planets but life on them may have been millions of years in the past or will be millions of years in the future, our time. So don’t bet on extra terrestrials. Families
System breaking down in the West. Women can’t do it all: adopting a male agenda in life arguably only another form of submission. Smaller families and more childless families. Being a parent used to bring social status, it doesn’t now. Ethnicity

Very complex. Very postmodern. ‘Identity’ will depend more on one’s set of values than where one comes from.

Crime

Up but more property crime than violent crime. Prison populations up. Christianity


Growing West and East. Current modes (military and dynastic leadership) may shift towards democratic forms. Big problem remaining: fundamentalism. English

World language for next half-century then shift to possibly Spanish. Chinese if they can solve the orthography problem. But English will fragment. Process well under way. English teachers jobs very secure. (Even in Quebec.)

Bodies

Twenty-five percent of the population will be over 60. But healthier. Cliché problem is to ‘add life to years’ rather than converse. Big educational implications.

Minds

Depression, dementia, stress, Alzheimer’s. Boomers already
trembling. Four

and five-generational living families. Grandparents may be too busy minding
great-grandparents to look after grandchildren. Reproduction

Divergence between developed and developing regions. In the former sex for

pleasure and conception for the laboratory. More test-tube babies, sperm and

egg-banks. Chinese interventional experiments need watching. Funding health

Seven percent of UK Gross Domestic Product presently goes to Health; 9% in

Netherlands, 10% France and Germany. But outcomes very comparable. Prob

able shift from universal coverage to ‘top-up’ or ‘opt-out’ schemes; i.e., basics

paid, user-pay for the rest. Even so higher taxes and rationing on the way. (Since VALUES AND RELIGION

health and education compete for the public purse one can safely predict more

stresses and strains in both systems.)

This is by no means all. It is only a sampling of the multiple facets of post

modern life as examined by the Cambridge experts cited but it is surely a peek at

the shape of things to come. That shape, through a glass darkly, may disappoint

- or it may excite - but futurology is perforce a very modest business since the

future itself is a combination of the causal and the casual: of past determining

forces which have yet to run their course and the totally
unforeseen. So prophets had better be modest. Nevertheless what is glaringly conspicuous by its absence from the above forecasts, what is missing from all this arcana of tribal peoples, telecoms, film, even Judaism; what is totally lacking in this glimpse at the coming century is the category of philosophy. And this from the academic home of Russell, Moore, and Wittgenstein. This from the institution that gave an honorary degree to Derrida! Not a peep, not a peek. To the end of history must now be appended the demise of philosophy. But before leaping to this conclusion let us look at the view from our side of the water. The American view As part of the same millennial frenzy that inspired the Cambridge authors, a special issue of Time magazine was devoted to such questions as: Will we live on Mars?, travel in time? discover another universe? figure out the brain? get rid of cockroaches?, etc. Admittedly, the questions are scientific-technological, but they are carefully considered by the finest expertise in the respective fields, including many Nobelists. To make a short story even shorter the answers can be summarily summed as no time travel, no extra-terrestrial contact, no final ‘theory of everything’, no explanation of consciousness, no solution to the mind
body problem, no perpetual motion machinery, and no controlling the weather.

Or cockroaches. And again no philosophy even though several commentators had inevitably to deal with issues such as mind, consciousness, and meaning.

Granted the project was non-normative, rationalistic, and scientific-techno logical in the best tradition of the Enlightenment and the Age of Reason. And, come to think of it and if memory serves, Time has not devoted a special issue to philosophy for over thirty years. At which time it declared it dead, killed by the academicicians. Even Time gets things right on occasion.

General conclusion
The values of the short-term future are implicit if not explicit. It is likely to be an unholy Apollonian-Dionysian mix of rationalistic legalistic bureaucratic scientific technological pragmatics and a reactive postmodern relativistic hedon istic narcissistic materialistic nihilism. For education this might imply a skew towards the digital, the mathematical, the marketable, and the meritocratic. That is to say, not the mindless but the meaningless. And all the consequent C O N C L U S I O N Dionysian reactions of rage, resentment, ressentiment, and violence this might invoke. I hope these words are not prophetic and a product more of dimmer than of clearer sight. But I have long perceived with some empirical verification the
cultural tendencies to valorexia and philosophobia: the twin diseases of loss of meaning and abhorrence of philosophy.

Of course we as educators must be concerned with literacy of all types, including the digital; of course we must attend to earning-learning of all the marketable kinds; but we must also restore our responsibility for general social decorum, even in postmodernity; we must hand down traditions and history even if they offend some multicultural persuasions; and we must have a concern with the larger purposes of being human. Failing this we are not educators but just another form of teaching machine: programmers, trainers, info-dispensers.

Information may equate to knowledge but knowledge does not equate to understanding. None of this is to say we cannot joyfully embrace the future. Amor fati is always an option. 7 That the questions which this admittedly disjointed and tumultuous sweep of time and events are always: what changes and what stays the same? Mark Twain’s remark is relevant, ‘History does not repeat itself. But it sure rhymes.’

Simply put what changes is context, what doesn’t change is human nature.

But, as already mentioned, human nature just happens to be the essential raw
material of education. More, it is also the essence of administration and leader
ship. (Think character instead of characteristics.) Moreover still, human nature
and the human condition are the quintessential subject matter of real philosophy.

John Dewey said, and our late colleague Don Willower endorsed this, that the
whole of philosophy is the general theory of education. I would go further and
assert that the whole of philosophy is also the general theory of administration. 8

True, philosophy in the academic sense is largely remote from practical affairs
but administrative philosophy is a discipline the whole aim of which is to inform
practicality. And this sort of philosophy is the birthright of everyone. To make
my point please take the following A3M3 test:

1 Do you really know how to tell right from wrong?
2 Do you really know how to tell good from bad?
3 Can you tell a sound argument from a fallacious one?
4 Do you know enough about human nature?
5 Do you know enough about the human condition?
6 Do you really know yourself?
7 Are your answers to the above questions adequate for your role as leader or aspirant to leadership? Special conclusion

The test you have just been subjected to calls for some further words of
comment. Contrary to what you might now modestly assume, it is possible to VALUES AND RELIGION
score a perfect seven. At the very least it is possible to impute or ascribe such a score since the test may be extroverted and attributed onto unwitting targets.

Thus, all the great charismatic leaders for good or evil might score a 7: Jesus Christ, Gandhi, the Lord Buddha on one side and Josef Stalin, Adolf Hitler, and Pol Pot on the other. I myself have known leaders who, for me at least, fit the 7 bill nicely: my mentor Sir Geoffrey Vickers for one and a certain university president for another - although both might well have been loath to acknowledge the ascription.

More importantly, the test implies an agenda for leadership preparation and research the component parts of which are already established and need only to be assembled. Essentially they suggest a shift in theory emphasis from epistemology to axiology; a short course in elementary logic and rhetoric; some exposure to the arts in the Greenfield tradition and due consideration of pathology (see Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993).

As for research the work already done in the leadership initiative of these conferences is one example. Credit must be given in this respect to the labours of Professor Begley. Analytical tools for value praxis already exist and the
ethnological studies of Peter Ribbins in the United Kingdom (Ribbins & Sayer, 1998) and Peter Gronn in Australia (Gronn, 1999) provide examples of how insight can be gained into the administrative form of life. This curricular emphasis should supplement and complement rather than displace the current studies in social science.

In the A3M3 quiz the crucial question, which cannot be formulated so as to yield a precise answer, is of course number 6. Philosophers and non-philosophers alike may argue cogently and validly that it is unanswerable in any objective sense, short of mystical illumination or transcendental revelation. Nevertheless it is always possible to arrive at a tentative subjective judgment, and the question should always be held before us for if it is not asked then it is answered — in the negative. Not for nothing was the exhortation 'Know thyself' above the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in ancient Greece.

Finally, two lesser considerations: first, the test is subject to modification in that the rigid requirement for a dichotomous yes or no answer might be relaxed and, second, perhaps the test calls for a more innocuous and user-friendly title than the one temporarily assigned: Administrative Arrogance And Managerial Modesty Measure. I am sure that neither the A nor the M
attributes exceed the
limits of propriety in the present audience, and that the
circle of what might have
been can be closed into what yet still might be. Notes
1 This chapter is revised and updated version of a paper
originally presented at the Con
ference of the UCEA Centre for the Study of Values and
Leadership, Bridgetown, Barbados. It has also been previously published as an
article in a special issue (Vol. 4,
No. 4, 297-307) of the International Journal of Leadership
in Education (2001). C O N C L U S I O N
3 For the identity between leadership and administration
see Christopher Hodgkinson
4 Scott Adams, ‘The Dilbert Principle’, as cited in James
Wolcott (2000).
5 Direct quotations are indicated by quotation marks,
otherwise paraphrase and
commentary. The headings are those used in the source CAM
No.28 Michaelmas
1999 and the authorities are respectively: ‘population’
(economist Sheilagh
Ogilvie), ‘climate’ (Judge Institute’s Chris Hope), water
(geographer Bill Adams),
‘energy’ (consultant Dan Yergin), ‘superpowers’ (Centre for
International Studies’
James Mayall), ‘trouble spots’ (Guardian Editor Ian Black),
‘United Nations’
(former U.N. Under-Secretary Dame Margaret Anstee), ‘East
and West’ (M.C. to
King of Nepal Chiran Thapu), ‘money’ (Chief Economist of The Times Anatole Kaletsky), ‘markets’ (Judge Institute’s Richard Barker), ‘electronics’ (Silicon Valley Institute director Paul Saffo), ‘internet’ (Washington Post Editor David Ignatius), ‘cars’ (Professor of Engineering David Newland), ‘aircraft’ (Rank Professor of Engineering Shbn Ffowes Williams), ‘space’ (Royal Astronomical Society’s Jacqueline Mitten), ‘families’ (research psychologist Penelope Leach), ‘ethnicity’ (anthropologist, Sue Benson), ‘crime’ (Institute of Criminology’s Andrew von Hirsch), ‘Christianity’ (Bishop of Rochester Michael Nazir-Ali), ‘Islam’ (scholar and author Akbar Ahmed), ‘English’ (Director Research Centre for English and Applied Linguistics Gillian Brown), ‘bodies’ (Professor of Clinical Gerontology Kay-Tee Khaw), ‘minds’ (Director Research Centre on Aging Felicia Huppert), ‘reproduction’ (Head of Department of Biological Anthropology Nick Mascie Taylor), and ‘funding health’ (Master of Sidney Sussex Sandra Dawson).

6 Time, April 2000

7 Nietzsche’s solution. But this depends on the degree of freedom and reality of the will. Which calls for another paper beyond this one.


9 Theoria, op.cit. note 4; and also Macmillan (2001).
From experience I can recommend Robert Thouless (1974). The elements of argument do not change with the fashions of the times and this was first published in 1930.


As for note 2.


Managing moral purpose and change agentry is at the heart of productive educa
tional change. It is necessary to take a closer look at each of them, and to make
explicit their organic relationship. Moral purpose

In their major study of teacher education, Goodlad and his colleagues found
themselves being pushed deeper to the moral purposes of education in order to
understand the basic rationale for teaching in post-modern society: ‘We came to

see with increasing clarity the degree to which teaching in schools, public or

private, carries with it moral imperatives—more in public schools, however,

because they are not schools of choice in a system requiring compulsory school

ing’ (Goodlad, 1990a, p. 47, my emphasis; see also Goodlad, Soder and Sirot

nik, 1990). Goodlad singles out four moral imperatives:

Facilitating critical enculturation The school is the only institution in our nation specifically charged with enculturating the young into a political democracy . . . Schools are major players in developing educated persons who acquire an understanding of truth, beauty, and justice against which to judge their own and society’s virtues and imperfections . . . This is a moral responsibility. (pp. 48–9) Providing access to knowledge The school is the only institution in our society specifically charged with providing to the young a disciplined encounter with all the subject matters of the human conversation: the world as a physical and biological system; evaluative and belief systems; communication systems; the social, political, and economic systems that make up the global village; and the human species itself . . . (Teachers) must be diligent in ensuring that no attitudes, beliefs, or practices bar students from access to the necessary knowledge. (p. 49) Building an effective teacher-student connection The moral responsibility of educators takes on its most obvious significance where the lives of teachers and their students intersect . . . The epistemology of teaching must encompass a pedagogy that goes far beyond the mechanics of teaching. It must combine generalizable principles of teaching, subject-specific instruction, sensitivity to the pervasive human qualities and potentials always involved. (pp. 49-50) Practicing good stewardship If schools are to become the responsive, renewing institutions that they must, the teachers in them must be purposefully engaged in the renewal process. (Goodlad, 1990b, p. 25)

One of Goodlad’s colleagues, Sirotnik (1990, p. 290 ff) adds his list of moral
requirements: commitment to inquiry, knowledge, competence, caring, freedom, well-being, and social justice. In his own words: The implications of moral commitments to inquiry, knowledge, competence, caring, and social justice go farther than curriculum and classroom experiences. They go to the very heart of the moral ecology of the organization itself. This can be readily seen in the extent to which these commitments are reflected in the work environment of educators outside of classroom teaching per se. To what extent does the organizational culture encourage and support educators as inquirers into what they do and how they might do it better? To what extent do educators consume, critique, and produce knowledge? To what extent do they engage competently in discourse and action to improve the conditions, activities and outcomes, of schooling? To what extent do educators care about themselves and each other in the same way they care (or ought to care) about students? To what extent are educators empowered to participate authentically in pedagogical matters of fundamental importance - what schools are for and how teaching and learning can be aligned with this vision. (p. 312)

At a policy level, growing concerns about educational equity and economic performance mirror the more particular issues just described. The restructuring movement, in intent at least, places a renewed focus on the education of all students, 'especially those who have been ineffectively served in the past' and attempts to reorganize schools for that purpose (Murphy, 1991, p. 60). Poverty, especially among children and women, racism, drug abuse, and horrendous social and personal problems all make the equity and excellence agenda more serious and poignant day by day (Hodgkinson, 1991).

My main point, however, is not to consider these matters at
the institutional level – at least not at this time. The building block is the moral purpose of the individual teacher. Scratch a good teacher and you will find a moral purpose. At the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto, we recently examined why student teachers wanted to enter the profession. We have a post-baccalaureate fifth year program which results in certification after one year. It represents a particularly select group because there is a great demand to enter teaching in Ontario. For 1992/93 there were some 7000 applicants for 1100 positions. We use as admission criteria a combination of two factors weighted equally – academic grades, and an applicant ‘profile’ designed to capture experience and reasons for entering teaching. Because of the emphasis on experience, the average age is 29. In a small study we drew a random sample of 20 per cent of those in the 1991/92 year (Stiegelbauer, 1992). We set out to derive from the written profiles, what student teachers said about ‘why they want to become teachers’. The most frequently mentioned theme was ‘I want to make a difference’ reflected in the following sample of quotes: I hope my contribution to teaching, along with other good teachers’ contributions, will help result in a better society for our future. I care about children and the way that children are learning. Education is an important factor which determines the quality of an individual life
and the future of society as a whole. No other profession enables one the opportunity to provide such a positive impact on a child’s overall development. I want to effect positive change in students’ lives. I’ve always thought that if I could go into a classroom and make a difference in one kid’s life . . . then that’s what I am here for.

I am not suggesting that the mere statement of purpose is a straightforward matter. We cannot automatically take these statements at face value (although VALUES AND RELIGION our day-to-day experience with student teachers provides ample corroboration of this theme), and there are different motivations for entering teaching among any cohort: But I am saying that we have a kernel of truth here. Many, many teachers enter the profession because they want to make a contribution – they want to make a difference!

What happens here-on-in – in teacher preparation, induction, and throughout the career – is a different story. Those with a non-existent or limited sense of moral purpose are never called upon to demonstrate their commitment. Those with moral potential, however inchoate, are never developed. Those with a clearer sense of purpose are thwarted. Hargreaves and Tucker (1991) address the latter issues in their treatment of teaching and guilt. They quote Davies (1989, p. 49) ‘at the centre of the feeling of guilt is self disappointment, a sense of having done badly, fallen short, of
having betrayed a personal ideal, standard or commitment’. Hargreaves and
Tucker (1991) also suggest that aspects of moral purpose like caring may be too
narrowly conceived. They argue that there is more to it than personal caring and
interpersonal sharing: ‘Care . . . carries with it social and moral responsibilities
as well as interpersonal ones’ (p. 12).

The argument is somewhat subtle, so let me make it more directly. If con-
cerns for making a difference remain at the one-to-one and classroom level, it
cannot be done. An additional component is required. Making a difference, must
be explicitly recast in broader social and moral terms. It must be seen that one
cannot make a difference at the interpersonal level unless the problem and solu-
tion are enlarged to encompass the conditions that surround teaching (such as
the collaborative school, chapter 4), and the skills and actions that would be
needed to make a difference. Without this additional and broader dimension the
best of teachers will end up as moral martyrs. In brief, care must be linked to a
broader social, public purpose, and the latter if it is to go anywhere must be pro-
pelled by the skills of change agentry.

We now come to the integrative theme of the chapter: teachers are agents of
educational change and societal improvement. This is not as
highfalutin as it

sounds. I have already argued that they are part way there on a small scale with their

aspirations for making a difference. And they are there ecologically with expecta
tions of reform constantly swirling around them. In addition to making moral

purpose more explicit (thereby clearly declaring what business we are in) educators

also need the tools to engage in change productively. Care and competence, equity

and excellence, social and economic development are natural allies in this quest. Change agentry

I will have more to say about change agentry later. Here I want to outline some

of its elements at the individual level. How to produce more of it, and under

what conditions it can be further developed and sustained are the subjects of the

remaining chapters. MORAL PURPOSE AND CHANGE AGENCY

I define change agentry as being self-conscious about the nature of change

and the change process. Those skilled in change are appreciative of its semi

unpredictable and volatile character, and they are explicitly concerned with the

pursuit of ideas and competencies for coping with and influencing more and

more aspects of the process toward some desired set of ends. They are open,

moreover, to discovering new ends as the journey unfolds. In chapter 3, the
complexities of the change process and some of the insights and lessons arising

from the new mindset will be explored in detail. At this stage the question is,

what conceptions and skills should the teacher of moral purpose possess in order

to become a more effective change agent.

I see four core capacities required as a generative foundation for building greater

change capacity: personal vision-building, inquiry, mastery, and collaboration. Each

of these has its institutional counterpart: shared vision-building, organizational

structures, norms and practices of inquiry; focus on organizational development and

know-how, and collaborative work cultures (chapter 4). For reasons that should be

increasingly clear throughout this book we need a dual approach working simultan

eously on individual and institutional development. One cannot wait for the other.

And if they are not working in concert, in particular settings, it is necessary to work

on them separately looking for opportunities to make them connect.

The individual educator is a critical starting point because the leverage for

change can be greater through the efforts of individuals, and each educator has

some control (more than is exercised) over what he or she does, because it is

one’s own motives and skills that are at question. Moreover, working individu
ally on the four capacities about to be described makes it inevitable that there will be plenty of intersection of effort. I am not talking about leaders as change agents (more of that later) but of a more basic message: each and every educator must strive to be an effective change agent.

I start with personal vision-building because it connects so well with moral purpose contending with the forces of change. Shared vision is important in the long run, but for it to be effective you have to have something to share. It is not a good idea to borrow someone else’s vision. Working on vision means examining and reexamining, and making explicit to ourselves why we came into teaching. Asking ‘What difference am I trying to make personally?’ is a good place to start. For most of us it will not be trying to create something out of nothing. The reasons are there, but possibly buried under other demands or through years of disuse, or for the beginning teacher still underdeveloped. It is time to make them front and centre. We should not think of vision as something only for leaders. It is not a farfetched concept. It arises by pushing ourselves to articulate what is important to us as educators. Block (1987) emphasizes that ‘creating a vision forces us to take a stand for a preferred future’ (p. 102); it signifies our disap
pointment with what exists now. To articulate our vision of the future 'is to come out of the closet with our doubts about the organization and the way it operates' (p. 105). Indeed, it forces us to come out of the closet with doubts about ourselves and what we are doing. VALUES AND RELIGION

Says Block writing more generally about organizations: 'We all have strong values about doing work that has meaning, being of real service to our customers, treating other people well, and maintaining some integrity in the way we work' (p. 123). Teachers, as I have indicated, are in one of the most 'natural' occupations for working on purpose and vision, because underneath that is what teaching is all about.

Several points in conclusion. First, I cannot stress enough that personal purpose and vision are the starting agenda. It comes from within, it gives meaning to work, and it exists independent of the particular organization or group we happen to be in.

Second, personal vision in teaching is too often implicit and dormant. It is often expressed negatively (what people want to get rid of, or not see happen) or narrowly in terms of means (more time, smaller classes). We need also to have positive images as driving forces. Teachers do not have to
wallow in hubris in realizing that they are in a strategic position. Teachers should be pursuing moral purpose with greater and greater skill, conceptualizing their roles on a higher plane than they currently do.

Third, once it gets going, personal purpose is not as private as it sounds. Especially in moral occupations like teaching, the more one takes the risk to express personal purpose, the more kindred spirits one will find. A great deal of overlap will be experienced. Good ideas converge under conditions of communication, and collaboration. Individuals will find that they can convert their own desires into social agendas with others. Remember, personal purpose is not just self-centered, it has social dimensions as well such as working effectively with others, developing better citizens, and the like.

Fourth, personal purpose in teaching should be pushed and pushed until it makes a connection to social betterment in society. This is what it is at the one-to-one teacher-student level anyway. It has greater scope and meaning, and calls for wider action if we realize that societal improvement is really what education is about.

Fifth, and an extension of the previous point, is the realization that personal
purpose in teaching is a change theme. Gardner (1964, p. 72) quotes Petrarch: By citizens, of course, I mean those who love the existing order; for those who daily desire change are rebels and traitors, and against such a stern justice may take its course.

Today, the teacher who works for or allows the status quo is the traitor. Purposeful change is the new norm in teaching. It has been bouncing around within teaching for the past thirty years. It is time we realized that teachers above all are moral change agents in society - a role that must be pursued explicitly and aggressively.

Finally, and paradoxically, personal purpose is the route to organizational change. When personal purpose is diminished we see in its place groupthink and a continual stream of fragmented surface, ephemeral innovations. We see in a phrase, the uncritical acceptance of innovation, the more things change, the more they remain the same. When personal purpose is present in numbers it provides the power for deeper change: Cultures get changed in a thousand small ways, not by dramatic announcements from the boardroom. If we wait until top management gives leadership to the change we want to see, we miss the point. For us to have any hope that our own preferred future will come to pass, we provide the leadership. (Block, 1987, pp. 97-8).

All four capacities of change agentry are intimately interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The second one - inquiry - is to say that the formation and enact
ment of personal purpose is not a static matter. It is a perennial quest. One of the

new paradigm writers, Richard Pascale (1990) captures this precisely: ‘The

essential activity for keeping our paradigm current is persistent questioning. I

will use the term inquiry. Inquiry is the engine of vitality and self-renewal’ (p.

14). Stacey (1992) puts it this way: ‘A successful, innovative organization must

have groups of people who can perform complex learning spontaneously.

Because in open-ended situations no one can know what the group is trying to

learn, the learning process must start without a clear statement of what is to be

learned or how’ (p. 112).

Inquiry is necessary at the outset for forming personal purpose. While the

latter comes from within, it must be fueled by information, ideas, dilemmas and

other contentions in our environment. The beginner, by definition, is not experi-

enced enough with the variety and needs of students, and with the operational

goals and dilemmas of improvement to have clear ideas of purpose. Habits of

‘questioning, experimentation, and variety’ are essential (ibid). Reflective prac-
tice, personal journals, action research, working in innovative mentoring and

peer settings are some of the strategies currently available (see Fullan and Harg

Learning is critical for the beginning teacher because of its formative timing.

But we are talking about more than this – lifelong inquiry is the generative characteristic needed because post-modern environments themselves are constantly changing. We are probably never exactly right in the first place, but in any case we need the checks and balances of inquiry because in changing times our initial mental maps ‘cease to fit the territory’ (Pascale, 1990, p. 13). Thus, we need mechanisms to question and update our mental maps on a continuous basis. For Pascale, the question is the answer: ‘Our quest isn’t just a New Management Paradigm of the Nineties but a way of thinking that is continually open to the next paradigm and the next and the next . . .’ (p. 265). What could be closer to change agentry? Values and Religion

The relationship between the first two capacities – personal vision and inquiry – involves the ability to simultaneously express and extend what you value. The genesis of change arises from this dynamic tension.

The capacity of mastery is another crucial ingredient. People must behave their way into new ideas and skills, not just think their
way into them. Mastery
and competence are obviously necessary for effectiveness, but they are also
means (not just outcomes) for achieving deeper understanding. New mindsets
arise from new mastery as much as the other way around. Mastery then is very
much interrelated with vision and inquiry as is evident in this passage from
Senge (1990): Personal mastery goes beyond competence and skills, though it is grounded in competence and skills . . . It means approaching one’s life as a creative work, living life from a creative as opposed to a reactive viewpoint . . . When personal mastery becomes a discipline – an activity we integrate into our lives – it embodies two underlying movements. The first is continually clarifying what is important to us (purpose and vision). We often spend too much time coping with problems along our path that we forget why we are on that path in the first place. The result is that we only have a dim, or even inaccurate, view of what’s really important to us. The second is continually learning how to see current reality more clearly . . . The juxtaposition of vision (what we want) and a clear picture of current reality (where we are relative to what we want) generates what we call ‘creative tension’. ‘Learning’ in this context does not mean acquiring more information, but expanding the ability to produce results we truly want in life. It is lifelong generative learning. (p. 142)
It has long been known that skill and know-how are central to successful change, so it is surprising how little attention we pay to it beyond one-shot workshops and disconnected training. Mastery involves strong initial teacher education, and continuous staff development throughout the career, but it is more than this when we place it in the perspective of comprehensive change
agentry. It is a learning habit that permeates everything we do. It is not enough to be exposed to new ideas. We have to know where new ideas fit, and we have to become skilled in them, not just like them.

Block (1987) says that the goal is: (to learn) as much as you can about the activity you are engaged in. There’s pride and satisfaction in understanding your function better than anyone else and better than you thought possible. (p. 86) MORAL PURPOSE AND CHANGE AGENTRY

We also know that inquiry, learning, and mastery are intrinsically anxiety producing: ‘Almost every important learning experience we have ever had has been stressful. Those issues that create stress for us give us clues about the uncooked seeds within us that need attention’ (ibid, p. 191). This means that the capacity to suspend belief, take risks, and experience the unknown are essential to learning. We can be more selective in what we try (as distinct from accepting all change) but in exploring selected new ideas we must be patient enough to learn more about them and to look for longer term consequences before drawing conclusions.

Rosenholtz (1989) found that teachers in schools characterized by these ‘learning enriched’ habits, not only learned more and became better at what they did, but they became more confident. The more accustomed one becomes at
dealing with the unknown, the more one understands that creative breakthroughs are always preceded by periods of cloudy thinking, confusion, exploration, trial and stress: followed by periods of excitement, and growing confidence as one pursues purposeful change, or copes with unwanted change.

Back to Senge (1990): People with a high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode . . . personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. And they are deeply self-confident. Paradoxical? Only for those who do not see that ‘the journey is the reward’. (p. 142)

In order to be effective at change, mastery is essential, both in relation to specific innovations and as a personal habit. New competencies and know-how are requirements for better understanding and judging the new and are the route to greater effectiveness.

Collaboration is the fourth capacity. Aside from the power of collaboration which we take up in later chapters collaboration is essential for personal learning (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991). There is a ceiling effect to how much we can learn if we keep to ourselves. The ability to collaborate - on both a small and large scale - is becoming one of the core requisites of postmodern society. Personal strength, as long as it is open minded (i.e., inquiry oriented) goes hand-in-hand with effective collaboration - in fact, without
personal strength
collaboration will be more form than content. Personal
mastery and group
mastery feed on each other in learning organizations.
People need one another to
learn and to accomplish things.
Small-scale collaboration involves the attitude and
capacity to form produc
tive mentoring and peer relationships, team building and
the like. On a larger
scale, it consists of the ability to work in organizations
that form cross-instituV A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N
tional partnerships such as school district, university and
school-community and
business agency alliances, as well as global relationships
with individuals and
organizations from other cultures.
In short, without collaborative skills and relationships it
is not possible to
learn and to continue to learn as much as you need in order
to be an agent for
societal improvement.
In summary, skills in change agentry are needed, because
the processes of
improvement are dynamically complex, and as we shall see, these processes are
to a certain extent unknowable in advance. Chaos in a
scientific sense is not dis
order, but a process in which contradictions and
complexities play themselves
out coalescing into clusters (see Gleick, 1987, Stacey,
Scientists talk about ‘strange attractors’ as forces that pull chaotic states into periodic patterns. Moral purpose is one of the change processes’ strange attractors because the pursuit and pull of meaning can help organize complex phenomena as they unfold. Strange attractors do not guide the process (because it is not guidable), they capitalize on it. Without moral purpose, aimlessness and fragmentation prevail. Without change agentry, moral purpose stagnates. The two are dynamically interrelated, not only because they need each other, but because they quite literally define (and redefine) each other as they interact.

I have argued that moral purpose and change agentry, far from being strange bedfellows, should be married. They keep each other honest. They feed on, and fulfill one another. Moreover, together they are generative in that they have an in-built capacity to self-correct and to continually refigure what should be done.

Not only are they effective at getting things done, but they are good at getting the right things done.

I have also claimed that moral purpose and change agentry separately, but especially in combination, are as yet society’s great untapped resources for improvement. We need to make them explicit, and make them part and parcel of
personal and collective agendas. We need to go public with a new rationale for why teaching and teacher development is so fundamental to the future of society. We need to begin to practice on a wide scale what is implicit in the moral purpose of teaching. To do so we need the capacities of change agentry.


Source: V. Houghton, R. McHugh and C. Morgan (eds), Management in Education: The Manage

In common parlance we speak of organizations as if they were real. Neither scholar nor layman finds difficulty with talk in which organizations “serve func
tions”, “adapt to their environment”, “clarify their goals” or “act to implement policy”. What it is that serves, adapts, clarifies or acts seldom comes into ques
tion. Underlying widely accepted notions about organizations, therefore, stands the apparent assumption that organizations are not only real but also distinct from the actions, feelings and purposes of people. This mode of thought pro
vides the platform for a long-standing debate about organizations and people. Is it organizations which oppress and harass people or is it fallible people who fail to carry out the well-intentioned aims of organizations? The debate continues on issues such as whether it is better to abolish organizations, to reshape them along more humane lines, or to train people to recognize the goals of organizations more clearly and to serve them more faithfully.

In contrast, this paper rejects the dualism which conveniently separates people and organizations; instead it argues that a mistaken belief in the reality of organizations has diverted our attention from human action and intention as the
stuff from which organizations are made. As a result, theory and research have

frequently set out on a false path in trying to understand organizations and have
given us a misplaced confidence in our ability to deal with their problems. If we

see organizations and individuals as inextricably intertwined, it may not be so
easy to alter organizations, or to lead them, or to administer them without touch
ing something unexpectedly human. More importantly, the view that people and
organizations are inseparable requires us to reassess the commonly accepted
claim that there exists a body of theory and principle which provides the touch
stone for effective administrative action in organizations. The belief in the
reality and independence of organizations permits us to separate the study of
organizations from the study of people and their particular values, habits and
beliefs. The common view in organization studies holds that people occupy
organizations in somewhat the same way as they inhabit houses. The tenants
may change but, apart from wear and tear, the basic structure remains and in
some way shapes the behaviour of people within. Studies have therefore focused
largely on the variety of organizational structures and their effects upon people.
These structures are usually seen as invariate over time.
forms into which individuals may move from time to time, bringing with them idiosyncrasies which colour their performance of the roles prescribed by the organization (Getzels, 1958, p. 156). Organizational science and the profession of administration

The science of organization has found its way into studies of schools and influenced the training of those who are to administer schools. In this science, schools are a variety of the species organization which can be distinguished chiefly by the nature of their goals and their bureaucratic structure (Bidwell, 1965, pp. 973–4). The science of organization is, therefore, assumed to provide useful knowledge about schools even as it does about other kinds of organizations. Accepting this position, Griffiths (1964, p. 3) rejects “the opinion that educational administration is a unique activity, differing greatly from business, military, hospital and other varieties of administration” and endorses (p. 118) a “general theory which enables the researcher to describe, explain, and predict a wide range of human behavior within organizations”.

In a profession of administration based upon organizational science, the task of the administrator is to bring people and organizations together in a fruitful and satisfying union. In so doing, the work of the
administrator carries the justification of the larger social order (Getzels, 1958, p. 156), since he works to link day-to-day activity in organizations to that social order. In schools, the administrator may be director or superintendent, principal or headmaster, department head or supervisor. Whatever their titles, their tasks are always the same. They bring people and resources together so that the goals of the organization and presumably of an encompassing social order may be met (Gregg 1957, pp. 269–70).

No matter what circumstances he finds himself in, the administrator mediates between the organization and the people within it. The task is difficult; he needs help with it. As the argument runs, such help is fortunately to be found in the emerging science of organizations. Since organizations do have a human component, knowledge about organizations is usually described as a social science. But social or not, this science like all others is seen as universal, timeless, and imperfect only in its incompleteness.

The claims for a science of organization and for a profession of administration based upon that science have in recent times made a marked impact upon education. For over two decades now, scholars have attempted to improve education by applying organization theory to the conduct of
affairs in schools and VALUES AND RELIGION

by training educational administrators in that science
(Culbertson and Shibles, 1973). Celebrating its emancipation from the press of immediate practical affairs

(Griffiths, 1964), the field turned instead to discovery of the basic relationships

and principles which underlie day-to-day concerns. The professor supplanted the

practitioner as the source of valid knowledge about administration. If practition

ers did not know or accept that they were no longer masters of the basic know

ledge which underlay their craft, it did not matter. Even the scholar-practitioner,

Chester Barnard, in introducing Simon’s classic writings claimed that it was the

scholar’s knowledge of the “abstract principles of structure” rather than the prac

titioner’s knowledge of “concrete behavior” which leads to an understanding of

“organizations of great variety” (Simon, 1957, pp. xlii-xliv). Things are not

what they seem, in educational administration as in other realms of reality. We

need the scientist and his theory to interpret them to us. His knowledge, though

it may be incomplete and is certainly subject to improvement, has the virtue of

universal applicability. Acting on this conviction, scholars in educational admin

istration have sought to understand how organizations really work and to use
A survey of representative writing in educational administration (see Campbell and Gregg, 1957; Halpin, 1958; Griffiths, 1964; Getzels, Lipham and Campbell, 1968; Milstein and Belasco, 1973) reveals that inquiry in this field has leaned heavily on the belief that a general science of organizations has provided the needed theoretical underpinnings for understanding schools and for the training of the administrators who are to run them. While a general theory of organizations provided the rationale for understanding schools, the sister social sciences provided the research tools and the “sensitizing concepts” needed to identify and resolve their administrative problems (Downey and Enns, 1963; Tope et al., 1965). Since this happy combination of theory and method yields an understanding of organizations as they really are, it then becomes possible to say how educational administrators may be trained to improve organizations and administrative practice within them (Culbertson et al., 1973). Although the claim is seldom if ever made explicitly, this line of reasoning, linking a general theory of organizations to the training of administrators, implies that we have at hand both the theory and method which permit us...
to improve schools and the quality of whatever it is that goes on within them.

That change in schools proceeds without assistance from an applied organization theory, or indeed, in contravention to it (Fullan, 1972), usually fails to shake our faith in such theory.

cited to this point that most of them are American in origin, since it was in the United States that the movement to conceive educational administration as a social science arose in the late 1940s. A decade later the movement had taken hold in Canada and some time later in Australia and Britain. As the concept of educational administration as a profession and social science gains ever wider recognition and acceptance, it becomes appropriate to examine the theory and assumptions which underlie the field. In particular we need to ask whether the theory and assumptions still appear to hold in the settings where they were developed before they were recommended and applied to totally new settings.

Such an examination is not only appropriate but essential in the face of an alternative view which sees organizations not as structures subject to universal laws but as cultural artefacts dependent upon the scientific meaning and intention of people within them. This alternative view, which
stems from nineteenth century German idealism (Deutscher, 1973, p. 326), bears the awkward name phenomenology (Phillipson, 1972), though it might with equal justification be called the method of understanding, as it is in the work of Max Weber (Eldridge, 1971, p. 28). What we call the view is not important. What matters is that there exists a body of theory and assumption which runs squarely at odds with that which has provided the ideological underpinnings of educational administration as it has developed over the past two decades. The ideological conflict between these views rests on two fundamentally different ways of looking at the world. One is the established view both in the study of organizations generally and in the study of educational administration. In this paper, I will outline the alternative view and recommend its application both in organization and administrative theory.

It is surely no accident that the alternative view has its roots in European philosophy and social science. And it is at least noteworthy that this view has a current flowering in Britain, where it is exerting a strong influence in both sociology (Filmer et al., 1972; Dawe, 1970; Brittan, 1973) and in education (Young, 1971; Cosin et al., 1971), I do not wish to drive the
differences in the views to
the point of a spurious contrast between American and
European social science.

The alternative view which I will outline has its
supporters in the United States
too (Garfinkel, 1967; Cicourel, 1964; Louch, 1966; Wilson,
1970). Two points
should be made here. First, and of lesser importance,
phenomenology has yet to
influence the study of organizations in the United States
despite the existence of
a long-standing phenomenological tradition in some
sociological schools of
thought in that country. 1 In Britain, both theory and
research on organizations
reflect the phenomenological perspective (Tipton, 1973;

Second, and more important since it relates to the heart of
the issue, the exist
ence of the two competing ideologies illustrates the
fundamental contention of
phenomenology that there are no fixed ways for construing
the social world
around us. These ways are products of particular settings
and circumstances
rather than expressions of universal ideals and values. Our
concepts of organi
zations must therefore rest upon the views of people in
particular times and
places, and any effort to understand them in terms of a
single set of ideas, values
and laws must be doomed to failure.

The alternative view rejects the assumption, underlying
much of organization

theory, that organizations belong to a single species which behaves in pre
dictable ways according to common laws. This view finds forceful expression in

the work of Mayntz (1964), a European scholar of organizations: Values and Religion
Propositions which hold for such diverse phenomena as an army, a trade union, and a university... must necessarily be either trivial or so abstract as to tell hardly anything of interest about concrete reality...
After all, the distinct character of an organization is certainly determined, among other things, by the nature, interests, and values of those who are instrumental in maintaining it. [pp. 113-114]

If people are inherently part of organizations, if organizations themselves are

expressions of how people believe they should relate to each other, we then have

good grounds to question an organization theory which assumes the universality

of organizational forms and effects. This argument suggests that organizations

theorists have been so busy defining the forest that they have failed to notice dif
ferences among the trees—and worse, have ignored objects in the forest that are

not trees at all. It suggests, too, that an academic industry which trains adminis

trators by disclosing to them the social-scientific secrets of how organizations

work or how policy should be made indulges at best in a premature hope and at

worst in a delusion. Two views of social reality

The conflicting views on organizations of which I have been speaking represent
vastly different ways of looking at social reality and rest on sharply contrasting
processes for interpreting it. These contrasts are summarized in Table 1 in which
I have compared the two views and suggested how they differ with respect to a
number of critical issues. Each of these issues has implications for the theory of
organizations and for research undertaken in line with such theory. Necessarily
then, these contrasts also have implications for a number of practical questions
in the conduct of affairs in organizations. Some of these will be explored in the
concluding section of this paper. Although there are no generally accepted
names for identifying the two views contrasted in Table 1, it may suffice to note
that the crux of the issue is whether social reality is based upon naturally exist
ing systems or upon human invention of social forms. Social reality is usually
construed as a natural and necessary order which, as it unfolds, permits human
society to exist and people within it to meet their basic needs. Alternatively,
social reality may be construed as images in the mind of man having no neces
sary or inevitable forms except as man creates them and endows them with
reality and authority. In the one perspective, organizations are natural objects—
systems of being which man discovers; in the other,
organizations are cultural artefacts which man shapes within limits given only by his perception and the boundaries of his life as a human animal.

The systems notion posits an organizational force or framework which encompasses and gives order to people and events within it. The system—unseen behind everyday affairs—is real; it is the organization. The force of THEORY ABOUT ORGANIZATION VALUES AND RELIGION

Table 1 Alternative bases for interpreting social reality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is social reality?</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>A natural system</th>
<th>Human invention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of comparison</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical Realism: the world exists</td>
<td>Idealism: the world exists</td>
<td>basis and is knowable as it really but different people construe is. Organizations are real it in very different ways. entities with a life of their Organizations are invented own. social reality.</td>
<td>The role of Discovering the universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social science laws of society and human people interpret the world conduct within it. in which they live.</td>
<td>Basic units of The collectivity: society or Individuals acting singly or social reality organizations. together.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method of Identifying conditions or Interpretations of the understanding relationships which permit subjective meanings which the collectivity to exist. individuals place upon their Conceiving what these action. Discovering the conditions and relationships subjective rules for such are. action.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theory A rational edifice built by Sets of meanings which scientists to explain human people use to make sense of behaviour. their world and behaviour within it.

Research Experimental or quasiThe search for meaningful experimental validation relationships and the of theory. discovery of their consequences for action.

Methodology Abstraction of reality. The representation of reality especially through for purposes of comparison. mathematical models and Analysis of language and quantitative analysis. meaning.

Society Ordered. Governed by a Conflicted. Governed by the uniform set of values and values of people with access made possible only by those to power. values.

Organizations Goal oriented. Independent Dependent upon people and of people. Instruments of their goals. Instruments of order in society serving power which some people both society and the control and can use to individual. attain ends which seem good to them. continued

THEORY ABOUT ORGANIZATION

“natural” in the descriptor is to evoke the view common in systems theory that organizational forms are shaped by powerful forces which in large measure act independently of man. The organizations so formed will be right and good, if the natural forces are allowed free play. Mayntz (1964, pp. 105, 115) has noted that such views in which an unseen organizational hand works for the greater social good are likely to be most congenial to scholars who share a faith in the ideals of the Western liberal democracies. In identifying organizations as social inventions, the alternative view identifies organization with man’s image of himself and with the particular and distinctive ways in which
people see the world around them and their place in it. This view is the perspective of phenomenology. In it organizations are the perceived social reality within which people make decisions and take actions which seem right and proper to them. (Greenfield, 1973, p. 557). The heart of this view is not a single abstraction called organization, but rather the varied perceptions by individuals of what they can, should, or must do in dealing with others within the circumstances in which they find themselves. It is noteworthy that this tradition—the decision-making tradition (Cyert and March, 1963; Simon, 1964) in organization theory—is frequently cited in scholarly writing, but seldom followed in analyses of organizations. This tradition, culminating currently in the creative insights of James March (1972) into organizational realities, reaches back into the work of Simon (1957; March and Simon, 1958) and thence into the work of Max Weber (trans. Gerth and Mills, 1946) and the German philosophers and sociologists of the phenomenological tradition (Deutscher, 1973, p. 327; Silverman, 1972, pp. 184-5).

What are some of the particular issues involved in the contrast between the systems and phenomenological views? These are suggested in
Table 1 where the
two views are compared on a number of points. In the
discussion which follows,

Table 1 Continued What is social reality?
Dimensions A natural system Human invention
of comparison

Organizational Organizations get out of Given diverse human ends,
pathologies kilter with social values and there is always conflict individual needs. among people acting to pursue them.

Prescription Change the structure of the Find out what values are
for curing organization to meet social embodied in organizational organizational values and individual needs. action and whose they are.

ills Change the people or change their values if you can.

the phenomenological view is emphasized, since it is assumed that the founda

tions of the systems view are the more familiar of the two views. Philosophical basis

The systems view assumes that the world is knowable as it is. Although the acqui

sition of such knowledge requires the intervention and help of scientists, theorists

and scholars, there exists an ultimate reality which may be discovered by applica

tion of the scientific method and similar forms of rational analysis. In systems

theory, the prevailing image of the organization is that of an organism. Organi
organizations exist; they are observable entities which have a life of their own. Organis
izations are like people, although sometimes the image is more that of the
recalcitrant child rather than the mature adult. In any case, the theory endows
organizations with many human properties. They have goals towards which they
direct their activities: they respond and adapt to their environments. Nor can
organizations escape the fate of organisms ill-adapted to their environments.
Indeed, the fate of organizations depends upon their ability to adapt to an increas
ingly complex and turbulent environment. Following the Darwinian logic inherent
in their image of the organization, systems theorists (Bennis, 1968) see small,
quick-witted, democratic organizations replacing the ponderous, bureaucratic
forms now expiring around us. The fact that bureaucratic organizations appear as
large, robust and formidable as ever does not appear to shake belief in organi
zations as living entities subject to stringent laws permitting only the fittest to
survive. Indeed, our belief in the living organization is likely to be so strong that
we fail to notice that the systems theorists have shifted from telling us about the
way organizations are to telling us how they ought to be. “If only organizations
were adapted to their environments,” the argument runs, “imagine how quickly
these bureaucratic forms would disappear.” In thinking about the dazzling prospect of a world in which organizations were creatures closely adapted to a benign, well-intentioned environment, we forget that the role of theory is to tell us the way things are rather than how they ought to be or how we should like them to be. Our image of the organization as an entity, as a living entity, rests upon an analogy. But we fail to draw the conclusion (Willer, 1967, p. 33) that the analogy is useless when discrepancies appear between the image and the phenomena observed.

The phenomenological view of reality contrasts sharply with that of systems theory. This view has its origin in the distinction Kant drew between the noumenal world (the world as it is) and the phenomenal world (the world as we see it). For Kant, a world of reality does indeed exist, but man can never perceive it directly; reality is always glossed over with human interpretations which themselves become the realities to which man responds. And man is always learning, always interpreting, always inventing the “reality” which he sees about him. In popular form, the Kantian philosophy has been expressed as follows: “Man does not create his world, but he does make it.” It therefore comes as no surprise to the phenomenologist that people are killed by “empty” guns.
nomenologist, beliefs are always of greater consequence than facts in shaping behaviour. The bullet may indeed be in the gun, but it is the individual’s belief about an empty chamber which causes him idly to pull the trigger. Deutscher (1973) summarizes the phenomenological view as follows: The phenomenological orientation always sees reality as constructed by men in the process of thinking about it. It is the social version of Descartes’ Cogito, ergo sum. For the phenomenologist it becomes Cogitamus, ergo est—we think, therefore it is! [1973, p. 328] The role of social science The implications of the phenomenological view are of critical importance in shaping our views both of the social sciences and of a study of organizations founded on them, as may be seen in the contrasting positions taken by Weber and Durkheim (Bendix and Roth, 1971, pp. 286-97). For Weber, working within his “method of understanding”, “there is no such thing as a collective person ality which ‘acts’”, only individuals acting on their interpretations of reality. In contrast, Durkheim, convinced of an ultimate, knowable social reality, sought to eliminate the perceptions of individuals and to find “the explanation of social life in the nature of society itself” (Bendix and Roth, 1971, p. 291). Thus Durkheim spent his life building a sociology around notions of “elemental” forms which provide the invariable units out of which
social life is built. Weber,
on the other hand, explored the ideas, doctrines and beliefs with which men
endowed their organizations and which provided the motivation for action
within them. Durkheim’s path leads to generality, abstraction and universality in
the study of organizations; Weber’s leads to the particularistic, the concrete, and
the experience-based study of organizations. Durkheim’s path leads to an ascep
tic study of organizations, Weber’s to one which smells of reality.
The phenomenological view leads to the concept of organizations as “invented
social reality” (Greenfield, 1973, p. 556) and to the paradox that, having invented
such reality, man is perfectly capable of responding to it as though it were not of
his own invention (Silverman, 1970, p. 133). More basically, however, the phe
nomenological perspective questions the possibility of objectivity in what Weber
calls “the cultural sciences”. While it is possible for such sciences to pursue
inquiry within a logically rigorous methodology and for them to take into account
certain basic social facts such as where people live and what they do, it is not
possible for cultural scientists to give us “a direct awareness of the structure of
human actions in all their reality” (Eldridge, 1971, p. 16). Thus the notion of dis
covering the ultimate laws which govern social reality becomes an ever receding fantasy which retreats as we attempt to approach it. Such bogus ‘laws’ as the law of supply and demand were, both for Weber and Durkheim, “maxims for action”, advice to people on how to protect their interests if they wished to be “fair and logical” (Eldridge, 1971, p. 18). In Weber’s view, then, it is impossible for the cultural sciences to penetrate behind social perception to reach objective social reality. Paradoxically, this limitation on the cultural sciences is also their strength, since it permits them to do what is never possible in the physical sciences: the cultural scientist may enter into and take the viewpoint of the actor whose behaviour is to be explained. We can accomplish something which is never attainable in the natural sciences, namely the subjective understanding of the action of component individuals . . . We do not ‘understand’ the behaviour of cells, but can only observe the relevant functional relationships and generalize on the basis of these observations. [Weber, 1947, pp. 103–4]

While the cultural scientist may not discover ultimate social reality, he can interpret what people see as social reality and, indeed, he must do so according to a consistent, logical, and rigorous methodology (Eldridge, 1971, pp. 9–10). It is such a discipline for interpreting human experience which provides the science in the cultural scientist’s work, not his ability to discover ultimate truths.
about social structure. Thus the purpose of social science is to understand social reality as different people see it and to demonstrate how their views shape the action which they take within that reality. Since the social sciences cannot penetrate to what lies behind social reality, they must work directly with man’s definitions of reality and with the rules he devises for coping with it. While the social sciences do not reveal ultimate truth, they do help us to make sense of our world. What the social sciences offer is explanation, clarification and demystification of the social forms which man has created around himself. In the view of some (Dawe, 1970, p. 211), the social sciences may lead us to enlightenment and to liberation from the forces which oppress man. In the phenomenological view, these forces stem from man himself, not from abstractions which lie behind social reality and control man’s behaviour within that reality. Theory about what?

The two views give rise to opposing theories about the world and the way it works, since each sees reality in different kinds of things. Each approaches theory building from a point of view which is normative rather than descriptive.

In the natural systems view, the basic reality is the collectivity; reality is in society and its organizations. Assuming the existence of an
ultimate social

reality, the role of theory is to say how it hangs together or how it might be

changed so that it would hang together even more effectively (Merton, 1957; Etzioni, 1960). Thus functional analysis—the theory associated with the systems

view—becomes a justification of the way social reality is organized rather than

an explanation of it. In this view, the theory becomes more important than the values and religion research because it tells us what we can never perceive directly with our senses:

it tells us the ultimate reality behind the appearance of things and it establishes a

view which is essentially beyond confirmation or disproof by mere research.

The phenomenological view begins with the individual and seeks to under

stand his interpretations of the world around him. The theory which emerges

must be grounded (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in data from particular organi

zations. That these data will be glossed with the meanings and purposes of those

people and places is the whole point of this philosophical view. Thus the aim of

scientific investigation is to understand how that glossing of reality goes on at

one time and place and to compare it with what goes on in different times and

places. Similarly organizations are to be understood in terms of people’s beliefs
about their behaviour within them. If we are to understand organizations, we
must understand what people within them think of as right and proper to do.

Within this framework we would certainly not expect people everywhere to
have the same views. In fact, it is the existence of differences in belief structures
which provides us with the key to interpreting them. People are not likely to
think of their own views as strange. Indeed it is only in contrast to other views
that we come to understand our own. Theory thus becomes the sets of meanings
which yield insight and understanding of people’s behaviour. These theories are
likely to be as diverse as the sets of human meanings and understandings which
they are to explain. In the phenomenological perspective, the hope for a univer
sal theory of organizations collapses into multifaceted images of organizations
as varied as the cultures which support them.

The view of theory as arising from our understanding is expressed by Walsh
(1972): The point about the social world is that it has been preselected and preinterpreted by its members in terms of a series of commonsense assumptions which constitute a taken-for-granted scheme for reference . . . In this manner factual reality is conferred upon the social world by the routine interpretive practices of its members. The implication of this is that every man is a practical theorist when it comes to investigating the social world, and not just the sociologist. [p. 26]

Thus, the naturalist tries to devise general theories of social behaviour and to
validate them through ever more complex research methodologies which push him further from the experience and understanding of the everyday world. The phenomenologist works directly with such experience and understanding to build his theory upon them. As Kuhn (1970) points out, our theories are not just possible explanations of reality; they are sets of instructions for looking at reality. Thus choice among theories and among approaches to theory building involves normative and—especially in the social sciences—moral questions.

Choice among them is in part a matter of preference, but choice may also be made on the basis of which theories direct us to the most useful problems and which provide the most helpful insights into them. Research and methodology

In the systems view, research is directed at confirming theory. Theory, in this view, is something which scientists build, largely from the armchair, by thinking up what must be the ultimate explanation for the phenomena observed. Contrary to accepted opinion, Kuhn (1970, p. 16) has argued that such theory is never open to disproof and serves instead as a “consensual agreement among scientists about what procedures shall constitute scientific activity and hence which expla
nations will count as scientific explanations” (Walsh, 1972, p. 25).

From the phenomenological perspective research, theory and methodology
must be closely associated. Theory must arise out of the process of inquiry itself
and be intimately connected with the data under investigation. In this view, the
aim of theory should be explanation and clarification. Thus research and theory
which fulfills this aim must depend not only upon what is being explained but
also upon to whom it is explained, and with what. Louch (1966) argues this view
as follows: Explanation, in Wittgenstein’s phrase, is a family of cases joined together only by a common aim, to make something plain or clear. This suggests that a coherent account of explanation could not be given without attending to the audience to whom an explanation is offered or the source of puzzlement that requires an explanation to be given. There are many audiences, many puzzles. [p. 233]

Research in the naturalist mode is prone to use experimental methods to
establish relationships among variables. The research often substitutes math
equations models for the substantive theoretical model and is satisfied if statisti
cally significant relationships are found among the variables of the mathematical
model. The aim is to relate variables \(x\) and \(y\), usually with a host of other vari
ables “held constant”. Little effort is spent on determining whether \(x\) and \(y\) exist
in any form which is meaningful to or has consequences for actors within a
social situation. Nor is there much effort to ask whether holding one or more
variables constant yields an interpretable result among those remaining. In phys-

c ical systems, we can understand what it means to hold volume constant, for
example, while we raise the temperature of a gas and observe the effect on pres-
sure. But what does it mean when we come to a social system and speak, as
some researchers do, of holding social class constant while we observe the effect
of school resources upon achievement? Whereas the physicist manipulates
materials and apparatus in specific, understandable ways, the social researcher
frequently makes no intervention at all in the social system which he is attempt-
ing to explain. Instead, he does the manipulation of variables in his mind, or in
the workings of his computer. Can we rely on the suggestion that if we manipu-
late variables in a social system, we will get the same results the researcher gets
from his intellectual manipulation of them? The doubt is growing that we will
not, as is apparent, for example, from critiques of school effects research
(Spady, 1973, pp. 139-40) demonstrating that schools may account for a great
deal or virtually nothing at all of pupil achievement, depending on which of
several alternative but statistically acceptable procedures
the researcher chooses
for his analysis.

Phenomenologically based research, on the other hand, aims at dealing with
the direct experience of people in specific situations. Therefore the case study
and comparative and historical methods become the preferred means of analysis.

These methods are perhaps found in their most developed form in the work
Weber did in building ideal types for organizational analysis. These types should
be seen as “characterizations or impressions of ways of thought and styles of
living” which permit comparison and understanding of them (Louch, 1966, p.
172). What Weber did in building these ideal types was to worm his way into
the heads of bureaucrats, clerics and commercial men in order to “discern logical
connections among propositions expressing [their] beliefs about the world”
(Louch, 1966, p. 173). The moral consequences of these beliefs may also be
made plain and checked against “reality”. The close connection among theory,
research and ethics thus becomes obvious.

Thus an organizational theory based upon understanding rejects the emphasis
which much of contemporary social science places upon quantification, more
complex mathematical models, and bigger number crunchers in the shape of
better and faster computers. As Burns (1967, p. 127) has pointed out, better
manipulation of numbers cannot substitute for the emptiness of the concepts to
which they apply. This fixation on numbers without concern for the concepts
they are thought to represent leads to a sickness of social science which Sorokin
has called “quantophrenia” and which Rothkopf (1973, p. 6) likens to the Leer
lauf reactions described by Lorenz. In these reactions, animals go through
elaborate stereotyped performances for hunting or mating when no other living
creature is there to see or respond to the performances.

If we move towards improved understanding in our research we might
change our image of what constitutes the essential research tool and supplant the
computer with Weber’s notion of the ideal type. An ideal type provides us with
an image of a social situation at a particular time and place. We may then sur
round this image with others made of different organizations or of the same
organization at other times. By looking at these images comparatively by seeing
them almost as the frames of a motion picture, we begin to understand our world
better and to comprehend its differences and the processes of change occurring
within it. This direction in theory and research leads to an investigation of lan
guage and the categories it contains for understanding the world (Bernstein, 1971a; 1971b). It leads also to an investigation of the processes (Scheff, 1973; Theory About Organization Garfinkel, 1964) by which we negotiate with each other and so come to define what we will pay attention to in our environment and our organizations. Society and its organizations.

In the systems view, the problem of society is the problem of order. Without society and its organizations, chaos and anarchy would result. The social order is seen as a basically well-working system governed by universal values. In the phenomenological view, the organization as an entity striving to achieve a single goal or set of goals is resolved into the meaningful actions of individuals. Organizations do not think, act, have goals or make decisions. People do (Georgiou, 1973; Greenfield, 1973), but they do not all think, act and decide according to preordained goals. Thus the notion of the organization as a necessary order maintaining instrument falls and the notion of organization as the expression of particular human ideologies takes its place. In this way, the problem of order becomes the problem of control (Dawe, 1970, p. 212). Or, to put the question otherwise, the problem is not whether order shall be maintained but rather who
maintains it, how, and with what consequences. The image which this view calls
to mind is the organization as a battlefield rather than the organization as an
instrument of order. People strive to impose their interpretations of social reality
upon others and to gain command of the organizational resources which will
permit them to do so. The warfare in this battlefield usually takes the form of
linguistic attack and defence, although the physical forms of warfare fit just as
comfortably within the perspective.

Take as an example this exchange between a principal and a new social
worker after the social worker had spent considerable time and effort coun
selling a student who had been persistently truant and tardy. 2

P: It was really simpler and more effective in the old days when the truant officer just went straight to the student’s home and brought him back to school.

SW: Actually, I do the work truant officers did, but I do it a different way.

P: That may be so, but we used to get results more quickly. If the students wouldn’t come to school, we expelled them. They had to recognize our authority or quit school. That’s what I mean by simple. Now everything is complicated. Why can’t we deal with these cases without a lot of red tape?

SW: I prefer to see my work as treatment. The aim is not to wind up a case quickly but to keep the student in school and learning. And in any case, Mr. Principal, legally I am the truant officer and you need my backing to expel a student for truancy.

It is surely not hard to see in this exchange a battle going on over what the job of
the social worker should be and behind that a struggle over how
the school should define its responsibilities to students. The issue is how the job of the social worker shall be defined and who shall control the school’s power of expulsion. Each of the protagonists is inviting (and threatening) the other to accept a particular definition of the situation and the way it is proper to act within it.

The conflict view of organizations thus links up neatly with the decision making tradition in organizational analysis. In a recent significant contribution Perrow (1972, pp. 145–76) demonstrates how this tradition, developed brilliantly by March and Simon (1958), complements the insights of Weber. A major concern of Weber was for the way in which the power of bureaucracies would be used outside the organization. March and Simon demonstrate how power may be marshalled within the organization. As Perrow points out (p. 196), the supposed plight of professionals within bureaucracies is a minor complaint compared to what others have suffered from professionals who have been able to act out their ideological beliefs through their control of organizations.

We should also be grateful to Perrow (p. 90ff) for pointing
out the contrasts

between Barnard’s theory and his practice. For Barnard, (1938, pp. 46–61)

organizations were by their very nature cooperative enterprises. In this respect,

Barnard was a good systems theorist whose theory dealt with abstractions about

organizations and not with the ideologies of those who ran them. In an astonishing case study, Barnard (1948) spoke to a group of the unemployed who had recently seen “police clubs flying, women trampled, men knocked down” (p. 64)

in the following terms: I’ll be God damned if I will do anything for you on the basis that you ought to have it just because you want it, or because you organize mass meetings, or what you will. I’ll do my best to do what ought to be done, but I won’t give you a nickel on any other basis. [pp. 73-4]

In his commentary on this situation, Barnard makes it very clear that he realized he was in a position of conflict over ideology. But his theoretical concern lies not with the ideologies, but with his proposition that men under “states of tension” will do what is “utterly contrary to that which is normally observed in them” (p. 62). While he explains in detail how he won the ideological battle which gave him power to decide what the men “ought to have”, he makes no mention of his final decision. The content of decisions is not important in systems theory. However, Barnard does take pains to denigrate the ideology of
the unemployed workers and their claims for better treatment. He also considers

in a footnote (pp. 73–4) whether a person of “superior position” should swear in

front of those of “inferior status”, and confides that “the oath was deliberate and

accompanied by hard pounding on the table”.

In this example, Barnard as theorist merely adds the notion of “states of

tension” to his earlier developed principles of cooperative action in organi

zations. Do these ideas tell us the significant aspects about organizational life T H E O R Y A B O U T O R G A N I Z A T I O N

with Chester Barnard? The phenomenologist holds that Barnard’s ideology is

the significant variable shaping the experience of many people in the organi

zations which he controlled. Without understanding the ideological issues

involved in an organization, and in particular without knowing what ideology is

in control, the general principles of organization mean relatively little in terms

of what people experience in an organization.

Organizational pathologies and cures

The systems theorist looks for pathologies in the body of the organization itself.

These stem from ill adaptations of the organization to its environment, to the

ultimate goals it should serve, or to the needs of individuals. The solution to

these pathologies is obvious: change the structure of the
organization to improve

the adaptation and thus the performance of the organization. The phenomenolo
gist, on the other hand, sees structure as simply the reflection of human beliefs.

If there are problems in organizations—and problems are certainly to be

expected—they must therefore rest in conflicting beliefs held by individuals.

Solutions to such problems cannot be found simply by changing structures. The

root of the problem lies in people’s beliefs and the ability to act upon these

beliefs. Thus the argument that we must make organizations more liveable, more congruent with human values and motives, ignores the fact that it is one set of human motives and values which is in conflict with another set of motives and values. There is no abstract entity called organization which can be held accountable—only other people. [Schein, 1973, pp. 780–1]

Our penchant for thinking about organizations as entities, as things with a life

of their own, blinds us to their complexity and to the human actions which con

stitute the façade which we call organization. It leads us to believe that we must

change some abstract thing called “organization” rather than the beliefs of

people about what they should do and how they should behave with each other.

The more closely we look at organizations, the more likely we are to find

expressions of diverse human meanings. The focus of our efforts to improve

organizations should not be, “What can be done to change
the structure of this
organization?” but, “Whose intentions define what is right
to do among people
here involved with one another?” and “How might these
intentions be
changed?” The task of changing organizations depends, first,
upon the varieties
of reality which individuals see in existing organizations,
and second, upon their
acceptance of new ideas of what can or should be achieved
through social
action. We know little about either, but it is clear we
should understand the first
before we attempt to direct the second. V A L U E S A N D
R E L I G I O N Implications
Where do the ideas based on phenomenology leave the notion
of “organization”? And what of the science that studies
organizations? And where does a
profession of educational administration which bases its
practice on this science
now find itself? In conclusion, let me briefly develop some
answers to these
questions and suggest some directions for future study.
1. Organizations are definitions of social reality. Some
people may make
these definitions by virtue of their access to power while
others must pay atten
tion to them. Organizations are mechanisms for transforming
our desires into
social realities. But the transforming mechanism lies
within individuals. It is
found in individuals striving to change their demands or
beliefs into definitions

of reality that others must regard as valid and accept as limitations on their

actions. This notion of organizations as dependent upon the meanings and pur

poses which individuals bring to them does not require that all individuals share

the same meaning and purposes. On the contrary, the views I am outlining here

should make us seek to discover the varying meanings and objectives that indi

viduals bring to the organizations of which they are a part. We should look more

carefully too for differences in objectives between different kinds of people in

organizations and begin to relate these to differences in power or access to

resources. Although the concept of organization permits us to speak of the domi

nating demands and beliefs of some individuals, and allows us to explore how

those with dominating views use the advantage of their position, we need not

think of these dominating views as “necessary”, “efficient”, “satisfying” or even

“functional”, but merely as an invented social reality, which holds for a time and

is then vulnerable to redefinition through changing demands and beliefs among

people. Where then may we go from here? Let me suggest some lines of devel

opment.

2. We should begin to regard with healthy scepticism the
claim that a general

science of organization and administration is at hand. Such
theories carry with

them not only culturally dependent notions of what is
important in an organi-

zation but also prescriptive ideas of how study and inquiry
into organizational

problems should go forward. The movement toward
international associations

for the study of educational administration should be
welcomed, but these

associations should open windows on our understanding of
organizations rather

than propagate received notions of organization theory. If
the movement can

provide a comparative and critical perspective on schools
and on our notions of

how they should be run, the association will serve a
valuable role. Since the
dominant theories of organization and administration have
their source in the

United States, it is these ideas which should receive
searching analysis before

they are blindly applied in other cultural settings. In
Britain, this critical exami

tation of theory and its policy implications has already
begun (Baron and

Taylor, 1969; Halsey, 1972), though one is hard pressed to
find similar critical

examinations in other national or cultural settings. T H E
ORY ABOUT ORGANIZATION

3. Willy nilly, the world does seem to be shrinking towards
the global
village. Yet there are still strong forces which maintain vivid cultural distinctions within it. Despite these forces, the interests of the mass media, which the academic community seems all too ready to ape (Perrow, 1972, p. 198), direct attention more frequently to the symptoms of social problems rather than to their sources. While the mass media are usually ready with prefabricated solutions to these problems, students of organizations should doubt the utility of solutions which ignore their sources in the truly critical and powerful organizations of our societies. If we are unwilling to understand our own organizations, or if we regard acquiring such understanding as a trivial task, we should be aware that there are often others willing and waiting to apply their own preconceptions and answers to the tasks of defining the organization, identifying its problems, and prescribing solutions to them. Our own experience of our own organizations is a valuable resource. It is with this experience that the organization theorist must begin to understand the nature of organizations. Since an understanding of organizations is closely linked to control of them and to the possibility of change within them, the phenomenological perspective points to issues of crucial importance both to the theorist and the man of prac
tical affairs.

4. The possibility of training administrators through the study of organization theory has been seriously overestimated. Such theory does not appear to offer ready-made keys to the problems of how to run an organization. Through credentials, such training does appear to offer sound prospects for advancement within administrative systems. While such training may increase social mobility, each society must decide whether it wishes to pursue this goal, and, if it does, whether this method is the most appropriate for doing so. If training of administrators is to serve its avowed purposes, then it seems clear that the nature of the training must move in virtually the opposite direction from that advocated in recent years. That is to say, training should move away from attempts to teach a broad social science of organizations-in-general towards a familiarity with specific organizations and their problems. That the training should continue to have critical and reflective dimensions should not conflict with this redirection of training programmes. It appears essential also for training programmes to develop a much stronger clinical base than is now common in most of them. In such training, both the theoretician and the practitioner must be intimately
involved.

5. Research into organizational problems should consider and begin to use

the phenomenological perspective. This redirection of research should awaken

interest in the decision-making tradition of organization theory and in the insti

tutional school of organizational analysis (Perrow, 1972, pp. 177-204) with its

emphasis on the exposé and ideological analysis of specific organizations

(Bendix, 1956). In methodology, research should turn to those methods which

attempt to represent perceived reality more faithfully and fully than do the

present highly quantified and abstruse techniques. And researchers should avoid V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N

prescribing solutions to pressing social problems on the basis of prescriptive

theory and research. For example, those who concluded on the basis of the

Coleman study that the achievement of black students in American schools

might be raised by integrating black and white students were dazzled by the nat

uralist assumption that a statistical relationship represents social reality. They

therefore were led to the error of believing that social relationships may be

manipulated in the same way in which variables from the research design can be

manipulated. In doing so, they failed to reckon with the
reaction of black stu
dents to greater integration as a “solution” to their problems (Carlson, 1972).

Indeed researchers and social scientists might consider the cultural imperialism
which is frequently inherent in their recommendations for solving social prob
lems and strive first to understand (Bernstein, 1971b, Sarason, 1971; Holbrook,
1964) the social and organizational world for which they hope to prescribe solu
tions.

What is needed for better research on schools is better images of what
schools are and what goes on in them. “Better” in this case means creating
images of schools which reflect their character and quality and which will tell us
something of what the experience of schooling is like. Since schools are made
up of different people in different times and places, it is to be expected that
images which reflect the experience of schooling must be many and varied.

These images would be sets of “one-sided viewpoints”, as Weber called them,
each throwing “shafts of light” (Eldridge, 1971, p. 12) upon social reality in
schools.

As the natural systems have provided the dominating model for studies of
organizations (Mayntz, 1964, p. 116), the image of the school as a unit of pro
duction has dominated investigations of schools (Levine, 1973; Spady, 1973).

The production model of the school is a systems variant which sees the school as a set of roles and resources arranged to yield a product which conforms to pre-determined goals. We are often so accustomed to this model that we fail to notice the enormous discrepancies between it and what typically goes on in schools. To begin with, most sets of official educational goals would justify schools doing virtually any good thing for the individual or the society in which he lives. Secondly, the products of school are nearly impossible to identify, if by product we mean something which is unmistakably due to the efforts of the school itself. The clearest measure of school product—the results students obtain on standardized and other kinds of tests—correspond poorly to the goals of education and are usually accounted for most readily by influences outside the school. Thus whether schools do anything to achieve a set of vague goals can never be determined within the model of the school as a unit of production.

If we shear from our image of schools the notion of overriding goals and visible products, what are we left with? The image is now that of pure process in which people strive to shape a social environment which is
congenial to them

and which they believe serves their purposes or the purposes which other people

ought to have. The image of the school is now not the factory or the system but THEORY ABOUT ORGANIZATION

the public utility (Pincus, 1974) which produces a service which people use for

their own ends. It is not surprising in this conception of the school that people

involved with it—teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, etc.—have strong

feelings about what services should be provided and how they should be pro

vided. Moreover, it should be apparent that experience with the school’s ser

vices leads to strong, though not necessarily universally accepted, beliefs about

what kinds of service and conditions of service are good and bad and to convic

tions about which of them are effective and ineffective. However, lacking objec

tive criteria to judge the relevance and validity of their claims, and lacking even

a common basis of experience with the school’s services, people holding these

beliefs and convictions are likely to clash with others having different but

equally firmly held convictions. We learn to believe in our own experience of

school process and to doubt the validity of others’ beliefs. In this way, the pro

posal model accounts both for the apparent stability of schools—their resistance
to change—and for the continuing conflict about what schools are for and how
they should be organized and run. It suggests as well that the path to understand
ing more about schools must lie through interpretations and analysis of the
experience of people in schools, not through attempts to decide which structural
elements of schools yield outcomes that best approximate their ultimate pur
poses.
6. The research advocated above and the rationale for it developed earlier in this
paper do not imply only the description and analysis of subjective states. Weber is
said to have advised researchers first to get the facts about the basic elements of
social situations and then to move to a subjective interpretation of them (Eldridge,
were such matters as wages, costs of materials, the people involved, and descrip
tions of them in demographic terms. These are the typical resource variables which
are of frequent concern in analyses of the school from the perspective of the pro
duction model. The questions usually investigated are whether the school is making
effective and efficient use of its resources in pursuit of predetermined educational
goals. Answers to such questions are complex, contradictory and unconvincing,
as Spady (1973) has demonstrated. The reasons for such unsatisfactory outcomes are obvious when pointed out, as Gagné (1970) has done. Children do not learn from “environments” from “resources” or from the “characteristics of teachers”. They learn from their specific involvement with people, things and events around them. Thus knowledge of the basic facts about a social situation is only the beginning of an understanding of it. What is needed beyond these basic facts is a knowledge of how people in a social situation construe it, what they see as its significant features, and how they act within it. Such knowledge can only come from the interpretation of particular experiences in specific situations.

In this respect, it might be useful to think of two kinds of variables in a social situation—outside and inside variables. The outside variables are those which lend themselves readily to quantification and which involve a minimum of interpretation. As has been suggested, these variables provide information about the values and religion characteristics of the people and resources found in a social situation. The inside variables are those which may only be expressed through interpretation of experience. Both kinds of variables are important, though in most organizational studies of schools, emphasis has usually fallen exclusively
It would be helpful to replace our usual notion of the school as a system with

the idea of the school as a set. Where the system idea
implies preordained order

and functions in the school, the notion of set leaves completely open both the defi

nition of the elements of the school and the description of relationships among

them. Defining the school as a set leaves as a problem for investigation what the

elements of the situations are and what the meanings of relationships among the

elements are. With such a view of the school, we might recognize both external

and internal variables; as follows: External variables.

Pupil characteristics: their age, sex, home background, individual abilities and previous learning. School characteristics: building design, facilities and equipment. Classrooms: number of pupils, subject of study, methodology. Teacher characteristics: training and length of service, personality, intelligence, abilities and interests. Internal variables. What is the quality of relationships among teachers, pupils and others in the school? What experiences do they have in terms of (a) their expectations for the environment, (b) the opportunities and problems they perceive, (c) the efforts they make to learn, help or teach, (d) their feelings of accomplishment or failure? What decisions do different people in the school make and why do they make them? How are people and situations defined and evaluated?

The variables listed above are intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive.

The final point to be made about them is that both of these major dimensions are

essential for describing and understanding schools fully. In fact, some of the
most revealing analyses will arise from contrasts between the school seen in terms of external variables and the school seen in terms of internal variables.

That organizational theory has too frequently directed attention to the external variables and that it has presumed rather than explored their relationships to internal variables are points which have already been made at length.

7. A continued study of organizations from the perspectives of the social sciences is certainly warranted. Schools as one of the most significant of our social institutions deserve particular attention. It seems appropriate, however, for students of schools as organizations to consider the meaning of their studies and to redirect them towards investigations which increase our understanding of organizations as they are before attempts are made to change them. Paradoxically, the efforts which promise to yield the most penetrating insights into organizations and the most practical strategies for improving them are those efforts (March, 1972) which deal with the way people construe organizational reality and with the moral and ethical issues involved in these construings.

If, as the phenomenologist holds, our ideas for understanding the world deter
mine our action within it, then our ideas about the world—what really exists in it, how we should behave in it—are of the utmost importance. And if our ideas about the world are shaped by our experience, then the interpretation of our experience is also of paramount importance. It is this process, the placing of meaning upon experience, which shapes what we call our organizations and it is this process which should be the focus of the organization theorist’s work. And unless we wish to yield to universal forces for determining our experience, we must look to theories of organizations based upon diverse meanings and interpretations of our experience.

Notes

* Source: An expanded version of a paper given at the Third International Intervisitation Programme on Educational Administration (1974) at Bristol, sponsored by the British Educational Administration Society and other agencies.

1 Deutscher (1973, pp. 324ff) describes these schools of thought and their connections with idealistic philosophy. He also points out (p. 325n) that those he calls the “Harvard functionalists” make no mention of phenomenology or its proponents in their encyclopaedic history of theories of society. See Parsons et al. (1961).


BARNARD, C. I. (1948) Organization and Management, Harvard


CUBERTSON, J., FARQUHAR, R., FOGARTY, G. and SHIBLES, M. (eds.) (1973) Social Science Content for Preparing Educational Leaders, Charles E. Merrill.


DOYNE, L. W. and ENNS, F. (eds.) (1963) The Social Sciences and Educational Administration, University of Alberta.


ETZIONI, A. (1960) “Two Approaches to Organizational Analysis: A Critique and a Sug


M AYNTZ, Renate (1964) “The Study of Organizations”,


SCHIN, E. H. (1973) “Can One Change Organizations, or Only People in Organi

SILVERMAN, D. (1972) “Methodology and Meaning”, in Filmer et al. (1972, pp. 183-200)


For students of educational administration, 1974 was an exciting year. It was the year in which the third International Intervisitation Programme was held. At the conference Thomas Greenfield delivered a paper which changed the face of educational administration as a field of study. To understand why it is necessary to locate the paper in its historical context.

Since the 1950s educational administration had been dominated by positivist thought in the form of the ‘Theory Movement.’ This envisaged the development of a general theory of human behaviour, within which the theory of administrative behaviour in educational contexts would be a sub-set. In this paradigm the natural sciences, especially physics, would provide the model (Griffiths, 1957, 308).

By the late 1960s doubts were being voiced. But as Griffiths...
acknowledges, its ‘demise came at the 1974 meeting of the IIP in Bristol. . . .

The coup de grace was delivered by Greenfield who made an across-the-board denunciation of every aspect of the theory movement’. Since then, Greenfield

‘has broadened and deepened his critique. In an impressive series of papers . . .

he has sought to develop a systematic view of social reality as a human invention, in opposition to the systems scientific perspective of social reality as a natural system. He has constructed strands of argument on the nature of knowledge, on administrative theory and research, on values, on the limits of science, and the importance of human subjectivity, truth and reality . . . the magnitude of his undertaking and a corresponding elegance of argument make his work the most important theoretical development in recent educational administration’

(Evers and Lakomski, 1991, 76).

Accordingly, his papers are eagerly sought in many parts of the world but are not always easy to get hold of individually or collectively. A solution is the publication of a collection and since 1990 we have been involved in producing one. We have done so in all the usual ways including spending several days together in Birmingham in June 1991. Some hard choices have
had to be made

in selecting ten papers to represent his thinking from among the sixty Greenfield has published since 1961 [Appendix 1]. Once this was done we have been involved in the equally demanding task of editing in a way that respected the integrity of individual papers but which minimized repetition in the text as a whole. With this under way two tasks remained – producing a foreword and writing a postscript. The former was straightforward – we had only to ask Christopher Hodgkinson.

The latter took more thought. We wished to enable the reader to locate the set of papers within the context of Greenfield’s personal and professional history as he saw it. This led us to a ‘novel’ approach. During the five days of our meeting in Birmingham we conducted a series of wide ranging discussions. These were taped and transcribed. Since then we have refined, revised and elaborated the text of these talks. They represent an unusually sustained attempt to explore with a scholar how and why his thinking developed as it did.

Before 1961: towards the scholar’s life

PR: Let us try and get some purchase on the development of your thinking over time. Partly by looking at your life, career and work. You were born in Saskatchewan?

TG: Into a farm family and I lived the first few years of my life on a farm.
PR: You didn’t enjoy farming much?

TG: I didn’t experience much of it but I remember from an early age having a longing for something else. That something else was the city. I can recall my mother telling me of cities and their various wonders.

PR: Most of your schooling was in city contexts?

TG: From the ‘Second Grade’ to my degree studies in English and German at the University of British Columbia.

PR: These studies were an influence you came back to later in your career and thinking?

TG: They certainly were. I fell into those choices of study, as many do, but it left a lasting impression on me. After finishing my degree I needed a job quickly and teaching seemed the easiest and most obvious thing, also my mother had been a teacher so perhaps there is that kind of influence. If I’d been more courageous or had more money I might have done other things.

PR: So you spent a number of years teaching in an elementary school?

TG: I was trained as a secondary school teacher and worked as one briefly and VALUES AND RELIGION was quite happy at it. But I was offered the job in Vancouver and they put me in an elementary school because that was where there was a shortage of teachers. Initially I found that difficult.

PR: Presumably you became reasonably good at it because from ’58 to ’59 you had a year as a Vice-Principal?

TG: Yes that’s right. I guess by the end of my teaching career I had some success. It was in an interesting school. Some of us were advanced and I was one of those.

PR: What were your responsibilities?

TG: Assistant to the head. That was my first insight into practical administration. The principal was the opposite of the previous one. He was very aggressive and direct whereas the other man had been incompetently laissez-faire. He was repressive with the children and indifferent to the teachers. I suppose that was when I first began to think about what administrators do.
PR: You had a year as a deputy principal?

TG: Then another happenstance from above. Someone in Edmonton contacted the BC Teacher’s Union and asked if they knew of somebody to nominate for a scholarship in educational administration. The thought of getting away for a year from that principal was attractive.

PR: Did you also want to research?

TG: My plan was simply to go for the year. I realised that if I did go I would probably be launched into an administrative career. 1961-1971: Objectivist years – from certainty to doubt

PR: In Alberta you studied Teacher-Leader Behaviour and Its Relationship to Pupil Growth. Why?

TG: The Department was just establishing itself. It had been going for only two years and there were two kinds of staff. Older people who had come to an academic position from a background of senior positions in administration and those, like the professor I worked with. He had some experience of education and then had gone to study in the University of Chicago, which is where the thrust of the Theory Movement arose. When I started my studies, I had a sense that the difficulties and complexities I had been introduced to in my study of the arts could be answered. They could be calculated, they could be resolved – exactly. I had a sense of turning my back on what I had understood to be knowledge for many years.

PR: That in comparison what you had known hitherto was sloppy, impractical, soft?

TG: That’s right, there was clarity, answers and certainty. As I understood more of the New Movement theory I saw it could bring discipline and knowledge to thinking in the field, to make it more useful.

PR: Was your Doctoral research a development of your Masters work?

TG: It was. My masters’ study focused on leadership, and I worked within a

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE pre-existing instrument designed to measure leadership. The standard thing to do was to take such measures and relate these to other variables. I
related these to measures of output, in particular to measures of pupil growth. For my doctoral studies I tried to understand more of how these measures of output were related to organisational variables.

PR: This was very much within the positivistic frame?

TG: Oh absolutely!

PR: It relied on a good deal of number crunching?

TG: I did a great deal of number crunching. This was offered to us as the methodology. All problems in education were thought to be ultimately resolvable in this way. Of course we were drawing on the whole school of thought that is described as ‘Logical Positivism’.

PR: This was a time in which the Theory Movement and logical positivism were at the height of their influence.

TG: Logical positivism was powerful in the social sciences generally and predominant in philosophy. We were not aware of this. These things were simply offered to us as part of the method we should use. We were aware there were problems to be solved in education and this was the means for understanding and resolving them.

PR: At a fundamental level it was taken for granted that tackling such problems raised technical rather than philosophical considerations?

TG: That was reflected in our training program. There were two kinds of emphases, the first and most important, was on quantitative method, the second was on an understanding of the social sciences. The social sciences were seen as a great repository of knowledge that would give us ideas and theories on which we would use our methods of quantitative analysis. We learned the social science of empiricist realism, that is the methods of logical positivism. We were also involved in studies that from the new perspective were seen as rather useless. We did a course in educational philosophy, which was taught by one of the old line scholars who had grown up in the tradition of Dewey. He took us through thinking on education, from Spencer onwards. We looked at thought right back to the Greeks. We had wonderful discussions and debates and being in that class re-awakened ideas that entered our heads as undergraduates. They certainly interested and challenged me. But when you walked out of that class you realised it didn’t really help at all.
PR: It was entertaining - but not really useful?

TG: It was simply self-indulgent, and didn’t address the great social issues of the day. I’d grown up in an environment of protest, a generally left-wing ideology. I was raised by my mother. She had a vivid sense of social outrage at the social injustices she suffered. I also had a sense of social mission, that there were great problems in the world that had to be set right.

PR: And that science was the way to do it?

TG: My first inclinations were towards the arts but I came to feel that was for VALUES AND RELIGION nothing and one ought to devote oneself to studies that could be socially useful.

PR: The serious citizen is a scientist? You published three papers in 1961.

TG: From early in my studies I could write well enough to put things clearly and forcefully, to draw people’s attention, to get good marks. Since then I’ve thought about my writing a great deal more. As Barnes says, ‘Mystification is easy, clarity is the hardest thing of all.’

PR: Your early papers use an essentially quantitative approach?

TG: They do. Within the systems metaphor that orders the whole thing. The school is a productive unit, there are distinguishable outputs, they are caused by effective process, all under the control of the administrator.

PR: And such thinking informs your Ph.D. study: ‘Systems Analysis in Education –A Factor Analysis and Analysis of Variance of Pupil Achievement’?

TG: A terrible title - but it displays the things I was proud of at the time. I cringe to think of it, a blaring trumpet advertising method, and no substance at all.

PR: Ideas derived from systems theory backed up by great technical skills in manipulating the numbers.

TG: I had a sense I was a possessor of a kind of arcane knowledge and had to display that in the title.

PR: You were an insider?
TG: I was inside, I could do a factor analysis, I could do an analysis of variance.

PR: And you felt comfortable with that at that time?

TG: Oh yes.

PR: When you finished your Ph.D., you became Research Director at the Canadian Teacher’s Federation?

TG: In Ottawa. I had gone to Alberta for a year, but had stayed four. I was too educated to return to the ordinary classroom. But there wasn’t an academic position available at that time in Canada. So I took an opportunity to get into research administration.

PR: To what extent was this a research role?

TG: My main role was as an advocate for research. There were interests the Federation wanted pursued with regard to the interests of teachers. They wanted salary scales, benefits and things of that kind examined. It was low-level survey research. There was also interest at that time in classroom research. I published several papers advocating that role for the classroom teacher in research.

PR: Did you hope for a ‘proper’ academic appointment?

TG: I went there happily but before long I became less happy. I found the position was that of tame scientist, in which you were hired because you could add a certain cachet to the proper opinions that my employers wanted to highlight. We were very much on display as scientists of education.

PR: Paid to find things you were expected to find or at least to find evidence to support such expectations?

TG: You could say what you wanted as long as you didn’t question certain sacred truths. I came to be very aware of that.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE

PR: So there were frustrations in working in that context and when the chance came to get a post at OISE [Ontario Institute for Studies in Education] in Toronto you were interested.
TG: I was very much imbued with the attitude that saw the
typical role of the researcher as the creator of superior
knowledge, so I did resent the political control that was
put on me, even though it wasn’t all that binding. So when
the university system began to expand I remember thinking
long and deeply about leaving the Federation. But I had the
opportunity to join the newly formed OISE. What decided me
to go was the knowledge that my former Professor, John
Andrews, was going to the Institute. That was a strong
attraction. Also the thought of moving to a big city was
very attractive.

PR: Andrews was quickly promoted. In 1967 you became Head
of the Department and held this post for the next four
years. What was involved?

TG: The chief thing was managing its growth. The Institute
was growing very fast, money seemed to be no object. Every
year there was a competition among the departments for the
increased resources given to the Institute. Growth was seen
as good in itself.

PR: Presumably at that time you accepted this?

TG: Oh I did, and we were growing also in terms of students
and of the depth and complexity of the programmes we were
offering.

PR: How large was the Department by the time you completed
your term?

TG: We were twenty or more by 1970.

PR: Good grief.

TG: Good grief yes!

PR: What was managing that growth like?

TG: Appalling.

PR: What kind of administrator were you?

TG: I was proactive. I saw things to do and I did them. I
didn’t feel badly about using my power, except sometimes,
and I thought I was working for the greater good.

PR: Did you see yourself as a consultative manager?
TG: I didn’t mind overriding a decision that I thought needed to be overridden. I didn’t do that very often but I saw the need for it. I was keenly aware of the demands the Department was under, demands to expand both research and training. We had to meet our obligations, and this moved me to take risks. I pursued senior scholars, but not many of them came. So the salvation of the Department lay in recruiting new, untried talent. I appointed a woman to the faculty at the time when such an appointment was exceptional. I also took risks in the specializations I promoted and the greenness of the persons I recommended. I was pretty green myself.

PR: How did your four years experience as an administrator shape your thinking as a scholar?

TG: It shaped it a very great deal. When I finished my first term as Head, I was up for review for a second term and I felt that there was no question about VALUES AND ELIGIBILITY. To my surprise one of the senior people came to me and said he wanted the job. I was just completely dumbfounded. He said he would get it and that the best thing I could do was to step down. That was my first encounter with the Realpolitik of organisations and, of course, it rubbed me the wrong way. I might have been persuaded to leave and go back to doing what I really preferred. I decided he was wrong, that he didn’t have the power, and even if he did, I wasn’t going to go that way. The ensuing months were sheer hell. He was a consummate political animal and he was able to find enough resentment about things I had done and exploit this. It came to a vote of the whole Department, staff, students, support staff - everybody. I could see that to win by a small margin, which I did, was not enough, so I quit.

PR: So you went back to being a professor and ceased being an administrator. That experience must have been one you learnt from?

TG: During that time I was aware again that we were expected to be tame scientists.

PR: Even at OISE?

TG: We were an instrument of provincial government policy, and one of the issues was the amalgamation of schools and school districts. There was a belief that bigger was better. I saw that I was being used as a kind of strategic lever against popular opinion. I could see the complexity of the issues. I could see these were to do with values. I
was there to build the technical argument, to give it credibility. But on more than one occasion people would listen and then say, ‘That may be true if you say it. We still don’t want to do it.’

PR: So the doubts which have dominated much of your work since then can be traced back to this period? And these doubts were wide ranging and fundamental, relating even to your understanding of the methods that you were using? This takes us neatly to the first of the papers in which you begin to express these doubts in a published form. ‘Critique of a Tradition’, in 1968 raises doubts concerning the ideas and methods of researching that had characterised your work in the past.

TG: My task was to review the research years at the University of Alberta, research using the instrument known as the Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire, the LBDQ. There had been much research of this kind. I looked at its outcomes and its implications. As I did the paper, I came to realise the limitations of such theory and methodology. I said in a muted way that these methods were inadequate as a means for studying leadership.

PR: Were you also beginning to have doubts about the quantitative approach itself as a means of understanding things like educational leadership?

TG: I had to think things out, I had to understand them as deeply as I could. My arts training left me with the idea that the world was a mystery and that understanding of it was gained only with great difficulty, much scepticism and a lot of work. When I examined a body of findings based upon the LBDQ, that scepticism returned.

PR: Unlike some who share your reservations about the quantitative approach you had a very good grasp of statistics. You spent a decade or more working with statistics. You were very comfortable with them but began to see their limitations?

TG: There are enormous subjective elements in these supposedly objective methods. I knew too that numbers opened up a whole arcane study which was immensely satisfying because of its apparent exactitude and closed logic. That such logic is comfortably abstruse and impervious to question by non-initiates is part of its
attraction. It impresses by its apparent power while repelling questions, hiding the fact that it often has much less to say to the everyday world than it seems to. Numbers can be useless, but strongly addictive.

PR: What was it about the late ‘60s which began to make you doubt all this?

TG: I began to think through the nature of my science. Earlier I had become aware of the enormous subjective elements in these supposedly objective and quantitative analyses. There were problems with factor analysis, one of the prime tools, and also with multiple regression. With factor analysis, for example, there is no unique solution. Solutions are imposed by the researcher and what is interpretable becomes the decision of the researcher. In multiple regression, subjective decisions such as the order in which the variables are input significantly affects the result. In Coleman’s study of equal opportunity, for example, the order of entering the variables shifts the value of in-school factors from virtually everything to almost nothing. On one occasion when members of a Senate committee asked about the meaning of the beta weights that powerfully shape his findings, Coleman replied they were purely mathematical concepts which had no bearing on practical reality.

PR: Such an approach may manipulate quantitative data, see various pretty patterns and suddenly say ‘This pattern represents truth, life and reality!’

TG: That’s it exactly. Much later I came across a statement from Francis Bacon where he says, ‘God forbid that we should mistake a dream of the imagination for a pattern in the world.’ Many findings produced by the quantitative methods are dreams of the imagination asserted as truth. For example, if statisticians find a relationship statistically significant, then all the variation in the display which does not reveal that pattern is called error.

PR: And is systematically set aside?

TG: You simply eliminate the error and everything looks better because you are dealing with it through a lens that draws you up close, and instead of seeing the whole of the aquarium you’re looking at a tiny little droplet.

PR: And then extrapolate to the whole phenomenon.

TG: In this context an objection often made against the
that he doesn’t understand the relationship between the regularities observed and a larger world, that inference and representation is impossible. That is exactly the problem: the quantitative researcher creates in eliminating error.

PR: Concern for such issues is evident in your 1973 paper ‘Social inventions’. When did you first begin to think in such terms? 1971–1974: Towards an alternative paradigm

TG: I saw these problems before the end of my formal studies. But I did not appreciate their full implications until I realised these matters touched upon the essence of the claim that science offered salvation for the social problems of the world. This is first expressed in my 1968 paper, which ends with a series of questions. These questions and their wider implications were forming in my mind and between 1968–1972 they came to the fore. In 1971–72 they crystallised.

PR: Before we turn to this, let us first consider what you mean by ‘empiricism and ‘the empiricist approach’?

TG: It arises from applying logical positivism to the world. I first encountered this view in an aphorism from Spearman: ‘Anything that exists, exists in some quantity, and anything that exists in a quantity can be measured.’ This implies that anything immeasurable does not exist, not beauty, justice, or truth.

PR: Does Spearman’s claim self reference? How do you measure a claim? What of the hypothetico-deductive method itself? It does not necessarily derive from logical positivism or empiricism?

TG: No it doesn’t, except that there is an easy bridge between that view and mathematical physics.

PR: That reminds me of Griffiths’s point, made many years ago, that properly conceived the study of educational administration could replicate Kepler’s Laws of motion. It could produce general laws of human behaviour in social contexts.

TG: That’s right, and there is an enormous leap of logic and faith in such a claim. It is only in retrospect that you realise that what is being advocated is a view of the social world that sees it as a version of the physical world. The methods which enabled understanding of the
physical world are exactly the methods that will bring us to an understanding of the social world.

PR: The argument advanced was that the objectivist approach had brought vast leaps of knowledge in physics so why should it not do so in the social sciences? But let us try and clarify your own epistemological position. Evers and Lackomski seem to claim you doubt objectivity in the physical as well as the social world.

TG: I don’t doubt the objectivity of the physical world. I do not question that, in

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE their example, a door may be a better way of leaving a room than trying to go through the wall, floor or roof. I would say that it’s not clear that the door is the only way out - there may be a window - even if it is forty floors up!

PR: As I understand it, what they want to do is to argue, following Quine and others, that there are ways of choosing between competing theories which are neither wholly positivist nor wholly subjectivist.

TG: They rely on something like an agreement among scientists.

PR: Perhaps a bit more than that - the criteria they propose are things like which of two or more competing theories is the more economic, which explains more, which leaves you with the fewest messy problems, which is related better to what we already know.

TG: Yes and that a significant group of people accept it - which to me puts it on a social basis. I think of the fate of Galileo and other heretics who were right but forced to say their theories were wrong. Evers and Lakomski’s arguments may best apply to the interpretation of the physical world, although conundrums exist there too. It ends in mystery in that reality too. The limits of both macro- and micro-analysis are found in emptiness, darkness, the unexplained, the unfathomable. But Evers and Lakomski’s argument becomes shaky indeed when it is applied to the social world. There truth is defined, as Szasz says, not by scientists looking into test tubes and telescopes, but by ‘experts’ who go not to their laboratories to observe, but to make judgement. As Szasz points out, whether schizophrenia is a disease, a sin, or an acknowledgement is a willful and moral choice.
PR: The paper in which you first began to voice the concerns which have dominated your subsequent writing was 'Social inventions' in 1973. Limitations of space have excluded it from our book. Why did it not cause the stir your 1974 paper did?

TG: Where it was known, it was as much a cause célèbre as the later one. I spent much of the year following my resignation doing very little, just teaching and licking my wounds, and then I had a leave. It turned out to be a very important year.

PR: What did you do with it?

TG: I went to the University of Alberta, then to the University of British Columbia and finally to Germany. I read and read, being drawn into the world of Max Weber. And I had to write a paper on change.

PR: That was for AERA? [American Educational Research Association]

TG: Yes. I tried to use the new understandings. After that I went to Germany. In going to Germany I was opening a door. I turned to things that had moved me as an undergraduate student.

PR: What kinds of things?

TG: Generally the arts – art, language and philosophy.

PR: How long did you spend in Germany?

TG: Only four months! V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N

PR: You didn’t go there to explore German thinking on the things which have characterised your later writing?

TG: No, I wanted to go through a door I had previously rejected. That turned out to be an important experience. I knew the fount of knowledge there. I encountered a body of thought that much of my critique rests upon. I lived in Germany in German, and that was difficult and stressful. We surround ourselves with our mother language, with the realities and assumptions of that language. To have that torn away and operate in a system that you suddenly don’t understand is hard. You don’t understand the social architecture.
PR: A hard existentialist experience.

TG: It is. That is a theme that comes back in my later writing, that we need that tearing away from our existing social reality to appreciate what it is.

PR: To see it in its strangeness and familiarity?

TG: And it's mutability. We think of it as inexorable, it's the water the goldfish never sees. I came to see German thought and history in a new context.

PR: It seems as if this experience confirmed rather than triggered your growing disenchantment with empiricism and your search for another way? What about the paper you wrote? What was the response to it?

TG: I don't think it was remarked on much. It was just one of thousands of papers at AERA.

PR: Can we now turn to something that did cause a major stir - your paper to IIP '74 in Bristol? How did you come to be asked to give the IIP paper?

TG: I knew George Baron. When he became the Coordinator of the IIP '74, he asked if I would do a paper on leadership. I said, 'I'd be happy to do that but I have to tell you that what I would say about leadership now would be rather different from what I said a few years ago.' I sent him a copy of the 1973 paper and he wrote back saying, 'Forget about leadership. Write some more of the new.' He referred to the work of contemporary British sociologists he thought I might find interesting. One was Filmer. It was from Filmer I picked up 'Phenomenology'.

PR: You must have known some of this work anyway?

TG: I did. I'd read Silverman and a good deal of German philosophy, sociology and history, centring in particular on Weber. Previously I'd used the 'action framework', a term Silverman draws from Weber. Filmer's book drew my attention to phenomenology in contemporary analysis. My critics thought it was a mistake. I remember writing the paper easily. It was all there. It was all sensible and apparent. It all came together. George gave me the title and I recall sitting down and the whole thing just seemed to flow out.

PR: In retrospect, what were you trying to say in the paper? Is it possible to pick out the main themes?
TG: I pointed to the inadequacy of social science as
science and to organization theory as a foundation for
management science.

PR: In Griffiths's memorable phrase, you were thinking
yourself out of a paradigm? Was that painful?

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A
HUMAN SCIENCE

TG: It was painful.

PR: How did you come to reject the paradigm? What
objections were crucial for you? Were your objections
essentially epistemological? Evers and Lakomski seem to
think so and so also does Griffiths?

TG: I came to see there were complexities in the world
other than those that the systems framework had led me to
see. I was strongly aware of the existence of alternative
realities. The systems perspective offers certainty and an
ordered view, but I knew from my experience such a view of
the world was only one. The more interesting questions
often lay in the contestation between alternative
perspectives, how some became dominant and others
subordinate. Power was inadequately dealt with in the
systems model.

PR: In so far as it was dealt with at all?

TG: This came to me with an absolute clarity. My year away
solidified my views. It enabled me to return to my
intellectual roots. I was returning to understandings I had
been led away from.

PR: Into the more complex social world you discovered in
the study of literature for example?

TG: Exactly.

PR: A world in which motive, interest and reason are
important in shaping how people think and act. In your IIP
paper you used words and made claims which some found
difficult to cope with. Labels like subjectivist began to be
attached to you and your views. Were you ready to accept
such a label when you were writing the paper?

TG: Shortly thereafter I began to use the word
subjectivist. I don't know why I didn't use it earlier, I
can’t imagine that it wasn’t available to me.

PR: Subjectivism is implied in the paper but you don’t use it.

TG: I had a sense of working alone. I was still groping to understand. When I was in England, British sociologists like Beryl Tipton wanted me to become ‘structural’, but I always resisted the ethno-marxist or critical perspective. The people I talked to were books, some old, others new. I think, perhaps, I was subject to the error the solitary scholar is apt to fall into. I was unable to check things out by talking to other people, I did it mostly by myself.

PR: Were you aware in writing the paper that you were presenting an essentially epistemological argument?

TG: I didn’t set out to study epistemology. My key issue was ‘How are we to understand the social world?’ It is not known in the way the physical world is to be known. This was very clear to me. As was the notion that in some sense we construct the world around us.

PR: Which entails that it is different – in some cases significantly different – for each of us?

TG: And so science fails as a basis for rational social action. I saw the cultural differences between the world of educational administration as it then was and the things that I was reading, I saw the difference between those rules and the rules I had grown up with in undergraduate study. To an extent VALUES AND RELIGION saw this as part of a general split between European and North American modes of thinking and understanding. I acknowledged that in the paper, without wanting to drive it home too far. What I tried to emphasise was not the geographical aspect of the cultural difference, though this seemed real enough, but the different sets of ideas which some people used to understand the world. I was most clear about the invalidity of a claimed universal science using the methods of logical positivism: I was sure that was wrong and said so.

PR: Evers and Lakomski seem to argue you’re a subjectivist with regard to the physical and the social world. Is that a correct representation of your views?

TG: No. We are grounded in physical reality. That we do not escape, cannot escape, but there are other kinds of realities built on that. Schumacher makes this point. He
speaks of the great Chain of Being in which the world of self-consciousness is built first on consciousness, then both upon life, and ultimately all three on a fourth, the physical stuff of the world. Each of the links in the Chain is qualitatively different from, radically different from, the ones above and below it. The living body is not the dead one, though the physical reality of both may be virtually indistinguishable. Or as Lear says, carrying the dead Cordelia in his arms, ‘I know when one is dead, and when one lives.’ That is my position now: we exist in physical reality but we are not limited by it, much more we transcend it. After all, you can still enter the Lenin tomb in Moscow and see the body incarnate, as vividly as it was the day before Lenin died. This failure to recognise a hierarchical difference becomes a source of great error: a society congealed around a distorted and malevolent perception. Evers uses the example that you exit by the door of your office. For the most part this may be true, but it is not the last word. I could exit by the window or I could refuse to go out at all. That I cannot walk through a wall is meagre knowledge compared with how I might construe it. Is it a Wall to be wept at and venerated? Is it a Wall men may weep and pray at, but not women? Or should I take a bazooka and blast it? The interesting questions about the physical world are how we construe it. Oùsont les neiges d’antan? Auden writes of returning to a city where Euclid’s geometry and Newton’s mechanics would account for our experience, and the kitchen table exists because I scrub it. It seems to have shrunk during the holidays. The streets are much narrower than we remembered; we had forgotten the office was as depressing as this. Physical reality exists within a subjective reality. It’s a slippery slope we live on.

PR: You could take some quite simple alternative cases to the one they use

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE about a room. You could ask what a fine paintbrush means to me as opposed to somebody else? At a physical level it is the same for everybody. But someone seeing a paintbrush for the first time would not see it as I do. Nor, perhaps, would Michelangelo.

TG: Exactly. There’s a wonderful dialogue in The Countesthorpe Experience, which is a commentary upon Countesthorpe College and the many controversies which surrounded its development. The dialogue is between Armstrong the head of social studies at the school and Professor Bantock of the School of Education, University of
Leicester. They talk about the different ways people construe the world. At one point Bantock argues that Thomas Aquinas and the mediaeval peasant did not worship the same God, nor it might be added, did they worship in the same church. Quoting Blake, Bantock says, ‘The fool sees not the same tree the wise man sees.’ To me it is obvious that the realities we see are dependent upon what we think those realities are, and this includes our interpretation of the physical world.

PR: But the argument may be easier to make in the case of the social world than the physical world. Take the case of the roles people play. It is possible for two people to share similar roles but to interpret and enact them in very different ways. We make roles, we do not just take them. I suppose the issue we have to address as subjectivists is that if you push this argument too far it is hard to see what account one could give of the social world. Social life must at some minimal level be predicated on the idea that we can work together and share understandings about what we can expect of and from each other. The question becomes how do we work together if we see the world in different ways?

TG: You have slipped from talking about the physical world to the social. The two are quite different. One is a world of ‘is’ and the other of ‘ought to be’. Consider the differences of will. We manipulate the physical world, not create it. We do not ‘create’ the social. We assert ourselves, we want to control others. The social dynamic has no counterpart in the physical world. It is uniquely human. Attempts to control others’ perceptions are never completely successful. They work, by and large, but there’s always the possibility of the renegade and the rebellious. Patterns of social life are all ultimately controlled by the action, will and intention of individuals. We can try to organise and shape this and we spend a great deal of effort in doing so but are never more than partially successful. In thinking about this I find R. D. Laing’s discussion of the confrontation between the twentieth-century mother and the Stone Age baby very telling; ‘After fifteen years what you end up with is a half-crazed creature more or less adjusted to a mad world.’

PR: The IIP paper has been described as an ‘across the board attack’ on the kind of thinking that had dominated conventional theories about organisations and their management. Is this the way you saw the paper yourself and did you expect it to be seen by others in this way? V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N
TG: I didn’t go to Bristol to throw down a gauntlet. I went there having written out the dialogue that had been taking place in my own mind over the last few years. I went in the hope of inviting others to join the dialogue. I certainly saw the implications of the position I was adopting and I think I spelled these out clearly at the end of the paper.

PR: I am surprised to hear that? I’ve always read the paper as a kind of manifesto for a new paradigm. Has it not been interpreted by others in this way?

TG: I didn’t think in paradigms at the time but perhaps I thought what I had to say could be accepted as inquiry. I didn’t go to Bristol to cross the Rubicon, but as soon as I arrived I began to get intimations others would see things differently. The paper had been sent to the conference and distributed to participants. When I arrived a couple of days after the conference began, there was a kind of electric tension that burst out at the session itself.

PR: When I first read it the paper made a great impression on me. I had encountered some of the ideas it contained and these had begun to make me think hard about my own position which up to then was largely that of a conventional positivist. My first thoughts were ‘Great! Somebody has thrown down the gauntlet at last and has done so in an elegant forceful argument’. I thought it a crunching paper so I am surprised to hear you did not expect it to cause the stir it did.

TG: I think it was a kind of naïveté on my part. There were people there who were toweringly angry with me.

PR: Was there a respondent? What was his response?

TG: The respondent was Alan Crane. His response was largely to ignore the paper and to seek to repair the damage. Unfortunately his statement does not appear in the proceedings. As I remember it, his text affirmed the existing paradigm. He soon came to change his view.

PR: Who were the people who spoke forcibly for and against from the floor? What did they say?

TG: For the most part, the questions and comments were neither for nor against. They were exploratory, but the atmosphere again revealed the gulf, the audience behaving like schoolboys in an assembly where a visiting speaker has said all the wrong things, explored a forbidden topic, even
under the eyes of the headmaster. Griffiths’s brooding presence was very much apparent.

PR: He was present?

TG: He was indeed, he challenged me from the floor, but not before there was a forest of hands and questions after my presentation and Crane’s response. I don’t recall anything hostile from that response, only keen interest, if not support. It was clear something rather extraordinary was happening. Even before the session the atmosphere was electric. It was like a time-bomb waiting to go off, and I walked into the session with many doubts and uncertainties. As the paper had been circulated, I didn’t read it or even summarize its main points. I don’t remember what I said, I just wanted to get

**EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE** the ordeal over with. I’d presented my thing, said a few words, made a few points, and Alan Crane stood up, seemingly to calm the horses, and then there was an explosion. Everyone, it seemed, wanted to say something. I remember George Baron saying to me afterwards, ‘Well, it had a slow start, but once you got wound up . . .’ He recalled an incident where Griffiths interrupted me as I answered a question. I had been saying that the dominating theorists of the field were systems thinkers - I may have added most were Americans. Later the whisper campaign against me claimed that the point of my critique was no more than a cover up for my administrative incompetence, a fight against my American nemesis in the struggle that deprived me of the Departmental headship. In any case, Griffiths interrupted at that point. ‘Name one,’ he demanded in his stentorian voice, ‘Talcott Parsons,’ I shot back. I might have added ‘Daniel Griffiths.’ Baron said he was in admiration of that exchange. Certainly from that point on the gloves were off, I have come to be deeply grateful to Daniel Griffiths for his latter day views, but it was another case in the beginning.

PR: I think I’ve met about 400 people who have told me they were there. What happened after the session?

TG: The room was full but it was a moderate sized classroom, with about sixty present. Immediately after the meeting people came to talk to me. Griffiths was seething with anger, telling me ‘You are poorly informed’ I remember those words. He then turned on his heel and left after advising me to read more. I tried to talk to him later, but it was difficult. I felt I had betrayed something, stabbed
Caesar. I had always stood in admiration of him – in awe even. It was painful. I felt alone and isolated. There seemed no community of scholars, no camaraderie. If there was support, it came from individuals who didn’t count, people from places on the periphery of the great world of theory and accepted thinking about it. Four years later when IIP ’78 was held in Canada, my colleagues ensured there would be no echo of the Bristol error. I was not invited to attend or make a presentation. I watched the IIP caravanserai as it passed briefly through Toronto.

PR: What happened after the conference? After 1974: The subjectivist year – from Bristol to Edmonton

TG: Things went quiet. I knew in UCEA [University Council for Central Administration] circles the thing would come back as a cause célèbre, I was aware Griffiths was speaking out. I began to get invitations to write, some of my later papers are a reflection of that.

PR: From North America as well as in Europe?

TG: There were exchanges in the UCEA Review. I remember by that time feeling almost paralysed by it all. I had not anticipated the bombshell that broke over my head. I began to understand the way it was seen. It was interV A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N preted as deliberately challenging, threatening and hostile, I had not thought of it like this. I simply wasn’t prepared to mount any platform in an adversarial way. It was just not me, I didn’t want to go through some kind of trauma or intellectual combat, and for some time I felt paralysed. I felt I was not doing good work at that time, it took me a long time to overcome that fear. To accept a burden I didn’t want, a kind of curse of insight. In those years I was unsure about my insights, unsure at least that I could invoke them again to defend the original vision. That’s how I felt about it, as a vision whose source I was unsure of, and could not command. In each subsequent paper I had a sense of struggling to draw again from the deep well of insight that moved the 1974 paper. To reach the Muse, as it were, was uncertain, an undertaking fraught with risk. And in those days, the overthrow of reason and professional authority that Allan Bloom describes so well in The Closing of the American Mind – all that made it hard to be a scholar of any kind other than one who upheld the new political orthodoxy. It dismays me to find how often my writings are seen by younger readers as support for academic fascism then and now, for that is what it is. I learned to listen to the depths, to alternative realities for inspiration. I began to feel like
Winston Smith in 1984, beset from both left and right. I learned to listen to the depths, to alternative realities for inspiration. Though argument helped I learned to tune into and hearken to the non-rational, to return to modes of knowing I knew from the arts and my other training.

PR: In Britain, EMA [Educational Management and Administration] published a series of papers which tried to take up the debate. ‘Self’ in 1977–78 was a response to that symposium. What were you trying to say in it?

TG: I knew the argument about the social construction of reality brings in very personal issues. I realised you couldn’t just march into an assembly, as I did at Bristol, and present the intellectual arguments for a radically different view of social life and not see the personal dimensions it entailed. I’ve never seen my arguments as ad hominem. I aimed only at the intellectual issue, but of course you cannot advance such arguments without, as I say in my paper, cutting into something unexpectedly human.

PR: Were you not trying to insulate what you do as a scholar from the account you were giving of what social life is like?

TG: There was an element of the sorcerer’s apprentice in what I was doing. It is one thing to get all those brooms moving and another to stop them. I soon realised once it had started there was no going back.

PR: Are you saying you assumed that the kind of social world you were depicting would not quite apply to you?

TG: I was quickly disabused of that – ‘Self’ begins the march towards that recognition.

PR: Can you elaborate on that?

TG: Where does the self belong in the study of organizations? That’s the point. There are reflections of my struggle in that paper and it acknowledges that EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE our ideas are very much connected to ourselves, to our personal constructions of the world, and to our values. That the assertion of one’s own self and values is apt to bring one into conflict with stronger dominating expressions of self.

PR: To some you might be the dominating . . .
TG: I definitely wasn’t then. The paper began to be talked about in unscholarly ways. I discovered something about my field: its pettiness, its calcified and limited vision, its conventionality, its hostility to dissenting opinion, its vituperativeness.

PR: The attack was personalised?

TG: The attack was personalised, it was by second-hand statement, innuendo – people who had not read the paper but claimed they knew what it was about.

PR: They attacked your motives not your arguments?

TG: Some put up the straw man ‘phenomenology’ saying I didn’t understand it, this was evidence of the inadequacy of my argument. I was aware I was being attacked unfairly in an unscholarly fashion, that people sought to explain the paper in personalised terms. They began to circulate stories about my administrative competence and the business about losing the leadership of the Department started to come up. I felt beleaguered and alone.

PR: Several of the EMA contributors were sympathetic.

TG: That was in England. The first person who extended the personal hand of friendship and support to me here was Chris Hodgkinson.

PR: You have not formally collaborated? A case of two people sharing a similar view of the world and learning together and sharing ideas as they learn together?

TG: He came to me at a time I was very vulnerable. This was about the time his book Towards A Philosophy Of Administration came out. He had sought me out. Chris’s style means there are no secrets with him, nothing you can’t talk about. We talked of the whole intellectual furore, my changing personal circumstances, my marriage dissolving. He would talk about everything, intellectual and personal, everything others avoided in disdain, disagreement, or embarrassment. He offered the steel of intellectual argument and the hand of friendship. There were no others like him. Everything was on the table, no averted eyes, no sham, no shame, no pitying condescension. No rejection. Acceptance, but also no-holds-barred disagreements when it came to that. But always understanding and support. The first time I met him, he said something like, ‘What’s this I hear about your taking up
the vices of the ancient Greeks?’ And I probably replied something like, ‘I’m not just taking them up.’ He was, as I say, a great, friendly, and supportive hand, and there weren’t many then.

PR: Not even amongst your colleagues at OISE?

TG: Not in that way. There were not the people there that I could talk to intellectually or personally. I always felt my Canadian colleagues waited to see how the show would play New York or Chicago before committing themselves. Well the ‘Phenomenology’ show is still getting mixed reviews in New York and Chicago, though fringe voices like William Greenfield’s Organization Theory Dialogue has invited my views, as is seen in ‘Phoenix’. My Canadian colleagues have now come around, too, though often they would rather put me on some kind of honour role than ask my views on anything. At one time however some of the colleagues closest to me virtually averted their eyes when they saw the fuss and furore. There were friends but not in a way that Chris was. I never felt with Chris a personal rejection although I did feel this with other people; a sense of being beyond the pale.

PR: How, and in what way did you begin to affect each others thinking? Had this begun to happen when you started to write ‘Truths’ in 1978?

TG: I had begun to take in what he said about administration as an act of will and choice, as asserting self, as dramaturgy. In the next paper, ‘Research in Educational Administration’, I cite Sir Geoffrey Vickers, after writing to him at Hodgkinson’s suggestion. Chris was in correspondence with Vickers, who was most generous with his time and thought, though he was old and ill. The correspondence between Vickers and Hodgkinson began after Vickers had written a critically appreciative review of Towards a Philosophy of Administration, a book that was admired everywhere but in educational administration, where it was ignored or misunderstood.

PR: So ‘Reflections’ in 1978 tries to work out some of the themes raised in the debates after 1974?

TG: I was trying to explain again what the 1974 paper was about, going over the same ground and speaking to the critics who had addressed it in print in the United States. I make reference to Hills, Griffiths, Kendell and Byrne.

PR: Who first criticised your use and understanding of
phenomenology?

TG: Griffiths and Willower did, and much of ‘The man who comes back’, in 1980 speaks directly to them.

PR: How were you using ‘phenomenology’?

TG: Not in the way some American phenomenologists were using it. I suppose you might say that I was using phenomenology with a small ‘P’, Griffiths and Willower were using it with a big one. And they insisted that if I was not using their way I must be using it incorrectly.

PR: This debate was conducted in the American context and with the American scholars who were key members of the ruling orthodoxy and who had been notable in defending it against you.

TG: For a long time that’s what I did. I was invited to these events as an enfant terrible to come and say again and again those threatening and outrageous things.

PR: What of ‘Ideology’ in 1979? In it your concern begins to turn from epistemological to value issues.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE

TG: Here I was able to get away from the old platform. I was at last able to look ahead again, to resume the dialogue I had begun with the 1974 paper. I was able to set aside the debate and get on with the thinking.

PR: Let us turn briefly to ‘Talk, Chance, Action and Experience’ of 1979. What do you mean by experience and chance in this context?

TG: The world of chance is one the statistical view seeks to do away with. In stressing regularities, statistics leaves out irregularities even though they may explain a great deal about how the world actually functions. What is vivid, individual, living gets left out. In this paper and in ‘Truths’ I ask the question, ‘Why are we afraid of the specific?’ The argument for chance is to bring in the specific, the individual, the reality of contingency and circumstance and to recognise the importance these things can have in organizations. To take this view, is to move towards a historical view of social reality.

PR: How important is it to be clear about the notion of
experience if we are to understand social life?

TG: The word 'experience' echoes through many of my papers after 1974. We all exist within our own phenomenological reality, that is our experience. It is a great resource, it is irreducible and it is not to be summed up in statistical and general propositions. The important point about experience is what we think we know about it and how we come to understand it. In one sense our experience is irreducible but in another it needs explanation or rather it needs understanding. It doesn't come ready-made to us.

PR: Some of the gurus of the Theory Movement have challenged the idea that the experiences of practitioners as seen and interpreted by the latter can be an important way of understanding organizations and their management.

TG: That puts the point well. In many ways natural science is a matter of building knowledge that goes against experience. Our experience tells us the sun rises in the east and sets in the west but natural science tells us this is false, that the sun doesn't rise at all. Just about all natural science is a supplanting of immediate experience with better knowledge. That is the approach taken in much of the social sciences and in the Theory Movement. It amounted in practice to a belief that administrators did not and could not know what was really going on. They thought they experienced something but this had little to do with the reality of what was happening.

PR: They had to have their experience explained to them to understand it. They needed a theorist to do this?

TG: Against this I would argue that while experience may not in and of itself be sufficient to understand reality, it is a crucial building block for such an understanding. Any worthwhile explanations of social reality must not contradict that experience. It may reinterpret it but it must not contradict it. This is the perspective of phenomenology, the perspective of the first hand, the perspective of the subjectivist.

PR: Natural science can explain but not understand? V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N

TG: More and more I used images from literature and art. In 'Ideology' I quote from William Blake. He asked, What is the price of experience, do men buy it for a song? Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No, it is bought with the price Of all a man hath, his house, his wife, his
children’. One begins with the experience but there is more. You come to understanding through that bed-rock, through that thing that nobody can dispense with. We live in experience but what understanding are we to place upon it? A social science that assumes that experience must be obliterated or replaced is wrong.

PR: Can I have access to or learn from the experience of another?

TG: The only way we can gain access to another’s experience is in symbols of one kind or another, frequently linguistic symbols. We struggle with language to put names on our own experience, to understand better and to understand others. As Schumacher says ‘There must be an altruism, I must first of all believe that there is somebody else there who is sentient even as I am, whose experience is as valid as mine and which I ought to try and understand.’ That’s a moral principle.

PR: For what purpose should I do that?

TG: In the fundamental sense of respect for others, beyond the utilitarian sense of mutuality. In a deeper sense it has an ethical base: Love thy neighbour as thyself.

PR: ‘Research in Educational Administration’ of 1979 documents the continuing dominance of the positivistic, scientistic, empiricist paradigm in the study of educational administration in North America?

TG: I attempted to set out the credos of New Movement theory. Then I examine the research that flowed from it. I was trying to show its inadequacies in theory and research – attempting to lay out the alternative directions in which we might go.

PR: You talk a good deal of Andrew Halpin?

TG: I try to understand the genesis of the Theory Movement, and Halpin was very much involved in it. He was a founding father. I don’t think anybody has more penetratingly used Simon’s ideas - a brilliant mind. I find it interesting that in his earlier writings Halpin seems to have been clearly aware of the shortcomings of the idea of a Grand Theory. He was one of those who raised questions and did so right at the beginning. It has long surprised me why Halpin and others stopped asking them.

PR: I don’t know of a more evocative set of titles than
'The Broken Icon', 'The Fumbled Torch' and 'A Foggy View From Olympus'. Is his concern in writing these papers the same concern he expressed at the beginning of the Theory Movement? Or rather is he arguing that it is the theorists who have failed the movement rather than the theory which has failed the theorists?

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE

TG: What interests me are the doubts he expressed in some of his early papers. In ‘Ways of Knowing’ he ruminates on the idea that the way scientists know is not the way that administrators know. He recognises there are ways of knowing that are non-scientific. But later on, he put these doubts aside and becomes a committed convert to the New Movement. At the end he is saying that the Theory Movement failed because the following generation of researchers watered down and despoiled the pure and potent methodology, the vision the founding theorists handed down to them from Olympus. The methodology was not done the way it should be, the acolytes failed the priests. The rite became impure. So, I would question your statement that Halpin thought it was the theory the founders offered that was betrayed. Halpin was under no illusion that such theory existed. He complained bitterly about loss - the loss of the methodology. The rite - the methodology defined by Simon and in logical positivism generally - was no longer performed by knowledgeable and competent practitioners. Halpin went back to believing in pure positivist methodology, setting aside all his earlier doubts that it was adequate to the task set for it. It is those doubts I offer in this paper as foundation for a critique of the Movement.

PR: If this approach will not do, how and what should we research in educational administration? You begin to address these issues in the paper.

TG: I need to make an observation before I try to answer that question. We should ask ourselves why a flawed science persists. Why a science that does not work is still hailed as science. An answer can be found in the argument MacIntyre advances. There are strong reasons for believing in such a science, even if it doesn’t work. It offers a world in which there are answers to all problems. You must have been at sessions where the science of effectiveness is preached. It is a world of cheerfulness and certainty. The alternative is conflict-ridden and uncertain, opening up the pain that comes with recognising the different realities we live in, of confronting the value chasms that separate us.
The Canadian government hires conflict resolution ‘experts’ from America to ease the acceptance of its proposals for constitutional change. We want to believe such a technology exists and that it works to remove the value gaps separating Canadians. Welcome to the world of management science and the relief managers or politicians feel as their responsibility for value choice is devolved into a technical, non-responsible realm where choice is a product of scientific analysis, not personal judgement. Choosing responsibility leaves one in an exposed and vulnerable position, and so science comes to the administrator’s rescue: science not the administrator makes the decision, thus absolving the administrator from responsibility, while giving strategic advantage over the choice. To go back to your question, we should be studying decision-makers, how they make their decisions and what they decide. It is a conclusion I come to with assistance from Vickers and Hodgkinson: that a science of values is meaningless, that science cannot resolve value differences, though for strategic purposes we may wish to say it can. Without science the administrator simply makes choices. The choices made may be good or bad, but someone is responsible for them. This is a hard road and one reason why it is difficult to be a manager and why managers look for help from science. And finally I would note the paper argues that the proper role of research in the face of these dilemmas is description.

PR: How do you justify the existence of scholars of education administration given the assumptions you have outlined? How can we help?

TG: We can help by enabling administrators to understand their experience better. One of the implications I drew at the end of my 1974 paper said the study of educational administration should use the social sciences as windows of discovery, windows into alternative perceptions, windows into alternative values.

PR: In thinking about the way in which we construct reality, how do you see the balance between reality as individually and socially constructed?

TG: What the social researcher is doing is launching out upon an inquiry into other people’s realities. I assume that the portrait can be of value not just to the researcher but to people within that social reality as well or to others who have interests in it. I would also hope that enquiries into social reality make plain the contestation, the different visions of reality that people
have, of how one prevails over another, of how power is used to sustain and propel certain views over others, and to ask what the consequences are. But I do not see this yielding the technology of control that management research seeks. The research I have in mind offers the hope of achieving insight into social realities. It is overwhelmingly descriptive and historical. It looks for insight, but first it is descriptive. It records decisions and points to their implications.

PR: Can it help to improve things?

TG: Maybe it can but not in an instrumental way. We are not looking at physical reality but at a chancy, value-driven cultural enterprise. All we hope for is a better vision beyond the shadows in which people will somehow rise to what is good to what is better. It can bring us to argument, to better argument, to an appreciation of people and their values behind the argument. That is my position: description first, followed by argument and ultimately, of course, prescription. While positivistic management science wants to shut down argument by calculating the answer, I want to open it by standing at the gulf that separates us, by recognizing the chasm that must be overcome.

PR: I know ‘The man who comes back’ of 1980 gives you satisfaction, not least because of those marvellous quotes from Francis Bacon in the beginning. Why is it significant for you?

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE part of myself that I had earlier suppressed speak freely. This paper comes from the heart, not just from the head. Here I began to use strength out of gay realities to say something about the world. I drew strength from myself, from newly understood experience, to call upon the Muse, and to let myself speak the truth I saw. From that special reality I gained strength. The horrible uncertainty of the past, the doubt that I might have something to say to the world was largely assuaged, if not completely exorcised. ‘The Man Who Comes Back’ is a paper where I address my critics, but also advance the argument. I look at some of the deepest conundrums of understanding social reality. In doing so I don’t think I ignore my critics. I am attentive to what they say, but at the same time, I speak past them, trying to build a framework of sound understanding.

PR: And it’s built around nine propositions?
TG: It ends with those nine propositions saying how we might understand organisations. It seemed to have no impact in the central academic institutions of educational administration in North America. To this day it goes virtually uncited, as is apparent in the record of the major American citation index. Though EAQ [Educational Administration Quarterly] is sometimes reluctant to publish my papers, the editors know they represented good business. Issues in which they appeared were good sellers.

PR: Can’t get a better quantitative test than that!

TG: I attribute this response to the interests of students and junior faculty who read my articles almost as a subversive activity. One colleague starting his academic career told me recently students were enthralled or profoundly troubled when examples of my writing were offered them.

PR: ‘Anarchy’ of 1983 sketches an anarchistic theory of organisations, but does not draw on traditional anarchistic notions.

TG: I am using anarchism here, in the sense of an awkwardness of things, of things that don’t fit, of an unwillingness to participate, of a non-intended, but ultimately conscious rebelliousness. At the end I talk of the anarchy that adheres in all thought. It’s a personal statement in many ways. I am no longer addressing critics, I am simply stating my position. I suppose in a lot of my work there is a theme of the individual versus the organisation. I am for the individual, I am for freedom, for independence.

PR: Some of these papers reflect a return to themes you touched upon at the beginning of your academic career. Themes to do with leadership. You appear to be trying, in part, to bring this up to date with your contemporary thinking?

TG: In ‘Non-Natural Order’ of 1984 I take up Halpin’s ideas about ways of knowing. There are ways of understanding and expressing knowledge that are powerful, satisfying and important, but non-rational – ways that are essentially cast within an artistic, literary, historical, philosophical even journalistic mode. A mode that is descriptive, withholding judgement, though moving towards it, moving to insight.

PR: You began to develop an approach to understanding
leadership which entailed taking examples from literature which illustrates the analysis you want to make. In the paper there is a long section from A House for Mr Biswas. Why did you decide to use this?

TG: I found myself drawn to the book. It is powerful, evocative. Perhaps in it I saw something of my own experience. It tells us things about education which, narrowly conceived, the social sciences can’t begin to approach. It helps you to understand what education means, and what a painful process it is, if it works in a deep and fundamental sense. I found it a tragic expression in one sense and hopeful in another.

PR: What does it tell you about leadership?

TG: That leadership is more than an individual phenomenon; it is a cultural thing, that it’s embedded in whole lives, whole lives within cultures. The programme of education we see in Biswas is certainly not ‘implemented’. We see elemental cultural dynamics at work. There is a kind of leadership in what Naipaul describes, and Biswas is a leader too – he leads himself. ‘If you would be a leader,’ said Bethune, ‘first lead yourself.’ That’s antileadership, and I admire it, as I do this sentiment from Mackay, a Canadian poet: ‘Rend your heart and not your garments.’ Whatever the power or restriction of the wider culture, the person within it who thinks right, believes right is of ultimate importance.

PR: The idea of knowing yourself as a route to understanding educational management is a recurrent theme in your work. Along with the belief that the kind of excessively task-orientated approach to leadership development advocated in much of the literature is not a promising way to hope to achieve this.

TG: Technocratic approaches to leadership and technocratic approaches to literacy are empty. A text like Naipaul’s has more to say about illiteracy, say in the inner cities of England, than many of the technocratic studies that are talking about effective teaching. They do not begin to touch the power of insight Naipaul offers, insight into the importance of tradition. Mr Biswas moved from poverty in rural Trinidad to seeing his son embarking for Oxford. That is an awesome journey, but it is carried out within a tradition of knowledge, and reveals the dynamics that ultimately bring about change. These are not simple, technocratic variables, they are deep-seated attitudes towards knowledge. Biswas’s life tells us that all
education is in one sense invasive of individual experience. What Naipaul lets us see is the shaping of the individual in line with cultural values.

PR: Coming to grips with these things has been a kind of twenty-year odyssey for you. Who have been your guides as you struggled to think through the enormously complex issues that you have been trying to come to terms with? And are the old ones like Weber or Laing being supplemented by a very different set including Naipaul and Shakespeare?

TG: First a methodological point in terms of a question: ‘What represents the EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE world and allows us to understand it?’ The claim of empiricist social science of course is that we can know reality only through its restricted rules. This is dangerously wrong in that its representations of the world are both limited and impoverished. What I came to realise is that other modes of representing the world are not just a supplement, as some people would see it, to the stronger objective and powerful understandings of science, they are true alternatives to it. But of course, they do not lead to what science promises us – control. So we follow the narrow route of science because of the false promises it offers. It doesn’t offer control, or if it does, in a very spurious mode. There are more fundamental and powerful insights into reality. These are descriptive; they do not yield control. You look at the life of Mr Biswas and it doesn’t tell you what to do, it doesn’t tell you which variables are to be manipulated, but it does give you an understanding and appreciation. It gives you what Sir Geoffery Vickers calls ‘appreciation’. There is that value-oriented stance again. A novel like Mr Biswas allows you to appreciate what was involved in the building of literacy. It has powerful policy implications but they’re not the kind that you deduce in the way that empirical scientists claim to do. The inference in empiricist science is supposed to be obvious and logical, I doubt they are. In ‘appreciation’ that obvious logic does not exist. One understands and comes to value. A look at Mr Biswas would incline you to evaluate education as a desirable end in itself – you certainly wouldn’t do it for a productive reason, you would do it for what it says about the maintenance of culture and what it offers the individual even though all individuals would not benefit from it. So the implications that I would draw there run against the kind of production-oriented, mechanistic, market-driven analyses that we have now. You
invest in education in and of itself. But the power of that investment can be such as to transform the individual and – possibly, ultimately – the culture itself. That is how change comes about.

PR: I am trying to understand the way your thinking has developed, as opposed to where you are now. Can we consider this in three questions: First, ‘What can I know?’ Secondly, ‘How can I achieve such knowledge?’ and thirdly, ‘Who can help me to know?’ And in considering each of those questions, can you also say something about the sequence in which your ideas have developed? What came first, what next and what last?

TG: Initially, I was seduced by a methodology that, collapses the first two questions. The first becomes irrelevant and the second all-important. The argument I’ve been making is that logical positivism offers us a shrunken view of the world. It offers a methodology for manipulating reality so as to control it, a methodology that promises more than it actually delivers. It ends up hiding more than it reveals. In terms of the nature of knowledge, I’ve turned my back on the people who were my mentors in educational administration. I have found myself going back to ways of knowing and bodies of knowledge that I had encountered much earlier. On coming to VALUES AND RELIGION educational administration I concluded that my earlier knowledge was useless, or more exactly, valueless. This paper recognises that those other bodies of knowledge are relevant and may be powerful. That they are not just supplements to what social science lets us understand, but are truly unique insights in their own right. Partly because they are not paralysed by the only way of knowing recognised in positivistic social science.

PR: How does art relate to social science?

TG: I don’t think we should see art as another kind of social science, the two are quite different. There is a role for social science as social science. It’s a very complex role, and it is not the social science that is envisaged by logical positivism. The vital point is that the arts are not to be cast into the role of a lower level support to social science. Studies of the humanities and educational administration say, ‘To illustrate the principles established in social science, to colour them in with the tones of fleshly reality, one draws on literature and the humanities.’ You read a Bell for Adano or view The Bridge on the River Kwai to add weight and relevance to general principles, colouring in the laws of social
science. Everything, including King Lear, can be brought into the service of social science. But for me the arts are not to be so easily dragooned to serve the propositions of social science by adding convincing evidence to support what such science has already established. Much more the arts speak to questions of how to live a life. People who make policy based on what social science tells them will need something more. They would do well to call on the humane vision that the arts can give. In this view of the arts, they are not simply a parallel vision of scientific truth. Theirs is a starkly different vision, one in which moral questions are to the fore. Should Henry Kissinger weep at his desk before ordering the fire of napalm to be dropped on peasant villages, a question raised in Wallace Shawn’s play, Aunt Dan and Lemon? Would such weeping make it impossible to do what has to be done? As Northrop Frye has said, ‘We don’t go to Macbeth to learn about the history of Scotland, but to understand what it’s like to gain the world and lose your soul.’ Somebody who understands that is a better person, certainly a better person to be in a leadership position.

PR: But how does it help you with the identification and education of such leaders?

TG: I have proposed that leaders require a period of withdrawal and contemplation, that is what I would see as the role for training. Certainly there is a role in training for the provision of information, concepts and theories. But I think the most valuable form of training begins in a setting of practice, where one has to balance values against constraints – in which one has to take action within a political context. I think only somebody who has acted in that way is ready for true training in leadership. In that context I would be Platonic, not striving to make philosophers kings, but kings philosophers, or artists maybe. To make them more humane in any case, more thoughtful of their power, more aware of the values it serves or denies.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE

PR: Aristotle and Plato were not all that successful when they actually tried their hands at leadership?

TG: Which takes us back to the idea that the practising administrator may know something the philosopher and the theorist do not know, and vice-versa. I think we have to bring those things together. The ultimate training of a
leader would be a kind of philosophical withdrawal to look at the larger issues in fresh perspectives. Perhaps they will return and administer as they were doing it before but with an added insight. That’s all I can see as a hope, that there is an added insight. A deeply clinical approach to the training of administrators is needed, as it is for teachers. Our training for both is disjointed, reflection is separated from action, thinking from doing, praxis from the practical. Why do we merely throw people at these jobs, expecting them to do well with almost no experience of them, offering them no analysis of their experience? The answer seems to lie in a virtually anti-intellectual bias, in the belief that experience alone, shored up by quick nostrums of science will turn the trick.

PR: There is a practical hope as well?, That they will be better leaders for it?

TG: I think there is. One of the things I have sensed in speaking to leaders in education, is how impoverished their real world is. They don’t see beyond a narrow horizon. They don’t see the problems of education, except in rather technological terms, or if they do see it, if they talk about it in larger terms, they are sentimental or platitudinous. We need leaders in education who can think about some larger issues, it’s the only thing that’s going to save it. It is interesting that the reports we get from Japan indicate that is the way they see administrative training. Junior officers entering government or business spend time just sitting and contemplating the beauty of the flowers. Senior people are expected to have a sense of history, of their own culture, of what is ultimately of value and they spend time on such things. Yet these things may seem nonproductive, though of course the practical never escapes ultimate attention. It isn't just navel-gazing or New Ageism. Can we expect our educational executives to think of larger but seemingly non-productive matters? I hope so, but it will be an uphill struggle to bring them to such contemplation. Perhaps we need different kinds of executives in terms of character and vision.

PR: There are examples within western culture which have looked back at such folk, they can sometimes be very nasty in practice as well.

TG: What are thinking of, the Mandarins?

PR: I was thinking of Cosimo de Medici. Machiavelli’s Prince is a highly cultured person with a great understanding of many things but would you like to have him
as a role model for educational leaders?

TG: I'd rather have the Prince than the technocrats of today. Machiavelli helped him to understand what he was doing and why. I would prefer that to the people who are being swept over the precipice and don’t realise it.

PR: He understands politics and people. Is that not an intensely control-orientated vision? 

TG: Not in the technocratic sense. It is control in the political sense, the lawful sense.

PR: Is that an important distinction?

TG: I think so. Certainly organisations are control orientated, but my theme is that they should not work through a mechanistic kind of control, but rather through a lawful, personal, responsible form. That is the point emphasised in the title of this paper, the idea of wilfulness and non-natural order. The idea that the organisation is not natural, it is created out of somebody’s intention, purpose and will, and the people who understand this and its implications for theory and practice are the ones who will control it. That is the nature of organisations. The people who run organizations ought to understand this. Therefore, I prefer the Prince even though he is selfish and egotistical. He does not pursue the best goals but he knows what goals he is pursuing and how to pursue them. Hodgkinson would say what we need is an amalgam of Machiavelli and Plato, a Prince with better ideals. We need a Prince who knows he is responsible, not one who thinks science removes his responsibility or who manipulates us behind the mask of a fraudulent science.

PR: Plato did not seem to have somebody like the Prince in mind as a model ruler in the Republic. He believes if you are egotistical and selfish you will become the most terrible prisoner of your own vices and desires. He propose a form of selection and training which would liberate his guardians from this danger but he was not too precise about how you might achieve this.

TG: I don’t think there is a technology for that. All we can do is work with the character of leaders. This is a distinction which Hodgkinson makes. Whereas studies of leadership in the positivistic mode have looked at the characteristics of leaders, what is important is their
character. I think we look at the Prince and deplore his character, but how do you get people of good character into leadership positions in organizations? That would be the answer.

PR: But isn’t what Machiavelli proposed predicated on somebody who is like the Prince? Can you be other than the Prince if you operate in the kind of way that Machiavelli is proposing? Could Plato’s Philosopher Guardian operate as Machiavelli’s Prince is advised to do without becoming the Prince?

TG: We must hope it is possible. That is why I put emphasis on a withdrawal from the exercise of power so that leaders can examine what they are doing. The headlong pressure to act, to do, to be the leader militate against a reflective attitude – a stance that is needed for the growth of worthwhile values, of character. That is what I see as the ultimate in the nurture of leaders through training. It would be aimed at persons in power, fostering awareness of values and of the value choices that face them, and thereby perhaps assisting character growth.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE

PR: So the effort is not to make them effective leaders, but to make them good persons first?

TG: To make them good persons, yes. I’d remind you that in German, Machiavelli’s genre is known as Furtenspiegel, writing from the ‘mirror for princes’. Seeing himself in the mirror, the Prince is to be transformed.

PR: Even so what makes a good leader? What, for example, makes St Paul a good leader? Why was St Peter less effective as a leader than Paul? How do you help leaders to be better people and more effective leaders?

TG: Paul, is a perfect example. He receives a blinding vision on the road to Damascus with a new moral insight and thereafter he combines, what you might call political strategies with mystical experience. ‘For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face.’ He shows us what it is to be a good leader. His combination of vision with untiring effort and endless recipes and advice for making things work, seeing where values require taking a stand on what matters, and working out their implications in practical reality. For example, his decision to make Christianity more than just another Jewish sect by his
abandonment of the old Law and circumcision, opening the new way to all, to Gentile and Jew, to women, to men, to freeborn and slave, the insistence that redemption was open to all. That’s leadership, and it has a political element woven with the visionary. He is filled with concern for the world as it is and how to change it and organise it but at the same time he is touched by, in this case, a transcendental vision. The role that I see for the arts is the one that gives us some insight into the larger values, and that I think leaders very much need.

PR: That is one thing the arts could do. They could also give leaders an insight into motive and intention and the operation of will and the relationship between each and all of these things and actions.

TG: One of the implications of accepting a world of multiple realities is that leaders need to appreciate the realities that they are overriding in the pursuit of those they seek to inculcate. Again this requires a kind of withdrawal from the immediate reality to understand the complexities and the alternatives. But the leader cannot contemplate forever, contemplation must stop sooner or later and action must begin. But there is no calculus for resolving a conflict of values, a conflict of separate realities, except through force, varying from psychic to physical.

PR: Can we examine ‘Critical Perspective’ of 1985. It offers an economical yet comprehensive account of your thinking on educational organisation.

TG: What it represents in terms of something new, is a study of the foundations of our field in the work of Herbert Simon and Chester Bernard, especially Simon. Here is where I began to consider how Simon built up a foundation and pushed the field in a mistaken direction.

PR: What do you see as the mistaken direction?

TG: He established logical positivism as the methodology of the field. In doing so he understood it could not deal with values: there is no science of VALUES AND RELIGIOUS valuing. Simon recognised that. His solution removed valuing and purposing from the science of administration. His science came at the price of a neutered administrative practice, deploring on the one hand that administrators make choices out of their own values, creating on the other the administrative ‘moral cipher’ as the model for scientific action. In that sense, Simon is
worse than Machiavelli, much worse.

PR: He had a very technicist view.

TG: He scientised the field by eliminating the value choice questions. His whole aim was to reduce decision making, to eliminate values in choice questions. His whole aim is to reduce decision making to a calculable system. The only way you can calculate this is if there are values established within it. So Simon’s perfect administrator is a neutered cipher. Interestingly, he began by trying to understand what he called the ‘psychology of human choice’. But ultimately the thrust of his logic brought him to the study of artificial intelligence, as is seen in his model for choosing a diet that was maximally nutritious and of minimal cost, as though religious rules of diet were meaningless, and as if food fads and fetishes had no force. The endpoint of Simon’s thought is HAL of Kubrick’s 2001, the computer that is superrational, but non-human and non-humane, making up for the deficiencies of human thinking by obliterating the human power to have values to choose.

PR: What of Chester Barnard?

TG: Barnard saw the task of the executive officer as building a moral order. That is the nature of organisations - a moral order in action. The building of that order is, as I see it and as Barnard saw it, a wilful thing. So if you put Simon and Barnard together, you create the perfect combination. Barnard was much concerned about purpose and the building of commitment through communication. These were the foundations of his concept of administration, defining an administrator who was value-concerned and active on behalf of them. All that Barnard’s administrator strove to create Simon assumed as givens in the administrator’s world. Simon focused only on what the administrator has to be to achieve the values handed to him and to achieve them efficiently. But Barnard and Simon are not seen in a complementary sense within much of the subsequent literature. Rather Simon becomes a replacement for Barnard, as superior because he is scientific. If you look at early editions of Simon, there is an introduction by Barnard in which he says virtually the same thing. He too was dazzled by the promise of Science.

PR: Even Barnard?

TG: Even Barnard. He speaks of Simon’s book as being the next wave, as something standing on the base of what he offered. I don’t think he saw that as entailing a
PR: To what extent is ‘Decline and Fall’ of 1986 concerned with similar issues?

TG: Very much. It takes up where the previous paper leaves off. It looks at what Simon offered, at the difference between Simon and Barnard.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE

PR: Is there anything else in this paper that we should note at this point?

TG: I mention the classic work, The Consolation of Philosophy by Boethius, and this is to make the argument on the need for reflection. The story of Boethius is touching. He was a Christian who stood at the hinge between the Roman World and the Middle Ages. He is an administrator, one caught between the Emperor and the Pope, or as it turned out, the wrong Pope. He is condemned, and as he awaits his death he thinks back on his career and writes, thus bringing new insight to the administrative task. Few of us will face the horror that Boethius did, but I am convinced that potentially there is that same dimension in all administrative rule, a kind of horror. The wielding of power is terrible, and the more power, the more terrible it becomes. If there is to be a kind of humanising of that power a contemplative, philosophical dimension must and should be brought to it. Perhaps to do the thing at all requires the kind of withdrawal which I have advocated, and a need for a meditation on values.

PR: Some of your work has an epistemological focus some deals with aspects of value and its place in the study and practice of educational administration. Both themes are present in the last two papers. Both were written in 1991. The first is ‘Phoenix’ and the second is ‘Science and service’. They read, to an extent, as an Apologia pro Vitae Sua. Do you see it like this?

TG: I feel rather like Prospero, I guess, looking back on a career.

PR: Prospero voluntarily gives up the power of magic at the end of The Tempest?

TG: Shortly before I wrote this paper I retired. So this is a retrospective view of the controversy in which I have
been involved for close on twenty years. I had these things that I wanted to say stored up.

PR: You try to look back over developments in the field as well as the debates in which you have been involved over the last two decades. You try to make sense of the field as a whole, but as you do that, new things come forward like the book from Evers and Lakomski.

TG: That’s right!

PR: Which is a new challenge, a rather subtler one philosophically than the some that had come before?

TG: I finished the paper knowing that it was not a final testament after all. The debate wasn’t finished. There’s a whole new phase, a new era of issues and controversy, but that makes me feel good. I like to think I had some part to play in what’s happening now.

PR: Certainly in this case, they much value your work.

TG: A surprise after all this time.

PR: I think Knowing Educational Administration is in many ways an exceptional book, But I can’t help thinking that Evers and Lakomski have been brave or foolhardy or both. The scope of their thesis is immensely broad. They have been pretty reckless in the potential enemies they might make given the range of critiques they present. But of all the critiques, yours is VALUES AND RELIGION the most understated. It is one of the longest in the book, but also one of the most tentative. Whilst they acknowledge its strengths, they seem rather more critical of Hodgkinson’s work. They are also critical of the critical theorists.

TG: Perhaps they see Hodgkinson as the more dangerous opponent philosophically. His comment on the book was that the value-fact divide recognized over 2,500 years of philosophy is not so easily unhorsed, that naturalistic coherentism hasn’t done it. I take great satisfaction from what they have said, not just because it is appreciative, although it is that, but because they pay attention to the text of what I have written. They pay attention to what I said, even though their view of it is rather selective. They don’t look at all of my writing over the last twenty years and I wish they had looked at some of the other things. But what they look at, they look at squarely and carefully.
PR: And they’re critical of others who don’t.

TG: Exactly, And that is something which has aggrieved me most over the years. Too often I have been personally attacked rather than attacked on the basis of what I have written. That has been a cross to bear over the years. So it is satisfying at this juncture to find critics with whom I may disagree, and I’m sure I will, but who understand what I’ve said and deal with it.

PR: Your work has often been associated with that of Hodgkinson. How have you influenced each other’s thinking and what kind of intellectual debt do you owe each other?

TG: The debt he may owe me is that mine was the initial breach in the wall. I began discussion of contentious issues. This opened up the field and he has marched through that breach. It was likely he would have done so anyway but this breach was there to use and I think he used it. He has gone much further with the questions of value than I did initially, and so what I owe to him is a better understanding of the world of values, and perhaps he has saved me - I’m not sure that I’ve been guilty of the relativism that some people have accused me of. I don’t think I ever took that position, people misunderstood the fact that I wanted to look with open eyes at the different value positions that people live by, and to recognise where conflicts of values exist. I don’t think this is to claim that there is no way of arbitrating between them, but my task has always been to put description first. That’s the message I have tried to leave - description first and prescription second. And to emphasise that prescription does not logically follow from description, it cannot. I guess I largely set aside the question of how one is prescriptive, although I recognised that one must be ultimately. Hodgkinson has addressed such issues much more centrally and much more fully. There is a difference: Hodgkinson has said to me I am the better writer - perhaps or perhaps not. But I have been able to get attention that he does not. A kind of interaction occurs between us; together we are a kind of reciprocating intellectual machine.

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE

PR: How are you alike in what you are trying to do?

PR: One sense in which I see you as somewhat similar is
that you are both scholars in the traditional sense of the word. Neither of you is known now as a researcher.

TG: Yes, I accept that, but I would also argue that we ought not to draw a sharp line between non-empirical scholarship and empirical scholarship. I mean they are both enquiries, and one needs the other.

PR: I don’t deny that for a moment but you did much of your research when your thinking was influenced by the traditions you have now spent many years challenging.

TG: V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N

TG: Yes, though I have done more beyond that than people recognise. But I certainly accept the judgement that I am not an active empirical researcher.

PR: I have tried to frame a series of questions reflecting the criticism that your theories are invalid, since you have done little or no empirical research in the light of them. Can we consider them?

TG: I travel this ground reluctantly, for I have been over it many times before, most recently in 'Phoenix'. Before taking on the individual questions, let me suggest that they boil down to a single point: Why can’t Greenfield abide by the rules of the game set down in the systems-empiricist paradigm, which is after all the only rational and desirable one? That question constitutes a strategic denial of my arguments, a strategy that rules them out of order before they are even considered. Do I again have to cite opinions to the contrary by Culbertson, Griffiths, Evers and Lakomski, and others? Do I have to make a defence in a court ignorant of those judgements or at least dismissive of them? Past pleadings in front of that court have been fruitless and give ample evidence that those who pose the charge often fail to hear the answers, let alone weigh them in balanced judgement. The reason for this recalcitrance on the part of my critics is clear, as Hodgkinson shows in his Foreword: ‘He touches the point with a needle’. The implications of my work are seen as so threatening and revolutionary in some quarters that the only defence against them is to deny that my positions carry sense or weight, to seek to invalidate them as having no empirical support. I am reluctant to push this analysis, but the reoccurrence of such criticism in ever new forms and from varied sources makes it all the more important to address the issues again. And this, I know, is your argument. So let’s look at it again in the separate aspects you enumerate.
PR: Let me put the questions as five propositions. That theory is valuable only insofar as it is useful in research?

TG: This proposition is cast within the assumptions of the systems-empiricist paradigm. It refuses to see any other kind of enquiry as a contribution to knowledge. As Schumacher says, even the slenderest knowledge of matters of profound importance is of great value. If ‘adequate’ standards of inquiry, as Schumacher describes them, are acknowledged, my work is a kind of research. While not profound itself, my work ‘adequately’ addresses issues that are. I hope it has yielded at least some slender knowledge of these issues, knowledge that other methods cannot generate.

PR: That your work is not and has not been useful by this crucial criterion of research as it is usually understood.

TG: Perhaps my work has not been useful by that criterion. But that is the heart of the issue. The whole thrust of my argument is that there are other more ‘adequate’ criteria for building knowledge.

PR: That there is a failure by the missing research criterion is demonstrated by the fact that to date not a single researcher has used your ideas.

TG: That no researcher has used the ideas I have espoused is true only if the

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS A HUMAN SCIENCE criteria and assumptions of the systems-empiricist paradigm are imposed as a Procrustean bed for the whole field. That those who live encapsulated within the systems paradigm do not use these ideas is hardly surprising. But it is false to claim that my work has influenced no researchers to take up new modes of inquiry. There has been a ‘sea change’ in the field and ‘turbmoil’ as Griffiths and others acknowledge: part of that transformation, as these commentators recognize, is due to my blazing the path.

PR: That in any case, it would be difficult to undertake research on the basis of your ideas, since these change significantly from paper to paper and lecture to lecture.

TG: Surely it is not to be seen as a negative quality of my work that it has changed and evolved over two decades, that
the critique has not sprung Minerva-like and fully formed from the head of Zeus. Instead it has come slowly and with some pain from a human being struggling for understanding over two decades of work. Surely recognition of this struggle is not to be taken as serious criticism of the effort over those decades. It is possible to see a thrust in the development of ideas in my critiques. If there are changes in that critique, they are not simply erratic and do not constitute abrupt or ill-founded changes to suit the ideological winds of the time. There are developing themes in the work and these have been identified most recently in ‘Science and Service’. You have noted the other side of this coin, the face of it that says, ‘You have tended to reproduce rather than advance significantly your ideas since the IIP ’74 paper’. That I must face the inherent contradictions of these twinned criticisms suggests to me that they come from those who are acutely uncomfortable with what I have written. Their response is less reasoned argument than a reflex that rejects or ignores what lies behind them. They have another agenda to pursue.

PR: That these criticisms go a long way towards explaining why your work is not much quoted in the United States, is not popular, and has not ‘caught on’ there.

TG: The observation about the ‘point of the needle’ is explanation of why my critique has not ‘caught on’ in the United States. It is unpopular wherever what Frye describes as ‘Mercantilist Whiggery’ prevails. Writings such as ‘Phoenix’ where I critique the ill-effects on education of such a world view are unlikely to be received with joy and gratitude in cultures that accept the excesses of technocratic-pragmatic, systems-empiricist, individualist values as received and unopposable truth. But it should be noted that ‘Phoenix’ was commissioned by an American group and presented first from an American platform to a small but appreciative audience. On all of these points, a more balanced judgement will surely be possible after the results of the programme we are engaged in here appear in the Routledge collection. After its publication, I would hope to hear the opinions of those who may bring an open-mindedness to the issues and ultimately a balanced appreciation of them. De quistibus non est disputandum. I am willing to let the matter rest with a ‘trial by what is contrary’, as Milton described the process of truth making. In such a trial, I ask only an opportunity to present my defence, hoping not to be ruled out of order for wanting to argue it.

PR: What of the final paper in the collection? Why did you
write it and what were you trying to achieve with it? How does 'Science and Service' relate to 'Phoenix'?

TG: ‘Science and Service’ was written six months after ‘Phoenix’, the two of them being a keystone in the arch of my writings. I did not set out to make them serve such a crucial role nor even conceived them as linked. As usual the papers arose from invitations. After word of my retirement spread I began to get invitations to write - anything at all, just write. The invitations to do these papers came early and as invitations to speak about issues that arose during the last two decades of controversy in administrative studies.

‘Phoenix’ is a synoptic statement revisiting the issues of the past two decades. It attempts to secure the ground that has been won and to extend the implications of the argument into new territory. I delivered ‘Phoenix’ not only at AERA in Chicago but in seminars at the Universities of British Columbia and Victoria. These presentations began the questioning anew.

‘Science and Service’ puts values central to its persuasive structure. It speaks from the heart, and in return has engendered strong reactions - for and against. It speaks to others' hearts too. The fundamental issue in both papers is the same:

what place can values have in a science of the social world, in purposive, admin

istrative action within it? If ‘Phoenix’ did not answer that question, it had at least pointed the direction in which the answer lies. In beginning to write

‘Science and Service’, I knew I had to speak to the challenge from Evers and Lakomski, but I did not want to make it only a response to
their work. That may come later. Rather ‘Science and Service’ does a march around Evers and Lakomski, it outflanks their fact-driven position by making values central to the whole argument – or rather by making the choosing of values central to that argument. In Evers and Lakomski’s argument, the choosing of values is reduced to a process that lies essentially outside human will: they solve the value problem by obviating it. As Evers says, their answer is to ‘physicalise the mental’. Values are genetically encoded, I suppose, and scientifically discovered.

When I presented ‘Phoenix’ at a seminar at the University of British Columbia, I was surprised by a question that asked me to clarify my values. I was taken aback. I thought I had done so, and listed the various value positions I had taken in the latter part of that paper. Later I realized I had not spoken to the heart of that question, how one values values.

In ‘Science and Service’ I bring the fact-value dichotomy into the existential reality of making a value choice out of facts. I take seriously the Weberian argument that rationality itself stands upon a non-rational choice. The paper offers a leap, a leap upwards, a leap of faith perhaps. The argument
shows what we must
do if we are to avoid the Evers-Lakomskian trap. To be
humane, to escape the
fact-driven, calculable world, we must be human, reaching
beyond our grasp,
towards heaven, as Browning would say. And this of course
takes us out of the
limited world of fact and matter, out of synapses and
programmed responses,
into the world of culture, into true culture, a world that
Evers and Lakomski
deny, or accept only as an obverse of the physical. As I
see it Evers and Lakom
ski’s great contribution is to remind us of the world of
fact, of the error of
valuing too much. My Contribution and Hodgkinson’s is
perhaps to remind us
of the mystery beyond fact, of the error of valuing too
little. In ‘Science and
Service’ I acknowledge contemporary problems in education
where values inap
propriately overwhelm the factual. One need not look far in
education today to
see many such problems: the view for example that all is to
be discovered by the
child pursuing its own needs, the conviction-driven
exalting of the child-centred
approaches that deny what we all know to be good and great
teaching. There are
facts in all of this that need more attention than they
get, though I admit they are
value saturated. All of this may leave us dismayed,
overwhelmed even, before
the fact–value gulf.

When I presented ‘Science and Service’ at a recent seminar at the University of Western Ontario, I was asked whether it represents a departure from previous relativist positions. My first response was to say that I hope there is not a single and even line of development through all my papers. They represent a groping towards understanding, not a uniform and logical line of extrapolation. But I also said I hoped that the position seen in ‘Science and Service’ is consistent with what has gone before, with positions that set out the realities of different perceptions of the world and that describes the realities of those views in conflict. Those differences are the basic stuff of the world, and much of my earlier work asserts them in the face of a mode of thought that would deny them or work them out in a flawed system that asserts technical progress is equivalent to moral progress. Such progress brings us to the world of authority and hierarchy, which my work has never denied, though I now see more clearly than I did where the redemption of authority and hierarchy must come from. I hope I have never taken the position that one value position is as good as another – the opposite indeed – though I have tried to show that looking at the world through
the eyes of value holders reveals profound conflicts that reason itself fails utterly
to resolve. I may have come close, but I never embraced the relativist horror.

That’s clear in the bonsai image from Decline and Fall where the educator
shapes pupils’ values even as the gardener shapes the bonsai tree. While I’m at
it, I should say that I am dismayed at those who read my work as though it made
nothing but a liberationist, egalitarian, and rights-of-the-individual argument, a
position seen most vividly - and wrongly - in the stance of today’s deconstruc
tors, post-modernists and radical feminists. I yield no more to values calculated
out of science than to values taken for granted or ignored. While it might be
easier to throw up one’s hands in the face of these difficulties, the way I have V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N
reached finds that each culture offers its own road upwards. Salvation, peace and
reconciliation, if they are to be found, are to be found on that road, and we
cannot deny our own road. I began ‘Science and Service’ with deliberately reli
gious metaphors in mind, and these connect with others that suffuse much of my
work. I finished the paper with a sense that the great conundrum we face is still
unresolved. But perhaps we know better now what it is and which way to look to
face it.
In pushing that position a little further I would refer to a work I have just come to know. In the Massey lecture series titled, The Malaise of Modernity (broadcast on CBC and published by Anansi), Charles Taylor has argued what he calls ‘the view from Dover Beach’. In reference to Arnold’s far-seeing poem

and in contravention to Lasch and Bloom, he defends self-fulfilment as a goal of individual action. He argues that the ethic of the ‘authentic’ individual, as first stated by Nietzsche, the presumed villain of the piece, does not destroy the truth of ethical limits on human action. It simply moves the consideration of such limits to a new context. Nietzsche himself never gave up the moral perspective,

calling for a yea-saying, a yes to the world. How can it be otherwise if we are not to perish with the individual in self-defeating doubt, agony, and destruction?

Taylor’s view is that the ebbing of the Dover tide is not absolute, it offers as much as it takes away. Hope lies at the bottom of Pandora’s box. There remain the possible errors of liberalism in Taylor’s argument. It must be made clear therefore that the authentic individual goes unredeemed – doomed within violence and self-destruction – without a sense of obligation, of altruism, of some thing beyond the individual. Taylor chronicles the trip the
elite, modernist poets

- Yeats and Eliot - took towards fascism, a charge that may be wrong at least in

the case of Eliot, but who can deny the endpoint of

individualism seen in

Pound’s broadcasts from Italy during World War II? These were not just

madness, as they were treated as being after the War, but the end development

of a line of thought, a line still alive today in the vicious and death-dealing

actions of the skinheads of today. The strength of the individual perspective is

the pause it gives for questioning, for dialogue and its stimulus for the creative,

for the new vision. It seems clear to me now that dialogue cannot deny a conver

sation with the ultimate. That must temper the excesses and destructiveness of

the otherwise unrestrained individual. There must be a yea-saying to the world.

Ultimately - and this may be the point of greatest importance - art must be

descriptive, mimetic, of the world not just creative of it, otherwise art and

human action itself ends in self-defeat.

The hundredth anniversary of the birth of Henry Miller and a renewed critical

appraisal of his work give reason to look again at these issues. Miller called the

Tropic of Cancer ‘a gob of spit in the face of art’, as he revelled in his

experience of Paris. But even in the Tropic he had
something to say: he praised

one culture and criticized his own. He moved to the Big Sur, but deplored the

New Ageism that followed him there, even as he deplored the spirit of the larger

American culture. He was horrified that Linda Lovelace and Deep Throat could

be seen as justified by his art, yes by his Art. Another gob of spit in the face of

Art, and he ended by defending what he knew he had never attacked. We should

remind ourselves that great art is moral. It is an ethical statement about the

world, and that is what makes it great. Gobs of spit may besmirch it, but not

deny its message. Art and ethics are ultimately united. So too the individual and

his understanding of the world are ultimately united with ethics. That is the posi

tion I have come to, and it is the position I began with. Macbeth and Faust are

not just fine words spread over five acts. Great art – and great social science too

– must always have a moral content. And we judge their greatness by that

content. Describing the world as it is can hardly deny or controvert this position.

Indeed it makes the position. That’s what I have been trying to do in my work:

trying to describe the world as it is, and trying to contemplate the moral conun
During ordinary times, which are never ordinary, but especially during a period of school restructuring, educational administrators need to consider their responsibility to promote an ethical environment in their schools. This article develops three foundational ethical themes—critique, justice, and caring—as the pillars on which to build such a school.

The social sciences are undergoing a major shift away from a dogmatic positivism that relegates ethics and morality to a stereotyped realm of personal preferences, prejudices, and tastes unsupportable by scientific argument, toward an acknowledgement of organizational and public life as a legitimate arena of moral striving and human fulfillment (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Jennings, 1983; Sullivan, 1986; Walzer, 1985). In the field of education, talk about ethics and morality tends to divide between public rhetoric and academic theory. In the public arena, some call for a return to a hypothetical
time when people agreed on moral values, when teachers were not ashamed to preach morality in the classroom. Others worry that these proposals are simplistic attempts to impose “fundamentalist” definitions of right and wrong (supposedly with Biblical grounding) on everyone, to impose repressive attitudes about sex, spontaneity, and material enjoyments. The public rhetoric tends to frame the debate over morality in education in extreme and sometimes inflammatory imagery, but a more restrained shift has slowly been taking place among researchers and theorists.

Whether this shift is labeled as ushering in a “Post-Positivism” (Jennings, 1983), “Post-Structuralism” (Cherryholmes, 1988), or “Post-Liberal” (Bowers, 1987) era or as a reconceptualization of traditional categories of virtue and character and justice (MacIntyre, 1984; Purpel, 1989; Walzer, 1985; Wynne, 1982), there is clearly a movement away from an overly rationalistic approach, despite some rear guard action in defense of positivism (Lakomski, 1987). This shift in educational policy formation and implementation, in organizational analysis, in program evaluation, and in curriculum theory, is toward an inclusion of human factors, expressly moral in nature, previously neglected.
The literature in educational administration similarly reflects growing concerns about moral and ethical issues (Foster, 1986; Greenfield, 1987; Kimbrough, 1985; Raywid, 1986; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988; Strike, Haller, & Soltis, 1988; Vandenberg, 1990). However, the literature may be yet a step away from speaking concretely enough to practitioners. The abstractions of moral philosophers and social theorists are difficult to translate into practical guidelines that influence everyday actions. Theory needs to approach close enough to practice so that it becomes a theory for practice, something the reflective practitioner can use in everyday encounters while walking about the school or the district (Schon, 1983; Sergiovanni, 1985; Starratt, 1990). A theory for practice does not imply a collection of generic recipes for moral choices, but rather a theory that helps practitioners frame moral situations encountered in practice so that their moral content becomes more intelligible and more available to the practical intuitive sense of the practitioner.

What follows is an attempt to bring ethical inquiry much closer to the work place of educational administrators. It will not attempt to build an ethical theory, but rather to bring ethical themes developed by other theorists into a multidimen
sional construct that offers practicing administrators a way to think about their work and their workplace from ethical perspectives. The attempt will probably offend ethical purists because it borrows from ethical theories that seem incompatible with one another. On the other hand, the construct accepts the substantial conceptual tensions between the themes and highlights those tensions to illuminate the very ethical issues at stake. If the construct appears to offer useful, or even interesting, clarifications for the practitioner, then perhaps ethical theorists can follow up this attempt with a more foundational synthesis of their own.

What is suggested, in brief, is the joining of three ethics: the ethic of critique, the ethic of justice, and the ethic of caring. None of these ethics by itself offers an educational administrator a fully adequate framework for making ethical judgments; together, however, each ethic complements the others in a developmental context of practice. Each fills out an ethical perspective on policy choices. Because none of these ethics compels choice in every instance, one perfect choice does not exist; the three perspectives, however, enable one to make choices with the consequences more clearly delineated, to move toward the “best” choice under the circumstances, or to a choice
that, although it favors one ethical demand, will probably be balanced later on by other choices. The ethics of educational administration: building and administering an ethical school

The ethics of educational administration being advanced here is different from that offered by other scholars on the topic, such as Kimbrough (1985) or Strike V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N et al. (1988). They tend to focus on individual ethical choices of administrators regarding how to deal with individual persons or with individual situations. In other words, the ethics of educational administration from their perspectives is about the ethics of choices that administrators make in given circumstances. The position taken here is that the much larger ethical task of educational administrators is to establish an ethical school environment in which education can take place ethically. Individual choices regarding individual circumstances are seen as taking place in this larger ethical context. Hence the administrator who assumes that the educational environment, the organization, the system, the institutional arrangements (the curriculum, the daily and weekly schedule, the assessment and discipline and placement and promotion policies) enjoy a value neutrality, or worse, already embody the desirable ethical standards, is ethically naive, if not culpable.
Educational administrators are supposed to manage, not simply any old organization, but an educational organization. The educational program housed in that organization is supposed to serve moral purposes (the nurturing of the human, social, and intellectual growth of the youngsters). Hence, although educational administrators do many generic things common to all administrators (coordinate the scheduling of multiple activities simultaneously under one system, monitor budgetary expenditures, monitor health hazards, delegate responsibilities, and so forth), these activities are aimed at promoting the educational goals of the institution. The qualitative elements essential to educating give those administrative choices a different finality than choices made, for example, by hospital administrators, military officers, or corporate managers.

Hence the ethical position taken here is that educational administrators have a moral responsibility to be proactive about creating an ethical environment for the conduct of education. They will no doubt be faced with individual ethical choices about whether to suspend a custodian for certain actions or whether to accept a gratuity from the parent who wants her son to make the basketball team. Those individual choices, however, do not constitute
the ethical agenda of

the educational administrator; they are a small part of the large agenda of building an ethical school.

Presently, the political climate is encouraging educators to restructure schools, which provides a certain opportunity for the building of ethical schools.

Assuming that this means, among other things, a move toward school-based management, teacher empowerment, and participatory decision making, then schools will be freed from systemic, bureaucratic controls and enabled to exercise greater autonomy in their attempts to create a more humanly responsive environment. This implies that the school community will be engaged in an ongoing effort to govern itself, and that, in turn, implies pursuing a moral purpose. From this vantage point, then, the educational administrator faces a difficult task. How is he or she to conceptualize the ethical task? This is where the ethical inquiry of this article begins.

Each theme will be developed consecutively. Although attempting to remain faithful to the theory, or body of theory, from which the theme was selected, the exposition will be guided in equal part by the ethical demands of the educating context. Hence, if a distortion, bending, or thinning out
of the force of the original theory seems to some readers to be taking place, they may be right;

however, such interpretation is grounded in the effort to offer a larger synthesis in the service of practice. Underneath this synthesis, of course, are the irreducible assumptions and myths about what is valuable in human life in which every theory is grounded. A discussion of the ontology and epistemology behind this construct, however, would paralyze, I fear, the very attempt to develop the construct in this article. If the construct offers possibilities for ethical clarification and development, then subsequent debate and criticism can lead either to its further elaboration or to its rejection. In either case, the conversation over the meaning of ethics in educational administration may be enriched. The ethic of critique Because the historical moment appears to be one of transition and transformation, his article begins with the ethic of critique. Whether one begins from the less radical perspective of the recent proponents of school reform, such as Boyer (1983), Goodlad (1984), or Sizer (1984), or from the deeper critique of Freire (1970), Apple (1982), Bates (1984), or Giroux (1988), it has become increasingly evident that schools and school systems are structurally ineffective.
Moreover, the awareness of the structural obstacles to renewal and change is taking on a historical dimension: The bureaucracy of school systems is coming to be seen as an enduring problem, not simply a contemporary phenomenon.

Hence an ethic of educational administration appropriately begins with the theme of critique, a critique aimed at its own bureaucratic context, its own bureaucratic mind-set. As the school community, under the leadership of educational administrators and teachers, faces the possibility of creating an ethical school, it will also face the necessity of critiquing both the adversarial, contractual mind-set of the unions, as well as the hierarchically structured, impersonal administration of the school. Beyond that critique awaits the critique of the overly (if not exclusively) technicist approach to teaching and learning tied to narrowly conceived learning outcomes and simplistic, quantifiable measures of learning.

Because it goes well beyond the functional critique of contemporary reformers such as Goodlad and Boyer, the ethic of critique employed in this article draws its force from “critical theory,” that body of thought deriving from the Frankfurt School of philosophers and others sympathetic to their perspectives.
thinkers explore social life as intrinsically problematic because it exhibits the struggle between competing interests and wants among various groups and individuals in society. Whether considering social relationships, social customs, laws, social institutions grounded in structured power relationships, or language values and religion itself, these thinkers ask questions such as the following: “Who benefits by these arrangements?” “Which group dominates this social arrangement?” “Who defines the way things are structured here?” “Who defines what is valued and disvalued in this situation?” The point of this critical stance is to uncover which group has the advantage over the others, how things got to be the way they are, and to expose how situations are structured and language used so as to maintain the legitimacy of social arrangements. By uncovering inherent injustice or dehumanization imbedded in the language and structures of society, critical analysts invite others to act to redress such injustice. Hence their basic stance is ethical for they are dealing with questions of social justice and human dignity, although not with individual choices.

Examples of issues confronted by critical ethics include (a) sexist language.
and structured bias in the workplace and in legal structures; (b) racial bias in educational arrangements and in the very language used to define social life; (c) the preservation of powerful groups’ hegemony over the media and the political process; (d) the rationalization and legitimation of institutions such as prisons, orphanages, armies, nuclear industries, and the state itself. The point the critical ethicist stresses is that no social arrangement is neutral. It is usually structured to benefit some segments of society at the expense of others. The ethical challenge is to make these social arrangements more responsive to the human and social rights of all the citizens, to enable those affected by social arrangements to have a voice in evaluating their results and in altering them in the interests of the common good and of fuller participation and justice for individuals.

This ethical perspective provides a framework for enabling educational administrators to move from a kind of naivete about “the way things are” to an awareness that the social and political arena reflect arrangements of power and privilege, interest and influence, often legitimized by an assumed rationality and by law and custom. The theme of critique forces administrators to confront the moral issues involved when schools disproportionately
benefit some groups in
society and fail others. Furthermore, as a bureaucratic
organization, the school
exhibits structural properties that may promote a misuse of
power and authority
among its members. From a critical perspective, no
organizational arrangements
in schools “have to be” that way; they are all open to
rearrangement in the inter
est of greater fairness to their members. Where unjust
arrangements reflect
school board or state policy, they can be appealed and
restructured.
When an educational administrator confronts the structural
issues involved in
the management of education, such as the process of teacher
evaluation, homo
geneous tracking systems, the process of grading on a
curve, the process of cal
culating class rank, the absence of important topics in
textbooks, the lack of
adequate due process for students, the labeling criteria
for naming some children
gifted and others handicapped, the daily interruptions of
the instructional
process by uniform time allotments for class periods, he or
she discovers ethical
burdens to all of them because they contain unjustifiable
assumptions and
impose a disproportionate advantage to some at the expense
of others. BUILDING AN ETHICAL SCHOOL
The ethic of critique poses the fundamental ethical
challenge to the educa
tional administrator: how to construct an environment in which education can

take place ethically. The ethic of critique reveals that the organization in its

present forms is a source of unethical consequences in the educational process.

Some would say that all organizations, of their very nature, precipitate uneth

ical consequences. All organizations tend to make the rules and standard operat

ing procedures the dominant force in organizational life, smothering initiative,

instilling fear of not being promoted or approved by one’s superiors, severely

limiting freedom of choice, reinforcing “groupthink” and the official rationaliza

tions for the way things are. On the other hand, organizations, paradoxically, are

the only places in the modern world where freedom and creativity can be exer

cised in any significant way (Eisenstadt, 1968). In the restructuring of human

institutions to meet the human purposes for which they were originally designed

one finds significant moral fulfillment (Starratt, 1990).

Thus educational administrators will face the continuing paradox of their

institutional position in the school. On the one hand, they must acknowledge the

tendency built into management processes to inhibit freedom, creativity, and

autonomy, and to structure unequal power relationships to insure institutional
uniformity, predictability, and order. On the other hand, they must acknowledge
their responsibility to continually overcome that tendency to promote that kind
of freedom, creativity, and autonomy without which the school simply cannot
fulfill its mission.

Hence the ethic of critique, based as it is on assumptions about the social
nature of human beings and on the human purposes to be served by social
organization, calls the educational administrator to a social responsibility, not
simply to the individuals in the school or school system, not simply to the edu
cation profession, but to the society of whom, and for whom, he or she is an
agent. In other words, schools were established to serve a high moral purpose, to
prepare the young to take their responsible place in and for the community.

Besides the legal and professional obligations of the educational administrator,
the moral obligation is to see that the institution of the school serves society the
way it was intended. Hence the challenge to restructure schools is a moral as
well as a technical and professional challenge. The ethic of justice
One of the shortcomings of the ethic of critique is that it rarely offers a blueprint
for reconstructing the social order it is criticizing. The problem for the educa
tional administrator is one of governance. How do we govern ourselves while carrying out educating activities? The ethic of critique illuminates unethical practices in governing and managing organizations and implies in its critique some ethical values such as equality, the common good, human and civil rights, democratic participation, and the like. An ethic of justice provides a more explicit response to the question, even though that response may itself be flawed. VALUES AND RELATION

We govern ourselves by observing justice. That is to say, we treat each other according to some standard of justice that is uniformly applied to all our relationships. To understand the theory of justice that we employ requires an understanding of anthropology and epistemology. Socrates explored the basis of justice in The Republic; his search was to be pursued by a long line of philosophers up to the present day.

Currently, there are two general schools of thought concerning the ethic of justice. One school traces its roots to Thomas Hobbes and John Locke in the 17th century and finds its contemporary expression in the work of John Rawls (1971).

In this school, the primary human reality is the individual, independent of social relationships; the individual is conceived as logically prior to society. Individuals
are driven by their passions and interests, especially by fear of harm and desire for comfort. Individuals enter into social relations to advance their own advantage.

Individual will and preference are the only sources of value. Therefore, social relations are essentially artificial and governed by self-interest. The issue of social governance assumes a social contract in which individuals agree to surrender some of their freedom in return for the state’s protection from the otherwise unbridled self-seeking of others. In this school, human reason is the instrument that individuals use to analyze in a more or less scientific fashion what is to their advantage, and to calculate the obligations to social justice called for by the social contract. As Sullivan commented, in its more benign application, this theory conceived of social justice as “a social engineering to harmonize needs and wants” of self-serving individuals in society (Sullivan, 1986, p. 19).

Kant, however, wanted to ground morality in something more than the passions. Hence his philosophical search led him to postulate moral categories of obligation inherent in the practical reasoning of humans. However, the individual was still the source of moral activity. The obligation to act ethically came from the individual, not from society. Rawls (1971) attempted to explain this
Kantian moral intuition as a reconstruction of the intuition of justice as fairness.

He constructed a coherent context of general rules by which a moral community can reach agreement in much the same way that a community judges linguistically correct expression according to the rules to which all users of the language subscribe (Rawls, 1971). His development of fairness and fair play avoids some of the minimalist rationalizing of the utilitarians, although he continues to hold on to a kind of practical reason to work out individual instances of the universal fairness principle.

Kohlberg (1971) carried on this tradition, only he claimed to go beyond the traditional standoff between “is” and “ought” found in Hume and Kant. That is to say, Kohlberg claimed to have documented in his research an isomorphism between psychological development of moral reasoning and normative ethical theory (Schindler, 1986). His research indicated that as humans moved from one moral stage to a higher moral stage, they moved toward formal moral criteria of prescriptiveness and universality. (Kohlberg, 1971, pp. 224–225). Their higher moral reasoning conformed to what moral theorists from Kant to Rawls had postulated as universal principles to guide ethical
behavior. Once again, note

that Kohlberg postulates the individual as the source of ethical judgment, and

reason as the instrument of morality, although reason is now seen more in a developmental perspective.

The second school of thought on the ethic of justice finds its roots in Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, and Dewey. A contemporary scholar in this school, William Sullivan (1986), placed society as the prior reality within which individuality develops. Furthermore, through experience, through living in society one learns the lessons of morality. Participation in the life of the community teaches individuals how to think about their own behavior in terms of the larger common good of the community. In this school, freedom “is ultimately the ability to realize a responsible selfhood, which is necessarily a co-operative project” (Sullivan, 1986, p. 21). Ethics is grounded in practice within the community. The protection of human dignity depends on the moral quality of social relationships and this is finally a public and political concern. Citizenship is a shared initiative and responsibility among persons committed to mutual care (Sullivan, 1986, p. 22). From this perspective, a communal understanding of the requirements of justice and governance flows
from both tradition
and the present effort of the community to manage its
affairs in the midst of
competing claims of the common good and individual rights.
That understanding is never complete; it will always be limited by the
inadequacy of tradition to respond to changing circumstances and by the impossibility of settling conflict
into claims conclusively and completely. The choices, however, will always be
made with sensitivity to the bonds that tie individuals to their communities.
Kohlberg himself (1980) believed that moral reasoning and choices were best
made in a communitarian setting (Blatt, 1970; Higgins, Power, & Kohlberg,
1984). He played an active role in the formation of “just community” schools.
Hence it can be argued that an ethic of justice, especially when focused on
issues of governance in a school setting, can encompass in practice the two
understandings of justice, namely, justice understood as individual choices to act
justly and justice understood as the community’s choice to direct or govern its
actions justly. In a school setting, both are required. In practice, individual
choices are made with some awareness of what the community’s choices are
(school policies), and school community choices are made with some awareness
of the kinds of individual choices that are being made every day in the school.

An educational administrator encouraging an ethic of justice will see to it that specific ethical learning activities are structured within curricular and extra curricular programs to encourage discussion of individual choices as well as discussions of school community choices. This may mean extensive faculty and student workshops on active listening, group dynamics, conflict resolution, values clarification, problem naming, and the like. Teachers familiar with Kohlberg’s stages of moral reasoning (Kohlberg, 1969, 1981), can more easily understand the general frame of reference students are using (e.g., instrumental hedonism, negotiation of the social contract, and so forth). VALUES AND RELIGION

In a school that takes site-based management seriously, issues of the day-to-day governance of life in the school are inescapable. The ethic of justice demands that the claims of the institution serve both the common good and the rights of the individuals in the school. Ongoing discussions of student discipline policies, of faculty and student due-process procedures, of agreements about faculty time commitments, and so on are absolutely necessary. Furthermore, disussions about the curriculum, about appropriate textbooks, about a visiting
speakers’ program, and the like will need to be carried on, not simply for their
appropriateness for standardized tests, but for the moral questions they raise
about public life in the community. Approaches to multicultural education
should include not only the standard attempts to create better understanding of
cultural differences, but also, and most important, discussions of historical and
present social conditions that breed unjust relationships between people of dif-
ferent cultures and explorations of ways to alter those social conditions. Issues
of grading and testing could be examined from the perspective of justice, with
such discussions leading to the development of alternatives to present practices
that benefit some to the disadvantage of others.
No doubt such freewheeling discussion of so many taken-for-granted elements
of schooling will get messy and unmanageable. Most administrators dread such
initial lack of definition. On the other hand, the debate is in itself educative. The
only way to promote ethical attitudes and understandings about self governance is
to engage in debate. Someone might object that there will be little time left for the
business of teaching and learning if schools spend so much time restructuring the
institution. Although that criticism betrays too narrow a view of teaching and
learning, let us take it seriously. Then the question for
the community to decide is

precisely how to manage its time in such a way as to attend
to the more traditional

academic agenda while still carrying out its activities of
self-governance.

Even this brief dusting off of the school’s involvement in
promoting an ethic

of justice points to the close relationship of the ethic of
critique and the ethic of

justice. To promote a just social order in the school, the
school community must

carry out an outgoing critique of those structural features
of the school that work

against human beings. Often the naming of the problem
(critique) will suggest

new directions or alternatives for restructuring the
practice or process in a fairer

manner. For example, the administration of a policy that
provides a dispropor
tionate share of resources to students in the upper decile
of the student body

results in inequities that affect large numbers of
“average” students unfairly

(Cusick & Wheeler, 1988). It raises questions about the
responsibility of

brighter students to share their gifts for the larger good
of the community,

perhaps in some peer tutoring activities. Ethics of caring

One of the limitations of an ethics of justice is the
inability of the theory to
determine claims in conflict (Hollenbach, 1979). What is
just for one person
might not be considered just by another person. Hence discussions of what is just in any given situation, can tend to become mired down in minimalist considerations (What minimal conditions must be met to fulfill the claims of justice?).

For an ethic of justice to serve its more generous purpose, it must be complemented or fulfilled in an ethic of love. Although earlier discussions of the incompleteness of the ethic of justice took place in a theological context (Niebuhr, 1935), more recent discussions have tended to ground the ethic of love and caring in a philosophy of the person (Buber, 1970; MacMurray, 1961).

Scholars such as Gilligan (1977) and Noddings (1984, 1988) promoted these ethical directions from a vantage point of psychology, especially women’s moral development, in the current literature on the ethic of caring. Such an ethic focuses on the demands of relationships, not from a contractual or legalistic standpoint, but from a standpoint of absolute regard. This ethic places the human persons-in-relationship as occupying a position for each other of absolute value; neither one can be used as a means to an end; each enjoys an intrinsic dignity and worth, and given the chance, will reveal genuinely loveable
qualities. An ethics of caring requires fidelity to persons, a willingness to acknowledge their right to be who they are, an openness to encountering them in their authentic individuality, a loyalty to the relationship. Such an ethic does not demand relationships of intimacy; rather, it postulates a level of caring that honors the dignity of each person and desires to see that person enjoy a fully human life. Furthermore, it recognizes that it is in the relationship that the specifically human is grounded; isolated individuals functioning only for themselves are but half persons. One becomes whole when one is in relationship with another and with many others.

Educational administrators committed to an ethic of caring will be grounded in the belief that the integrity of human relationships should be held sacred and that the school as an organization should hold the good of human beings within it as sacred. This ethic reaches beyond concerns with efficiency, which can easily lead to using human beings as merely the means to some larger purpose of productivity, such as an increase in the district’s average scores on standardized tests or the lowering of per-pupil costs. Administration based on an ethic of caring will attend to the “underside” of administration (Starratt, 1984), that is, to those motives
that sometimes intrude,

even slightly, on an exchange with a teacher, student, or
parent. Sometimes

those motives involve the desire to dominate, to
intimidate, to control. Some

times those motives involve racial, sexual, ethnic, and age
stereotypes that block

the possibility of honest communication. Sometimes the
administrator feels inseg

cure in the face of a strong and assertive teacher and
feels the need to put that

teacher in his or her place. Sometimes the administrator is
not even aware of the

power he or she has in the eyes of teachers and recklessly


toys with the teacher's

insecurity by some light-hearted ridicule of a classroom
activity.

When these underside issues dominate an administrative
exchange, they

block any possibility of open, trusting, professional
communication. Mistrust, V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O

N

manipulation, aggressive and controlling actions or
language on the part of the

administrator or the teacher or both can lead to a
relationship that is hypocritical,

dishonest, disloyal, vicious, and dehumanizing.

An administrative exchange can move beyond a superficial
ritual to a con

tractual obligation to a relationship of caring when there
is a deep attention to

the unique human beings involved in the exchange and to
issues of self-esteem,
personal confidence, and ego anxieties. People who are fairly secure in their sense of themselves and in their professional role are not overly affected by these underside motives; few, however, are entirely free from them in every circumstance. If these motives are understood and acknowledged initially, they will not distort the exchange in excessively manipulative or negative ways.

The administrator who is concerned with nurturing the growth of teachers will have to ensure that teachers experience the relationship with the administrator as one of regard, mutual respect, and honest contact between two persons.

Even though their traditional organizational roles have conditioned administrators and teachers to an antagonistic relationship (Blumberg, 1974; Starratt, 1990), in a school intentionally restructuring itself and concerned about issues of empowerment, it is possible to move toward a relationship based on caring. For relationships of caring to develop, administrators will initially explore with their teachers those conditions necessary to initiate and maintain trust, honesty, and open communication (Hoy & Kupwersmith, 1984).

Besides developing sensitivity to the dignity and uniqueness of each person in the school, the administrator can promote an ethic of caring by attending to
the cultural tone of the school. Often the use of language in official commu
iques will tell the story: Formal abstract language is the language of bureau
cracy, of distance; humor, familiar imagery and metaphor, and personalized
messages are the language of caring. Through reward procedures and cer
emonies as well as through school emblems, school mottos, school songs, and
other symbols, the school communicates what it cares about. When the school
rewards academic competition in ways that pit students against each other, when
the awards are few and go only to the top students in the formal academic disci
plines, then the school makes a clear statement of what it values. Other cer
emonies and awards that stress caring, cooperation, service, teamwork, and the
like send different messages. Some schools clearly promote a feeling of family
and celebrate friendship, loyalty, and service. Laughter in the halls, frequent
greetings of each other by name, symbols of congratulations for successful pro
jects, frequent displays of student work, hallways containing pictures of groups
of youngsters engaged in school activities, cartoons poking fun at teachers and
administrators—these are all signs of a school environment that values people
for who they are. When youngsters engage every day in such a school commun
ity, they learn the lessons of caring, respect, and service to each other. With some help from peers and teachers, they also learn how to forgive, mend a bruised relationship, accept criticism, and debate different points of view.

For most educational administrators, a brief reflection on their own ethical building a hool caring will occasion some embarrassment. By confronting their own flawed performance, administrators can discover, with a moment’s reflection, the subtle but constant intrusion of self-interest. Without excusing it, they learn to acknowledge it as a part of them. Recognizing their own failures will help them avoid the tendency to self-righteous judgement of others’ ethical mistakes.

The ethics of caring brings us full circle at this point. Knowing our own failures to care for others, our own immature ways of rationalizing moral choices, knowing our own reluctance to challenge questionable school arrangements, we are able to confront the general weakness in the human community. That weakness is part of being human. Despite our heroic ideals, we often act in distinctly unheroic ways. A sense of compassion is needed for one who would act ethically—compassion for himself and compassion for others. We have to extend
our caring to forgiving. The forgiveness extended, we then go on with the business of making things right. Summary

Two questions remain, the response to which may close out this inquiry into an ethical perspective for practitioners. The first question involves the legitimacy of combining themes derived from three different ethical theories, despite what some might claim are irreconcilable differences among the theories (Pateman, 1980). The second question deals with the practicality of the construct for the practitioner. Namely, does it offer the administrator a perspective that allows him or her to frame the most important ethical issues encountered in schools and to shape an environment that encourages ethical choice?

The answer to the first question deserves a lengthy development that space does not allow. For now, this author argues that the three theories are not irreconcilable. They can be grounded on both the essential nature of human beings and on the essential nature of human society. That is to say, one can argue for the necessary interpenetration of each theme by the others if one is to argue for a fully developed moral person and a fully developed human society. Even a superficial familiarity with the themes, which this article attempts to communicate, suggests that each theme implies something of the other theme. The ethic of
critique assumes a point

of view about social justice and human rights and about the way communities

ought to govern themselves. The ethic of justice assumes an ability to perceive

injustice in the social order as well as some minimal level of caring about relation

ships in that social order. The ethic of caring does not ignore the demands of

community governance issues, but claims that caring is the ideal fulfillment of all

social relationships, even though most relationships among members of a

community function according to a more remote form of caring.

Moreover, each ethic needs the very strong convictions embedded in the other.

The ethic of justice needs the profound commitment to the dignity of the indi

vidual person found in the ethic of caring. The ethic of caring needs the larger

attention to social order and fairness of the ethic of justice if it is to avoid an entirely idiosyncratic involvement in social policy. The ethic of critique requires

an ethic of caring if it is to avoid the cynical and depressing ravings of the habitual

malcontent, and the ethic of justice requires the profound social analysis of the

ethic of critique, to move beyond the naive fine tuning of social arrangements in a

social system with inequities built into the very structures by which justice is sup
posed to be measured. The response to the first question, then, is that the themes
are not incompatible but, on the contrary, complement and enrich each other in a
more complete ethic. Uniting themes from different theoretical foundations
attempts to use the genuine strengths and the genius of each theoretical position in
the interests of building a rich and pluriform ethical environment.

The response to the second question is likewise affirmative. An educational
administrator’s day is filled with ethical situations and challenges. Sometimes
those situations clearly call for a critique of unfair school procedures; sometimes
they involve debate over school policy in an effort to balance the common good
with individual rights; and sometimes they involve the demands of an individual
person to be recognized and cherished for who he or she is. At other times, more
complex problems require that the administrator examine the problem from each
framework and perhaps balance the demands of all three ethics in his or her
response to the problem. Given the proactive position of an ethics of educational
administration advocated in this article, namely the building of an ethical school
as an integral part of a national effort to restructure schools, the larger construct
of all three ethical themes offers a more comprehensive and
multidimensional foundation for such a reconstruction. BUILDING AN ETHICAL SCHOOL

Figures 1 and 2 offer a visual diagram of how the themes work together to provide such a multidimensional perspective.

This article has attempted to develop a tapestry of ethical perspectives, specifically for those involved with educational administration. That tapestry is woven of three themes: the theme of caring, the theme of justice, and the theme of criticism. An ethical consciousness that is not interpenetrated by each theme can be captured either by sentimentality, by rationalistic simplification, or by social naivete. The blending of each theme encourages a rich human response to the many uncertain ethical situations administrators face every day in their work.

Furthermore, they offer complementary frames for thinking about building an


Figure 2 The multidimensional ethic at work in a school setting—an ethical school environment. Quality of Life Cultural Enrichment Participation Equal Access Due Process Policy Formation & Implementation Assessment Rights Responsibilities Resource Allocation Culture of Silence & Domination Hierarchy Privilege Power Class Distinctions & Distortions Definitions Critique Myth of Human Society Individuality Loyalty Human Potential Human Dignity Empowerment Environment


McCutchan.


Teachers College Press.


Harper & Row.


Lakomski, G. (1987). Values and decision making in
educational administration. Educational Administration Quarterly, 23(3), 71-82.


agent: Philosophical foundations

for moral education and character development (pp. 271-305). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.


Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 1, 5-17.


While the mainstream churches are being increasingly ignored as religious institutions in rapidly secularizing England, their schools survive and, in many instances, thrive. These schools, financed by public funds, are an increasingly important part of the English state schooling system. It would appear that their survival and expansion has been driven by increased societal emphasis on academic success, which, in the main, these schools provide. What are the implications of this in terms of social divisiveness and what is the response of the churches themselves in terms of their role in the communities they serve? While the arguments for and against are entered into by a small number of commentators, it is perhaps significant that the once politically sensitive area of church/faith schools is still left alone by politicians.

Introduction

Thriving religious schools in England are a phenomenon of our times. Much is written that may give the impression that the English
schooling system is a uniform and a consistent whole. However, a closer examination of the state system, financed by public funds, shows that while all schools are operating within a centrally designed, directed, and inspected template of a national curriculum and OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) scrutiny, many different types of school are present. Religious, or as they are more usually called in England, church or faith schools, are one discrete group within the state system. While other faiths are represented, including Jewish and Moslem, they are, in the main, Church of England and Roman Catholic. In a seemingly fragmenting world that has moved or is moving beyond the usual religious traditions, the great narratives that post modernist thinking has identified as being left behind, the position and popularity of the church or faith school is not simply the concern or interest of a tiny minority. Why does their existence and public funding seemingly remain unchallenged? This article seeks to explore how various agents within the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church see the role of their schools in terms of the community and/or communities that they serve. It also seeks out oppositional views to these schools’ existence and/or their...
public funding. The "secularized" context of the discussion

In July 1999, the American magazine Newsweek reported once again the death

of God in Europe. It is possible to say, with a certain irony, that this is in con

trast to many other parts of the world where He continues to flourish or where

"religious thinking, practices and institutions" retain, in Wilson's (1966) terms,

"social significance." Certainly, in England, intellectual explanations for the

decline in religious belief are both fashionable and influential. The leading

British sociologist Anthony Giddens (1991), in particular, has noted the exist

ence of what he calls a post-traditional society. Such theory and its "close

cousin," postmodernism, is predicated on the acceptance that the "great narra

tives," such as Christianity, that explain human existence in a comprehensive

and consistent manner, no longer are relevant.

The Oxford-based theologian Don Cupitt (1997), who is influential in liberal

Anglican circles, has written in stark terms of a major global cultural change in

which the past is comprehensively left behind as people disengage with ethnic,

religious, and moral loyalties. As with modern teenagers watching a dramatiza

tion of a Jane Austen novel, with its mannered existence, it is "difficult to

reimagine what it was once like genuinely to believe such
things and to follow

such customs” (Cupitt, 1997, p. 79).

Membership figures that show a downward trend in membership of the

Church of England, Roman Catholic, and non-conformist churches would seem

ingly support the conclusion that English society is moving irretrievably to secu

larization. (Though it should be noted that membership of the “newer” churches,

such as the Seventh-day Adventist, is, in fact, increasing). Figures supplied by

the Christian Research Association (as quoted in Brierley & Wraight, 1995 p.

240) show that for the two churches whose schools are the focus of this article,

specifically, the Church of England and Roman Catholic Church (as discussed in

Johnson, McCreery & Castelli, 2000), are shown in table 1.

In less than a quarter of a century, over half a million members have been lost

by both churches. Other figures in this vein can easily be found. As an aside, to

illustrate this point about the seemingly comprehensive loss of connection with

these churches, it is possible to look at that important social event in all cultures,

the wedding. It can be said that the style and venue of weddings say much about

the current fashions, social attitudes, and values of a society. Thompson (1986)

reports that twenty years ago, in 1979, there were more civil marriage
ceremonies than religious ones since Register Offices were established in 1837.

More recent figures show that 59% of couples, who actually marry rather than simply co-habit, now go through a civil ceremony (Office for National Statistics, 1998).

However, argument about the exact nature of the secularization of society is not new (Wilson 1966, 1982). As Martin (1967) has pointed out, some care must be taken with the interpretation of statistics about church membership that may or may not have been accurately and consistently collected. Within such reservations comes also a warning about using them to make comparisons between “now” and “a golden age of religiosity,” which always seems to be just beyond living memory. Also, a distinction has to be made between formal church membership and regular attendance (in 1996 only 11% of British adults attended church once a week or more—ONS 1998, p. 228) and a residual loyalty and identification. Other figures published by the Office for National Statistics in 1998 showed that “many people consider themselves to belong to a religion even if they are not active members” (ONS 1998, p. 227). These figures (see table 2), though still showing a downward trend, are, in terms of the percentage
involved of the British population (which is approximately 56 million), very dif
ferent from those in table 1.

Over half the British population call themselves Anglican or Catholic (albeit
mostly non-churchgoing). Thus, Cupitt’s assertions about “an extraordinary cul
tural upheaval” in which traditions are repudiated can be challenged. However,
within these figures, there is no age breakdown. Thus, it could be that those people
with a residual loyalty are older than those without. It could be that in Cupitt’s
terms, these traditions are “going up in smoke,” but perhaps considerably more
slowly than he argues. The dual system of church and state

Whether or not the case for society being “secularized” is fully and convincingly
made, trends show an increasing detachment from active participation in the
institutions and ceremonies of conventional mainstream Christianity. It is within

SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN A SECULARIZED CULTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Membership through the years</th>
<th>1975</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>1985</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>1994</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>2,297,871</td>
<td>2,179,458</td>
<td>2,016,943</td>
<td>1,871,977</td>
<td>1,760,070</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>2,605,255</td>
<td>2,454,253</td>
<td>2,279,065</td>
<td>2,198,694</td>
<td>2,002,758</td>
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this context that the relationship between church/faith schools and the state in England is placed. State funding of church schools has had a comparatively long history; although, it must be noted that, initially, the British government was very reluctant to intervene in schooling for the poor provided by such voluntary activity.

It was in 1833, that central government made its first tentative steps in funding such elementary schooling through the payment of small grants to the non-conformist British and Foreign Schools Society and the National Society of the Church of England. (The latter was founded in 1811 to compete with the non-conformist churches for the loyalty of the urban poor.) So today’s dual system of church voluntary and state maintained schools had “its origins in the grants made in 1833” (Sallis, 1994, p.8). Sallis notes that today “The inclusion of church schools in the public system is thus a distinctive feature of education in this country [England].” This is significant when international comparisons are made. Elsewhere, in societies, with and without strong cultural links to
England, a secularist view of state schooling is taken. Such a stance “has wide spread public acceptance in Australia and New Zealand, Canada, the USA and most of continental Europe” (p. 8).

However, it must not be forgotten when Church of England and Catholic schools were included within the state system, not only religious leaders but also very senior politicians were involved in the considerable debate. In the face of furious non-conformist objections (about “Rome on the rates”), Balfour, the Prime Minister, had to defend the provisions of the 1902 Education Act that incorporated the Church of England and Roman Catholic church schools. In a noisy House of Commons, he argued that such a move was “not a relic of an ancient system permitted as a matter of compromise to remain . . . out of harmony with the needs . . . of a progressive community” (Munson, 1991, p.245). Balfour went on to see them “as part the normal . . . machinery for edu cation” (p. 245); and at the beginning of the twenty-first century, part of this machinery they have remained.

Along with this historical sketch, it must be noted that subsequent developments throughout the twentieth century have given state funding to Methodist,
Jewish, and, more recently, within the last three years, to the handful of Muslim, Sikh, and Seventh-day Adventist schools. Importantly, it is also necessary to

Table 2 Decline in Church of England and Roman Catholic Church membership (1980–1995) (numbers given in millions)

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Church of England</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note


remember when considering the other part of the dual system that the state maintained schools, sometimes called county schools, are not secular. Interest ingly, it is their religious and spiritual role that is controversial and has been subject to much recent debate, especially among the English teaching profes sion.

In 1988, “rather to the surprise of many, the Conservative Government . . . sought, in the Education Reform Act . . ., to reinstate the act of collective worship” (Davies, 1994, p. 10). It had once been part of every child’s daily experience in school, as stipulated by the epoch-making Education Act 1944. In the 1960s and 1970s, for a variety of reasons, including school size and head teacher and teacher disapproval, many schools had
discontinued the practice. In startling contrast to the position in the USA, the Thatcher government went further to legislate “for the compulsory teaching of R.E. (religious education), in particular Christianity, described as the predominant religion in Great Britain, as part of the school curriculum” (p. 10).

Six years later, in 1994, Davies could report that “the law was being most determinedly resisted and most comprehensively ignored.” At the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) Annual Conference held that year, a survey was presented to the Conference that showed that “80% of head teachers wanted the law on religious education in school changed” (p. 9). David Hart, the NAHT General Secretary, accused John Patten, the then Secretary of State for Education (the governmental minister responsible) “of failing to recognize that moral values could be taught outside the context of religious assemblies and R.E. lessons” (Davies, 1994, p. 9). Davies also notes the widespread view among head teachers and teachers that “schools should not be mission stations . . . and that Britain was a multi-cultural society, in which no one religion should be given superordinate status” (p. 10). From this “professional” perspective, reliance is placed on the teaching of personal, social, and
moral education in schools from a seemingly “neutral” middle ground. This stance is seemingly confirmed by a declaration by the National Curriculum Council, itself a governmental agency. In 1993, the Council stated that it did not consider the spiritual and moral development of children was or should be predicated on a religious or any other belief system: “. . . spiritual development has to do with relationships, with other people, and for believers, with God.” In this statement, “believers” are seen as a distinct group or community.

It is worth noting here that “community,” in itself far from an uncontroversial term, goes beyond the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1983) definition of “common character; agreement; identity.” It can be seen as a basic structure that can be located in the real world (such as the Amish in Pennsylvania). On the other hand, urban sociologists such as Pahl (1984) see “community” as less certain and infinitely more flexible. This is a term open to subjective interpretation. Whatever the definition, belonging to a community is a statement about the socialization that its members have experienced, and within that process, the values and rules that they have internalized to a point that behavior becomes
predictable and, to a greater or lesser degree, automatic.

Clearly, membership of a community gives its adherents an identity that in some way can distinguish them from others and other communities in society. Thus, to belong to any community is per se an expression of difference. Research method

So given overall trends of detachment from conventional institutional Christian ity in society as a whole and opposition to the acceptance of “the superiority of Christianity” as a source of moral guidance and religious belief in county schools, why do church schools still exist, and in many instances thrive? How do they themselves define the community and/or communities that they are serving?

In exploring these questions, data were collected from documentary sources.

Data were also obtained from a series of semi-structured interviews with individuals within church-education societies and communities and from those in opposition to church/faith schools.

A first set of interviews were undertaken to find out how Church of England and Catholic head teachers (or school principals) saw their role in the develop ment of their children’s spirituality, in maintaining a school culture consistent with the moral values of their declared belief system, and
how this might con
tribute to the children’s spiritual development. To this
dend, an interview inven
tory was designed to cover both general environmental and
“religious” issues (to
put it at its widest) and specific operational issues that
heads had to face, such as
the design and content of school assemblies. All the
interviews, which were
based on the same interview inventory, took place in the
schools, were tape
recorded with permission of the heads. The intention of the
interviews was to act
very much as a “seek and find” exercise and so to act as a
pilot survey to test out
issues and ideas, arising from the literature, that could
lead to a more detailed
and more tightly designed study.

These semi-structured interviews were carried out with the
heads of 13 primary
schools in a south London borough, that has a varied ethnic
and cultural composi
tion. Some parts of the borough are predominately black,
others mostly white, and
others mixed. The borough has also received a large share
of the influx of refugees
from eastern Europe and other parts of the world, including
those who have fled
the war in Somalia. The borough has a reputation for being
prosperous and
“middle class”; however, every day, distressed people are
found begging on its
streets and in its underpasses. (The overall cultural and
ethnic mix of those living in the London conurbation cannot be underestimated. It is possible to illustrate this diversity through the type and number of languages spoken. A recent article in the daily newspaper, the London Evening Standard (21 January 2000), was entitled “From Abe to Zulu, the 300 languages spoken by London pupils” and reported on research carried out in London schools that showed that London is now the “most linguistically diverse city on the planet . . . more so than New York.”

All 13 schools were fully subscribed; most of the schools were expanding and were, thus, in a position to select their intake. They were situated in the same type of areas. However, the Church of England schools were open to “all-comers”; whereas the intake of the Catholic schools was almost entirely Catholic. (Historical factors have led to Catholic schools being situated mostly in the English conurbations; the Anglican experience is, of course, very different, and so a strong presence in rural and usually mono-cultural areas is still maintained. Hence, it is easy to speculate that the issues facing a Church of England head teacher in, say, agricultural Lincolnshire, a county 120 miles from London, could be very different from those heads interviewed in this small study.)

All the head teachers gave most generously of their time
and were seemingly open in their comments. Other sets of interviews were carried out with three officers of church educational bodies. They asked to be anonymous; but again, were very helpful.

Finding subjects to interview who are in opposition to church schools was much more problematic. As is reflected below, many of the 15 or so letters that were sent out asking for interviews from individuals or bodies likely to be in opposition were not answered. In the end, much of the data collected were taken from documentary sources, some of which are quite old. The journalist Polly Toynbee, however, responded very positively to a request for an interview. She rang the researcher back! A mutual date for a face-to-face interview within a reasonable time frame was not possible, so a telephone interview ensued. The Education Secretary of the Free Churches Council kindly allowed herself to be interviewed at the Council’s premises; as did the General Secretary of the National Secular Society.

Findings

In England and Wales, 2,000 primary and 450 secondary schools are in the Catholic, voluntary-aided sector that forms 10% of state provision. Currently, nearly three quarters of a million young people are being educated in Catholic
schools (CES, 1996), and overall, the demand for places is increasing. The Church of England sector contains, as can be expected of the established church in England, many more institutions—4,903 primary schools and 225 secondary schools (Lankshear, 1992). As with the Catholic sector, the demand for school places is strong and increasing. The contribution made by Church of England and Roman Catholic schools is not minimal. Together these church schools make up over a third of state-schooling provision in England and Wales. The declared aims of Catholic schools The Catholic education community identifies such a role, if in a particular form, for itself and a partnership between the school, parents, and the local community, the latter being first the Catholic community and, increasingly, the wider community as a whole.

SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN A SECULARIZED CULTURE

The importance of Catholic education has been stressed by church authorities from the mid-nineteenth century to the present today. The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales “have seen education as central to the mission of the Church” (Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 1997, p. 5). Education is a deeper and broader process than the mere preparation for an economic role, as pupils are to
learn and understand that “God (is) creator, sustainer and ultimate goal of all

that exists” (p. 50). The mission statement of a Catholic school should make it explicit that it conforms to Christian principles (Catholic Bishops’ Conference, 1996, p. 2).

The role of the head teacher or school principal is pivotal and not limited to a professional competence; for the Catholic head is also to be a personal example to the teachers in his or her school. It is also clear that Catholic teachers have their own role, inasmuch, according to Arthur’s comments on the Declaration on Christian Education (Second Vatican Council, 1965), it is “they who deter mine whether the Catholic school fulfils its aims” (Arthur, 1995, p. 254). Additionally, they “should integrate the Catholic faith and culture in their own person and that they should imitate Christ,” not only “by word but also by every facet of their behaviour” (p. 254). The Bishops, according to Arthur (p. 257), had emphasized in 1974 the need for schools governors to appoint Catholics to pastoral and management posts. Provisions about atheists and agnostics were dropped ten years ago, in 1990. However, in the face of the tenor of such advice, whether or not it is still current, it is interesting to note that the trend in the
Figures indicates a majority of non-Catholic teachers in Catholic secondary schools by the turn of the century (Arthur, 1995). Whatever the practical difficulties about staffing, it is clear that Catholic schools are unshakeable from their basic purpose—to be recognizably Catholic. The declared aims of the Church of England school.

As with many things concerned with the Church of England, the policy position adopted is less than explicit. The Durham Commission into Church of England schools that published its report in 1970 put it in these terms: “Only one thing is completely clear: on the subject of Church schools the Church of England has never had one generally agreed policy. It certainly has none today” (p. 217, quoted in Carey, Hope, & Hall, 1998, p. 50).

As an expression of its stated role as the established church, the Church of England school has traditionally been open to “all-comers,” both in terms of staff and pupils. There is no expectation that the head and members of staff should be practising Anglicans (or even practising Christians) and the pupils themselves are drawn from a variety of cultural backgrounds, some Christian, some not (Johnson & McCreery, 1999).

However, this “openness” is now being questioned within a debate about the
nature of “community” that should be served. David Lankshear (1992, p. 18),
the Schools Officer of the National Society, notes that within the Church of VALUES AND RELIGION England there are those who “would argue that the schools are provided by the Church and are a major potential asset in the Church’s work of evangelism and Christian nurture.” This clearly echoes the Catholic position. However, he goes on to note that others within the Church see “the key role of the Church school is to be a good school, run within the context of a Christian community” (p. 18).
Thus, some senior Church of England figures are seeing within the popularity of their schools an opportunity to “become more overtly Anglican” and to place a greater emphasis on serving its own domestic Anglican community. Others continue to argue for the usual “Anglican light touch” in the conduct of their schools through which the traditional Church of England role in serving the widest community, be it practicing Christians or not, is maintained. It is in the former that a “stronger” Christian position is taken, and the latter that seeks (echoing the National Curriculum Council statement discussed above) to promulgate a value system of tolerance and morality that is acceptable in a society increasingly both multi-faith and no-faith. Within this context, in an area that is
gaining increased attention, the leading Anglican academic Leslie Francis (1993,
1994), among others, has argued cogently for church schools. Opposition to church schools
Opposition to church or faith schools exists in many differing forms. Historic

The non-conformist fury in 1902 about the incorporation of Church of England
and Roman Catholic schools into the state system has been noted. Today, the
Free Churches Council takes a more sanguine view. The Council no longer has a
declared position on these schools, as one interviewee said: “It’s not really a live
issue,” for the constituent churches that make up the Council. Of course, some
individual church members object out of principle; but most “seem quite pleased
that they (the schools) are there as a Christian presence in the educational
system.” An anachronism in a secular society

The National Secular Society, founded in 1866, retains its “fundamental objec
tions to religious schools,” according to its general secretary. The Society has
opposed religious schooling since that time, to quote its general secretary again,
as it believes that religion is a private matter for the family. . . . We are not saying that morality isn’t important, or that preparing people for life isn’t important . . . but morality doesn’t necessarily come from religion; . . . what we find objectionable is that (church schools) are state funded.

SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN A SECU
The general secretary of the National Secular Society also mentioned that he had appeared on television in 1998 to oppose, in 1998, the granting of state funds to Muslim schools: “This was not a racist thing . . . it is a matter of principle whoever is involved.”

None of the leading political parties address the topic of church schools in their declared education policies. The political sensitivities from 1902 that were still warm enough in 1941 for Churchill to advise Butler to leave the church schools alone still seem nearly a hundred years later to have sufficient heat for today’s politicians to “let sleeping dogs lie.” Educational organizations such as the Socialist Education Association, a body affiliated to the Labour Party, have argued in the past against church schools on the grounds they are an expression of religious privilege that promotes a divisive sectarianism that frustrates a truly comprehensive education system. (Given that Tony Blair the current Labour Prime Minister sends all three of his children to state funded Roman Catholic schools, the Socialist Education Association was contacted to see if its position remained the same. No reply was received.)

Recent open opposition to church or faith schools has not come from politicians
but from journalists. In an article in the influential, liberal newspaper The Guardian

(27 January 1999), journalist Polly Toynbee wrote of her disquiet about the unquestioned existence of church schools which she felt were essentially middle-class and socially divisive. (She ignored the fact that many church schools, due to historic factors, are located in areas of serious social and economic deprivation.)

In terms of an educational argument against church/faith schools, Hirst (1972, 1983) saw education in a sophisticated form as leading to self-direction or in a primitive form as simply passing on tradition and knowledge. He argued that church schools are concerned not necessarily with education in this sophisticated form but with the development of faith in terms of catechesis.

However, since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988, concerns about a narrowness of a church school curriculum are no longer relevant.

Perhaps one of the more telling arguments against church or faith schools has been those expressed in the Swann Report in 1985 (and supported by the Commission for Racial Equality, 1990). The Swann Report concluded that although “ethnic minority religious groups have the legal right to establish their own schools, this would not be a desirable development” (CRE,
1990). The Report felt that “they would not be in (their) long term interest . . . and (its) basic philo-
sophy of ‘education for all’ would be compromised” (CRE, 1990, p. 2). This has
remained the strong position of many—that faith schools of all kinds are socially
and racially divisive and undermine the possibility of a truly comprehensive
education in which all share basic values of tolerance.

Interestingly enough, in terms of a cohesive multi-cultural society, articles
have appeared in the press that argued public funds granted in January 1998 for
Muslim schools would, in fact, enhance and support a multi-cultural society.

Roy Hattersley, a former Labour Cabinet Minister, writing in the same news
paper as Polly Toynbee while taking an entirely different view (The Guardian, V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N
12 January 1998), argued that “Muslims . . . will be given a new self-confidence”
at the news of such Islamic schools. Darcus Howe, writing in the Labourite and
progressive New Statesman (16 January 1998), argued that state funding for
Muslim schools is a victory against Islamophobia.

Thus, the “multi-cultural argument” can be seen to have at least two strands: one
that is against church or faith schools because, in the English context, they tend to
exclude ethnic minorities; and the other, on the contrary, such schools when reflect
ing the faith and culture of minority communities help enhance their self-confidence

and position in society. Thus, the liberal position on church/faith school is split. How the popularity of church schools is perceived

While journalists such as Toynbee dismiss the popularity of church schools with parents as the exercise of class privilege, it is clear that there is little empirical

both Church of England and Roman Catholic, that are reported more fully else where (Johnson & Castelli 2000, Johnson & McCreery 1999), and with officers of church educational bodies sought information from those in the schools them selves. The head teachers discerned both a pragmatism and a deeper attachment, perhaps both cultural and emotional, to their Christian ethos in the parental liking of church schools.

In general, the head teachers reported that church schools are perceived by parents as being academically “good,” sometimes excellent. Church schools invariably occupy high positions in governmental league tables of examination results and favorable reports in popular guides to achieving schools (for example, The Sunday Times Guide to Excellent State Schools, October 1998).

Also, most if not all head teachers interviewed, who worked in schools in multi cultural south London, commented on the reputation that
these schools have for
“good discipline” and “order.”

Others commented upon the supposed secularization of
society. In fact, one

interviewee asked: “What secular society?” Others detect a
feeling that parents

don’t quite want to detach their children from
Christianity.” Still others spoke

of “spiritual questions and needs that won’t go away.” One
primary head teacher

put it simply: “Parents still want their children to know
the difference between
right and wrong.” Thus, educational, cultural, spiritual,
and moral issues were

identified as a genuine, if sometimes not articulated,
concern for parents. Conclusion

Much has changed in the English schooling system since the
election of the first

placed schools

into a quasi-market, where state funding followed the pupil
or student. As part

of such marketization, parents were given the right to
choose the school they

preferred for their children. (This replaced, in theory at
least, the allocation of

SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN A SECULARIZED CULTURE

school places by the bureaucratic decision making of local
government officers

in the town or city hall.) Thus empowered, parents have
been making choices.

Clearly, hard-headed pragmatism about academic excellence
should not be underestimated in the parental choice of a church school. However, there are other factors. Real parental and general societal concern about certain trends in society (for example, high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancies, and divorce) cannot be dismissed as mere moral panic. As one Church of England head, who was interviewed, has been quoted as saying: “Parents still want their children to know the difference between right and wrong.” But what “right and wrong” and whose? In a post-traditional, post-modern world that produces an intellectual position that recognizes many frameworks and gives no precedence, no superordinate status to any, what moral code should be taught?

The Catholic school, as has been seen, does not adopt a moral ambivalence or accept uncertainty. As fully part of the Catholic Church, it has a declared duty to promote Catholicism in terms of values, knowledge, and belief which are absolute and declared from the center. Hence, an identity, while it is sometimes questioned, remains recognizable by “everybody” and so offers a membership of a worldwide community.

The Church of England does not have such a centralized decision-making mechanism. In organizational terms, the structure of its
“looser.” Thus, the Church of England head teacher has much greater direct influence on what values are transmitted and in what way. The Church of England heads, in their interviews, talked more in terms of the children’s behavior rather than belief and doctrine. This behavior is acted out not only in the formal setting of a school assembly or in the attendance of church services, but, they implied, more importantly in respect to day-to-day living and interactions in the school community and beyond.

Nevertheless, it should not be ignored that the Church of England school, whether or not much time is spent on formal religious practice, does offer access to the Anglican tradition. In this way, it can be seen that Church of England schools are essentially Protestant. Much is not or is understated and open to individual interpretation through the individual’s own moral framework. After all, Anglicanism is the established religion of the English, a people who have no written constitution and seemingly suffer no anxiety as a consequence. As recognized by the Hindu priest, who sent his child to a Church of England school (Johnson & McCreery, 1999), some sort of moral sense is offered to those children from within the Anglican tradition and from those without.
The Archbishop of York (Carey, Hope, & Hall, 1998) wrote recently: “Those of other faiths do not actually thank us for being apologetic or unsure or uncertain of our own, or even attempting to play down the differences or distinctiveness.” (p. 17).

In the face of the social realities of the new millennium, is this distinctiveness an illusion or mere wishful thinking? It is possible to ask whether parents who seek a declared moral code and a cultural and religious identity for their children are “desperately trying to hold on to or restore their traditions but are finding to VALUES AND RELIGION their dismay that it cannot be done: the substance of tradition is melting away, slipping through their fingers even as they grasp it” (Cupitt, 1997, p. 79).

In face of this fashionable acceptance of the loss of the past, such parental choice of a church school could seem both futile and educationally unsound.

However, other writers do not accept such a cataclysmic vision. Bennett (1998) for one offers this comment on the postmodernist thinker: “He sees history setting out on a new chapter even when objectively speaking, it may have only turned a page” (p. 23). Bennett recalls a phrase of Adorno, that such a view allows its thinker to “forget himself.” In so doing, his own culture, history, and
the secure sense of self that is identity that is derived at least in part from his

community is lost “out of sheer open-mindedness” (p. 23).

The discussion of the multi-faith and multi-cultural society is dense and many

layered. A secularized society, state, and school could suggest a homogenized
culture in which Christianity does not have a “superordinate position.” It could
also be a host culture, in this context Christianity (either as an active religious
faith or as a cultural residue), promotes a societal tolerance and acceptance of
minority faiths and culture. As was seen in the reception of public funding for
Muslim, Sikh, and Jewish schools, a new position would seem to be emerging
where a faith and cultural self-confidence are encouraged for ethnic minority and
religious communities. If this is the case, it would be illogical to challenge the
continued existence of Church of England and Roman Catholic schools.

As was seen earlier, it was necessary for Balfour to argue at the very begin
ning of the twentieth century that church schools were not inappropriate with the
needs and objectives of “a progressive community.” They were to be seen then
as part of “the normal machinery for education” in England (quoted in Barber,
1994, p. 41). It is also clear that at the beginning of this new century, while indi
vidual voices speak out against them, there is no organized, substantial chal-

lenge, either political or academic, to their remaining part of that machinery.

However, it must also be noted that while other commentators and activists

argue the case for a more overtly confident Christian stance by these schools,

that the attitudes and demands of these schools’ customers, namely, the parents,

seemingly remain, in part at least, pragmatic, and so problematic. Secularization

of English society may mean that strong feelings, one way or another, about

these schools have disappeared: on the other hand, they may be lying dormant to

return in a recognizable or new form. It is perhaps significant that politicians in

England, as with politicians everywhere, being sensitive to the electorate’s feel-
ings, expressed and subterranean, continue to prefer to “let sleeping dogs lie”


SURVIVING AND THRIVING IN A SECULARIZED CULTURE


Research Association.


From Abe to Zulu, the 300 languages spoken by London pupils. Evening Standard (2000, January 21).


Newsweek (1999, July 12). Is God dead: In Western Europe, it sure can look that way.


VALUES AND RELIGION BEYOND ORIENTALISM – HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE CULTURE OF MUSLIM SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND Some methodological reflections Helen Johnson and Mike Castelli

Source: International Journal of Education and Religion 3(1) (2002): 33-45. This paper seeks to offer an exploration of an appropriate methodology for the study of Muslim schools in England. For this matter, it focuses on the need for an extensive contextualisation and awareness of cultural subjectivities and identifies some commonalities and dissimilarities that may influence the collection of data concerned with the culture of Muslim schools in one northern European country. The primary focus is an attempt to register the complexity of investigating cultural issues and to propose some tentative steps towards qualitative research that will tell the story of a significant development within state education in England. 1. Introduction

In the diverse English schooling system, comparisons, whether explicit or implicit, made between schools and the roles of actors within them are likely to use culture as a fundamental concept. Culture itself is a ubiquitous and multi
layered term that demands caution in its definition. Its use as a tool of analysis and interpretation also raises important issues of bias and political vested interests, possibly, if not probably, in all parties to the project. In any study of Islam and Muslim schools, whether or not set in a western context, the seemingly automatic attitudes of some western observers have to be noted and considered in depth. This is necessary lest such observers unthinkingly adopt the stance of orientalism, which Edward Said (1978, 1997), amongst others, has discussed as the western style for dominating, restructuring and interpreting Islam on western terms.

While acknowledging Said’s argument, it is also important to note that Islam in the West is itself undergoing change. As part of this change, Muslim schools are engaged in creating an identity for the school, the students and the larger communities associated with them. Most Muslim schools in England are multi-ethnic and draw children from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. Although mono-faith they portray diverse interpretations of Islam. While respecting and supporting the cultural diversity within their student population these schools are also preparing young people for contemporary English society. It would not be
an exaggeration to describe their task as developing a kind of English Islam, which is new and is finding its way and its identity within this new context.

The focus of this article is to discuss the considerations that must be addressed when devising a methodology with which to study publicly funded Muslim schools in England. In this context, there is a shared language of public everyday usage, namely English. So, it might appear that any significant methodological concerns might revolve around the technicalities of operationalisation, specifically those of data collection. However, it could be that something more profound and complicated is also present. There is interaction between culture and the meanings people acquire and attribute to events. So though, a ‘shared language’ seems to imply ‘shared meaning’, it could be that the ‘shared language’ often taken for granted sometimes conceals the subjectivity of different cultures or leads to simplistic and sometimes inaccurate ‘translations’ from the studied culture to the one in which the research study is framed (Trautmann, 1987). This could be particularly so in a northern European context where certain religions and cultural traditions have only comparatively recently coexisted in a multi-culturalised context. So as a research project is progressed through the stages of
designing of a methodology, collecting and analysing data about Muslim schools in England, the omnipresent challenge will be the need to be self-reflexive about the nature of the cultural subjectivity brought by all participants to the process.

The structure of this article is as follows. For the readers unfamiliar with the English schooling system, we say something about the English dual system and the place Muslim schools occupy in it (section 2). Next we consider the complexity of culture and especially focus on the relationship between culture and identity (section 3). The subsequent section (4), then, constitutes the core of this paper. It is here that we reflect on certain key-aspects of an appropriate methodology for studying Muslim schools. We end our discussion by drawing some conclusions regarding data collection and validity (section 5).

State funding of Christian schools has a comparatively long history in England. In 1833, the British government paid small grants to the educational bodies of the Non-Conformist churches and the Church of England. In 1902 Catholic schools were incorporated into the state system and subsequently, a small number of Jewish school and, more recently, in 1998, Muslim and Sikh schools. Values and religion

This inclusion of church/faith schools in the public/state
system of English schooling to create a dual system distinguishes it from the public systems of the USA, Australia, New Zealand and most of continental Europe (Sallis, 1994).

Church/faith schools were once criticised for the narrowness of their curriculum (Hirst, 1972, writing specifically of Catholic schools) and, in some instances, for their poor educational standards. However, today, church/faith schools are as subject to the 'central template' of the National Curriculum and inspection by the government agency OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) as any other school within the state system. Increasingly, church/faith schools (Anglican and Catholic schools in particular) are gathering a reputation for educational excellence and, despite some opposition, the present government is committed to increasing their number over the next few years.

Thus the Muslim schools in this research became part of the state system at a time when church/faith schools were enjoying some success. They were aware of this and aware also of the debate within the existing church/faith schools concerning church/faith values and the price of success within a state system.

Research has shown (Johnson & Castelli, 2000) that church/faith schools see themselves as integral to the state educational system and,
moreover, they feel they bring a particular educational philosophy that enriches and is enriched by this partnership. The two Muslim schools within this study share this commitment to the state system and are open to the dialogue that will ensue. The debate that has ranged around church/faith schools, and particularly Muslim state schools since the events in New York and Washington of 11 September 2001, has raised the question of the influence of Muslim schools upon contemporary English society. Within the Muslim community, both prior to and after 11 September, the debate has been around the compatibility of Muslim faith values and state values within schools. In this area they share common concern with other church/faith schools. How this intra-community and inter-community dialogue influences English society will be of interest to many.

3. The complexity of culture and uncertainty of identity

As was noted in the introduction, culture itself is a complex term, used by many disciplines, which has to be handled carefully. It can be seen in societal terms, as in Hofstede’s wide generalisations about cultural characteristics (Hofstede, 1980). The idea of a societal culture is a convenience that pinpoints a locale, a history, policies for the future and current salient operating characteristics of the
educational system. But can it always be used so confidently? As Dimmock and Walker (1999) note, societal cultures are not homogeneous. In a contemporary British/English society that sees much of its past, and it would seem, its future in terms of a strong nation-state, recent Scottish and Welsh devolution have made the term ‘British’ now increasingly problematic. This has had a ‘knock-on’ effect on an English identity that has become a sharper, more specific, refreshed (and also problematic) cultural and national term within a society that has an EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM that is distinctive from its immediate neighbours within the United Kingdom (Raffe, Brannen, Croxford & Martin, 1999). With such complexities and ongoing shifts in identity, it is clear that it is no simple task for researchers to explore and understand the full cultural hinterland that such national identities or labels represent. Hall (2000, p. 17) adds to the uncertainty by pointing out that “the concept of identity . . . is . . . not an essentialist, but a strategic and positional one.” He goes on to say that identity “does not signal that stable core of self . . . the bit which remains always-ready ‘the same’, identical to itself across time.” A recent article in a liberal, British newspaper about young English Muslims (The Guardian, 29 December 2000) would seem to
offer support for Hall’s argument. The views of Mohammed Omar, a twenty

five year old English-born Muslim are reported. He commented that many

young Muslims who had thought themselves westernised were shaken by the

Gulf war. Further on in the article he is quoted as saying: I grew up in Hackney, where a lot of people said OK I’m black. I think it was a lot to do with peer group pressure because in Hackney there were a lot of people from Jamaica. There’s nothing wrong with that, but in the end it’s just a fashion statement (our italics).

This statement would suggest that identity cannot be used to claim total security

and permanence; in fact, it would seem that identities fragment and multiply and

are more a matter of a chosen position rather than an automatic inheritance.

On a more specific level, it can be said that “educational policies have altered

following changes in the composition of British society” (Todd, 1991, p. 39).

Todd (1991, p. 39) goes on to note that “. . . there is no consensus on how many

distinctive approaches have evolved” in respect of education in a multi-cultural

society that the post-colonial Britain and England have become. Accordingly to

Mullard (1984, p. 7), such approaches depend on how specific conceptions of

educational issues link with wider models of British society: . . . all the racial forms of education that have scurried across the landscape of educational history over the last twenty years - immigrant, multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, poly-ethnic, and anti-racist education - stand and face each other in a relatively
similar way. This is so because they draw upon different or slightly different perspectives and perceptions of socio-educational reality and objectives. In short, they all evoke positions on the nature of the social and educational; they all invoke their own set of decisions in respect to (preferred) definitions of the problem in society and education and hence (preferred) conceptions of social and educational objectives.

As these positions have evolved, it is interesting that a current policy approach in England has been in terms of structures. The creation of new faith schools V A L U E S A N D R E L I G I O N (and the continuance of the previously established Christian ones) is a phenomenon of our secularised times (Johnson, 2000). The multi-cultural initiatives and programmes, discussed by Mullard over seventeen years ago, that place an emphasis on ‘inclusiveness’ and ‘similarity’ are judged by some as having been replaced or at least overshadowed by these new schools that respond to the needs and demands of newly arrived immigrant groups. Such school openings can be seen, in Mullard’s terms of preferred definitions of a social problem or issue and preferred solutions, in a number of ways. Without exploring this area further, three ways that immediately come to mind are:

• church/faith schools can be regarded as a confident expression of a mature multi-cultural society;

• they (and the longer-established Christian schools) can be seen as socially divisive;

• or, in Apple’s terms (1996), can be seen, within the arena of cultural politics, as a project of cultural restoration.
Culture is also an important term at the organisational level and has been written about extensively in management literature (Handy, 1994; Pheysey, 1993; Morgan, 1997; Schein, 1992). Hoyle (1986, p. 3), writing of the educational institution that is the school, notes that “central to the concept (of culture) is the idea of value, that which is regarded as worthwhile by members of the group.”

So, within any school and linked community it is likely, if not certain, that many sub-cultures will co-exist. Each will reflect different ‘worthwhiles’ that may or may not correspond with the mainstream culture, that in Apple’s terms (1996) holds hegemonic sway within the school or community or society as a whole.

Such comments are seemingly self-evident but of great significance when samples are being constructed or interviewees selected. More mundanely, but without less significance, will be the personal values of individuals that may be expressed overtly in political, social or religious allegiances or more subtly, as Goffman (1969) would have it, in the ‘ordinariness’ of everyday behaviour and interaction. All these (individual and collective) ‘cultures’ will interact in ways that are both predictable and unpredictable. 4.

Methodological reflections 4.1. Knowledge about the studied culture as a prerequisite
If researchers need to have self-awareness about their own culture, involvement in a cross-cultural study requires knowledge about the culture of those they are studying. Here again, an on-going management of this awareness is necessary; otherwise, researchers are at the mercy of stereotypes. (How do you typically regard Muslims? Do you have an ‘insider’ or ‘outsider’ understanding? On what is your ‘knowing’ based?) Common cultural stereotypes exist. They can be BEYOND ORIENTALISM accurate or a slander; they can be benign or malevolent; and they can be an objective statement or a patronising put-down. Stereotypes, collected on an anecdotal basis by these researchers, can be illustrated as follows:

1. From direct or indirect interactions with a range of others within across contemporary English society:

   About faith schools, in general:
   “Aren’t all faith schools fundamentalist or at best indoctrination shops?”
   “Do children receive a relevant, modern education in them?”
   “Aren’t children taught to believe rather than think?”

   About Islamic schools, in particular:
   “Don’t Muslim schools prevent children integrating into contemporary society?”
   “Do girls experience the same curriculum as boys?”
“Are girls treated as the equals of boys? Are they hidden behind veils?”

2. From the researchers’ own feelings:

“How will I be treated at the schools by the staff?”

“Will I be regarded as a ‘woman’ rather than as an ‘individual’?”

“Will I have to be acquiescent, bite my lip, let my colleague take the lead in the interviews and other social situations?”

“What should I wear or not wear to visit an Islamic school?”

“I really do not want to offend anybody by committing some dreadful social gaffe”.

“These anxieties are likely to be ridiculous, but I must take notice of what I am feeling”.

“How should I address female members of staff?”

“It is permitted for me to shake hands with the head teacher or other staff?”

From these anecdotes, it is possible to see these apprehensions about the purpose of Islamic schools and social unease are based on a lack of knowledge and previous social interaction. (However, the gender differences cannot be too quickly dismissed. After all, they do exist).

Beyond anecdote, more profoundly, Karen Armstrong’s (2000, p. iv) sympathetic history of Islam outlines a common western view: No religion in the modern world is as feared and misunderstood as Islam. It haunts the popular Western imagination as an extreme faith that promotes authoritarian government,
female oppression, civil war and terrorism.

Exploring this fear, Said (1997, pp. xxix–x) talks not merely of Apple’s cultural politics but of a cultural war being waged against Islam, derived “from nineteenth century Orientalists of the British and French school, who saw in Islam a danger to Christianity and liberal values . . .”. The Palestinian-American scholar has called this the ‘grandest of all narratives’ and although orientalism can be considered as a general theory of representation of The Other, it can be regarded as applying more specifically to Islam and Muslims. Said (1978, p. 3) defines orientalism as “the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient . . . as a western style for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient”. Thus, it is clear that orientalism must be faced head on and that there are important issues here for researchers about the achieving of an objectively informed position. This is even more apparent since the events in United States of America on 11 September 2001.

4.2. Adopting qualitative research techniques

Clearly positivist-based research that is concerned with the input and outputs of systems has a meaningful place in the social sciences and in the field of school and education management in particular. But as the preceding discussion on the
complexities and subjectivities of culture and their impact on meaning has shown an approach that delves beneath the surface realities is required. The qualitative perspective offers a means by which some of the main themes of sociological thinking and theory can be addressed. These themes revolve around issues of power, ideology and, most importantly of all, subjective meaning.

Weber (1978 [1921], p. 4) himself defines sociology as: . . . a science concerning itself with the interpretative understanding of social action and thereby with a causal explanation of its course and consequences.

In this, the social sciences are conceptualised as “cultural sciences with a systematic intent.” Habermas (1990, p. 10) notes that in this definition Weber combines: . . . methodological principles that philosophers had found in opposing types of sciences: the social sciences have the task of bringing the heterogeneous methods, aims, and presuppositions of the natural and cultural sciences into balance.

From this, Schutz (1964, pp. 269–270) states that: . . . all scientific explanations of the social world can, and for certain purposes must, refer to the subjective meaning of the actions of human beings from which the social reality originates.

While there may be social constructions of reality that are governed by identifiable rules and regulations, contrary to the Durkheimian view, no objective beyond orientalism patterns of reality exist. Individuals have the capacity to make their own reality and so exercise a choice in deciding to act out this rather than that: “. . . the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning” (Weber, 1978 [1921], p. 24) to
his or her own behaviour “be it overt or covert, omission or acquiescence.”

Freire (1990, p. 61) summarises this view in a pithy fashion: “. . . no one can say a true word . . . for another”. So, in practical terms, whereas quantitative research seeks to measure behaviour, qualitative research attempts to go beyond appearances to explore a deeper understanding of the meanings of the reality, within a particular situation, as offered by the situational actors themselves.

This approach has been successful in generating much reportage and vivid thick description about, in the main, urban sub-cultures. But how can the reader assess, whether implicitly or explicitly, its relevance to his or her situation, if no historical and/or structural contextualisation is attempted? Going beyond the what of culture and perception formation, how can the reader understand why it developed in such a manner? What can be surmised about the ideological and hegemonic pressures and influences on those views and perceptions, however individual? It could be argued that the ‘value-free’, theory-free, uncritical sociology that this approach seemingly produces, in fact, in some instances, conceals more than it reveals.

Hammersley (1992) has sought to synthesise the traditional, ‘Chicago
perspective’ with a wider and broader view of the historical and structural context in which the perceptions of individuals are embedded. He states (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 234): “. . . we have no grounds for dismissing the validity of participant understandings outright.” He takes the point further to argue that such ‘understandings’ “are a crucial source of knowledge, deriving as they do from experience of the social world”. However, they are not to be accepted unquestioningly and “they must be treated in exactly the same manner as social scientific accounts.”

In this vein, Jorgensen (1989, p. 18) argues for a position that allows both form and flexibility for the researcher, who, while perhaps having “a theoretical interest in being there”, has not made any definitive decisions about “. . . what concepts are important, how they are or are not related.” He concludes that: . . . what therefore, is problematic should remain open and subject to refinement and definition based on what the researcher is able to uncover and observe.

This view allows the researcher a theoretical position, that he or she is likely to have, as long as it is not given precedence over the data that is collected in the field. This theoretical position itself is a starting-point that can and is likely to be modified (as is the original research design). The issue is perhaps how far from
this starting-point is the end result. After all, as Powney & Watts (1987, p. 23) wryly comment: VALUES AND RELIGION There is a sense in which this must always be the case - that the researcher has explicit (or somewhat implicit) theoretical conceptions of the outcomes, otherwise he or she would not embark on the research in the first place.

With these provisos that attempt to distinguish a theoretical position from a cultural and or political prejudice, we now turn to consider the reflexive and 'self policing' qualitative researcher. 4.3. The researcher as the instrument

The qualitative researcher's own role in the research has been broadened out from the reporter of certain social phenomena and situations as seen by their actors. Thus, it is clear that certain 'checks' have to be built into the research design to assist the researcher to minimise bias and to maintain the balance between observation and theory in an authentic and meaningful way. Reflexivity is not primarily concerned with the arguing for the validity of the research to its readers, but with offering the researcher self-consciousness about how he or she designs, implements and interprets the research project. Ward-Schofield (1993, p. 202) suggests that at its core qualitative research has: "... the assumption that a piece of qualitative research is very much influenced by the researcher's own attributes and perspectives.” She goes on to say that: The
goal is not to produce a standardised set of results that any other careful researcher would have produced . . . it is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with detailed study of the situation. (Ward-Schofield, 1993, p. 202)

Clearly, reflexivity is more than a relaxed mulling over of what has happened today in school or in the office. According to Imel (1989), reflective practice is the integration of thought and action with reflection; and so is a more rigorous and demanding exercise. Reflective thinking can be structured: . . . according to the mode of thinking or the process an individual progresses through to reach a level of reflection that complements both the context of the situation and the background the individual brings to the episode. (Taggart & Wilson 1998, p. 2)

The evaluation and decision-making engaged is to be informed, logical and systematic – and may be conducted solely by the individual concerned or as a group activity with ‘critical friends’. But even in this, testing out the issue of cultural bias and/or ignorance is relevant once again. What should be the cultural background of that friend or friends? Does the loop remain closed if their background is similar to that of the researchers? Or can communication be really effective if the friends are ‘within their own, different culture’? 15. Some general conclusions about data collection, analysis, and validity As has been seen, data collection from both documentary and other sources has been considered, as has issues revolving around the objectivity of the researcher in
the emerging categories within the data in the subsequent analysis. From this it can be seen that it is clearly necessary to embark on such a cross-cultural project with some caution and careful though flexible planning. Though a qualitative approach cannot be used in a slip-shod or casual fashion, it has been selected as it offers “a means for inquiring into unsuspected connections within and across the levels of individual, school, society, national and supra-national culture” (Johnson & Hill 2000).

Thus in order to collect data, relevant government, religious, and school documents might be examined to ascertain the purpose, structure, and mechanisms of Muslim schools in England. This means that the two publicly funded Muslim schools and other privately funded ones need to be approached for access and to open up and widen comparative sources of data. In this way, misinterpretations can be avoided or minimised. An interview inventory design has to be attempted that is culturally aware and sensitive (since it is accepted that the likelihood of devising one that is culturally free is impossible in the field of education, which is, of course, concerned with culture).

As regards validity, the first concern will be description validity – the factual
accuracy of accounts. This is the essential of every qualitative study. As Geertz (1973, p. 17) puts it, “behaviour must be attended to, and with some exactness, because it is through the flow of behaviour – or, more precisely, social action – that cultural forms find articulation.” Interpretative validity will be the next concern. Beyond a valid description of places, behaviours, and reportage, attention must be paid to what they mean to the people involved with them. Interpretative accounts will be grounded in the language and culture of the people studied. In this type of research, then, generalising is limited to the community, group, or institution studied. Note 1 The role these ‘friends’ may play is illustrated by the following example. Through a series of three preliminary interviews, we established an increasing rapport with a subject who was himself a convert to Islam before studying the culture of Muslim schools. This subject has travelled from one set of paradigms to another, and retained the memory of the experience. Essentially, in Hall’s (2000) terms, he has proactively chosen his identity. He has become both a critical friend and a guide for us, specifically.


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PART 2 Emotions and gender


Change Through Col

Sage Publications.


During the past decade and a half, researchers have produced a strong stream of "bright side" empirical studies in the field of educational administration focusing on the considerable contribution of exemplary school principals to schools in general (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2001; Blase & Kirby, 2000; Good & Brophy, 1986; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood, Thomlinson, & Genge, 1996; Murphy &
Louis, 1994a, 1994b) and teacher development and student learning in particular (e.g., Blase & Blase, 1999; Heck, Larsen, & Marcoulides, 1990; Heck & Mar
coulides, 1993; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Sheppard, 1996). Notably, this know
ledge base provides ample theoretical and empirical evidence that effective
principal leadership can have important effects on student learning (Wang,
Haertel, & Walberg, 1993). Specifically, effective principals develop positive
relationships based on mutual trust, respect, openness, support, and understand
ing (Blase & Blase, 1998, 2001; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001;
Lambert et al., 1995; Sergiovanni, 1996; Walton, 1990); develop learning
communities of professionals and constituents able to openly communicate,
make decisions, solve problems, and resolve conflicts (Schmuck & Runkel,
1994; Wald & Castleberry, 2000); maintain a collaborative focus on teaching
and learning (Fullen, 1997; Joyce & Calhoun, 1996); and encourage teacher
reflection, peer coaching, and shared critique and inquiry (Blase & Blase, 1998;
Calhoun, 1994; Joyce & Showers, 1995; Schön, 1987). The importance of
related leadership skills and corresponding attitudes and values to the develop
ment of strong, positive relationships between principals and teachers cannot be
overemphasized; indeed, respectful, constructive relationships between principals and teachers are essential for school improvement (Boyer, 1995; Cotton, 2001; Hoachlander, 2001; Schlechty, 1997; Senge, 2000).

In stark contrast, no empirical studies have systematically examined the “dark side” of school leadership, in particular principal mistreatment/abuse of teachers, and the extremely harmful consequences such forms of leadership have on life in schools. This article is based on a larger qualitative study of school principals’ mistreatment/abuse of teachers and the subsequent destructive effects on them, from the perspectives of teachers themselves. It focuses on the effects of principal behavior that teachers perceive as abuse or mistreatment (teachers in our study used both terms synonymously), that is, effects that teachers experienced as seriously harmful over the long run. The principal behaviors teachers defined as abusive are also briefly described. In reporting the findings of our study, we recognize that the principal mistreatment phenomenon may be a function of problematic interactions provoked by both principals and teachers. We also acknowledge that different reference groups have different perspectives on the same problem (Blumer, 1969); in fact, we expect that the perspectives of the...
purveyors of mistreatment (i.e., principals) differ significantly from the perspectives of the victims of mistreatment (i.e., teachers) (Baumeister, 1996).

However, given the degree to which people in public schools routinely suppress conflict (a point we discuss below), it is not possible to obtain "objective" measures of the mistreatment problem.

To date, two long-standing avenues of research in education (i.e., teacher stress studies and micropolitical studies of the school principal-teacher relationship) have produced only glimpses of how principals mistreat teachers. A number of stress studies have linked elements of principals' leadership style and behavior (e.g., nonsupport, assertiveness) to significant stress and burnout in teachers (Adams, 1988; Barnette, 1990; Blase, 1984; Blase, Strathe, & Dedrick, 1986; Diehl, 1993; Dunham, 1984; Dworkin, Haney, Dworkin, & Telschow, 1990). Micropolitical studies have yielded richer descriptions of some aspects of principal mistreatment; these studies describe, among other things, principal favoritism with regard to appointments, promotions, enforcement of rules, evaluation, and recognition and rewards (Blase, 1988). Other micropolitical studies have examined principal behaviors including sanctions, harassment, lack
of accessibility, and manipulation as well as teachers’
response to such behav
iors (Ball, 1987, Blase, 1990, 1991; Blase & Anderson,
1995). Taken together,
these two areas of research provide provocative clues to
the principal mistreat
ment problem and its destructive outcomes for teachers;
however, such studies are few in number and have generated only limited
understandings of the range
of abusive principal behaviors: how such behaviors interact
to form a “pattern”
of abuse in a given situation; and the damaging effects
such behaviors have on
teachers, teaching, and schools.
Undoubtedly, the failure of both academic and professional
educators to
study principal mistreatment of teachers, applying the same
rigorous research
protocols we use to investigate other educational problems,
has resulted in
incomplete, naïve, and even false understandings of how
some, perhaps a note
worthy percentage of, school leaders and teachers
experience their work
(Hodgkinson, 1991). Moreover, this failure allows
mistreatment to continue
without challenge and without hope of improvement (Keashly,
Trott, &
MacLean, 1994; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). As a first step,
this study provides
an inductively derived knowledge base and initiates an area
of inquiry essential
to developing a constructive approach to a deeply disturbing problem in Amer
ican public education. Workplace abuse: a conceptual, theoretical, and empirical review Terms and constructs

Internationally, systematic research on the problem of workplace abuse, notably nonphysical forms of abuse, has increased significantly during the past two decades in countries such as Sweden, Norway, Germany, Austria, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Several of these countries have also enacted legislation against workplace abuse, and private organizations have been created to help victims of abuse (Björkvist, Österman, & Hjelt-Bäck, 1994; Davenport, Schwartz, & Elliott, 1999; Keashly, 1998; Namie & Namie, 2000). For most of this same period, organizational scholars in the United States have largely ignored the problem of work abuse. In recent years, however, scholars have begun to address the problem; indeed, the emerging national literature suggests that workplace abuse may lead to serious deleterious consequences for both employees and organizations (Baron & Neuman, 1996; Davenport et al., 1999; Hornstein et al., 1995; Keashly, 1998; Keashly et al., 1994).

Employing a variety of methods, researchers have used a number of terms in
the conceptual, theoretical, and empirical literature to describe the workplace mistreatment/abuse phenomenon including incivility (Andersson & Pearson, 1999), mobbing (Davenport et al., 1999; Leymann, 1990), bullying (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Namie & Namie, 2000), harassment (Björkvist et al., 1994);
petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1994), abusive disrespect (Hornstein, 1996), interactional injustice (Harlos & Pinder, 2000), emotional abuse (Keashly, 1998), mistreatment (Folger, 1993; Price Spratlen, 1995), abuse (Bassman, 1992), aggression (Neuman & Baron, 1990), deviance (Robinson & Bennett, 1995), and victimization (Swedish National Board of Occupational Safety and Health, 1993).

In addition, organizational scholars have developed a variety of empirically grounded constructs to define the workplace mistreatment/abuse phenomenon.

To illustrate,

• Andersson and Pearson (1999) conceptualized workplace incivility as “low intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviors are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard for others” (p. 457).
• The construct of mobbing (or psychical terror), the most common term used in Europe, refers to “hostile and unethical communication that is directed in a systematic way by one or a number of persons toward one individual. . . .

These actions take place often . . . and over a long period (at least six months) and, because of this frequency and duration, result in considerable psychic, psychosomatic, and social misery” (Leymann, 1990, p. 120).

Mobbing consists of humiliating, intimidating, and abusive communication, committed directly or indirectly, to confuse, discredit, intimidate, and isolate an individual, to force the individual into submission or out of the workplace (Davenport et al., 1999).

• Einarsen and Skogstad (1996) defined bullying, a term commonly used in the United States and Europe, as “harassment, badgering, nigling, freezing out, offending someone . . . repeatedly over a period of time, and the person confronted . . . [has] difficulties defending him/herself. It is not bullying if two parties of approximately equal strength are in conflict or the incident is an isolated event” (p. 191).

• Ashforth (1994) developed a measure of tyrannical behavior that consists of six dimensions. He defined a petty tyrant as “an individual
who lords his or her power over others . . . , acts in an arbitrary and self-aggrandizing manner, belittles subordinates, evidences lack of consideration, forces conflict resolution, discards initiative, and utilizes noncontingent punishment” (p. 772).

Abusive disrespect, a concept developed by Hornstein et al. (1995), is made up of eight behavioral dimensions of disrespectful supervisory behavior and specifically refers to “transgressions” by bosses that include deceit (i.e., lying), constraint (i.e., controlling subordinates’ actions outside of work), coercion (i.e., threatening excessive or inappropriate harm), selfishness (i.e., blaming and scapegoating subordinates), inequity (i.e., favoritism), cruelty (i.e., harming subordinates through name calling, personal attacks, disregard), disregard (i.e., being unfair and unkind, displaying an obvious lack of consideration), and deification (i.e., conduct that communicates a “master servant” relationship to subordinates).

From a comprehensive review of the workplace mistreatment/abuse literature, Keashly (1998) developed the concept of emotional abuse that subsumes THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP elements of the constructs defined above. Emotional abuse
emphasizes the
“hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors . . . directed at
gaining compliance from
others” (p. 85). Keashly identified emotional abuse with the
following: a pattern
of abuse (not a single event), behaviors that are unwanted
by the target, behav
iors that violate norms for appropriate conduct or an
individual’s rights, behav
iors that are intended to harm the target (as perceived by
the target), behaviors
that result in harm to the target, and power differences
between the abuser and
the target of abuse.

In addition, empirical research has generated a handful of
models of mistreat
ment in the work setting. Baron and Neuman (1996)
constructed the three-factor
model of workplace aggression, which includes expressions
of hostility,
obstructionism, and overt aggression. Expressions of
hostility include verbal and
symbolic behaviors such as facial expressions, gestures,
staring, dirty looks,
silent treatment, ridicule, unfair evaluations, and gossip.
Obstructionism refers
to actions that are often passive aggressive in nature,
such as withholding a
resource or behavior. Some examples are not returning phone
calls, refusing to
provide needed resources or equipment, and failing to warn
an individual of
imminent danger. Overt aggression, the third factor, refers
to threats or acts of physical violence and theft or destruction of an individual's work equipment.

Ryan and Oestreich (1991) produced a model of abrasive (i.e., less harmful) and abusive (i.e., more harmful) categories of boss behavior, with behaviors (listed from less to more harmful) including silence, glaring eye contact, abrupt ness, snubbing or ignoring, insults, blaming, discrediting and discounting, con trolling others aggressively, making threats about the job, yelling and shouting, making angry outbursts, and threatening physical harm. Ryan and Oestreich contended that any behavior may have greater impact on individuals depending on timing, place of occurrence, and level of repetition.

Theoretical work Theoretical work in the general area of workplace mistreatment/abuse is very limited. Existing theories discuss the causes and consequences of mistreatment as well as relationships among personal factors (e.g., Type A behavior pattern, hostile attributional bias), interpersonal factors (e.g., provocation, frustrating events), and environmental (i.e., situational) factors (e.g., restructuring, organi zational culture) (e.g., Hoel, Rayner, & Cooper, 1999; Neuman & Baron, 1998).

Andersson and Pearson’s (1999) theoretical ideas are particularly useful in
understanding how aggression could evolve between individuals in nonhierarchical relationships in organizational contexts.

In addition to general theories of workplace mistreatment/abuse, several scholars have specifically developed theories of boss abuse of subordinates.

Hornstein et al. (1995) constructed a theory of supervisory disrespect that draws heavily on symbolic interaction, organizational justice, and the psychological and stress literature. These authors argue that people’s feelings of both self-worth and security are affected by how respectfully others treat them; and feelings of self-worth and security, in turn, affect one’s mental health and well-being. Hornstein et al. established validity and reliability for the Boss Behavior Questionnaire (BBQ), which uses measurable constructs of respect and disrespect to examine eight domains of supervisory disrespectful behavior described above. Among other things, these researchers differentiated between a “demanding boss,” that is, a boss who is rigorously task-oriented (i.e., focused on production), and a disrespectful boss. As well, Hornstein et al. demonstrated that disrespectful behavior is always inappropriate, regardless of conceivable circumstances that exist in organizations, because it violates a person’s dignity and
generates loss of self-esteem and generalized distress (i.e., anxiety and depression).

Ashforth (1994) developed a model of the antecedents and effects of tyranny on subordinates. He contended that petty tyranny is an interaction between superordinates’ predispositions (i.e., beliefs about organizations, subordinates, ized values and norms, power, and stressors). Ashforth argued that tyrannical management causes low leader endorsement and high frustration, stress, and resistance; high helplessness and work alienation; low self-esteem and poor work performance; and low work unit cohesiveness. He emphasized that such affects could trigger a vicious circle that sustains the tyrannical behavior. For example, the exercise of power may induce a manager to do the following:

attribute subordinates’ success to himself or herself, develop an inflated sense of self-worth, create greater psychological distance from subordinates, and view subordinates as objects of manipulation (Kipnis, 1972). Likewise, subordinates’ responses to tyrannical behavior, such as helplessness and low commitment, may contribute to managers’ already negative stereotypes toward subordinates (e.g., lazy, untrustworthy), which further justifies coercion. To the extent that
such tyrannical behaviors reduce leader endorsement and incite resistance, the vicious circle becomes complete. Ashforth explained that this is why managers may persist with an ineffective management style, supported by defensive attributions and self-fulfilling attitudes and behaviors. They may not recognize the role their attitudes play in the genesis of the very behaviors they are presently trying to prevent. Also, tyrannical behavior may produce short-term subordinate compliance, which may seduce a manager to discount longer term, more serious disruptive effects of tyrannical behavior. Ashforth noted that this vicious circle results in the “tyrant’s paradox” (p. 771)—the means used to gain control under mine the viability of that control. Studies of workplace mistreatment/abuse Studies disclose a wide range of nonverbal and verbal/behavioral forms of work place abuse. To illustrate, nonverbal behaviors include aggressive eye contact (e.g., staring, “dirty looks,” snubbing or ignoring, “the silent treatment”) and physical gestures (e.g., violations of physical space, finger pointing, slamming objects, and throwing objects). Some examples of verbal behaviors are sexual harassment, angry outbursts, yelling and screaming, put-downs, lying, public humiliation, threats of job loss, physical harm, name
calling, excessive or
unfounded criticism of work abilities or personal life, unreasonable job
demands, stealing credit for another’s work, blaming, exclusion or isolation, ini
tiating malicious rumors and gossip, withholding resources or obstructing
opportunities, favoritism, dismissing an individual’s feelings or thoughts,
unfriendly behavior, not returning phone calls, and behavior that implies a
master-servant relationship (Björkvist et al., 1994; Davenport et al., 1999;
Harlos & Finder, 2000; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990;
Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Neuman &
Furthermore, according to the research, abuse in the workplace is associated
with a host of serious adverse effects on an individual’s physical well-being,
psychological/emotional well-being, work performance, and social relationships.
Examples of effects on physical well-being include sleep disorders (e.g., night
mares or insufficient rest), headaches, backaches, fatigue/exhaustion, illness,
hyperactivity, weight changes (e.g., significant increases or decreases), irritable
bowel syndrome, heart arrhythmia, skin changes, ulcers, substance abuse (first
time use), and suicide. Some psychological/emotional effects of abusive work place behavior are depression, anger, rage, helplessness, powerlessness, cynicism and distrust, self-doubt, guilt, shame, embarrassment, insecurity, disillusionment, poor concentration, lowered self-esteem, aggression or revenge, hypervigilance, panic attacks, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Effects on work performance include reductions in job effort, extra effort, commitment, and satisfaction and morale plus increases in absenteeism, turnover, and attrition. Social effects noted in the literature are isolation and loss of friendships (Björkvist et al., 1994; Davenport et al., 1999; Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Northwestern National Life Insurance Company [NNLI], 1993; Pearson, 2000; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991).

Examination of the research on abusive bosses (versus coworker abuse, for example) has revealed a number of disturbing findings. First, abusive conduct by bosses is commonplace in a wide range of both profit and nonprofit organizational settings. Second, studies indicate that bosses (e.g., superiors, managers) are more frequently workplace abusers rather than an individual’s coworkers; in
various studies, bosses have been identified as engaging in
abusive conduct
toward subordinates between 54% of the time and 90% of the
time (Björkvist et
al., 1994; Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996; Hornstein, 1996;
Keashly et al., 1994;
Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; NNLI, 1993; Pearson,
2000; Rayner,
1990). Several scholars have persuasively argued that they
expect abusive
contact by superiors to increase given organizational
changes such as the EMOTION Sand GENDER
growth in diversity, a decline in unionization (Yamada,
2000), and increases in
electronic monitoring (Hornstein, 1996).
Third, studies of workplace mistreatment have demonstrated
that male and
female bosses are equally likely to engage in abusive
contact (Harlos & Pinder,
2000; Keashly et al., 1994), although abusive male bosses
tend to use explosive
behaviors more frequently than female bosses (e.g., Harlos
& Pinder, 2000). In
addition, both men and women are victimized by such
behavior; however, men
are abused primarily by men, and women are abused by both
men and women
(Campaign Against Workplace Bullying [CAWB], 2000; Leymann,
1990).
Research has also demonstrated that women experience
significantly more
harassment than men (Björkvist et al., 1994; CAWB, 2000).
Finally, Keashly et
al. (1994) found that gender does not influence a victim's perception of the
degree of abusive behavior.

Fourth, the research on abusive bosses indicates that victims of this type of
abuse seldom have viable opportunities for recourse. Studies emphasize that
because of organizational culture (e.g., a “macho culture”) and off-putting man
agement practices (e.g., a cavalier attitude about abuse, attempts to justify abusive
conduct), victims’ complaints about abusive bosses usually result in (a) no action
(i.e., no response) from upper-level management/administration and departments
of human resources, (b) efforts to protect an abusive boss, and/or (c) reprisals
against the victim for registering complaints (Bassman, 1992; Davenport et al.,
Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Pearson, 2000; Rayner, 1998). Theoretical framework: symbolic interactionism

Although there is some significant scholarly work on the
problem of work
place mistreatment/abuse, there is no conceptual, theoretical, or empirical
work on the school principal mistreatment/abuse problem and, in particular,
none drawn from the perspectives of victimized teachers themselves. Sym
bolic interactionism served as the theoretical framework for this study. This
perspective on social inquiry rests on three major premises: (a) Individuals act
toward things and people on the basis of the meanings that things have for
them; (b) the meaning of such things are derived from, or arise out of, the
social interaction that individuals have with one another; and (c) these mean
ings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by
individuals to deal with the things and other people they encounter (Blumer,
1969). This theoretical perspective recognizes that although structural factors
(e.g., organizational, cultural) influence action, the interpretations and mean
ings that people attach to such factors account for action. In other words,
people’s capacity for reflexivity has more influence on action than structural
factors. The symbolic interaction perspective views the individual as a social
product who is influenced by others but also maintains distance from others
and is able to initiate individual action (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1934). T H E D A R K S I D E O F L E A D E R S H I P

In contrast to some qualitative applications, the Blumer-Mead (1969 and
1934, respectively) perspective on symbolic interactionism emphasizes the
examination of human subjectivity. In short, it examines perceptions and mean
ings that people construct in their social settings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Lofland, 1971; Morse, 1991; Schwandt, 1994; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998; Tesch, 1988). According to Meltzer, Petras, and Reynolds (1975), symbolic interactionists who employ this approach study “what goes on inside the heads of humans” (p. 55). They stated, Human beings are defined as self-reflective beings. . . . The behavior of men and women is “caused” not so much by forces within themselves [e.g., instincts] . . . or by external forces impinging upon them . . . but [by] what lies in between, a reflective and socially derived interpretation of the internal and external stimuli that are present [p. 2]. . . . Perception functions as a meditative experience for the individual in the relationship between himself/herself and the social environment. (p. 52)

Consistent with the Blumer-Mead (1969, 1934) approach, this study employed an open-ended theoretical and methodological perspective designed to focus on the meanings teachers constructed from long-term mistreatment/abuse experiences with school principals. The purpose was to create a substantive model of principal mistreatment/abuse behaviors and their effects—that is, an inductively derived model constructed entirely from the empirical world under investigation. Therefore, the model we present contains no concepts from the relevant extant literature and no logical elaboration (Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Research method and procedures clearly, the study discussed in this article is extremely
sensitive and even incen
diary in nature. To actually conduct our study in a variety of school settings, we
would normally be required to identify principals responsible for long-standing
abusive conduct as well as the teachers they have targeted. However, we
assumed that school districts would not grant permission to conduct on-site
interviews with teachers victimized by principals and that teachers would not
volunteer to participate in a research project of this nature (even if it were
authorized) given the potential risks of doing so.
We employed a snowball sampling technique that requires others to recom
mend teachers who they believe have experienced long-term, significant abuse
by a school principal. Snowball sampling techniques are especially useful in
grounded theory research that attempts to draw samples from a variety of set
ings. This technique maximizes variation in the database to generate a large
number of categories that describe the phenomenon under study (Bogdan & E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R
Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan,
1998). Therefore, we contacted professors as well as school administrators and
teachers for referrals. We explained the nature of our study to referring indi
viduals and asked them to discuss participation in our
study with a victimized teacher.

We then contacted (by telephone) teachers who had expressed an interest in participation, explained our study, addressed questions and concerns, discussed our backgrounds, and generally got to know the teacher. Four teachers were excluded from the study, 2 because their abuse was not long term and 2 because the teachers felt that it would be too emotionally trying to discuss the abuse they suffered. Only teachers who had experienced long-term and significant abuse (i.e., 6 months to 9 years) by their school principal were included in our study.

In this way, we identified 50 teachers in the United States and Canada who believed they had experienced significant principal mistreatment/abuse.

As expected, teachers were very fearful of possible disclosure; however, several safeguards seemed to alleviate their fears and promote trust and rapport.

We explained to teachers that their identities would remain anonymous.

Teachers were informed, per our agreement with the Human Subjects Committee at our university, that our entire database (i.e., audiotapes, typed transcripts, official and personal documents, and other related materials) would be destroyed upon completion of our analysis. We also indicated that all
identifiers (including teachers’ gender and grade level) would be redacted from any materials used in any presentation of our findings. This, of course, required using pseudonyms for the names of people and places. Finally, we shared our general research questions and asked teachers to think about their abuse experience in preparation for the next interview.

As noted, trust and rapport are essential to conducting successful interviews with research participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Fontana & Frey, 2000, Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Because we were primarily using telephone interviews, we expected that achieving both rapport and trust would be uniquely challenging. Surprisingly, this was not the case; in fact, teachers spoke quite freely and in detail about their abuse experiences, despite the deeply disturbing nature of their experiences. (In about 25% of our interviews, teachers were so emotionally overcome during the retelling of their experiences that the interview had to be stopped briefly or rescheduled.)

Discussions with participants indicated that several factors account for the rapport and trust developed. These factors extend beyond our promises of anonymity and destruction of raw data: By asking meaningful questions, listen
ing attentively, expressing our deep-felt empathy for their suffering, and in
general, treating participants respectfully, we were able to gain their trust and
thus openness about their experiences. Indeed, we found that “to learn about
people, we must remember to treat them as people, and they will uncover their
lives to us” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 374).

Three additional factors enhanced teachers’ trust and willingness to share their experiences. First, our initial contact occurred through a trusted friend or
colleague or both. Second, and perhaps most important, our study held special
significance for teachers who participated; as painful as the interviews were,
they strongly believed that the problem of principal mistreatment should be
made public and, as one put it, “This study might crack open the door of hope
and eventually change the world of education.” Third, teachers indicated that
telephone interviews, conducted in the safety of their homes over an extended
period of time, added to their sense of comfort, security, and trust in the
researchers.

In total, 50 teachers participated in our study over a 18-year time period. The
sample consisted of male (n = 5) and female (n = 45) teachers from rural
(n = 14), suburban (n = 25), and urban (n = 11) school locations. Elementary (n = 26), middle/junior high (n = 10), and high school (n = 14) teachers participated. The average age of teachers was 42; the average number of years in teaching was 16. The sample included tenured (n = 44) and nontenured (n = 6); married (n = 34) and single (n = 16) teachers. Degrees earned by these teachers included B.A./B.S. (n = 7), MED./MA (n = 31), Ed.S. (n = 11), and Ph.D. (n = 1). The mean number of years working with the abusive principal was 4.

Forty-nine teachers resided in the United States and 1 resided in Canada. Fifteen of the teachers we studied were with an abusive principal at the time of this study; most others had experienced abuse in recent years. Teachers described both male (n = 28) and female (n = 22) principals.

It was noted earlier that the research question, interview guide, data collection, and analyses were based on the Blumer-Mead (1969, 1934) approach to symbolic interaction theory. Consistent with this perspective, specific theoretical ideas from the literature were not used to control data collection. Instead, we used only a few sensitizing concepts such as principal mistreatment/abuse to focus our study. Sensitizing concepts provide “a general sense of reference and
guidance . . . [and] merely suggest directions along which to look” (Blumer, 1969, p. 148). Thus, teachers are less likely to be influenced by researchers’ pre conceived ideas about a topic of study (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Accordingly, we used an open-ended format to investigate the following broad question: How do teachers experience significant long-term mistreatment/abuse by school principals? Interviews are required in qualitative research that focuses on the determination of meanings from the participant’s perspective (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

We developed an interview guide rather than a pre-determined schedule, consisting of a set of topics to be explored, a “checklist of sorts” relevant to the topic at hand (Lofland, 1971, p. 85; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Specifically, we used two primary questions to gather data from teachers involved in our study:

1. What principal behavior/conduct do you define as mistreatment/abuse? Emotions and Gender

2. How did such behavior/conduct affect you, if at all, a psychologically/emotionally? b physically/physiologically? c with respect to your involvement/performance in the classroom?
d with respect to your involvement/performance in the school?

Between two and four interviews were conducted with each of our research participants; these interviews consisted of unstructured and semistructured questions. To avoid premature conceptual/theoretical analyses and to produce full descriptions of each teacher’s experience of mistreatment/abuse, we used the same initial set of questions with all 50 teachers who participated (Lofland, 1971; Noblit & Hare, 1983). We spent about 135 hours interviewing teachers; this procedure generated about 4,000 pages of transcription for analysis.

We discovered that in conducting in-depth telephone interviews with each participant, we could efficiently and unobtrusively make notes and draw diagrams that identified emergent categories and relationships between categories; we were also able to probe categories in great depth during each interview (Fontana & Frey, 2000). This generated a level of descriptive detail beyond what we had ever achieved in other studies using face-to-face interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Put differently, categories emerged and became saturated quickly and efficiently.

Given the limitations of using computer software for grounded theory
research, especially for conceptual and theoretical work (Charmaz, 2000; Glaser, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), we analyzed all of our data line by line and by hand. This is consistent with a Blumerian emphasis on meaning in symbolic interaction studies (Charmaz, 2000). This procedure, although very time-consuming, allowed us to keep teachers’ perspectives on mistreatment/abuse at the center of our research and to generate robust descriptions of each participant’s experience (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Subsequent interviews with our participants were used to “fill out” emergent categories, clarify areas of ambiguity, and explore relationships between and among emergent categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

We also requested personal documents from teachers (e.g., letters, diaries, journal entries) and official documents (e.g., administrators’ letters, law briefs, faculty meeting minutes) relevant to their mistreatment/abuse experiences. Personal documents were especially useful in deepening our understanding of the meaning of teachers’ mistreatment/abuse experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).
should be mentioned that examination of the personal and official documents submitted to us and reports from those who had worked with and referred us to the veteran teachers we studied suggest that they were highly accomplished, creative, and dedicated individuals. In most cases, such teachers had been consistently formally recognized by their school and district not simply as effective teachers but also as superior teachers; in many cases, such recognition for their exceptional achievements as public educators extended to state levels.

As noted above, our primary interest in conducting this study was to describe and conceptualize the teachers’ perspectives on reality, that is, the “meanings” teachers associated with their experience of mistreatment. Thus, this study conformed to general guidelines for inductive exploratory research that emphasizes meanings as well as descriptive and conceptual results. We used constant comparative analysis to produce descriptive categories and conceptual and thematic analyses from our data. One of us analyzed the entire data set independently, and the other examined the results of this analysis independently (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Charmaz, 2000, Lofland, 1971; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser
researchers met to resolve questions that arose. Upon completion of numerous cycles of analysis, we also made comparisons with the extant empirical and theoretical literature on workplace abuse as a check on the viability of our descriptive and conceptual findings. However, we made no changes in our analysis at any level as a result of this last procedure. To be sure, careful collection and line-by-line comparative analyses of the data reduce the probability of inappropriate borrowing of concepts from the literature (Charmaz, 2000).

Although interview-based protocols are essential to qualitative studies that focus on meanings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), interviewees may present idealized versions of themselves and their situations. To address this and other issues related to trustworthiness and reliability of our findings, we used an inductive-generative approach to data collection and analysis. Specifically, we used no a priori concepts to control data collection, developed rapport and trust with our participants, conducted multiple interviews with each participant, audiotaped and transcribed all interviews, probed for detailed responses,
examined data for inconsistencies and contradictions within and between interviews for each participant as well as across participants, compared interview data with available personal and official documents, searched for negative or disconfirming evidence, generated low-inference descriptors, and checked for researcher effects. Finally, as a supplemental validation of our findings, we made comparisons with the existing literature on workplace abuse (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

In accordance with guidelines for inductive analyses, all of the categories of findings discussed herein were derived directly from our data. This article focuses on teachers’ perspectives of principal mistreatment/abuse and, in particular, the effects such behavior has on teachers. Given space limitations, principal behaviors teachers defined as mistreatment are only briefly described.

By and large, our database consists of victimized teachers’ experience of mistreatment/abuse. However, at times, teachers also discussed the mistreatment/abuse experiences of others in their schools. Occasionally, these data are presented as well. Relevant theoretical and empirical literature are presented in the
Summary and Discussion section of this article for interpretive and comparative purposes and for supplemental validation of emergent findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Charmaz, 2000; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Additional descriptive, conceptual, and theoretical findings, particularly with regard to principal behaviors teachers defined as abusive, will be presented elsewhere. Excerpts from the database are included to illustrate selected ideas. Findings: a model of principal mistreatment

In essence, we have organized the principal behaviors derived from our database according to level of aggression: Level 1 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (indirect, moderately aggressive; e.g., discounting teachers' needs, isolating teachers, and withholding resources), Level 2 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, escalating aggression; e.g., spying on, overloading, and criticizing teachers), and Level 3 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, severely aggressive; e.g., threatening teachers, giving unfair evaluations, preventing teacher advancement) (see Table 1). Please note that this model does not imply that individual Level 1 behaviors always resulted in less harm to teachers when compared to Level 2 or Level 3 behaviors; to the contrary,
the degree of harm related to any single aggressive behavior varied from one victimized teacher to another, as one would expect. Moreover, our study focused on long-term mistreatment (6 months to 9 years); therefore, each teacher discussed the “cumulative effects” of a multiplicity of principals’ continued, systematic mistreatment/abuse as described within any or all three levels of our model. Level 1 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors: indirect and moderately aggressive

Indirect forms of principal mistreatment, as described by teachers in our study, included nonverbal and verbal principal behaviors. This category of principal behaviors was considered generally less abusive as compared to Level 2 and Level 3 behaviors, and this finding is consistent with studies conducted with the general population (e.g., Keashly et al., 1994; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991). At the same time, the frequency of occurrence; timing; amount of negative affect; nature of the location in which mistreatment occurred (e.g., public versus private); association with other, more severe, behaviors constitute of a pattern of abuse; and the generally hierarchical, “power over” nature of the principal-teacher relationship—a factor consistently discussed in the workplace mistreatment literature (e.g., Keashly, 1998)—contributed considerably to
the degree of harm teachers experienced from Level 1 behaviors. Level 1 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors include (a) discounting teachers’ thoughts, needs, and feelings, (b) personal insensitivity, (c) stonewalling, (d) isolating and abandoning teachers, (e) controlling teacher-to-teacher interaction, (f) nonsupport of teachers in difficult interactions with students and parents, (g) withholding resources and denying approval, opportunities, and credit, (h) witholding or taking credit, (i) favoring “select” teachers, and (j) offensive personal conduct.

Level 2 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, escalating aggression)

Spying

Sabotaging

Stealing

Destroying teacher instructional aids

Making unreasonable demands

Overloading

Criticism: The ubiquitous form of Level 2 behavior

Private criticism

Stigmatizing and pejorative labeling

Intentionally vague criticism

Gossiping

Unfounded third-party criticism

Soliciting others

Public criticism

Front office Faculty meetings

Classroom

Intercom Lunchroom

Hallway Parking lot

Level 3 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors (direct, severely
aggressive)
Lying
Explosive behavior
Threats
Unwarranted reprimands
Unfair evaluations
Mistreating students
Forcing teachers out of their jobs (reassigning, transferring unilaterally, terminating)
Preventing teachers from leaving/advancing
Sexual harassment
Racism
and feelings; (b) isolating and abandoning teachers; (c) withholding resources
and denying approval, opportunities, and credit to teachers; (d) favoring “select”
teachers; and (e) offensive personal conduct. Such behaviors were always a part
of a more extensive pattern of mistreatment/abuse. The reader should keep in
mind that this is a study of the teachers’ perspectives only; such a study cannot
determine principals’ intentions, although teachers typically inferred negative
intentions because individual principal behaviors occurred within the context of
a larger pattern of mistreatment. Discounting teachers’ thoughts, needs, and feelings (including verbal and nonverbal behaviors)
Teachers reported that when mistreatment occurred through face-to-face inter
action, principals usually displayed offensive nonverbal behaviors. One of the
most common forms of nonverbal behavior was repeated ignoring or snubbing a
teacher, especially in public places.

I went to introduce the principal to my husband. She looked at me,
turned around, and just walked off. She was flat out rude. I couldn’t believe that someone would stoop so low. If we passed in the hall she would turn and walk the other way or she would give me a dirty look.

She even snubbed me in the store. I remember saying, “Hi,” and she turned and walked off. I feel like I am dealing with a middle schooler.

Teachers described many abusive principals as extremely insensitive to personal matters, even illness; they also viewed stonewalling as a form of discounting. Isolating and nonsupport of teachers

According to teachers, abusive principals frequently attempted to isolate them by preventing their contact with others, especially colleagues.

She threatened all of us from day one not to talk during our planning period with other teachers. . . . She said, “It promotes gossip.” She didn’t even want us in the lounge during our planning period. She
would say, “You don’t need to say anything to your friends.” You
couldn’t say anything negative about the school. It was just a control
thing.

In addition, teachers indicated that abusive principals frequently failed to
support them in confrontations with problematic students when, in their view,
such support was clearly warranted by the circumstances (“She always told us,
‘I am going to support the children, not you.’”) In all cases of nonsupport with THE DARK SIDE OF ADVERSITY
students, teachers reported that principals were “shamelessly unfair”; they not
only failed to properly investigate problems, but they often blamed teachers for
the problems, gave them written reprimands, and verbally mistreated them in
front of students. In addition, teachers reported that abusive principals typically
failed to support them in conflicts with parents who, in the teachers’ view, were
clearly at fault; blamed teachers for problems with parents; and reprimanded
teachers in the presence of parents. She would say that you were the person with the problem and not the child... that you were making the child have low self-esteem and act out in class. It was your fault. I wasn’t even in the conference with the parent and the principal asked, “What exactly is it that you were doing to her child?” She accused me in front of the parents without even investigating. When the parents left, the principal said, “I know that you didn’t do anything wrong.” Withholding resources and denying approval, opportunities, and credit
Abusive principals mistreated teachers by withholding necessary resources and
denyng approval. The experiences of a music teacher who
had resources with
held and approval denied over a number of years were
particularly destructive: She moved me and my classes into
the gym lobby with no place to store my students’
instruments. The bathrooms had that old urine smell, the
heat didn’t work, and there was no air conditioning. She
denied all my requests to play at the hospital or to go to
the symphony, and all requests for funds for the music
program. She wouldn’t repair instruments. She denied my
requests to create a fund-raiser. She cut rehearsal time.
She did this to let me know that she was the boss, she was
in charge of the school and I jolly well had better learn
that. It gets worse. I was placed in a closet, 8 feet wide
and 30 feet long. This storage closet was my orchestra
classroom. The parents said, “Look this situation is just
awful.” I was in the closet for 5 months.

Our data reveal that some abusive principals undermined
teachers’ efforts to
initiate and involve themselves in professional development
opportunities: I had this idea to initiate professional
growth plans that focused on trying to discover ways in
which teachers can help each other grow. It was meaningful
professional growth. . . . I certainly was aware that
people had been victimized by this principal, and I had
observed people being embarrassed publicly. I had even
cradled people who were crying and angry and
disenfranchised . . . and damaged by this principal. . . .

S E M O T I O N A N D G E N D E R

She said, “Forget it [professional development].” She hid
that people were too burdened. She didn’t want to come out
clearly as
abusive. I felt that this was abusive because she is the
one who told me
to try it. She [also] criticized what I was doing [to other
teachers] to
make sure it became an unacceptable and undesirable thing
for teachers
Furthermore, all of the teachers we studied indicated that their principals withheld or took credit for work-related achievements. In fact, principals were often seen as “conspicuously” withholding recognition and praise.

I asked him, “Why did you sign the grant that I wrote?” He said, “Well, central office would question it. As long as you are my employee your work is my work and I get the recognition.” Favoring “select” teachers All teachers we interviewed attributed the practice of favoritism to their principals. According to our findings, favoritism refers to “inequitable” treatment of faculty; “select” individuals are rewarded whereas others are punished and/or neglected. Some examples of rewards to favored teachers include being released from attendance at meetings, being assigned better students and classrooms, receiving positive evaluations, receiving support for advancement, being placed on “good” committees, and receiving public recognition. Clearly, favoritism toward others exacerbated teachers’ feelings of mistreatment.

Moreover, favored teachers supported abusive principals directly and indirectly, which reinforced the principal’s domination of targeted teachers and
intensified their sense of mistreatment; the favored teachers encouraged others to comport with the principal’s agenda, demonstrated their appreciation for the principal publicly, criticized other faculty, represented the school with external evaluation agencies, and colluded with the principal on decision making. Offensive personal conduct Two mistreated teachers complained that their abusive principals displayed offensive personal habits (e.g., belching, uninhibited flatulence); such habits and conduct negatively affected school morale and school climate. Several teachers reported that their abusive principals were also generally unprofessional in their conduct: “He spent a lot of time doing personal things during the day. He had some kind of machine in his office where he polished rocks. It was his hobby.” And, He’d always corner me and give me mean, really mean looks. I was very intimidated. He was my principal, my boss, and my superior. He THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP would shrug a lot, blow, and like just breathe heavily. He would stand real close to me. Other teachers noted that several abusive principals had “affairs” with their col leagues: “There was one teacher in particular who spent so much time with him, like hours in his office. She would just leave her classroom unmanned.” Level 2 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors: direct and escalating aggression
This section describes some of the direct and escalating aggressive forms of mistreatment analyzed from our data. Level 2 behaviors include spying, sabotaging, stealing, destroying teacher instructional aids, and making unreasonable work demands, as well as one of the most prevalent types of mistreatment: unfair and harsh private and public criticism of teachers’ work and abilities (see Table 1). Spying

Most of the teachers who participated in our study accused their principals of personally spying on them. Some abusive principals ominously situated themselves in hallways near teachers’ classroom doors; others surreptitiously used the intercom to listen to classroom activity. Several teachers reported that their principals monitored their telephone conversations. Most of the teachers we interviewed indicated that abusive principals also solicited the services of other, favored teachers and/or parents to spy on them. Sabotaging

Teachers disclosed that principals manipulated other faculty to sabotage efforts designed to benefit students or colleagues: When I was awarded a grant for a project she did everything she could to sabotage the project. . . . The principal said that no one was supposed to help me and she made sure no one did. . . . The grant I got was wasted. Stealing

Several abusive principals were accused of stealing (e.g., personal journals, food) from teachers. The principal said, “I hope you didn’t mind but I sold my pickup truck yesterday afternoon and the
only way that I could sell it was if I threw your air conditioner in with it." It was a new, very expensive air conditioner! I was shocked but I was afraid to say anything. My husband had a fit. Destroying teacher instructional aids

Some abusive principals literally destroyed classroom instructional aids and/or ordered teachers to remove them from their rooms. The experience of one highly recognized veteran was especially poignant.

I had a beautiful loft in my room with pillows and a huge bookshelf that you could convert into a stage. It was great. The principal ordered it destroyed. But I went over his head—a bad thing, according to him. I asked the county ware-house people if they had to take the loft. They said no. So, I wanted my husband and some men to dismantle it so I could store it in my basement. When I came back one day after lunch, the warehouse people had axed the reading loft! The principal also ordered me to move a shelf from under the blackboard, which was so convenient for the children. Everything that I have ever learned about math and teaching supports using concrete objects. He said the solid oak desk in my room was really a piece of junk and we are going to get rid
of it . . . . I had a guinea pig and he made me get rid of it. He said that it

was unhealthy and dangerous; if a child was bitten, we could be sued.

[Reading from her journal,] “He stripped away everything that made

my room unique, that makes teachers special, sets one teacher apart

from another . . . . I was a teacher who had a special style of teaching.

But everything that made me special has been done away with. Circle

meetings were stopped. The Friday workshops were ceased. I was told I

needed to control [students] rather than making learning a joint venture.

I became a teaching box—filling up heads with information so that they

could pass the test . . . . I was Teacher-of-the-Year, sponsored the educa

tional fair, won first place in other competitions, and was nominated for

teacher of excellence. But all that was me is gone now. I want out.” Making unreasonable work demands

Some teachers were consistently subjected to unreasonable work demands (i.e.,

overloading); indeed, one teacher’s workload, described as “too difficult and

excessive,” was a dominant form of one principal’s mistreatment that spanned

several years. Other teachers were subjected to “nitpicking” with regard to time.

At that point he started clocking me to make sure that my class ended
exactly on time and that I had 5 minutes between classes. He was outside

my door many, many, times to make sure that I ended

at exactly 10:11. It wasn’t even an even number, 10:11. T H E D A R K

S I D E O F L E A D E R S H I P Criticism: the ubiquitous

form of Level 2 Principal Mistreatment

All the teachers we studied indicated that their principals

unfairly and routinely

criticized them. Teachers reported several types of private
criticism (i.e., stigmatizing and pejorative labeling, intentionally vague
criticism, use of an informant’s information, gossiping, soliciting others) and
public criticism. More important, criticism was, according to teachers, based on
false or “manufactured” information and was thus considered grossly
“unfair.” Principals were perceived as failing to conduct proper investigations (or
any investigation) of the

issue at hand before “attacking” the teacher; in other words, “accusations
without investigation” were commonplace.

PRIVATE CRITICISM

Teachers explained that they were privately and routinely

criticized for a wide

range of issues. Principals’ criticism was usually conveyed

with strong negative affect, both verbal (e.g., yelling) and nonverbal
(e.g., pounding the desk);

it was also considered false or extremely exaggerated and
therefore “unjusti
fied.” To illustrate, principals directly criticized teachers’ instruction and planning. He would bring teachers into his office and intimidate them. You could hear him pound on his desk and yell at them for all kinds of things. He took my plan books every week and graded them in red ink. He’d write ugly comments. He would leave little notes in teachers’ boxes about things that weren’t true, like “Your class was noisy.” He would sit in your classroom and later leave a note that would say, “I was disappointed in your English lesson today.” He would just make things up!

For instance, principals privately criticized teachers for what they defined as “messy” classrooms (a teacher reported that the principal yelled at her because “one piece of paper was on a shelf”), the way teachers conducted department meetings (the principal could not provide reasons for his criticism), the color of ink teachers used, and being pregnant. One teacher described how her principal overreacted when she had used a particular color of ink on a form: One morning I found a note in my box that said I had signed my report cards with the wrong color ink, blue instead of black. The principal pulled me out of class into the hallway and said, “You were told this was the way it was to be done and you have not followed those directions!” I apologized twice but he kept berating me. The next day I got a reprimand in my box. I was totally humiliated as a professional.

Another teacher discussed how the principal criticized her colleagues for being pregnant: E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

A teacher said she was thinking about starting her family but she wanted to wait and see if the principal would retire, because the prin


principal had previously confronted people about being
pregnant. That’s
against the law! The principal would say, “What poor
timing. How dare
you think you can have a baby at the beginning of
September!” One of
the teachers miscarried; she was devastated. She said she
thought it was
from the stress at school.

Not infrequently, unjustified principal criticism of
teachers was nonspecific;
it consisted primarily of pejorative labeling such as
accusing individuals of
being “negative”:

As the union representative, I wrote a letter to the
principal saying there
was no educational substance behind his approach and that
my students
weren’t learning anything. He wrote back, “You are just
being negative
and unwilling to change. Your attitude is the problem and
you are under
mining the staff and morale.” He circulated the letter to
the whole staff. I
filed a grievance that forced him to back down. After that,
it’s been a
cold war.

In other cases, teachers reported that principals’
criticism was intentionally
vague and based on unfounded criticisms they claimed a
third party, “a snitch”
(e.g., teacher, student), had initiated or reinforced.
Nonattendance at an assem
bly, having a negative attitude, and yelling at students are but a few examples of
the actions principals falsely attributed to teachers. Frequently, principal criti-
cism was indirect and took the form of gossiping to other teachers and some
times parents. One teacher disclosed that a principal tried to solicit the help of
others to disparage her.

PUBLIC CRITICISM

Our data indicate that teachers were also publicly criticized and humiliated by
principals and that such criticism was based on fallacious or distorted information
and was accompanied by strong negative affect and offensive nonverbal behavior.

Teachers described abusive incidents by principals that occurred, for instance, in
the front office area of their schools, at faculty meetings, in their classrooms (with
students and others present), over the intercom, in the hallway, in the lunchroom,
and in the parking lot:

She would yell at teachers quite often on the PA as well as in person,
and in the lunchroom lobby in front of all the students. . . She pointed
her finger about 3 inches from one teacher’s nose and was just blasting
him right there in front of the entire lobby. She said he was not being
professional, he should not joke around with students and
he should **THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP**

keep his voice down because he was irritating. A hundred students were present. I was standing there, too. I can remember thinking if that were me I would just die. My principal and I had an agreement that I could leave 5 minutes early at the end of the day because I teach a pullout program in the morning. The first time I walked out of the building 5 minutes early the principal started running after me and yelling at me, “Where are you going! It’s not time yet! Get back in the building!” Even if I had been wrong, I don’t think screaming would have been the way to handle it. I was very shaken.

**Level 3 Principal Mistreatment Behaviors:** direct and severely aggressive

From the foregoing, it is apparent that principals who abuse teachers do so in a variety of verbal and nonverbal ways and that such abuse includes Level 1 (indirect, moderately aggressive) and Level 2 (direct, escalating aggression) behaviors. As devastating as these levels of mistreatment are, collectively, for teachers, principal mistreatment includes even more aggressive forms of abuse—Level 3 behaviors, glimpses of which have been seen in Level 2 behaviors.

According to our data, victimized teachers believed that most of the principals they described “intended to harm” and even “destroy” them and that many such principals were quite aware of the damage they caused. For instance, in addition to the repeated nature of abuse over long periods of time, most principals failed to investigate issues before “attacking” the teacher. And when teachers confronted abusive principals about their conduct...
and its destructive effects on them, such principals typically denied all allegations, blamed the teacher, and engaged in further reprisals against them. Most Level 3 forms of principal mistreatment were strongly associated with various forms of deception and included lying, explosive behavior, threats, unwarranted reprimands, unfair evaluations, mistreating students, forcing teachers out of their jobs, preventing teachers from leaving/advancing, sexual harassment, and racism (see Table 1). Lying Most of the teachers we studied identified principal deception, in particular “blatant lying” (i.e., intentionally false statements) as a common form of principal mistreatment. Lying was attributed to principals when they repeatedly made statements that conflicted with the teachers’ direct personal experience regarding an issue. Lying was associated with other forms of abusive behavior already discussed, such as nonsupport of teachers in conflict with parents and students, unfounded criticism as well as behaviors to be discussed (e.g., unfair formal evaluations), and forcing teachers out (“You can expect principals who do bad things to lie to protect themselves”). Lying was also associated with countless issues including placement of children, faculty voting outcomes,
teacher termination, reimbursement for in-service, library responsibility, authori
zation, and stealing funds. Explosive behavior

When principal mistreatment occurred through face-to-face interaction, princi
pals frequently escalated and became explosive and engaged in particularly
nasty behaviors:

He would address us at meetings by yelling, pounding his fist, and car
rying on at length until his face was scarlet and the veins stood out on
his neck. No meeting with this man was complete without our usual
verbal beating. I believe this man thought that it actually helped us.

Quote, “The beatings will continue until morale improves.”

Threats

Not surprisingly, teachers defined all abusive actions by principals as implicitly
or explicitly “threatening.” That is, teachers experienced such conduct as putting
them “at risk,” in “danger,” and in a state of fear. In addition, teachers reported
that abusive principals, with few exceptions, directly threatened groups of
teachers as well as individual teachers. Our data indicate that threats were
usually overt, but at times they were implied. Teachers explained that principals
threatened groups of teachers to stop the spread of rumors about the principal,
for making negative statements about the school to a review
committee, for

losing games, and numerous other issues:

She came to a staff meeting one time with a pack of
transfers and said,

“Anybody that doesn’t like it here, you can just get one of
these. I have
got plenty of them.” She said, “The thing that I want to
get straight is I
am here for the children. I am not here for you,” meaning
the teachers.

... She also said, “It is going to upset your evaluation.”

Individual teachers were threatened for a wide range of
reasons, for instance,
to coerce a teacher to change a student’s grade, for
expressing opinions that dis
agreed with the principal’s, for confronting a principal
for his conduct, for
making a request to central office for needed resources, for
use of personal days,
and for having to miss a parent-teacher association (PTA)
meeting due to serious
medical reasons.

Abusive principals threatened teachers with unwarranted
written reprimands.

Teachers described the use of reprimands as “grossly
unfair,” “irrational,” and
based on false accusations. Principals “wrote teachers up”
for stealing a video
camera (stolen by a student), use of the intercom (the
teacher was answering an
intercom call from the office), and for being in a storage
closet during class. The
teacher who was forced into a closet by her principal disclosed, I was constantly intimidated and harassed. He sent me letters of reprimand, delivered during class, and filled with false accusations. My students witnessed my reaction. I was not able to teach effectively. Once he cornered me in a closet and discussed inappropriate [sexual] topics to which I would not respond. I then received a letter of reprimand for being in the storage closet. Unfair evaluations

In all cases, teachers worked in school districts that required principals to complete “objective” teacher evaluations. These consisted of classroom observations, usually several per year, as well as conferences with the teacher. Such evaluations were described as important to the school district as well as to the teacher; in fact, most of the teachers in our study defined one negative evaluation as “seriously damaging” or “career ending” in their respective districts.

Our data show that teachers who were victimized by principals worked in a constant state of fear about unfair evaluations. (“She would come in at any time and decide that she didn’t like things. She did it to me, and I saw her do it to others.” “We are always in a state of fear, and I am the bread winner in my family.”) In all cases, teachers stated that principals included flagrantly false information on their evaluations.

Teachers’ fear of unfair evaluations were exacerbated by their belief that no viable recourse existed to overturn such evaluations. (“As
far as evaluations go, there
is really nothing you can do. It doesn’t matter what you
say; it is there on paper, and
you just sign it.”) It is important to mention that with
the exception of beginning
teachers who had not worked with other principals, all but
one experienced teacher
reported that they had, before mistreatment began,
consistently received superior
evaluations from former principals and even from their
abusive principals.
Teachers also reported that principals failed to give
legitimate reasons, or any
reasons whatsoever, when requiring them to submit to
extended or special evalu
ations. Several teachers indicated that abusive principals
intensified their use of
unfair evaluations when they were consumed by personal life
tragedies. When my father was dying . . . he comes to do an
evaluation. I felt like a whipped dog; I didn’t have any
energy to get up and dance. He wrote E M O T I O N A N D
G E N D E R
a bad evaluation, and within 2 days he came back for a
second one. . . .
The third evaluation came right after Dad died in April.
Mistreating students
Our data indicate that principal mistreatment of students
had harmful effects on
both students and teachers. Such treatment was considered
an aspect of princi
pals’ authoritarian-abusive approach to school leadership.
Generally, students
were mistreated for what a principal defined as
“misbehavior.” Many were
special education/behaviorally disabled students.

The principal and advisor of special education programs brought a child to my room fighting, struggling, kicking, and screaming. They held him down in the middle of the room by his arms and put their legs over his legs to restrain him. Both of them were White and he was a little African-American child. When his mother came, the child called her a bitch... He told me to suck his dick. The two male administrators snickered; they thought it was funny. I shut up... Eventually, the child got angry and called the principal, who was White, a "cracker."

Immediately, the principal called the child a “nigger.”... They struggled and the principal wound up hitting him in the mouth... His hand slipped. His lip split open and he was all bloody. I was sick to my stomach. I thought, “This is child abuse.” I stood there frozen. Forcing teachers out of their jobs (reassigning, unilaterally transferring, terminating)

Most of the teachers we interviewed stated that they were subjected to a variety of abusive actions by their principals such as unfair reassignments, forced transfers, and termination. In unilaterally reassigning teachers, principals changed their teaching locations and/or professional responsibilities.
The principal said to this teacher, and I quote, “You have got yourself knocked up [pregnant] and you are out.” She gave her a traveling reme
dial position between four classrooms. It was awful to watch somebody
torture her, it wasn’t physical, but it sure was mental. 
This teacher had been the principal’s favorite. But the principal would turn on people
unexpectedly and they would just fall apart. The principal would smile,
be nice, and all of a sudden, attack. She is sadistic. Preventing teachers from leaving/advancing
Also frequently reported were principals’ attempts to obstruct transfers of
teachers, both within a teacher’s district and to other districts. Routinely, abusive T H E D A R K S I D E O F
principals wrote unjustified negative letters of reference to other school adminis
trators in response to queries about teachers. He said that he would not recommend me for a teaching position. I said, “You’ve got to be kidding!” He said, “What I will say is that you are an excellent teacher and you are wonderful with children, but you are a troublemaker.” He said, “I don’t care if you think this is right or not.” I didn’t get the transfer. He wanted me to leave, but he didn’t want me to leave for the school of my choice.

In several cases, principals assured teachers that they would give them posi
used negative letters of reference, even when prohibited from writing such
letters by union agreements, to undermine teachers’ attempts to obtain new
teaching positions in other school districts, in some cases, for years. Sexual harassment

Several female teachers accused their principals of isolated episodes of sexual harassment: others accused principals of ongoing sexual harassment. In one case, the harassment occurred over a period of 9 years. Teachers viewed the principal's sexual harassment as obvious assertions of power and control. I had problems with him calling me to his office. He would close the door and say, "Does this make you nervous to be in here with me by yourself?" Then he would tell me inappropriate jokes. He was very flirtatious and very controlling and he knew that he was making me nervous; the jokes were sexual. Once, he said, "I want you to come over here and stand behind the desk with me." He tickled the backs of my legs and said, "I have been wanting to do that all day." I got out of his office. The secretary was aware that he was harassing me and would look at me like, "I am so sorry." Once, he came by my classroom and poked me right under my arm, not a very good place to be poking a female. He just kind of laughed. Racism

Teachers defined six principals, three African Americans and three Caucasian, as racists; they reported that racism resulted in poor school morale and poor school climate. He was definitely a racist. He didn’t want to hire Black people. He said that he had been made to hire a Black teacher before and he had to hire two this year but he didn’t want to. He never put Black teachers in E M O T I O N A L A N D G E N D E R charge of prestigious committees. We never had a Black teacher-of-the-year. The Black teachers were very strong, but didn’t stay very long; the stress was too much for them. The adverse effects of principal mistreatment of teachers Workplace bullying can have serious, even devastating, effects on ta
geted individuals. Psychological effects include stress, depression,
mood swings, loss of sleep (and resulting fatigue), and feelings of
shame, guilt, embarrassment, and low self-esteem. More serious effects
can include Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, which, left untreated, may
cause an individual to react violently against either the bully or anyone
else who happens to be in the vicinity. Physical effects include reduced
immunity to infection, stress headaches, high blood pressure, and
digestive problems. (Yamada, 2000, p. 483)

Here, we explore some of the seriously damaging effects of long-term patterns of mistreatment on the teachers involved in our study, mistreatment that lasted from 6 months to as many as 9 years; some of the teachers’ initial emotional responses to abusive principals as well as some far-reaching effects on teachers and schools are discussed. Other research on workplace mistreatment (i.e., described in the introduction to the article) conducted in a large number of public and private work settings, both nationally and internationally, has generated findings consistent with those that follow. Early psychological and emotional problems

According to our data, teachers’ early emotional responses to principal abuse
included feelings of shock and disorientation, humiliation, loneliness, injured confidence and self-esteem, and being corrupted and guilty (see Table 2).

Shock and disorientation. Teachers experienced a strong sense of shock, disorientation, and confusion as a result of mistreatment. Teachers used words such as bewildered, confused, shocked, disoriented, helpless, stunned, and mystified to describe feelings associated with early “attacks” by their principals.

It always bothered me that I never knew how to react or correct the problem; that was because I didn’t know what the problem was. I kept chalking it up to her being in a bad mood. I didn’t make the connection between the fact that I had disagreed with her and the things she was doing to me. I was real frustrated. Then I woke up and realized it wasn’t just a bad day. THE DARK SIDE OF DERISHIP

Teachers’ sense of disorientation was not short-lived; nor was it merely an initial response to the sudden, “out of the blue,” nature of principals’ actions against them. To the contrary, for most, such feelings persisted throughout their mistreatment experiences, in part because they were unable to understand why they were targeted and in part because they were unable to
identify any course of action to resolve their situations. I couldn’t understand what I had done to provoke this. I felt a loss of power, loss of center, loss of balance. I felt reduced, like when you have a parent who has turned on you. Our school was like a dysfunctional family and I was the abused child. I lost my confidence. I was becoming dysfunctional in my personal life. I had bad dreams. It is very painful, devastating. I felt sad, betrayed, angry, indignant, outraged, disoriented.

HUMILIATION

Our study also demonstrates that principals’ mistreatment provoked, early on,

strong feelings of humiliation and embarrassment in teachers, especially when

such treatment occurred in public places. I had been waiting for the principal in the office area, doing a good deed, trying to help the secretary. When the principal arrived, I jokingly said, “I E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

Table 2 Adverse Effects of Principal Mistreatment of Teachers

Early psychological and emotional responses

Shock and disorientation

Humiliation

Loneliness

Injured self-confidence and self-esteem

Corrupted and guilty

Long-term (chronic) psychological and emotional problems

Fear and anxiety

Anger

Depression Feeling isolated Feeling trapped Feeling unmotivated
Physical and physiological problems

Damaged schools

Damaged relationships

Damaged classrooms

Impaired decision making

Leaving one’s job

am glad you finally got back.” She flew into a tirade, saying, “I don’t care

how long you have been waiting. What do you think I have been doing,

standing around the corner picking my nose?!” It was awful. I was so

embarrassed. Everybody had the same dumbfounded look on their faces. I

froze. I was in shock. She had these kinds of incidents with other teachers

... bawling them out in front of their students and coworkers. It was

embarrassing. I was disappointed and hurt. It was a public reprimand.

LONELINESS

During the early periods of mistreatment, many of the teachers we interviewed

received some support from other faculty; however, many of the targeted

teachers reported that individuals, and sometimes groups of teachers, began to

ostracize them, typically because these teachers also feared principal reprisals

for association or because they were “taking the principal’s side” in the ongoing
ordeal. Teachers experienced feelings of profound loneliness throughout their mistreatment experiences.

I went to my friends, my confidants, and said, “This is miserable, this is terrible.” They looked at me as though I had obviously done something wrong and deserved what was happening to me. Their loyalty was to the principal. They were afraid about being mistreated too. They knew to play it safe, and they knew they had better stay away from me. They also didn’t want to talk to me because they didn’t want to know about it... it might make them feel badly.

INJURED SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Most teachers reported that from the beginning, principal mistreatment seriously harmed their self-esteem. Specifically, both veteran and beginning teachers developed substantial self-doubt and loss of confidence in their ability and competence as teachers. Many teachers actually internalized, in varying degrees, principals’ negative views of them, usually for years.

I had been given a program to work on because of my professional reputation and my skills in technology. Then, I was pulled out without notice and told things weren’t working. I felt I was not successful, that I had no talent
and I wasn’t worth trying to fix. Then I was transferred to another school to teach in an area I was not qualified to teach and in a school I did not want to be at. It was quite a blow to my self-esteem... [I] felt like I was a person of no value. I began to doubt that I could do the job anywhere.

I was put down and getting the shaft. I felt I constantly had to justify myself. I felt worthless, useless, like I couldn’t meet expectations. I lost THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP respect for myself because I didn’t stand up to him. I was afraid and I knew it. I wondered why he picked me out... Did he see me as a weak person and feel like he could manipulate me? He affected my self-worth.

CORRUPTED AND GUILTY

Teachers felt “corrupted” and “guilty,” for example, by being “forced” to change a student’s grade, to violate district policy, and to remain silent about such matters.

Our data also indicate that the principal’s negative modeling influenced other teachers’ behavior negatively and set in motion a host of dysfunctional behaviors on the part of others and thus corrupted teachers and students in a given school. To illustrate, in one case, some teachers imitated the racism of their abusive principals.

In other cases, teachers disclosed that students were forced to comply with the unethical demands of abusive principals; principals used students politically, coaching them to make false statements against victimized teachers.
In the following section, we examine additional devastating effects of principals’ mistreatment of teachers. In addition to feeling shocked and disoriented, humiliated, lonely, beset by low self-esteem, and corrupted, teachers discussed long-term effects such as chronic fear and anxiety, anger, depression, physical/physiological problems, and adverse effects on schools (i.e., damaged relationships, damaged classrooms, and impaired decision making) (see Table 2). Long-term (chronic) psychological and emotional problems

FEAR AND ANXIETY

Fear is essentially an awareness of psychological distress; it is also considered the most toxic of all human emotions (Tomkins, 1962). Moreover, fear has “a profoundly noxious quality that compels efforts to change the situation that elicited the emotion” (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996, p. 35). In contrast to other primary emotions (e.g., joy, anger, and grief), fear “is the emotion of avoidance of a consciously recognized, usually external, imminent danger” (Bartley, 1994, p. 12). Fear is associated with escape and avoidance; however, when such actions are thwarted or blocked (e.g., as in an uncontrollable situation and when one feels constant uncertainty about a potential danger), fear is transformed into anxiety, a state of arousal following the perception of threat (Epstein, 1972); this
involves “a cluster or pattern of emotions that may motivate both approach and avoidance” (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996, p. 35).

Fear, because of its unavoidable links to the body, has particularly injurious effects: it subtly and profoundly degrades human perception, cognition, and action. Fear “reduces working memory, increases superficial cognitive process ing, generates cognitive bias, and tends to put indelible traces in memory” (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996, p. 12). Even more serious, a generalized anxiety/fear disorder can evolve into post-traumatic stress disorder, into phobias, and finally, at the top of the diagnostic hierarchy, into a panic disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 1987).

Our study revealed that intense and chronic fear and anxiety were among teachers’ primary long-term responses to principal mistreatment. There were several reasons for this: First, teachers viewed the various forms and patterns of principal mistreatment as extremely threatening and punishing, and they perceived themselves to be particularly vulnerable. Second, teachers tended to internalize their fears, and this provoked a chronic state of anxiety, apprehension, obsessive thinking, and hypervigilance regarding the
possibility of further mistreatment. Third, fear of mistreatment provoked an array of powerful secondary fears, for example, fear of losing one’s job, losing one’s reputation, being ostracized by colleagues, expressing one’s opinion, receiving poor evaluations, lack of support from the central office, and failing one’s students instructionally and socially.

Fourth, fear was experienced as pervasive: It permeated all aspects of a victimized teacher’s work life; for many, it also profoundly and adversely affected the quality of their personal and family lives. Said differently, fear dominated teachers’ entire “sense of being” for long periods of time ranging from several months to many years. Some terms that teachers used to denote chronic fear and anxiety states were fear, scared, panic, dread, and paranoid.

I take it day by day. It is the only way that I can get through it. I am apprehensive, fearful. He is not on my case everyday, but he has set the tone. We did a unit on food and fruits, and at one time I would have taught my students the song about sipping cider, but I wouldn’t want him to be walking by and not get the connection. I hated to see this happening, and I dreaded going to work. . . . I was always fearful of repercussions . . . the uncertainty of the day. I was in constant fear and would cry because he
would accuse
me of things. I was worried . . .

I felt worthless, intimidated. I said to him, “You make me shake.”

When I knew that I had to meet with him, I became fearful. I knew

what the outcome what be. If he came into my room. I would get edgy.

I felt I constantly had to explain, to justify. I felt like I couldn't go to

him for help because he [didn’t] value my concerns. I felt angry with

myself because I took this treatment for years. I ate lunch in my room

and went to my mailbox once a day. I would try to get there by a

quarter ’til 7 to avoid him. I would stutter and stammer. . . I knew

what was coming and what he was going to do to me when I saw him. I

felt defeated. I dreaded going to school on faculty meeting days. I hated

it. I would sit in the back of the room at faculty meetings.

Many teachers we interviewed indicated that principal abuse was sufficiently

extensive among faculty at their schools to create what one described as a THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP

“culture of fear.” Fear affected entire schools, fostering a situation in which

most teachers were afraid to express their opinions and concerns under any cir-

cumstances; silence was the pervasive response. There is a
very strong culture of fear and caution. You best keep your head down, say as little as possible, and stay away from the front office. A teacher told me, “If you try to make any changes around here you will be her victim. Every year she has at least one and as many as three or four, maybe five or six people, whom she victimizes in order to demonstrate her power and control.” I had bad dreams about it. If I were called to the office my heart would absolutely race. I now feel apprehensive about going into administration given how much pollution goes on there. One fear I have is that she may begin to try to infiltrate or pollute or poison my doctoral program. . . . It takes a lot to stick your neck out. Most teachers simply stop championing new creative ideas because the reward is punishment. It is a pretty deep culture of fear. The self is at risk when you are trying to do your thing.

Most of the teachers we studied were so thoroughly traumatized that they generalized their fear of their abusive principals to other school administrators

(“I vowed that I would never work under another woman and I never have”).

Some teachers experienced this fear of administrators, sometimes years later, in different schools and with good principals.

ANGER

Also considered a primary human emotion, anger is a more or less primitive response to “being either physically or psychologically restrained from doing what one intensely desires to do” (Izard, 1977, pp. 329-330). Hence, anger motivates individuals to prepare their bodies for real or imagined battles and to defend themselves with vigor and strength. Ekman and Friesen (1975) stated that the major provocation to anger is “frustration resulting from interference.
with [one's] activity or the pursuit of [one's] goals" (p. 78). They noted, “anger will be more likely and more intense if you believe that the agent of interference acted arbitrarily, unfairly, or spitefully” (p. 78). Indeed, Averill (1982) asserted (as did Aristotle) that anger involves an appraisal that another person has intentionally and unjustifiably wronged one. Such were the thoughts and feelings of the teachers in our study, many of whom described intense feelings of anger/outrage and indignation toward their abusive principals; in addition, they felt angry with themselves for their inability to confront and/or successfully curb their principal’s mistreatment. Martin (1986), after an extensive review of the relevant literature, concluded that individuals tend to accept unjust treatment from authority figures without responding.

All of the teachers we interviewed expressed strong feelings of anger, both explicitly and implicitly. For most teachers, anger was chronic; it was a dominant emotion throughout their mistreatment experiences and, for many, continued long after mistreatment ended. As mentioned, teachers’ anger always included strong feelings of indignation, a form of anger due to the unjust and unfair nature of their victimization by principals. Teachers used many strong words
such as bitter, hate, furious, angry, enraged, outraged, appalled, disgusted, 
despise, resent, and hot to convey the intensity of their anger.

Principals would call me up and say, “Would you go down and open 
the school?” or do a tournament or some chaperoning? I built up a great 
reputation in the district. “Who is this guy to come in and treat me like 
dirt?” You give your sweat, blood, and tears, and what you get back is, 
“Thank you, but get out of our way!” Some administrators just don’t 
appreciate the sacrifices the individual makes for the system. I get 
incensed about injustice!

It is awful to say, but I hate this person. I have never felt that way before.

It bothers me that I feel such a strong dislike for another human being.

A handful of teachers also expressed strong feelings of revenge, another form of 
anger rooted in the emotion of “moral outrage” or a “sense of injustice” (Bies, 1987, p. 293). After carefully studying the phenomenon of moral outrage in 
organizational life, Bies (1987) wrote, “When people feel harmed wrongfully, or 
witness others enduring such an injustice, they are likely to become morally out 
raged” (p. 290); and this often leads to “the sympathetic reaction of outrage,
horror, shock, resentment, and anger, those affections of the viscera and abnormal secretions of the adrenals that prepare the human animal to resist attack”

(Cahn, 1949, p. 24).

He could have been on the show, In the Heat of the Night. He was a complete redneck idiot. I hated him. I was extremely angry. I was just as hateful toward him as he was toward me. I hated his guts. . . . If they were to do a buyout tomorrow I would take it. I wouldn’t teach again. I am disgusted that he thought I would respond positively to sexual harassment. I am angry that he knew he had the power to get away with it. This is a sick puppy. . . . I would have sabotaged him if I could for what he had done. I was extremely furious!

DEPRESSION

Depressive states refer to pervasive, absorbing, and chronic feelings of being out of control. As described above, anxiety is a kind of “mobilization” response to a future threat that may be developing or coming and that, one hopes, can be avoided. On the other hand, depression is a “demobilization” response to a loss, THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP a “static or unlikely-to-vary situation that can no longer (with any hope) be
avoided because it has already developed or come to pass” (Riskind, 1997, p. 687).

Most of the teachers who participated in our study reported being chronically depressed throughout their mistreatment experience. In describing feelings of depression, teachers used terms such as depressed, futile, helpless, hopeless, devastated, beaten down, paralyzed, broken, worn out, defeated, disoriented, distraught, trapped, isolated, sad, down, and despair. Clearly, for most victimized teachers, going to work as well as being at work was a “constant struggle to survive each day.” The feelings dogged me every time I thought about it. It made me half sick. I turned it into depression. You turn it against yourself and you start asking yourself, “What is wrong with me?” I didn’t trust my own judgment. I felt beaten down. I don’t like conflict. I don’t like verbal abuse. I just felt really tired all the time. I really did look 10 years older. I was so tired that I couldn’t sleep. I would go in tired in the morning and come home tired at night. I dragged around a lot. My energy level became very low. By the end of the 3 years, I would sit on the edge of the bed in the mornings and just cry. One morning my husband was rubbing my back and said, “You know what, darling? I don’t care if you have to work at Burger King. You don’t have to go back there next year, no matter what.” Twenty-two people left the school that year. All the stress had accumulated; I almost had a breakdown. I broke down at least once a week the 3rd year.

Many teachers’ depression was so severe that they sought counseling or psychiatric care for therapy and medication. I would wake up in the middle of night thinking, going over the same thoughts, over and over again. I went to the doctor and I had blood work ups. I ended up seeing a psychiatrist and being diagnosed as having clinical depression. I couldn’t see the good side of anything anymore. I had diarrhea and I
couldn’t eat.

In addition, feelings of isolation, being trapped, and feeling unmotivated were strongly associated with feelings of depression.

Feeling Isolated To avoid further mistreatment, teachers usually withdrew both emotionally and physically (when possible) from social and professional activities (e.g., faculty meetings, committee work, sponsorship of student activities, professional associations). They refused, for example, to volunteer for committee work and sponsorships; when required to attend certain events, they did not participate. According to our findings, teachers’ protective actions may have inadvertently exacerbated their feelings of isolation and depression. Other factors typically associated with principal mistreatment—showing favoritism, being ostracized by other teachers, and lack of viable opportunities for recourse (e.g., from central office, unions)—also contributed to a targeted teacher’s sense of isolation.

I never had lunch with the teachers. I stayed in my room. The only time that I was out of that room was to go to the bathroom. I am pretty social and pretty funny, but I just completely withdrew. I felt alone. I was very alone but I had to protect myself. I had to get through the day. I
think if I talked about it [the mistreatment] at school, it might have
made it worse.

I dropped every professional organization except two that I had been
very active in. These were organizations that helped me to be productive
in the classroom, but I didn’t feel motivated anymore, so I closed myself
down. Then he began to freeze me out. I felt very isolated. I went to as
few faculty meetings as I could and I was never chastised, which indi
cated to me that he didn’t mind. I cut my connection to the building.

Feeling Trapped Feeling trapped in a classroom or a school, with few or no
avenues for escape, was also associated with teachers’ feelings of depression; such
feelings were characterized by a lack of control and not knowing where to turn or
what to do to resolve a situation. Feelings of being trapped were, as teachers
reported, “like being in prison,” “damned if I complained, damned if I didn’t,” “in
an iron cage.” These feelings were a direct result of principals’ threats of reprisals
for requesting transfers, for unsuccessful attempts to transfer, the prospect of
negative letters of reference, unresponsive central office personnel, and weak
union representation, among others. It was clear that chronic fear and depression
and related responses (e.g., fatigue, self-doubt, and lowered self-esteem) reinforced teachers’ feelings of being trapped, as did personal life factors (e.g., being a major or the sole breadwinner in the family, having children in the school district).

She said, “Maybe you shouldn’t be in this business.” That was a direct quote. I had been afraid to ask for a transfer because she tends to blacklist people who ask for transfers. She made us turn in transfer requests to her first, before they went to the county office. She belittled one teacher who asked for a transfer and had another teacher’s transfer interview canceled.

Feeling Unmotivated We found that long-term mistreatment and chronic feelings of depression and fear/anxiety were strongly interrelated with teachers’ motivation to teach. THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP My first 8 years of teaching, I thrived on the challenge. . . . But I gave up my special vision. By the end of those years with her, I had lost a lot of my motivation. I was going through the motions. It had taken the heart out of me. Physical and physiological problems We found that mistreated teachers suffered a range of physical/physiological problems. Like psychological/emotional problems, physical/physiological problems were typically chronic; they began with the onset of mistreatment and usually ended when mistreatment terminated. In a few cases, problems persisted
for several months and even several years later. The seriousness of these problems appear to be related to the longevity of teachers’ mistreatment, at least in part. Roughly two thirds of the teachers we studied sought medical treatment for their problems. The most frequently identified physical/physiological problems were chronic sleep disorders (e.g., insomnia, nightmares, obsessive thinking), chronic fatigue, stomachaches, nausea, weight gain or loss, neck and back pain, and headaches or migraines. I gained 50 pounds. The final year was the worst year. I would come home with my neck and back in knots. It would lead to a headache. I had headaches all the time. It affected my sleep. I would toss and turn, and I would scream in the middle of the night. I had bad dreams about fear, like someone was after me. I was always exhausted. Now I have a new life and my health is great. I would go home with headaches and tense upper back muscles. I would get colds, headaches, stomachaches, and anxiety. I had headaches to the point that I went to my gynecologist, who put me on medication, saying that it was stress. I would take medication quite often. The headaches would last for days. I would come home and turn off the lights and stick my head underneath a pillow just to get still.

Examples of other severe physical/physiological problems teachers experienced included diarrhea, high blood pressure, blurred vision, nausea or vomiting, respiratory infections, hives, vertigo, heart palpitations, gum disease, auditory impairment, chest pains, and frequent colds and allergies. My doctor put me on a combination of a beta-blocker to correct my heartbeat and Valium. I went in once a week so that he could help me with the stress. He was my counselor, too. Every evening I had an upset stomach, every single night. I had lost a bunch of weight. I was down to 91 pounds, which for me is pretty skinny. I still have the erratic heartbeat. Every time I get upset
now it comes right back, I have had it while we have been talking. As soon as the principal left, my heart problems stopped. E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

My physical reaction included blurred vision. My blood pressure was

180 over 120, which is stroke level. My body was suffering tremendously because of the stress. I am now on blood pressure medicine and

I can’t sleep well. I don’t sleep more than 2 or 3 hours. I gained probably 25 pounds; I am much bigger than I was before. I have many more headaches than I used to.

Our data indicate that in addition to the psychological/emotional problems discussed earlier, individual teachers simultaneously experienced, on average, at least four of the physical/physiological problems described here throughout their mistreatment experience.

DAMAGED SCHOOLS

Over time, principals’ mistreatment resulted in far-reaching, destructive effects on schools, particularly with regard to relationships between and among teachers, their instructional work in classrooms, and collective decision-making processes.

Damaged Relationships Historically speaking, most of the experienced teachers we interviewed reported that throughout their professional careers and in their
work with former principals, they had been “totally” involved in their schools and, in fact, frequently provided the leadership necessary to initiate innovative arrangements among faculty focusing on student development. Our data demonstrate that abusive principals severely undermined the development of innovative and collaborative structures among faculty as well as teachers’ overall level of involvement in their schools. Consequently, in addition to ostracism by colleagues, mistreated teachers typically withdrew from all discretionary involvements, such as committee work, schoolwide events, special projects, and staff development. When involvement was considered mandatory, such as faculty meeting attendance, teachers minimized their participation and, in general, maintained silence. Briefly, teachers indicated that such extreme responses on their part were designed to protect themselves from further “attacks” by abusive principals. These teachers became “islands,” support from others was limited and was often given only “secretly” because, as one teacher stated, “friends were afraid that they could become a target of mistreatment, guilt by association.”

There were a lot of little cliques. There was no sharing among the faculty, no sharing of ideas or methods, no getting
together and looking

at students or doing assessments, none of that. Committees were few

and far between and generally composed of her little pets. That is how

all decisions were made. No one else wanted to be on the committees

under these circumstances. We supported each other. I spent a lot of

time on the phone with a really good friend . . . having a good long gripe session. She and I would make popcorn and just talk. Sometimes I would cry. She had some pets, her stoolies, and you knew right fast who the stoolies were. She would praise them. You were very careful whom you talked with. People would gripe all the time. It was a mass exit at checkout time, a real indication that people are not happy. Teachers would push each other to get out of the view of the video camera in the hallway so they could chat about what they had heard about her that day.

The extent to which many teachers withdrew from former social and professional commitments is noteworthy: I withdrew from all professional organizations, except two. I just withdrew. I closed myself down. Before all this started, I was the Teacher of the Year. I truly enjoyed teaching. I loved it. I thought that I would teach forever. I would come home happy every day. . . . I have always believed that we need to put a lot into our profession, that we need to work extra with other teachers and students. Before, I sponsored the science club, academic debates, the scholars bowl team, and students against driving drunk. I was senior class sponsor; I sponsored the class—all four committees at the school and county level. . . . I just withdrew from all of that. I was not going to put time and effort into a system that treated me that way.

Although teachers directly targeted by principals significantly withdrew from schoolwide involvement, as described, our data also point out that principal mis
treatment, particularly when it was widespread in the school, occasionally resulted in greater social cohesion among faculty; however, this was usually limited to a "defensive" banding together for social support and protection: "When teachers got together, they would share their complaints, get angry and share frustrations. She treated everybody badly. It became a gripe session—everybody felt the same way about her leadership."

Repeated attacks and reprisals against teachers appeared, at times, to be a function of favored teachers, teachers who served as informants or spies for principals. Thus, abused teachers were typically alienated from others, their relationships damaged, and they had to rely on the social and professional support of only a handful of trusted colleagues.

Damaged Classrooms With one exception, principal mistreatment had serious deleterious consequences for all major aspects of classroom life, including the quality of instruction and social relationships with students. In general, teachers described feelings of stress, paranoia, insecurity, fear, dread, and self-doubt with regard to classroom teaching: E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

My emphases and my thoughts went away from the curriculum as I wondered where the principal was. I was paranoid. Was he
coming to

my class, what was going on? . . . I have avoided new ideas that I would

have implemented in class because they would have involved the prin
cipal’s support. I felt vulnerable. I knew the principal would not back

me. My relationship with students became stressed.

More precisely, teachers disclosed that abusive principals forced them to

employ traditional methods of teaching that they viewed as “rigid,” “authorit
arian,” “dated,” and “ineffective.” Such methods emphasized lecture, rote and
recitation, drill, and worksheets and were associated with significant reductions

in teachers’ motivation, responsiveness to diversity, risk-taking, creativity and

innovation, planning, preparation, and variation in the use of instructional strat
ergies and materials. Furthermore, teachers described the increased use of

authoritarian, control-oriented, “impersonal” methods of classroom discipline,

an expectation of most abusive principals. Important adverse effects were also
discussed for teachers’ social relationships with students; reductions in teacher
caring, patience, tolerance, and humor were apparent:

I was less motivated to try new things or even ask for advice on how to

implement a new instructional unit and methods in my classroom. I was
constantly angry at the students, but I couldn't show it. I had to internalize my anger to prevent trouble from students or parents because I knew that the principal would not support me. My authority in the classroom had been undermined; so I was very uncomfortable about how to deal with the students and the class. I did not try as hard or put forth the effort toward my classroom duties. Every teacher was guarded in the classroom and in discussions and conferences with parents. Eventually, coming to school and to class was a dreaded event. When I received letters of reprimand during class, my students witnessed my reaction. I was not able to teach effectively at all. At first, I tried to ignore the negative environment, but eventually I became withdrawn. I taught straight from the book. I put in as little time as possible. I didn’t get very close to the students. My motivation for teaching became zero. I was constantly on edge. My nerves were shot and I would sometimes treat students in a negative manner because of the principal’s abuse. In my teaching, I was hesitant to try anything new. I didn’t do anything different that would draw attention to me, especially
anything that

might not work the first time. . . . I have passed kids who

failed just to

avoid conflict with the principal. . . . In a strange way, I

almost started

treating children like he was treating me. I never berated

them, but,

when I would give directions, if a kid would ask about it,

I would say,

“You know what I just said!” I had no patience. I felt like

I had to control the environment because, if I didn’t, he would get

me. I had kids with bracelets on their ankles, kids out of

mental institutions and jails. They needed special service

referrals. But I knew I couldn’t do anything to set the

students up for a referral, because the principal looked at

that very negatively. Everything had to look good.

Impaired Decision Making Typically, teachers used words

such as autocrat,

tyrant, dictator, authoritarian, despot, and control freak
to describe the leader

ship approach of abusive principals. Our data suggest that

with regard to

school governance and decision making, principals were

overtly authoritarian

or covertly authoritarian; in both cases, abusive

principals were extremely

coercive and control oriented, decisions were made

unilaterally and, often,

arbitrarily. Furthermore, in both cases, communication was

one-way and

intimidation was used to secure teachers’ compliance to
decisions and

decision-making processes. However, principals who used an

overt approach
to schoolwide governance frequently employed a direct, “in-your-face,”
“make-my-day” approach to leadership. Teachers’ comments illustrate how overtly authoritarian-abusive principals approached faculty meetings and schoolwide decision making. You don’t ask the principal anything, because he is just going to yell. If he knows the answer, he is not going to tell you. Faculty meetings were crazy; they didn’t accomplish anything. He would read a typed written agenda to us; it was just a joke. If you said something and he didn’t agree with it, then he would respond, “Did you understand what I said? Well, we are going to do it this way, because I am the principal.” We just sat there and wrote notes like, “Can you believe we are sitting here?”

Teachers also described overtly authoritarian principals’ approach to faculty committees. Committee members were appointed by her based on whom she liked and whom she didn’t like: favoritism. She ran some of the committees. She just told you what to do; she didn’t participate. We knew that you couldn’t do anything to the contrary of what she would want, so the meetings went something like, “What do you think she wants us to do? Okay, lets do that.” She had her spies. There was no way to discuss anything. There was no professional discussion. Everything was an order, and you just followed it and hoped to dodge criticism.

Indeed, all abusive principals used thinly veiled manipulative techniques to control teachers, such as negative comments (“We have done that before, it won’t work”) and pejorative labeling, vetoing faculty decisions, inviting dissenting faculty to “private” meetings, limiting time, and limiting agendas to particular topics to control faculty. However, covertly authoritarian-abusive principals
attempted to maintain a veneer of shared decision making:

She said, “I will tell you how much shared governance there will be,
what you can do, and the topics you can consider.” She is an absolute
dictator. She has displayed, many times, that she didn’t care for people
to express their feelings. Anybody who dared to speak up was not
chosen to be on the committee to talk to the accreditation team. She put
the wealthy Whites on committees, but she put Blacks, the “sucker
uppers,” who do what she says, on committees as chairs. At one of
those prep meetings, she said, “This is what you are going to say” and
if we spoke up about anything negative, that was grounds for dismissal.

We had shared leadership supposedly, but the principal was head of the
leadership team. She made all the decisions. Leaving one’s job
Most of the teachers we studied had been recognized as exemplary educators
throughout their careers, and they reported that they “loved children.” For them,
teaching remained a deep and enduring commitment, notwithstanding the
chronic feelings of fear, anger, and depression that dominated their lives. Their
decisions to leave the schoolchildren they loved and the schools in which their
mistreatment occurred could be viewed as a form of final withdrawal from the

profound pain and suffering that permeated their personal and professional lives.

(“Every minute of every day I thought, ‘Please get me out of here.’”) (“I strug
gled with the idea of quitting. A lot of teachers just walked out and didn’t

return.”) Other teachers were prepared to leave teaching altogether if they could

not find employment in another school.

Before the end of the first year there, I thought that I made a horrible

mistake. I knew that I couldn’t stay in that county. If I hadn’t been

forced to stay, I would have quit—I would have gotten out of educa

tion. I just couldn’t do it another year. Summary and discussion

Although this article has briefly described our findings related to what teachers

perceive as abusive principal conduct, the deleterious effects of such conduct

have been emphasized. A review of our findings points out that abusive princi

pals, like abusive bosses in general, engage in similar behaviors. However, in

contrast to the existing literature on boss abuse, we have conceptualized abusive

conduct in terms of three levels of aggression. Such behaviors and related pat

terns of conduct are consistent with studies of abusive bosses conducted
throughout the world in both profit and nonprofit organizations (Björkvist et al., THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP 1994; Davenport et al., 1999; Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Neuman & Baron, 1998; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991).

Although we used no particular theoretical framework of workplace mistreatment to control data collection (Blumer, 1969; Glaser, 1978, 1992, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), a comparison of our findings with Keashly’s (1998) definition of emotional abuse—constructed from a comprehensive review of the workplace abuse literature—indicates that teachers’ experiences of abuse and, in particular, the conditions under which teachers define a principal’s behavior as mistreatment or abuse, are consistent with what appears in the available literature. According to Keashly, individuals will tend to define a superior’s behavior as abusive if there is a pattern of verbal and nonverbal abuse, behaviors are unwanted, behaviors violate norms for appropriate conduct or an individual’s rights, behaviors are intended to harm as perceived by the target, behaviors result in harm, and there are power differences between the
abuser and the target of abuse.

We also found that the effects of such mistreatment are extremely harmful to teachers’ professional and personal lives; like many thousands of workers represented in the extant literature—a number that has been extrapolated to be multimillions of workers—abused teachers experienced the same devastating effects. Beyond the teachers’ responses of shock and disorientation, humiliation, loneliness, and injured self-esteem, principal mistreatment seriously damaged in-school relationships, damaged classrooms, and frequently impaired all-school decision making. In addition, principals’ abuse of teachers resulted in severe psychological/emotional problems including chronic fear, anxiety, anger, and depression; a range of physical/physiological problems; and adverse personal/family outcomes (with respect to our findings, this last result is discussed in Blase & Blase, 2003) also discussed in the general empirical literature on boss abuse (Björkvist et al., 1994; Davenport et al., 1999; Harlos & Pinder, 2000; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Lombardo & McCall, 1984; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; NNLI, 1993; Pearson, 2000; Ryan & Oestreich, 1991).
In addition, we found that teachers victimized by abusive principals seldom had viable opportunities for redress. This is consistent with other research that had demonstrated that victims’ complaints about abusive bosses typically result in (a) no action (no response) from upper management, (b) efforts to protect abusive bosses, and (c) reprisals against victims who complain (Bassman, 1992; Davenport et al., 1999; Hornstein, 1996; Keashly, 1998; Keashly et al., 1994; Leymann, 1990; Namie, 2000; Namie & Namie, 2000; Pearson, 2000; Rayner, 1998). In fact, according to our findings, teachers rarely complained to district level administrators because they expected “no help” and because they “feared” reprisals.

Furthermore, our findings point out that teachers were often unable to leave a school in which they were abused, at least in a timely manner. Several factors of considerable importance frequently result in strong feelings of being “trapped,” for example, district policies prohibiting transfers; the high probability of negative letters of reference (and blackballing); weak unions; need for a job and health insurance; and the chronic effects of long-term abuse itself, that is, chronic fear, depression (self-doubt, feelings of helplessness), and fatigue, all
factors that diminish one’s ability for proactive action, particularly in difficult circumstances (Izard & Youngstrom, 1996).

Finally, we reiterate that, consistent with Namie and Namie’s (1999) finding that workplace abusers often targeted “the bold, best and brightest,” the veteran teachers we studied were highly accomplished and dedicated individuals; these teachers had been recognized at the school, district, and frequently at the state level for their exceptional achievements. Such individuals, Namie and Namie speculated, might be threatening to administrators dominated by feelings of inferiority. Others have ascribed the problem, for example, to narcissism, an aggressive disposition, or a controlling disposition (Kets de Vries, 1989).

Theoretically speaking, our data indicate that principals employ a wide variety of indirect and direct verbal and nonverbal actions over the long term against targeted teachers that range from moderately to severely aggressive. For a given teacher, such actions constitute a unique pattern of mistreatment with regard to the types of actions (behaviors) employed and the frequency with which such actions (behaviors) are employed. In addition, teachers experienced all individual patterns of action (behavior) as seriously coercive, threatening,
critical, deceptive, self-serving, and fundamentally unjust. Principal mistreatment is predictable inasmuch as teachers, once mistreated, believe that additional mistreatment is likely to occur, such actions are unpredictable in the sense that they could occur “anywhere, anytime . . . for any reason.”

Long-term patterns of principal mistreatment tend to dramatically, adversely, and comprehensively affect the teachers’ professional life. Regarding the former, principal mistreatment tends to result in substantial damage to teachers psychologically/emotionally and physically/physiologically, to classroom instruction, to relationships with colleagues, and to schoolwide decision making. Teachers’ early responses to principal mistreatment (e.g., shock, disorientation, confusion, humiliation, self-doubt, and lowered self-esteem) seem to increase the teachers’ vulnerability to additional mistreatment by an abusive principal by reducing her or his ability to cope with such mistreatment. These responses, in conjunction with the cumulative effects of long-term stress, tend to result in chronic fear and depression. Such psychological/emotional states, together with adverse physical/physiological states, as well as adverse professional (e.g., poor classroom instruction) and social states (e.g., damaged relationships with colleagues), combine to create significant “life
altering” experiences for teachers. T H E D A R K S I D E O F L E A D E R S H I P Implications Implications for administrator and teacher preparation and professional educators

Most prospective administrators have been teachers and, as such, undoubtedly have experienced, observed, or heard about abusive conduct with regard to colleagues. Clearly, many are aware of its effects on victimized teachers and on schools as a whole. Nevertheless, preservice (e.g., university-based programs in educational leadership and teacher preparation programs) and in-service programs (e.g., those provided per school district policy, by union contracts, and within staff development opportunities) seldom directly address the “dark side” of school leadership and, as such, fail to equip prospective and practicing administrators and teachers with an understanding of and ability to deal with this incredibly destructive problem (Hodgkinson, 1991).

Interestingly, a survey of more than 300 school administrators and teachers about the practical value of studying the mistreatment problem (J. Blase & J. Blase, 2003) demonstrates the critical importance of this topic to administrators’ and teachers’ development as school “leaders.” One participant wrote, The most important thing for me as I develop as an educational leader is to guard against behaving in an abusive way. After seeing the video and participating in class discussion, I reflect back to 2 years ago when I feel I was a victim of mistreatment by a varsity
coach under whom I worked. I remember how vulnerable I was and how naïve I was going into the newly-acquired, sought-after position. My boss consistently snubbed me, called me out in front of the other players, and made me feel inferior and foolish. I feel like I am a very strong person but the effects of his position and his mistreatment had me questioning myself on a daily basis. I felt I was “asking” for the treatment I received; I constantly asked myself what on earth I was doing to upset this man so much that he would treat me in this fashion.

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1982) and theories of self-regulation and internalization (Vygotsky, 1978) point out that people often derive their most profound learning from a reflective understanding of social and linguistic life experiences (Tharp & Gallimore, 1998). Studies have confirmed this conclusion with respect to school leadership in particular (Blase & Blase, 1998; Ginsberg & Davies, 2001). This, of course, further signals the importance of vigorously addressing the mistreatment problem at both the pre-service and in-service levels, although the latter may be the safer place to address this problem, at least for the foreseeable future. To this end, university-based programs and field-based professional development programs can examine the phenomenon of principal mistreatment of teachers and consider questions such as the following: E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

• What conduct by school principals do teachers and administrators perceive as abusive?

• What is it about a school’s context, the principal’s role
negative role modeling by superiors, conflicting role expectations, unreasonable district policies), and those who occupy this role that can result in abusive conduct?

• What effect does such conduct have on teachers (e.g., emotional and physical consequences for teachers, and how does such conduct affect teachers’ classroom instruction and student learning?)?

• What are the consequences of abusive conduct by principals on school climate and school culture?

• What coping strategies are efficacious for mistreated teachers?

• What actions can mistreated teachers take to deal with the problem?

• What actions can school-based administrators, school district office personnel, and school boards take to help principals deal with this problem (e.g., providing opportunities for principals to consider ways they encourage or discourage a respectful and supportive climate in the school, ways to become more aware of the impact of their behavior on teachers, and ways to deal with teachers’ concerns about being mistreated)?

• What policies and procedures can school personnel develop to protect teachers and provide relief from mistreatment?
• At what point should district office personnel move beyond counseling, guiding, and providing performance reviews of principals who mistreat others and move to disciplinary action or discharge?

All concerned with public education should work to create awareness of factors potentially related to the problem of abuse. For example, areas for study and action include gender issues, power issues, work stress, crisis management, conflict resolution, labor laws, development of positive psychological and social work environments, development of mission/vision/values statements including how employees should be treated, development of norms conducive to respect and caring in the workplace, friendly and respectful collegial interaction, and effective administrator and teacher orientation programs that include standards of professional ethics and codes of conduct. Implications for further research

This study of principal mistreatment is the first study of its kind, and as such has generated new descriptive, conceptual, and theoretical knowledge in the general area of workplace mistreatment. It also contributes to the well-established micropolitical and leadership literature, for example, by describing in detail and for the first time the behaviors associated with abusive-authoritarian forms of school leadership
as well as the serious adverse effects of such leadership on teachers and their work.

with students. As well, our study contributes directly to the teacher stress literature by providing detailed descriptions of the effects of mistreatment on teachers. THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP

This article is the first empirical report of the experiences of abused teachers, that is, what, in teachers’ perspectives, constitutes principal mistreatment and its common effects on teachers’ work. Yet although we have begun to illuminate this problem, it nevertheless requires much more investigation. For example, principals’ mistreatment of teachers is contingent on a multitude of internal (i.e., personality) and external (i.e., organizational) factors (Hornstein, 1996). We would argue that as the call for educational reform and accountability become even more deliberate, the job of principal will become more complex, challenging, political, and stressful; this, in turn, may provide an even more fertile ground for the emergence of abusive conduct on the part of principals. (In fact, we have already heard numerous stories of principal mistreatment of teachers linked to new accountability measures.) Useful research could focus on the relationships between abusive principals’ personalities, preparation, and school contexts. Studies focusing on race, gender, and ethnicity of
school principals and
victimized teachers would be valuable. Studies of school
district office person
nel’s and boards of education’s perspectives and actions
vis-à-vis the mistreat
ment problem would also be valuable.

In addition, quantitative studies using random samples of
teachers are critical
to understanding the pervasiveness of the principal
mistreatment problem in our
nation’s schools and elsewhere. Qualitative studies can
provide descriptions
beyond those provided here (i.e., beyond forms of abuse,
effects, and how abuse
is perceived by victims) to include the extent to which
abusive principals recog
nize the effects of abuse, abusive principals’ intentions,
how and under what
contextual conditions abusive relationships evolve,
victims’ interpretations of
abusive principals’ behaviors, the degree to which victims
may contribute to the
abuse, when and how victims are willing to challenge abuse
(i.e., Why does a
teacher, who works in a professional culture wherein
workers assiduously avoid
conflict, ultimately decide to confront abusive treatment?),
the effectiveness of
district policies designed to stop abuse, and the
exorbitant costs of abuse (e.g.,
related to investigations of complaints, teachers’ time,
legal fees, union
representation, health insurance claims, hiring, training,
and teachers' performance and productivity [Field, 1996]).

Knowledge of the principal mistreatment problem has special significance for school reform and restructuring efforts. Recent studies have found that principals’ use of manipulative and coercive types of power in school-restructuring initiatives (designed along collegial/democratic lines) has drastically undermined such efforts (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2001; Malen & Ogawa, 1988; Murphy & Louis, 1994a, 1994b; Reitzug & Cross, 1994). More research is necessary to fully understand how and under what circumstances school principals both consciously and unwittingly subvert school reform outcomes. Also, as noted above, our study is timely and useful in the field of education given recent research interest in schools as “caring” and “just” communities (Beck, 1994; Bolman & Deal, 1995; Glickman et al., 2001; Katz, Noddings, & Strike, 1999; Noddings, 1992) and the recent emergence of themes such as organizational justice in the general organizational literature (Bies, 1987; Cropanzano, 1993; Enomoto, 1997). Educational researchers should consider studies of schools grounded in such perspectives.

Finally, it should be mentioned that school districts will
undoubtedly be reluctant to grant researchers access to conduct studies of the mistreatment problem; it is not surprising that a majority of studies of general administrator abuse have been conducted outside the workplace (Hoel et al., 1999). This may mean that for the foreseeable future and until educators recognize this problem, future research will have to be conducted in limited ways and in places outside of schools. Conclusion

As professors of educational leadership, we have spent decades researching and teaching about school leadership. We are aware that school principals are confronted with what seem to be insurmountable challenges and pressures: Their work is characterized by long hours and inadequate compensation (Olson, 1999) and they now face an explosion of demands and pressures related to school safety and violence, drugs, diversity, inclusion, site budgeting, aging teaching staffs, and unresponsive bureaucracies (Rusch, 1999) as well as new responsibilities linked to school reform including new power arrangements, collaborative planning, evaluation, and accountability (Murphy & Louis, 1994a). We are also aware that principals are confronted with unique challenges associated with the retention of quality teachers, inadequate facilities and
instructional materials,

and discouraged and disillusioned faculties (Steinberg, 1999). Moreover, we recognize that such challenges can result in dramatic emotional experiences for principals (Ginsberg & Davies, 2001); feelings of anxiety, loss of control, disempowerment, insecurity, anger, and frustration are not uncommon (Beatty, 2000; Evans, 1996). Indeed, we cannot adequately express our appreciation and respect for the women and men who meet such challenges with professional integrity, courage, and ingenuity.

Nevertheless, we are convinced that all of us, professors and professional educators, have failed to address the destructive problem of principal mistreatment of teachers. We believe that university and public school settings are frequently dominated by cultures in which conflict is strenuously avoided—a predictable phenomenon in that “conditions of conflict and ambiguity . . . are not merely irritating; in persistent and extreme form they are identity destroying” (Kahn, 1964, p. 6). Furthermore, avoiding a problem is a common way to ignore the difficulty inherent in working toward a genuine solution (Argyris, 1990; Owens, 2001); although such an approach consumes no time and energy, it fails to solve the problem that led to the conflict.
Unfortunately, even small, avoided conflicts, derived, for example, from insensitivity in interpersonal relationships or from mere misunderstandings, often escalate into huge, debilitating crises.

Indeed, lingering, hidden, unresolved problems constitute "conflict traps" that *THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP* may ultimately elicit strong, explosive, negative reactions (Boulding, 1964). The study discussed in this article provides the first step necessary for addressing and overcoming the mistreatment problem in constructive ways.

Now, more than ever before, school reform efforts require that principals and teachers at the school level work together collaboratively to solve educational problems. Such collaboration is successful when school principals build trust in their schools; trust, in turn, serves as a foundation for open, honest, and reflective professional dialogue; problem solving; innovative initiatives; and more directly, the development of the school as a powerful community of learners willing to take responsibility for and capable of success. All principals need to work toward these ends, and all individuals and organizations associated with public education should willingly confront the kinds of administrative mistreatment.


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It is a truism that all institutions - those organisations that have a specific purpose for the society in which they exist - are under the influence of emotions.

Schools and colleges, as significant institutions in our society, are no exception.

Although, educational institutions may appear to be rational places that function logically to achieve reasonable goals, which are intended to improve individual and societal well being and advancement, the reality is very different. Schools and colleges are heavily influenced by non-rational forces especially emotions, which can both enrich and disrupt their work. The emotional nature of the work can be overwhelming, taking those who work in schools and colleges from feelings of intense pleasure and satisfaction to the depths of despair, from feeling that teaching is the best job in the world to the worst, from facing the day in excited anticipation to one of fear and dread.

Although we may wish to remove emotion, dismiss it or even rationalise it - to de-emotionalise our work, it is ever present in educational leadership and management and always accompanies apparently rational processes. The very interesting point to be made in saying that is not what is being asserted but that it needs to be asserted at all. Such is the problematic nature
crashers at the party, pesky interlopers, unexpected visitors who outstay their welcome, however you want to image them - that we seek to ignore them, wish them away or dismiss them as a display of weakness, frivolity or naivety. Unfortunately, emotions cannot be dismissed or set aside but need to be worked with using very different approaches.

So, the key question is: ‘How can leaders work with the emotional experience of their institutions to create them as places where creativity and innovation are welcomed and where there is a passion for the work of educating young people?’ I hope in this paper to make a contribution to answering that question.

In this presentation, I will first explore some basic premises, so you are aware of the perspective I am taking. I will then briefly explore the nature of educational institutions as locales of high levels of emotion and anxiety and will describe some of the defences that are frequently put in place to defend against the emotional experience of leading, managing, teaching and learning in educational institutions. I will then consider how emotions can be worked with to release the creativity and passion required to build transforming institutions that can generate, embrace and sustain new ways of working. The basic premises
In this section, I outline some of the basic premises, that is, the ideas, concepts and aspects of theory, which underpin my thinking about the emotions, educational institutions and educational leadership and management.

Emotions may be experienced both consciously and unconsciously and may be the consequence of phenomena important to us in our external and internal world – they are systemic processes. Many of these phenomena, such as sexuality, rivalry and fear are deep and archaic and have an almost instinctual presence within us and in the worlds in which we live. They are therefore very powerful. Other forces, perhaps the consequence of other influences and experiences, started when we were born and perhaps began before then.

In educational institutions, emotions and the feelings they engender flow back and forth – sometimes dangerously. Emotions move between and within individuals, groups and institutions – throughout the whole system. Emotion is how power is experienced and interpreted within the system. Hence the very close link between emotion and politics. Emotion is inextricably linked to the micro-politics and macro-politics of the system. Over time, the continual flow of power and the experience of emotion create ways of working.
In this way emotions have a significant impact on the culture of the institution – 'The way we do things around here' – and the culture of the individual – 'The way I do things round here'. This emotional experience can create in the mind an institution that is stable, permanent and enduring. The dynamics of these emotions and the defences that are put in place to protect against them can compel the institution to work in certain ways. They can entrap those who work there and block the creativity and neutralise the passion required to undertake good educational work. The emotional experience, which is essentially abstract and untouchable, becomes reified and made real. Such institutions can be very resistant to change.

The unconscious is a significant influence on our conscious behaviour and can help to explain why actions that have surface rationality and validity may at the same time have an unconscious and hidden meaning. The unconscious contains our secret hopes, fears, desires, anxieties, urges and terrors and by definition we are not aware of them. We can never gain direct access to the unconscious. So, whilst it is very helpful to have the emotional terrain or the geography of teaching and educational leadership mapped out in the way that
Andy Hargreaves and others have, it is only a partial picture. To continue the

earth science metaphor, the geology is at least as important if not more so. The

emotional geology – the unconscious – has a very significant influence on what

we do in institutions – especially educational ones. It shapes the surface layout,

has enormous and uncontrollable power, and is unpredictable. We have some

sense of its fault lines, but the reality is, the underlying structure is known only

through occasional eruptions when it breaks through to the surface, and by occa

sional tremors and eruptions when it lets us know it is there.

Rational understandings, procedures and techniques may be helpful but

emotions are not handleable in that way. So, while it may be helpful to attempt

to ‘know emotions’, to understand them and to manage your own emotional state,

it is not sufficient. Being ‘emotionally intelligent’ is not enough. The value base of

emotional intelligence, what’s acceptable emotionally, and the purposes of those

who advocate emotional intelligence are all open to question. Moreover, it is in

experiencing emotions that the unconscious can come into play in unpredictable

ways that can derail any emotionally intelligent behaviour. Likewise, to be emo

tionally literate, to be able to describe how one is feeling and to have a vocabulary
through which to articulate one’s emotional experience is important. But we also

need to make sense of the turmoil when we are inside it, which is of course, the

worst place to be for emotional sense making. We may be unable to clear our

heads of the emotional disturbance because emotions do stop us from thinking

straight. And of course, it is one thing to be able to describe the profound comfort

or discomfort that emotions can bring but quite another then to understand how to

move forward from that place. Finally, it is also very helpful to have some skills

and techniques for dealing with our emotional experience although on their own

those capabilities are not sufficient. How we communicate, interact and relate to

others of course has an emotional component. So, if we can improve those

processes so that negative and perhaps unhelpful emotions are not generated, our

emotional world is likely to be more comfortable. The problem is that those tech

niques can in themselves become tools for manipulation, defences against

unwanted emotion and the tricks can be easily seen through and worked against.

The concept of the boundaries is helpful in understanding social systems.

The boundary essentially separates that ‘which is part of a phenomenon’ from

that ‘which is not’. This rather open definition is in a way
helpful because it opens up the possibility for exploration rather than limiting those possibilities.

The management of boundaries is a key aspect of institutional leadership. The notion of the boundary is usually used in connection with open systems theory and here are some specific points about the system boundary and leadership.

- The boundary separates the core of the system from the environment.
- Management of the boundary ensures that the core has the resources it requires to do its work, that resources in the core are not lost.
- Those responsible for boundary management have a sense-making role, interpretive, meaning-making role.
- Occupying a position on the system boundary is not only the task of the boundary manager, but occupying that role enhances their authority.
- Leaders need to occupy a position on the boundary of the system boundary.
- Those in the core will attempt to pull the system leader off the boundary. It is a form of attack on the leader’s authority.

There is a good case for arguing that anxiety is the dominant emotional force in many educational institutions. Anxiety, which has very primitive roots, is present in its own right and can be closely connected with other emo
tions and instinctual drives. For example, a person may be anxious about experiencing unpleasant feelings such as sadness, sorrow and dismay. There may also be anxiety associated with pleasurable feelings. What price might one have to pay in the future for feeling good now? Anxiety can also drive the generation and expression of feelings. Having feelings of any kind relieves the anxiety that one’s existence is empty and apparently meaningless. Anxiety may be difficult but anxiety in the right amounts may be a key motivator and driver of creativity – more of that later. So, anxiety and emotion are inextricably inter-twined, with anxiety having a central and crucial place.

Schools are locales for high levels of anxiety and emotion. For number of reasons, schools are places of high levels of anxiety.

1 The special nature of the primary task of educational institutions. The primary task of schools, enabling pupils to learn, will carry anxiety, as do all primary tasks. However, it is a primary task centrally concerned with change. So, the primary task of educational institutions carries additional anxiety.

2 Learning is associated with risk and uncertainty. Almost every aspect of learning – the imperative to learn, the learning process and the outcomes of learning – are associated with risk and uncertainty and therefore anxiety.

3 The process of teaching. Teaching is likely to be associated with anxiety. It is a complex, inter-connected, and inter-personal activity, which has a history and the many different facets to it, which have to be coped with publicly and at the same time. All these characteristics are potential instigators of anxiety. Also, teachers may be the recipients of the projection by society of the
troublesome feelings associated with any national failure, deficiency or decline.

4 The nature of relationships in educational institutions. Relationships in schools, which are continually changing, can invoke strong feelings and desires that can potentially cause anxiety.

5 New models of professional practice. New understandings of professional practice, such as reflective practice, place responsibility on teachers to improve their practice through reflection on their actions. These models can convey a message that teachers are to be condemned to a professional life of unending change driven by a fear that they will never be, and can never be, ‘good enough’.

6 Curriculum and management changes. The level and extent of imposed change in recent years have increased levels of anxiety for teachers and educational leaders.

7 Changes in the external environment. Recent changes in technology and in society generally are changing the nature of education and increased accountability in education and eroded the ex officio professional authority of teachers.

8 The centrality of education. Educational institutions are about the management of processes that are central to society in general and to every person’s
life. ‘Education’ therefore carries a high emotional content and the education system is likely to be the recipient of projected anxiety from the rest of society.

9 The continual re-creation of ‘the school’. Although schools may seem to be machine-like in the way they run - with the term dates set, the school diary organised for this week’s meetings, everyone’s timetable in place, the bell ringing absolutely on time, in fact they have to be created from scratch continually by those who work there. This continual process of re-creation is an additional source of anxiety.

We try to protect ourselves against the pain associated with unpleasant and difficult emotions and seek out pleasurable emotions. These protective patterns of behaviour are called social defences. They may have been learned over a long period and their origins perhaps date back to the earliest stages of an individual’s or institution’s life. Social defences are important because of the way they protect against the pain linked with strong feelings.

The different types of social defence are listed below.

Resistance. This social defence is the maintenance of the status quo by opposing change. In this way, the anxiety associated with the change is reduced.
Importantly, resistance, especially when it is given a gloss of rationality, also reduces the anxiety associated with revealing that a response to the proposed change is essentially emotional and not rational.

Repression. When recollections, urges and feelings are too anxiety provoking they are assigned to the unconscious by a process known as repression. For example, the professionally and personally unacceptable feelings of sexual attraction that teachers may have their students may be repressed in order to give protection from the anxiety that such feelings provoke.

Regression. When events at work carry a great deal of emotion and/or anxiety, individuals may resort to behaviours that have been learned earlier in their lives in order to limit the pain associated with those feelings. These behaviours will include those learned in the earliest stages of a person’s life and therefore may be very child-like.

Covert coalitions. As a way of coping with the emotions of working, members of an institution may make recourse to familiar relationships that have protected them from anxiety and emotional pain in the past. This defence can be viewed as a particular form of regression. To gain relief, individuals regress to the kinds of relationships in which they and the colluding
other or others are well versed.

Identification. Individuals may seek to limit the anxiety associated with enacting their own behaviours by identifying with others. In a school, heads of department may seek to identify with the headteacher in order to gain protection from the anxiety associated with their managerial work. For this reason and others all leaders have to ‘re-create the new’, that is to change and adapt themselves regularly and frequently. In this way, the followers do not become limited and restricted in the expression of their full potential by what is, in effect, the object of their envy.

Reaction formation. Occasionally, individuals will gain protection from the complexity of organisational life by the process of reaction formation. Working life is full of contradictions and unresolvable paradoxes. These can cause an inner tension and anxiety. Protection from this anxiety is gained by over-emphasising one of the pair of contradictory characteristics rather than holding them all in balance. So, a headteacher may find it hard to hold in mind that all his staff have both valuable and not so valuable qualities but seek to idealise the behaviour of some at the expense of others. These others are consigned to the not
favoured category.

Denial. The process of rejecting and putting aside any unacceptable aspect of the external reality is termed ‘denial’. These aspects may be thoughts, feelings and emotions which are too difficult to cope with largely because they are too anxiety provoking. They are pushed out of conscious awareness and into the unconscious. For example, a teacher in a primary school may deny that a forthcoming inspection is likely to be a cause of anxiety and real concern. Denial may on occasion be confirmed through negation. In negation, an individual may persistently and repeatedly reject a particular idea when that idea does not need to be disavowed so overtly. The teacher anxious about inspection may consistently assert that there’s really nothing to worry about and that the impact of inspection is always over-estimated.

Organisational rituals. The term ‘ritual’ is used to describe an established procedure or aspect of practice that has no apparent connection to a rational understanding of experience. These reified practices are probably the most durable and externalised form of defence against work-related anxiety. For individuals in a work institution, including teachers, these rituals can give structure,
security and a sense of order to a potentially unstructured, insecure and chaotic working life.

Splitting and projection. A very common protection against anxiety and EMOTIONS AND GENDER emotion is a process whereby difficult feelings that give rise to internal conflicts are split into their differentiated elements. The process of splitting is often accompanied by projection where difficult elements are located in other individuals and objects rather than in the individual themselves. This condition of splitting and projection is known as the paranoid-schizoid position. The alternate to the paranoid-schizoid stance is the integrated position. With this approach, which is called the depressive position, the individual gives up the security and simplicity achieved through splitting and projection and faces the confusion, paradox, inconsistency, incongruity and conflict created by the mismatch between internal and external realities. Splitting and projection is a very common social defence in institutions. The transformation of anxiety and emotion into creativity Whilst some social defences are useful they can have a very negative effect organising in institutions and institutional change. Their purpose and value to the individual – and the institution – is to protect from reality by blocking contact with it. They can prevent
the members of the institution from realising that change is required. They can hinder meaningful engagement with the work of the institution. They can prevent the consequences of actions being known, understood and reflected upon. Very importantly they impede learning.

Because of their important purpose and the fact that they do their job very effectively, they are often repeated in response to new anxiety-laden situations.

They become part of the scripts on which individuals and institutions base their lives. Moreover, and very significantly, social defences can be very resistant to change. There is a case for arguing that the more anxiety-laden an institution, the more it is likely to resort to defensive behaviours.

The excessive presence of social defences and the creation of a ‘defensive’ institution can make change very difficult in educational institutions and brings into play the ‘double whammy of educational change’. A change to a social defence of any kind, is like any change, a source of anxiety. But it will be a change to a process the purpose of which is to protect against anxiety. So the change is likely to increase anxiety levels. We therefore get double the dose of anxiety when changing social defences.
So, leaders in educational institutions need to minimise social defences in their institutions and manage the high levels of anxiety that result from educational change. Educational leaders have three important and linked tasks in this work: Boundary management, containment and acting as a transitional object. Boundary management

The emotion-laden nature of educational institutions can disrupt the boundary management of those who work in them causing them for example, to take on the role of education all leaders too much (boundary too permeable) or to becoming very defended and cautious (boundary impermeable). Leaders of schools and colleges need to work on boundary management in three important ways.

1. Managing the boundary between the internal experience and the external reality of those who work in the organisation and ensuring that defensive behaviour is not preventing meaningful contact with the external world.

2. Managing the boundaries between roles. The basis of this is clear definition of job responsibilities, encouraging others (individuals and groups) to find appropriate roles, to make appropriate roles and to take appropriate roles.

3. Managing their own boundaries so they are not prey to the emotions that are inevitably projected towards them in their leadership role. Containment

Containment is a term first coined by Wilfrid Bion in the context of psychoanalysis. It is primarily concerned with providing the conditions that facilitate effective and authentic receptiveness and reflection. The secure framework pro
vides a holding environment in which the emotions and anxieties of experience can be surfaced and worked with. It contrasts with a controlling environment where emotions and anxieties are restrained, held back and not allowed to become apparent. In a controlling environment, emotions and anxieties have to be dealt with in other ways and because they may be painful may need to be defended against. Controlling environments may therefore call up social defences.

Here we can see again the important part that leadership capability through out the institution (or shared or distributed leadership) can play especially when it complements leadership capability at the head of the institution. Leadership that emerges and is part of the processes of organising - organisational leadership - within the institution helps in the process of containment. The container is strengthened by the cross-links that leadership throughout the institution can provide and of course the more widely it is spread the more secure that contain ment function becomes. Acting as a transitional object Elsewhere, I have argued that educational leaders have a role in being the tem porary (ideally) recipient of difficult feelings that others in the institution cannot manage themselves (James and Connolly 2000). These feelings
need to be acted
out somewhere.

For example, where better (sic) than in the headteacher’s
office or in the
department office ‘sounding off’ to the head of department.
In this role as a
holder of difficult feelings, which many leaders will
recognise, the leader’s role E M O T I O N S A N D G E N
D E R
may simply be to hear the feelings of others, rather than respond to them, and
importantly, to ‘take them on’ rather than ‘take them in’. The danger with taking
them in (introjecting them) is that they can then become a burden and source of
stress to the recipient. Furthermore, it is usually unwise to act on the basis of
projected emotion. The action may be out of proportion, imagined or itself be
the response of the projections of others.

But I want to extend that role, the holder of difficult feelings, to one of acting as
a form of transitional object. Winnicott first used the idea of the transitional object
to explain the part that articles such as teddy bears and comfort blankets can play in
an infant’s development. The transitional object, as the first ‘not me’ object (Davis
and Wallbridge 1981), can create and occupy a mental space that is neither subject
ive nor objective. This space is a transitional zone that is retained throughout life in
the intense experiencing that belongs to art, imagination
and creativity (Winnicott, 1951 p 242).

So, leaders have a role with others in containing anxiety and emotion and developing and sustaining the transitional zone, thereby transforming anxiety and emotion into creativity. This work involves:

- managing boundaries particularly between subjective and objective worlds to ensure that there is a continual interplay and free movement between the subjective and the objective worlds because that is the zone of creativity;

- ensuring that boundary between the subjective and the objective is not blocked by social defences;

- providing a containing environment that allows emotions and anxieties to be experienced and held and not projected out into the external world or retained in an internal world but are held and worked with.

How might leaders make this happen in practice? Here are some examples.

- Providing a secure framework within which the work of the institution can take place

- Continual explanation of what might really be going on - especially in times of change - in terms of internal and external realities.

- Modelling - 'walking the talk', not falling prey to their own emotional mis
• Learning to identify defensive behaviours - their own and others’.

• Spotting and rectifying anti-task behaviour.

• Talking to people about their experience rather than their defences.

• Encouraging colleagues to talk about how they feel.

• Facing up to and resolving conflict.

• Checking out that their feelings are theirs and not the introjected feelings of others.

We are all driven by psychic forces - for which Freud coined the term ‘libido’.

These forces may be predominantly sexual, Freud’s termed the life instinct ‘Eros’, or may be a desire for death withdrawal and return if you take Freud’s death instinct, ‘Thanatos’. Although Freud used the term instinct to describe these forces, ‘drives’ may be a better term. The ‘drive’ concept has been broadened by other theorists. Drives may be the forces within us that give us ambition, a desire to make some kind of difference, or to lead a good life, however we configure that. At a fundamental level, they are about sex, aggression, and rivalry. At a more learned and acquired level, they might be about narcissism, a desire to control, to please people and to be well thought of, to achieve, to be
perfect, to repair inner damage, or a desire for security and safety.

Some of these forces are very strong - so strong that we may wish to conceal them or to hope they are not there. They can become pathological and then very dangerous. They can combine to become fetishes and significant disturbances.

There is a good case for arguing that they are seen simply associated with the typically male oriented agentic behaviour, but that is a narrow view of what they are. Whatever, in a ‘civilised society’ some of these forces can be seen as difficult. But they are very important and of course, they are the wellspring of passion and I would argue that it is important to be passionate. Some important issues Drives are of course very important; they are what push us to do what we do. It is important that they are recognised and worked with. Leaders of institutions need to be aware of them, to work with them and enable the institution and its members to become passionate about their work.

A degree of narcissism can be helpful. There’s nothing wrong with having a sense of justifiable pride. But in extreme, such people become virtually unmanageable, all problems are of others causing and they attract passivity and subservience in others who are prepared to collude with their delusion.
Passions and drives are crucial but they can very easily become distorted, mis-directed or come to dominate action over reflection and other more thoughtful processes.

Importantly passionate energy can be mis-directed into defensive behaviour so that people work harder dissociating themselves from the outside world than engaging with it with their full energy.

The sexual energy of working with colleagues to whom we are attracted is important in schools and colleges but it is often underplayed. It disappears as part of the de-emotionalisation of work in schools.

The aggression needed to undertake difficult work can spill over into a sense of anger and negativity towards others.

Rivalry can become a competitive urge that can distort the rationale for achieving the primary task. Do the teachers in a school work hard to be seen to be the best in the eyes of the headteacher, a kind of re-worked sibling rivalry, or are they motivated by wanting to do good educational work with their pupils? Is a headteacher driven by wanting to be the head of the best school or by being the head of a school doing the best that it can in the way that it wants? The key question is ‘What you are really competing for and what you want to be doing?’
The desire to control - monitoring, checking, ensuring things happen are important management activities, but if that is all you do then the organisation feels restrained, repressed and held in check. And of course an excessive desire to control can make delegation more difficult which may have many unwanted consequences.

A desire to please and to be well thought of is of course very useful. Such colleagues can be great to work with. But all too often it can lead to role over load, a lack of focus and can be a cause of stress and burn out.

A desire to achieve again can be very valuable quality but if achieving is all that counts it can drive out collaborative and enabling ways of working, which are essential in good leadership, can lead to an obsession with doing at the expense of being and reflecting (and therefore learning) and can narrow the focus at the expense of seeing the bigger picture.

Being a perfectionist can also be very helpful. It is good to have things done well but if it becomes obsessive then nothing is ever good enough, jobs don’t get completed and job may not be started because to do it perfectly becomes a monumental task.

To repair inner damage or to undertake what Melanie Klein
called reparation
can be a very important drive. It may be what drives
death to turn around
failing schools. By doing so they create an object of
beauty in the way that
artists may seek to repair inner damage through their work.
However, over-iden
tification with the object that has been created can cause
difficulties in succes
sion and in enabling continual change.
A desire for security can be of value. To be standing on
secure ground can be
very helpful but if that desire becomes excessive so that
much needed change is
blocked, then that desire has become unhelpful. Some
thoughts about working with passion
Passion, just like anxiety and emotion needs to be
continually worked with for
example, as follows.
Don’t address the distortion; address what people want to
do, to achieve, to
become.
Reflect together - schools need to be communities of leaders. If leaders are
going to lead together, they must learn together.
Organisational leadership needs
organisational learning.
The pathway of development in this way is not a
straightforward one. The
process ‘zigzags’ – sometimes forward to a new place,
sometimes backwards in T H E W O R K O F E D U C A T I O
N A L L E A D E R S
regression, sometimes sideward to a different perspective. That is the nature of development of this kind. Give space for the energy to emerge and time for reflection and renewal.

The resolution of the distortions of energy can result in a sense of authenticity and the notion of ‘flow’ that is “being totally, and positively, absorbed in what one is doing: a deep sense of rightness, goodness, engagement or being” (Fineman, 2003 pp23).

So, what happens when creativity and passion are released? That is when schools can move to a new place in their development, that of transformation.

Importantly, by integrating passion and creativity, they can move beyond recognising the importance of sustainability in educational change and work to achieve generativity (Gutmann 2003). The notion of generativity

The concept of generativity was first explored by the psychologist Erikson, who has made a significant contributor to our understanding of ego development and identity. Essentially, Freudian in perspective though critical of Freud’s work in many ways, he sees development, for which he borrows a term from embryology - epigenesis - as an organised or stage-wise process of acquiring essential “qualities of strength” or “virtues” (Erikson, 1964 p113).
Each stage of the development process has a “time of ascendance and crisis, yet each persists throughout life”. Each part exists before “its decisive and critical time normally arrives . . . and remains systematically related to all others . . . so that the whole ensemble depends on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item” (Erikson, 1962 p29). The virtues may be passed on from generation to generation and each preceding stage has both the seeds and the remnants of the other stages and each preceding stage sets the conditions for the subsequent ones.

Erikson describes eight stages from birth to death, which are characterised by a dialectic, the resolution of which creates a virtue. So, for example young adulthood is characterised by the Intimacy-Isolation dialectic, which, when resolved, yields the virtue of fidelity. Virtues to emerge include hope, will, purpose, competence, and fidelity in early adulthood, and love, care and wisdom in later adulthood.

In the period of adulthood that spans the late 20s to the late 50s, the crisis is represented by Generativity versus Stagnation. The resolution of this crisis yields ‘care’, which is a concern for obligations “generated by love, necessity or accident”
The goal of this stage is development of productivity set in the context of a wider contribution to society at a higher level than individual achievement, and key accomplishments include the passing on of knowledge and skills, training of the next generation and becoming a leader in their organisation. In these middle adult years, Erikson considered that a person might come to realise that “I am what survives me”. According to McAdam and de St Aubin (1998) have explored the notion of generativity, it is a new definition of success. Highly generative adults see their lives as filled with redemptive sequences where negative events give way to a positive ones, which redeem the initial negative experience.

Erikson argued that to be generative people must have a “basic belief in the species”. They must have faith that despite suffering and setback and despite evil, human beings are potentially good, and human life can be good for generations to come. It is this belief that sustains most of our generative efforts. Holding out hope for ultimate redemption gives us faith that our legacies will be good and that things may work out in the long run. Schools and generativity Of course, in so many ways these schools have a generative purpose. They care for the next generation and seek to pass on skills and knowledge to that genera...
tion. But how must schools be to be generative in their work. Generative schools and colleges and those who work in them and lead them:

• have within them the virtues of hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, and wisdom, very importantly, they are caring institutions

• are creative and value creativity in all aspects of their work

• are passionate about their work, their passion is grounded and their work has meaning and significance to them

• work to enhance their change capacity – their capacity for re-generation.

• are effective and efficient in all aspects of their work – they have determina

tion (a ‘will’), direction and an idea of the ‘destination’ (that is, they have a sense of purpose)

• recognise, value and develop uniqueness and individuality (not do so would be not to care).

• are inclusive (again, not ‘to include’ is a manifestation of a separation – a defence, and would deny the obligations “generated by love, necessity or accident” that are the essence of care).

• are transforming institutions where there is continual learning, creation, continuance and extension. They embrace their responsibility to develop
those with less experience or expertise – not just the pupils.

• are conscious of succession and continually look to develop the capability that will sustain the institution in its transforming state.

• are generous with what they give to others.

• are led generative leaders who recognise that they are but ‘temporary custodians’ of the institution, who must endeavour to ensure that they hand on the school or college to others as an established, purposeful and dynamic institution capable of sustaining transformation. THE WORK OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERS Concluding comments

So, in conclusion, I have briefly explored the nature of educational institutions as locales of high levels of emotion and anxiety and described some of the defences that are frequently put in place to defend against the emotional experience of leading, managing, teaching and learning in educational institutions. I have also considered how emotions can be worked with to release the creativity and passion required to transform schools and colleges into generative institutions. Such institutions can generate, embrace and sustain new ways of working and are of course led by generative leaders. Perhaps the next step is to

We now have fewer women heads of educational institutions than we had in the first two decades of this century. . . . When women move into male areas, they remain clustered at the lower levels, marginally represented at the middle levels and absent from the top other than the occasional deviant, nonconformist, articulate, pioneer. On a national scale there are fewer than 3% women heads of mixed institutions in education. (Byrne, quoted in Sampson, 1983, p. 52) The structural barriers can be seen in the cultivation of young male teachers in appropriate administrative and organisational tasks, while in the first five years of teaching, many women teachers concentrate on child centred tasks. In this way, authority in schools becomes linked with masculinity and leadership in education takes on a masculine image. (Sampson, 1983)

This chapter constitutes a marking out of territory which has significance for
education and educational administration. Leadership is a concept central to the
ories of how organizations such as schools and educational bureaucracies work
since, historically, schools have been organized in hierarchical ways. Authority
is seen to be legitimately accorded to the principal, generally a male. Increas
ingly the ways in which schooling and school knowledge are defined and organ
ized have been contested. The implications of the gendered and hierarchical
division of labour within education for pedagogy and organizational life have
been recently theorized about and questioned (Connell, 1987; Apple, 1985).
Similarly organizational theory, the source of many central concepts of educa
tional administration, has only begun to be criticized for its gender-blindness
(Hearn and Parkin, 1983). Emphasis in this criticism has been on the masculinist
model which has been assumed to portray all experience. The assumption of the
universality of the male experience has been the consequence of a privileging of
positivist knowledge claims and research approaches. It is this positivist
research paradigm which has informed the liberal interventionist policies of
equal opportunity during the 1970s and early 1980s. Premised upon sex role
socialization theory, such policies sought to facilitate
individual women taking on ‘leadership roles’ in schools in order to create a more equitable gender balance, and in so doing establish role models for girls and other women as ‘leaders’. But the reduction of women in such positions over this period suggests that the issue is more complex than merely a matter of numbers.

This paper argues that whilst the conceptualization of leadership in education is seen to be unproblematic, there is little hope for education becoming a site for emancipatory change. A particular view of leadership premised upon liberal theories of abstract individualism and bureaucratic rationality, and supported by positivistic theories of knowledge which privilege universal laws of administration and human behaviour, has become dominant in educational administration.

The universal individual central to this perspective of leadership is modelled upon men’s experience. Hierarchical relationships are considered to be the ‘givens’ of ‘rational’ organizational life. Leaders display attributes and behaviours, possess moral virtues and principles, which are generally associated with ‘masculinity’. It is a view which has effectively displaced women in educational thought, and therefore rendered women invisible in administrative practice.
Currently it is epitomized in the view of school principals as corporate managers.

It is necessary, therefore, to reconstruct a view of leadership which counters the emphasis on individualism, hierarchical relationships, bureaucratic rationality and abstract moral principles. I propose, therefore, elements of what would constitute a feminist reconstruction of the concept of leadership. These would include a view of power which is multi-dimensional and multi-directional.

Leadership is seen as being practised in different contexts by different people and not merely equated to formal roles. Leadership looks to empower others rather than have power over others. Such a view assumes a relational view of morality in which moral practice is rational within given contexts and social and political relations and not according to abstract moral laws or principles. Leadership is concerned with communitarian and collective activities and values. Thus the process of leading is both educative and conductive to democratic process, and, one would hope, consistent with education. Problems and explanations: the liberal interventionist approach

During the last fifteen years federal and state governments have introduced affirmative action and recognized the principle of equal opportunity through both affirmative action and equal opportunity through affirmative action and equal opportunity through
legislative and policy initiatives. Despite this, the number of women in ‘leader positions’ in education in Australia, Great Britain and the USA has decreased (Yeakey, Johnson and Adkinson, 1986). In the state of Victoria, Australia, in the period 1971-1983 the percentage of female principals in the secondary system fell from 20 to 11 per cent, whilst the percentage of female teachers increased from 45 to 52 per cent of all teachers. In the adjoining state of New South Wales the percentage of female primary principals decreased from 28 to 19 per cent of all principals (Sampson, 1987). This phenomenon can be partially explained as a consequence of the declining school population, the reclassification of staff appointments, and major educational and administrative restructuring in most state systems since the early 1980s. Opportunities for advancement in the promotional stakes are often reduced in a contracting system, particularly for latecomers, as many women are, to long-term careers. But economic conditions and structural impediments alone are inadequate explanations of another feature of what is a re-emerging pattern of masculine dominance. This second feature is the tendency for many women who have the qualifications, expertise and aptitude often not to apply
for positions of leadership in schools as principals. Furthermore, those women who do apply indicate a ‘preference’ for more democratic styles of school organization and administration (State Board, 1986). This ‘problem’ is the focus of this chapter.

There are a number of conventional explanations which have dominated the social science research over the past two decades which suggest reasons for this ‘failure’ of women to possess those aspirations, behaviours and attributes for leadership so readily displayed by their male counterparts. Women, it would be construed from such research, ‘fear’ success and lack ‘self-esteem’, are passive and non-aggressive. These explanations, it will be shown later, imply a female ‘deficiency’ in terms of ‘leadership’ skills, attributes and vision. At this stage I wish to suggest that there will be little change in the historical dominance of males in educational administration whilst policy makers and many liberal feminists merely look to increase the numbers of women in educational administration, in what I call the ‘liberal interventionist’ approach. It is necessary to ‘go beyond the numbers game’, in which gender equity is assumed to result purely from the better ‘representation’ of women in
positions of authority, and to question the very concept of leadership itself,

how it is portrayed in the literature, and how it is perceived by women and the community in education. It is the continuing association of masculinity with a particular view of leadership, especially in education where women constitute over half the occupation, which is problematic. How the particular notion of leadership dominant in educational administration has been socially and historically constructed in a way that connects so-called ‘masculine’ character istics to leadership will be a theme of this paper. The deconstruction of this ‘masculinist notion of leadership’ will largely be at a theoretical and conceptual level, in laying out and displaying the assumptions underlying the dominant notion of leadership, although the policy ramifications will not be totally ignored. E D U C A T I O N A L L E A D E R S H I P

Whilst I would argue that liberal feminism, in supporting this ‘interventionist approach’, has only achieved ‘success’ for the few, largely middle-class women by not challenging the norms, institutions and structures of masculine domi nance in education, this is not to be dismissive of the achievements of liberal feminists during the past decades, or denigratory of liberal reforms as merely co
option of feminist discourse. It is necessary to record, analyze and account for
the discrepancies, contradictions and failures of this period in order to create the
basis for more radical change. Much of the valuable work on women in educa
tional administration has mapped out the patterned discrimination against
women, analyzed why and how it has been historically constructed and repro
duced, indicating the structural, psychological and social factors influencing
women’s opportunities (Adkinson, 1981). Strategies have been developed and
undeniably affirmative action policy has gone some way in removing the struc
tural impediments in particular to the progression of women into ‘leadership
positions’ (equating them at this stage with formal bureaucratic roles), whilst
enforcing at least superficial change to the sexist attitudes pervading state con
trolled educational institutions. But it is necessary to go a step beyond having
women ‘represented’ in administrative positions, and undertake a more radical
critique from a feminist perspective of the very nature of educational administra
tion and leadership. Feminism as critique

First, let me discuss my intentions in mounting a feminist critique. Although I
talk of a feminist critique, it is necessary to remember that there is no single
feminist theory, but rather a body of theories which take on different political hues ranging from liberal feminism to radical separatism. Furthermore, there is a high level of scepticism amongst some feminists about the need for theory at all because of the feminist emphasis on personal experience and understandable distrust of intellectualism. Some radical separatists urge that feminist theory must necessarily reject all that is masculine and set up a theoretical framework in opposition. I would reject both views in favour of the stance that all world views are theory-ridden. The issue is whether these theories are made explicit or not, and the level of theoretical generalization (Gatens, 1986, p.14). Nancy Hartsock expresses it well: We must understand that theorising is not just done by academic intellectuals but that theory is always implicit in our activity and goes so deep as to include our understanding of reality . . . we can either accept the categories given us by capitalist society or we can begin to develop a critical understanding of our world. If we choose the first alternative, our theory may forever remain implicit. In contrast, the second is to commit ourselves to working out a critical and explicit theory. (Hartsock, 1979, p.57) It is necessary to critique the established social theories of politics, economics, philosophy and psychology in order to understand what, how and why the feminine perspective has been obliterated from social theory, and more specifically in this paper from what is construed to be ‘leadership’. Barbara Johnson
describes what such a critique would involve:

It is an analysis that focuses on the grounds of that system’s possibility.

The critique reads backwards from what seems natural, obvious, self-evident, or universal, in order to show that these things have their history, their reasons for being the way they are, their effects on what follows from them, and that the starting point is not a (natural) given but a (cultural) construct, usually blind to itself. Every theory starts somewhere; every critique exposes what that starting point conceals and therefore displaces all the ideas that follow from it. (Johnson, 1981, p.xii-xvi)

Such a critique raises epistemological, moral and political and not merely methodological questions. At the same time that social theory is reworked from a critical perspective, theory can act, in the Foucauldian sense, as a working tool, a strategy through which to critique instances and historical moments intent on reconstruction rather than construction of an alternative theoretical perspect.

Ive (Morris and Paton, 1979, p.57). In constructing a ‘feminist critique’ of leadership in education I will be undertaking a critical analysis of and reflection on how women have been displaced from or submerged in both organizational
and political theory, and how much of this invisibility of women has permeated the everyday commonsense notions of ‘leadership’.

Before commencing this critique, a further consideration must be acknowledged, although it will not be developed here. Problematic to both stating theory explicitly and critiquing social theory is the nature of language and text.

Sarah Fildes asserts that the traditional invisibility of women in theory can be explained partially by the conceptual language and terminology which have implicit masculinist values and models which must be questioned (Fildes, 1983, p.62). The use of certain concepts often sets the agenda and boundaries of a discourse (whether in theory, practice or policy), which in turn determines the direction and force of the final analysis. An essential aspect of feminist theory and feminism, therefore, is to question all that is ‘given’, to question what is not included in the discourse as much as what is, and what has been reinterpreted in a manner which displaces women’s interests. Such a questioning can often commencing from the dissonance between personal experience, commonsense knowledge and theory. This is the position implicit in the liberal interventionist model, which assumes that if more women can and do become ‘successful’
leaders, then societal behaviour and attitudes will change when personal experience ‘bumps up against’ myths about females in leadership roles. As to whether the success of women such as Thatcher in the particular mode of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP I will be critiquing – that which focuses upon hierarchy, authority, individualism and claims of rationality – is desirable for women is another matter. Similarly, in a period of rampant corporate managerialism in education, whilst the rhetoric centres on notions of efficiency, skill, hierarchy and control, leadership takes on particular forms and encourages particular approaches (Ministry of Education, 1986). In this sense discourse itself is a form of ‘power over others’, of masking conflict, of being deployed to reinforce consensus, of constraining action and prescribing behaviours. Power therefore infuses discourse. But discourse can be an instrument of either domination or emancipatory effort (Elshtain, 1982, pp.127–9). This particular point will be elaborated in the last section, in which new elements and parameters for an alternative feminist discourse on educational leadership are offered. Therefore, essential to a critical feminist perspective of leadership is a critique of the central concepts in the bodies of theory which inform educational
administration and which control the parameters of the discourse — concepts such as rationality, individuality, competence and merit. Such a critique under mines the gendered historical and social construction of the relationship between social structures which are construed to be ‘given’ and ‘neutral’, such as bureau cracies and organizations, and the individual. Secondly, it challenges the particular views about the nature of human activity and potentiality implicit in such theories. Finally, such a critique analyzes the particular epistemological underpinnings of theories of leadership. These aspects of social structure, human agency and epistemology are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and will be dealt with accordingly.

The next section addresses the ways in which traditional views of leadership have dominated educational administration and how leadership has been socially and historically constructed in a manner which looks to characteristics of ‘successful’ masculine leaders as those constituting leadership. The following section attempts to develop a better understanding of how liberal political theory has encouraged this hegemonic masculinist view of leadership, which is premised upon particular interpretations of rationality, morality, organization
and individualism, and is typical of Western societies. In turn, other social, eco
nomic and political arrangements such as the dominance of a positivistic epis
temology in social science, together with the bureaucratization of social life

have supported this particular leadership perspective. The 'liberal intervention
ist' approach underlying many equal opportunity policy initiatives is derived
largely from within this tradition. Next the notions of individual competitive
ness, bureaucratic rationality and abstract morality are discussed as central to the
traditional, masculinist construct of leadership. Finally, an alternative feminist

perspective of leadership will be presented; one that takes into account the
historical and social construction of organizations and knowledge, and which

presents a view of leadership which is essentially relational and communitarian.

To return to the initial question, how has the underrepresentation of women in
formal leadership positions been explained in the conventional literature on
leadership? Women have been cast in organizational theory as being deficient in
terms of leadership skills and attributes. Theories of leadership developing

within a positivistic epistemology have relied upon empirical studies of those
who are or have been in formal positions of leadership; that is, men. Historical accounts of ‘great men’ merely substantiate what is already seen to be self-evident. The behaviours, traits and characteristics displayed by men in formal positions of authority have become the ‘givens’ of leadership. Therefore, leader
ship in organizations has been historically associated with particular character istics which are more frequently depicted as ‘masculine’ than ‘feminine’ — aggressiveness, forcefulness, competitiveness and independence. Positivistic social science in general, and organizational and administrative theory in particular, have construed that what is masculine experience is universal across time, context and gendered subject. Theoretical work on the social construction of sexuality, from both functionalist and feminist perspectives, has rarely been related to organizational processes or theory (Hearn and Parkin, 1983, p.231).

This ‘masculinist’ characterization of leadership is common across the main approaches to leadership in organizational theory, whether they be trait model, the charismatic/behavioural model or the situational/contingency models of leadership central to educational administration. (For examples of such theories in a standard text in educational administration see Hoy
and Miskel, 1978. For a critique see Watkins, 1986, and Foster, this volume). Whilst trait theory consid
ers leadership qualities or skills to be inherent attributes of the individual, the behaviourist model allows appropriate leadership behaviours or styles to be learned. More recent situational/contingency theories tend to perceive a 'match'
between the individual attributes or leadership styles (innate and learned) and particular situations or contexts. Although the 'trait' theory model of leadership has been denigrated in organisational literature for its failure to differentiate between effective and ineffective male leaders, it has been duly resuscitated as an explanation for why women are not found in leadership positions. Given that the 'traits' associated with leadership have been defined and prescribed in a gendered stereotypic manner, women are in a double bind. If a woman displays the culturally defined traits of 'femininity' (being emotional, passive, dependent, nurturing, intuitive or submissive), she is perceived to be a 'poor' leader. If she acts according to the male role definition of a leader (being aggressive, achievement-oriented, self-confident, forceful or competitive), she is condemned as being 'unfeminine' (Chapman and Luthans, 1975). More specifically, the literature on women
in management

focuses on three sets of personality traits: aggressiveness/dominance, emotional control/sound judgment; self-confidence and self-esteem. Women’s apparent lack of such ‘traits’ as perceived in their behaviour is seen to make them unsuited for leadership (Bannon, 1978; Brown, 1979).

Let us consider these ‘myths’ in more detail. Firstly, there is little empirical evidence to support the connection between certain ‘traits’ and good leadership.

The literature is unable to substantiate the connection, for example, between aggressiveness and various ‘management’ skills seen to be essential to leaders in organizations and schools, such as tackling challenges, setting achievable goals, planning, organizing, persuading, conciliating and conveying enthusiasm. The second myth that women are unsuitable leaders and decision-makers because they are too emotional and subjective is equally unfounded, both theoretically and empirically. Theoretically it assumes that decision-making is rational, logical and objective, when increasingly the irrational, subjective and illogical nature of decision-making is the basis of current revisionist theorizing within the traditional organizational research paradigm. It is increasingly accepted that decision-making is value ridden and theory laden,
ideologically prescribed,
generally based on inadequate and even incorrect information and consequently emotive. Therefore the dominance of a particular 'scientistic' view of what leaders do when they make decisions (as being rational and objective) and what 'traits' are required to lead (non-emotional) cannot be upheld. Ironically, more recent studies of leadership, in an attempt to produce a more balanced conceptualization of leadership, look to these very 'feminine' qualities of emotionality, sociality and caring values which traditionally imparted connotations of weakness (Sergiovanni and Carver, 1980, pp.306-26). Likewise school principals are required to become facilitators, not dominators (Chapman, 1985).

The third myth, that leadership is associated with a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem, is again highly suspect. The literature portrays women as lacking these 'qualities', whether learned or innate. For example, Antill and Cunningham's Australian study, 'Self-esteem as a Function of Masculinity in Both Sexes', argues that men have higher self-esteem than women (Antill and Cunningham, 1979. For a critique of 'self-esteem' see Putnam and Heinen, 1976; Kenway and Willis, 1988). Since 1968 a dominant theory as to why
women have not gained more representation in higher levels of decision-making

is that of ‘fear of success’ (Horner, 1972; Condry and Dyer, 1976). This ‘fear’ explains why women are more 'anxious' than men in leadership positions and why they lack the desire to ‘take on’ leadership responsibilities. Women are seen to fear success because of the negative consequences which derive from succeeding in competitive situations — social rejection and perceived loss of femininity (Sassen, 1980). Or perhaps it was fear — more of being perceived as being deviant from role models by taking on masculine behaviours (Moore and Rickel, 1980; Greenfield et al., 1980). Ironically, studies which replicated the ‘fear of success’ model on male subjects found that men also admitted to the same fears (Carlson, 1972, p.21). More recently the ‘fear of success’ model has been reinterpreted to argue that women were not so afraid of ‘success’, just more prepared than the male subjects to admit to the negative or ‘other side of competitive success’ generally ignored in the literature — the alienation, loneliness and conflict (Carlson, 1972). The effect of this research was inevitably to blame the victim. Notions of success and esteem are socially constructed and context bound. The underlying theoretical paradigm, the trait approach to leader
ship, therefore emphasizes innate rather than learned psychological differences

between males and females, ignores the ways in which certain behaviours are
developed through experience and positive reinforcement, and portrays leadership
ship as a set of individual characteristics without regard for how behaviour is
both learned and situation specific.

Whilst the trait approach assumes innate difference, the behaviourist perspective accepts the notion of learned behaviours which are gender stereotypic. The political effect is the same as that of trait theory in justifying observed behaviours as proof of difference. There are particular sets of learned behaviours which are perceived as being appropriate leadership behaviours or styles. The dominant theory to explain the lack of women in administration and leadership positions is socialization and sex role stereotypes (Adkinson, 1981). This argues that gender differentiation is constructed by the internalization of certain gender role behaviours imparted through such agencies as schools, family, work and the media (see Marshall, 1979, for an example of the argument on the need to ‘socialize’ female educational administrators). Thus boys learn to be rational, logical, objective and to suppress their feelings. They are encouraged to be
aggressive and dominant in social situations. Girls learn to cultivate their emo
tions at the expense of their rationality, and are therefore more subjective. Their role is to be more dependent, nurturing and passive. This prepares each sex entrance into the public and private spheres of life, since these were the attrib utes required in each domain respectively. By imparting such significance to socialization, the behaviourist model assumes the passivity of the individual male and female who are ‘socialized’ into particular roles. At the same time this behaviourist model ‘allows’ women to acquire the necessary attributes. But in so doing it casts women into a deficit position in that it blames the victim when ‘socialization’ does not occur; it ignores resistance or the notion that an indi vidual’s socialization is partial and selective. It implies the need and precondi tion for women to take on masculine attributes of leadership (rationality, aggression, the ability to control and dominate) in order to succeed; it accepts the hierarchical relationship in schools and state educational bureaucracies as necessary and given; and it defines success/relevant experience in male terms (occupation, hierarchy, expertise). Ultimately particular sets of observable behaviours are valued more than others.
Finally, the recent emphasis within the traditional organizational research paradigm has been on situational or contingency theories of leadership, best represented by the work of Vroom and Yetton, Blake and Mouton and Fiedler (see Fiedler, 1978; Hoy and Miskel, 1978, for a summary; for a critique see Watkins, 1986). These theories argue that there is a package of leadership skills and behaviours ranging from democratic to authoritarian which can be learned, selected and used according to particular definable situational factors and contexts. Leaders must acquire the skill to recognize, diagnose and select the appropriate style of leadership to ‘fit’ the situation. No specific leadership style is given preference or more valued because of its intrinsic good. Each ‘style’ is selected as a means to achieve a particular organizational end most efficiently.

By implication, although the gender issue is never confronted in these models, such theories assume that leadership styles and administrative contexts are gender neutral, and that such skills are context and content-free to be freely applied across a variety of ‘categorizable’ organizational situations. That is, any individual can assume an appropriate style provided she or he possesses this
baggage of leadership skills and is able to diagnose the situation correctly. Such
models ignore research from within the positivistic research paradigm on small
groups and organizations (Jenkins and Kramer, 1978). Regardless of the ‘appro
priateness’ of leadership style adopted by females, female leaders are judged dif
ferently by their colleagues and subordinates from men in like situations. Firstly,
their competence is judged according to whether the task itself is perceived to be
‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’. Success by a female at a ‘masculine’ task (such as
leadership) is more often attributed to luck than competence by observers,
whereas success by a male at a masculine task is attributed largely to compe
tence. By contrast, success by a female at a ‘feminine’ task is attributed equally
to competence. Thus there is different recognition for similar performance. In
other words, ‘what is skill for a male is luck for the female’ (Deaux and
Emswiller, 1974; Bayes and Newton, 1978). Secondly, the legitimacy of an
action is generally associated with the legitimacy of the actor who performs it
and the role he or she occupies. Since leadership is perceived largely to be a
masculine role, this gives some reason why within such research paradigms
there is systematic variation between males and females in similar situations
Even the definition of task and skill, merit and competence in work situations is an historical construction which is gender biased (McNeil, 1987; O'Donnell and Hall, 1980).

Such conclusions are not surprising given the nature of the empirical research upon which the traditional construct of leadership has been premised. Because such research has focused largely upon leaders in formal positions of organizational authority, on male occupations and the achievements of men, and within a psychologistic framework, inevitably leadership attributes are perceived to be masculine attributes (Sherif, 1979; Kellerman, 1984; Sayers, 1986).

Accordingly findings about male behaviours are generalized to females. Further more, research on women in positions of leadership is largely confined to stereotypic areas of women's work. Even when research is in comparative fields, male characteristics are more highly valued than female characteristics in linking them to 'good' leadership. Women who enter male dominated careers are therefore seen to be stigmatized as they are seen to be 'disabled, deficient or deviant' (Marshall, 1985). In such contexts rationality is seen to be a better signifier of leadership than emotionality. Consequently there is a
built-in male bias in the *EMOTIONS AND GENDER*

research methodology in its assumption of homogeneity and universality of experience (Stewart, 1978; Hearn and Parkin, 1983). But it is more than a matter of methodology, since underlying such methodologies is a set of epistemic assumptions which will be discussed later.

Finally, the research in support of the various organizational theories of leadership, and some could say the ‘theory movement’ in educational administration per se, is inconclusive. In this field of study Foster points out the state of disarray because leadership is a 'slippery concept' (Foster, 1986). What is not disputable is that organizational and leadership theory neglects the significance of gender. Rather, it discusses authority, power and the division of labour in organizations as being both essential and neutral. It fails to recognize that there exists a gendered division of labour in organizations which historically defines women’s position in a negative manner. Such divisions are justified by notions of rationality, expertise and merit. Kanter refers to how the 'masculine ethic' of rationality is found in the image of managers and in the social science models of organizations in a manner which elevates the traits assumed to belong to men with
advantages to necessities for effective organisations; a tough
minded
approach to problems; analytic abilities to abstract and
plan; a capacity
to set aside personal, emotional considerations in the
interests of task
accomplishment; and a cognitive superiority in problem
solving. (Kanter, 1975, p.43)

Performance is judged in gender biased contexts. Burton
cites research which
suggests that the effort of women in organizations is
'perceived as diagnostic of
men’s ability and compensatory of women’s lack thereof’
(Button, 1987, p.429).

She suggests that ‘definitions of what is meritorious can
undergo change
depending upon the power of particular groups to define it.

... skill is a direct
correlate of the sex and power of those defining it, an
ideological category rather
than an economic fact’ (Burton, 1987, p.430).

Likewise, success can be conceived in different ways, just
as self-esteem is
evident in ways other than a display of uncaring
aggression, competitiveness or
dominance in particular social situations. Because women
may value different
types of success and achievement, success and actions are
interpreted in negat
ive terms for women. The construction of success is
elaborated upon by Markus.

... in contemporary society the organisational and
technical changes in work make it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to evaluate individual achievement, but at the same time, the work organisations and society at large, are increasingly in need of maintaining the disciplinary and legitimising function of the achievement principle. This means, then, that the evaluation of ‘performing capacity’ has to be accomplished symbolically. That is, based on ‘extrafunctional’ attitudes and aspirative criteria of different sorts rather than effective achievement . . . as Offe points out . . . the ‘achievement principle’ has been transformed from an ethical attitude into ‘one of the important forms of class-based power-games that rewards loyalty to dominant interests and forms of life’, perpetuated cultural divisions and legitimised the existing organisational and social hierarchies. (Markus, 1987, p.104)

The manner by which authority and power in organizations are perceived and exercised is significant for women in that many do not measure their ‘success’ by the same external or symbolic criteria. Markus’ research on female engineers in managerial positions indicates how they formulated their notion of success as being basically private. Job satisfaction was connected to internalized concrete achievements gained through personal experience (overcoming some difficulties, maintaining double roles, helping others in their work) rather than external social recognition. It was a form of success she
called 'vicarious achievement'—success resulting from the contribution of
the subject to the achievement of some other person. This privatized
conception of success in a public arena which rewarded outward achievement (formal
status, position of authority) through uniformization of success standards is thus read as indicating
that women lack motivation to succeed and has the ironical effect of maintaining
the inequity of their work situation (Markus, 1987, pp.101–2). They are labelled
for not ‘planning their careers’, or 'keeping their eyes open for the next step to
promotion'. Markus indicates how this is seen to be a problem particular to
women, 'given the observable switch in the basic hierarchical advance within
different work organisations increasingly obtained not through internal promo
tions, but rather through external recruitment to higher positions', as in, one
could argue, the case of local selection of school principals (Markus, 1987,
p.105). Thus the cultural association of masculinity and authority, of maleness
and management, is reproduced by those in power who do not wish to disturb
this 'natural' arrangement. Authority in organizations is judged by external and
overt symbolic signs of power such as salary, space and titles rather than
'complex staff positions that involve significant discretion' (Burton, 1987, p.431). Organizations, as are all workplaces, are socially constructed along gender lines (Acker and Van Houten, 1974).

Thus the social science model utilized in organizational theory assumes that organizations such as schools are value-free, and that the social organization of schooling is neutral. It also assumes that relatively complete explanations can be found about individual behaviours within the organizations themselves and in the public domain of paid work. Little consideration is given to the private domain of human activity and how it connects to organizational situations or paid work. This distinction between the public domain of the rational and the private domain of the emotional and affective is critical to ongoing power relations in organizations (Stewart, 1978; Shakeshaft and Hanson, 1986). Further more, any collective activities by women to alter the ways in which organizations are structured must challenge the masculine ethic of leadership premised upon individuality, rationality and hierarchy. It is this collectivity that sociologists have failed to identify (Hearn and Parkin, 1983, p.233).
It is therefore necessary to undermine the theoretical paradigm dominant in
administrative theory, which assumes that conflict is pathological and a problem
to be controlled by administrators. Whilst the notion that conflict is abnormal is
legitimated by administrative theory, a feminist perspective will be marginal
ized, controlled or dismissed as irrelevant. O'Brien aptly comments, 'The
central defects of the liberal social science is that they do not treat patriarchy as
an essential component of exploitation but as an accidental aberration' (O'Brien,
1986, p.96). The next two sections look to the historical contexts from which the
above ideas about leadership emerged, and the political and epistemological tra
ditions which supported and informed such a perspective. Liberalism, bureaucratization and the subordination of women in education

So far I have laid out some of the conceptual approaches towards leadership
dominating traditional administrative and organizational theory, and since the
1950s the theory movement in educational administration. The last section has
indicated how organizational theory has made women ‘invisible’ or ‘deficient’

as leaders. This section examines why the particular view of leadership por
trayed in administrative literature has come to be considered applicable to edu
cation. It suggests that the social formation of bureaucracies (as in education) was informed by liberal political theories which conceived of a relationship between the individual and society in a way which influenced and promoted hierarchical and individualistic views of leadership, and in turn justified patriarchal dominance in education. This is not to argue that there is necessarily some causality between bureaucracy and liberal democratic or capitalist states, as Pateman points out in her analysis of the parallel bureaucratic formation in communist states (Pateman, 1970). Rather, it is to try and understand why in liberal democracies such a view of leadership has become dominant.

The displacement of women in organizational theory is derived from their invisibility in social and political theory in general. Thiele argues that social and political theory has practised three forms or typologies by which women have become invisible: exclusion, pseudo-inclusion and alienation. Exclusion exists, for example, when Hobbes, in discussing his initial State of Nature, states that all men and women were equal, that women had natural authority over children.

Yet in the civic society envisaged by Hobbes (and Locke) the Commonwealth is entirely inhabited by men. Rousseau, in his notion of the social contract, takes
women into account in a pseudo-inclusive fashion, but marginalizes them by making women a ‘special case’. ‘What is normative is male’ (Thiele, 1986, Educational Leadership p.34). Alienation occurs when women are included as subjects, but the experience and parameters of women’s lives are distorted by being ‘interpreted through male categories because the methodology and values of the theorists are androcentric’ (Thiele, 1986, pp.33–4). Thus Marxist theory is both pseudo inclusive and alienating of women in arguing that women’s inequality will disappear once women enter the paid labour force. Ultimately women’s perspective is rendered invisible in political and social theory firstly, by the decontextualization or abstraction of real events and people from their situation in order to make generalizations or universal statements, and secondly, by the creation of dualisms between nature/culture, public/private, mind/body, rational/emotional, which cast women into the private sphere of emotionality and men into the public, civic sphere of political and economic activity. This process of decontextualization and conceptual dualism is characteristic of liberal theory, and is focused in the notion of individuality. As Carole Pateman points out, the abstraction of the individual had unfortunate consequences for women. ‘In order
that the individual could appear in liberal theory as a
universal figure who repre

sents anyone and everyone, the individual must be
disembodied’ (Pateman,
1986, p.8). The public individual, the universal man, was
masculine. He pos

sessed the material and symbolic interest which invested
his political status with

power.

Hester Eisenstein, in her analysis of contemporary feminist
thought, traces

the dilemmas created by the connection between the parallel
growth of feminism

and liberalism because the roots of both lie in the
emergence of individualism as

a general theory of social life. Both feminism and
liberalism have conceived in

some way of individuals as free and equal beings, emancipated from the

ascribed, hierarchical bonds of traditional society. Feminism in the late nine
teenth and early twentieth centuries was, Eisenstein
argued, merely making

claims for an extension of these liberal principles to
women. In attempting to

universalize liberalism across gender, it inevitably
challenged it because of the

essential separation between public and private spheres in
liberalism, which

excluded women from public roles and which perceived of the family as a

natural given. The contradiction which emerged centred on
the issue of partici
pation and equality when feminists were to claim equal rights to participate in the public sphere in terms of the vote (Eisenstein, 1985, p.xv).

Feminists turned to more radical and socialist demands for equal economic rights in the workplace — equal opportunity in access to education and occupation and equal rewards in terms of pay — on realizing the ‘hollowness of political liberalism without the economic means’ to achieve its promises (Eisenstein, 1985, p.xvi). But the failure of Marxists to explicate the alliances of interests which have acted to maintain the masculinist ideological hegemony continues to, and in fact has exacerbated, the sexual division of labour and existing power structures in capitalist societies (Stacey and Price, 1981). As with liberal feminism, socialist feminism has tended to perpetuate the private/public dichotomy, and thus fails to produce an adequate theory of social change which can lead to E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R radical social action. Both theories look to universal categories of ‘individual’, ‘worker’ and are sexually particular, constructed on the basis of male attributes, capacities and modes of activity. . . . The ‘individual’ is masculine, but because he appears to be universal and because the
categories of liberal
alism and socialism appear to hold out a universal promise,
it seems
either (for liberals) that the task of feminism is to make
good this
promise and incorporate women into existing institutions as
equals, or
(for socialists) to carry out the class revolution which
will bring true
universalism into being. (Pateman, 1986, p.7)
Liberal political theory has thus reified the notion of the
abstract individual,
freely making choices, autonomous and motivated by external
rewards. At the
same time liberal capitalism has spawned another form of
organizational life –
the bureaucracy.
Ferguson traces the links between liberalism, the
bureaucratization of social
life and the ‘feminization’ of the lower ranks of
educational bureaucracies since
the late nineteenth century (Ferguson, 1984; Hansot and
Tyack, 1981). The
significance of the bureaucratization of education for women
in education lies in
the embeddedness of the hierarchical relationships, the
division of labour
premised upon expertise and notions of bureaucratic
rationality. It is best exem
plified in the gendered and hierarchical distinction between
administration and
teaching as categories of work based on expertise, for
example, rather than as
inextricably dependent and within the same field of practice (Blackmore, 1987).

Such hierarchies reinforce existing power relations and the ways in which femininity and masculinity are socially constructed and reproduced in schools. The emphasis on authority as being legitimately and rationally imparted through neutral organizational or bureaucratic means renders the gender relationships which co-exist in bureaucratic life non-problematic. Thus bureaucratic control . . . operates through denial that there is discrimination. It is asserted that gender is irrelevant, that women can make it the same as men, that all will be rationally and fairly evaluated according to the same criteria. This ignores . . . the way the world is structured around men’s norms. (Game and Pringle, 1983)

Mary O’Brien considers the epistemological and political implications of this unsteady co-existence of liberalism and the bureaucratization of social life.

Liberal statism has spawned an administrative mode – bureaucracy – in which crass indifference to the much vaunted rights of individuals is passed off as ‘objectivity and efficiency’. Objectivity too is the myth on which liberal theory and research thrive, forming the intellectual – or preferably scientific – basis of liberal perceptions of knowledge. As liberal statism has grown and flourished to the point of bloat, the attenuated epistemology of liberalism and the notion of state organization and control of knowledge and/or ideology have
been central to liberal strategy for the maintenance of political power. Further, the major strategic achievement for liberalism – the vitiation of democracy by the political party system – ensures the limitations of women’s political power. . . . liberal aspirations to epistemological sophistication and the development of scientific, empiricist and structuralist research models probably owe more to the capitalist political economy than to the development of liberal philosophy. (O’Brien, 1986, p.96)

The irony remains that the expansion of bureaucracies which increasingly regulate all aspects of social life has been accompanied by modern political theory centring on individual freedom and autonomy (Ferguson, 1984, p.31). ‘Educational institutions generate and reflect both the course of bureaucracy and the roles and events that recruit individuals into bureaucracies’ in that the bureaucratic discourse seeks to promote individual merit and bureaucratic rationality (Ferguson, 1984, p.42). In this sense leadership is ‘earned’ by those with merit. Meanwhile, corporate capitalism leads to the fragmentation of work and the productive process, which has meant ‘the withdrawal of aspirations from the workplace into private goals, the disruption of indigenous networks of support and mutual aid’ (quoted in Ferguson, 1984, p.48). Individual happiness has come to be identified with success in organizational life. ‘Hence parents seek upward mobility for their children increasingly looking to education, not simply to provide access to a better job at a higher
salary, but to supply an institutional linkage to an established occupational hierarchy’ (Ferguson, 1984, p.45). Bourgeois individualism so promoted this bureaucratic means of organization to the extent that children have come to appreciate and understand the workings of hierarchical organizations at an early age. They do not distinguish hierarchy as characteristic merely of organizational life but of social relationships generally (Ferguson, 1984, p.46).

Thus the tenet of liberal, bourgeois individuality has done little to alter the gendered division of labour in work, school or at home. Instead, liberalism has advocated equality for women as articulated through the notion of individual merit and success, the autonomous, universal individual making rational decisions. The upward mobility of individual, generally middle-class, women through affirmative action and the institutionalization of equality as conceptualized in the liberal state have been illusory in that the rhetoric is not matched by the reality of what is occurring in the organization and structuring of education (particularly state education). Walkerdine indicates how class and gender within the liberal paradigm have continued to be the main structuring factors: emotions and gender. Females may cross over on to the side of masculinity in so far as they
are permitted to enter into these practices. Similarly, given it is bour
geois individuality, possessed of rationality, which is taken as the key
to normality, the working class can in principle become ‘bourgeois
individuals’ by dint of those liberal practices which provide that possi
bility. However such an individuality and autonomy is produced at a
price. Playful rationality is made possible through work, the hidden
work of servicing, manual labour and nurturance. Here the ultimate
irony is to be found in the position of the middle-class male, whose
powerful position is guaranteed by the trap of reasoned argument. (Walkerdine, 1985, p.235)
The unfortunate consequence of the adoption of the liberal tenets of individual
ism is that feminist values are incorporated, appropriated and submerged. There
is little opportunity to question the fundamental nature of organizations, to chal
lenge relationships premised on hierarchy or individualistic competitiveness or
the privileging of scientific knowledge upon which it is premised. Positivism and the rationalization of administrative work
Nineteenth century liberalism was imbued with a worldview well suited to
capitalist economic structures and work ethic. By the mid-twentieth century pos
itivistic social science offered predictability,
universality and certainty to the policy-makers of the developing liberal bureaucratic state. Thus many tenets of liberalism, individual merit and expertise, for example, found justification in positivistic epistemology. Positivistic theories of knowledge hold that all genuine human knowledge is contained in the boundaries of science, that is, the systematic study of observable phenomena that can be explained by scientific laws. Social science, in emulating the physical sciences, also made claims of prediction and control, thus giving privilege to its knowledge claims of objectivity and universality over other forms of ‘subjective’, non-observable, particularistic or experiential knowledge. The implications for women have already been addressed in the discussion of how positivistic social science constructed a masculinist model of leadership. Educational scholars and practitioners alike, by claiming status for educational administration as a science in a period when both progressivist and conservative educational traditions valued social efficiency, sought to gain both professional and public legitimation in the first decades of the twentieth century (Hansot and Tyack, 1981). Since the 1950s the theory movement in educational administration has taken as its own the industrial metaphor central to
administrative theory, and

applied the industrial model to schooling (Griffiths, 1979). Implicit in the func

tionalist view of education was the epistemological assumption that scientific

knowledge, gleaned through observation and empirical studies, was objective; that

knowledge derived through scientific method could be generalized across situations, time and gender. In this way positivism and liberal views about the abstraction of the individual in order to universalize experience.

In this framework organizations such as schools were considered to be value free contexts, in which organizational objectives could be stated and adhered to;

in which individuals were treated as autonomous beings whose interests and objectives could be moulded through the gentle direction of their leaders to those of the organization or school; in which consensus was the norm and conflict regarded as aberrant behaviour by those in authority; in which power was not confused with notions of authority and control. Organizational control was legitimately invested in formal institutional roles. Power was ignored as having connotations of being manipulative, political and devious. Administration in schools thus came to be conceived as a neutral practice carried out by experts in
a scientific and rational manner. Decision-making was seen as a rational and a
linear procedure, not a matter of values or subjective opinion. Means were sepa
rated from ends, fact from value. Valerie Walderkine comments: The investment of reason in the sexed-body, as the foundation of modern western scientific rationality, not only locates self-control in rational argument, but also places it at the centre of an omnipotent fantasy of control over the workings of the universe. Mastery and control of the 'real' are centrally located in claims to truth and therefore to possess knowledge. In this sense mastery, control and bourgeois masculinity are conjoined in that uncertain pursuit of truth. (Walkerdine, 1985, p.235)

What are the consequences of this privileging of positivism in educational
administrative theory? External factors (family, relationships, politics, etc.) have
come to be seen as merely disruptive to productive organizational relationships
(Steuart, 1978; Shakeshaft and Hanson, 1986). When women’s subjective
experience does not fit this ‘reality’ of scientific management, it is treated as an
aberration, non-relevant and deviant. Jan Grant suggests that women’s incorpo
ration into masculine domains in organizations has been at a cost. It often
requires women publicly to reject and submerge their definition of self as
women (Grant, 1985). Such co-option is because women’s subjugated know
ledge or subjective experience is not valued as a resource or valid alternative
worldview. Conversely, it means that radical action or opposition by women in
organizations such as teachers (predominantly female) to employers has been interpreted by sociologists and political scientists primarily as a male search for professional status rather than a female rejection of the values implicit in a systematic and dehumanizing control by men of women. Women’s activities are thus cast more as ‘submission’ than ‘subversion’, but in neither case legitimate (Markus, 1987, p.98). This is not to suggest that male teachers do not value other than occupational success, or are not motivated by humane values, or that women do not aspire to occupational mobility or status, but rather that dominant explanations for particular attitudes and activities are framed by narrow and limiting masculinist perceptions and experience of what is problematic. Likewise, the dominant definition of educational leadership has been historically constructed in a manner which ignores, reinterprets or denigrates feminine values and experience.

The positivistic epistemology underlying conventional organizational and administrative theory has undergone an attack from within its ranks since the early 1970s for its naive scienticism which separates fact from value, and assertion that administration is a value-free science (Hodgkinson, 1981; Greenfield,
1986; Codd, 1988; Bates, 1986). This 'intellectual turmoil' in educational administration has not ruffled the calm of masculine domination in education at either the theoretical or practitioner level. The inability to incorporate a theoretical explanation for continued masculine domination, despite increased sensitivity to gender issues, has been excused on the grounds that 'organisational theories have been based on the perspective of executives', the emphasis being on the disempowerment resulting from the emphasis on social control, hierarchy and bureaucracy rather than recognition of the reproduction of gendered dominance as a set of power relations as a significant phenomenon of educational organizations (Griffiths, 1979, pp.43-65). The interpretivist perspective of educational administration which has emerged maintains as its essence the individualism of liberal political theory and the fact/value distinction of positivistic epistemology (see Greenfield, 1984, 1986). That there may be some shared experience of particular social groups who have a different way of seeing from their position of non-control at the base of male dominated, hierarchical organisations is only implied. Perhaps women share certain common organizational experiences through their patterned subordination and
powerlessness as women,

and not merely in their commonality as subordinates. The issue is one of control,

but by whom, over whom, and on what basis?

Both the positivistic and interpretivistic traditions which have dominated

approaches to educational administration have come under attack from the

perspective of critical theory for their common epistemological assumption of the

distinction between fact and value, which effectively excludes moral commitment

and ignores the historical, political and personal nature of organizational relation

ships (Codd, 1988). Such critiques tend to presume that discussions of domina

tion and subordination, of power relations and the significance of ideology,

necessarily include women as objects of subjugation. But there has been little

attempt overtly to connect this powerlessness to matters of the social construction

and reproduction of gendered power relations in educational organizations (see

Fraser, 1987). Depending upon whose interpretation of the Frankfurt school is

taken to portray their position best, there would appear to be some convergence

of feminist approaches and that of the critical theorists. Salleh discards the view

that critical theory is ‘drenched in a Freudian inspired nostalgia for patriarchy, an

obsession with the “ideal bourgeois” family, a static and
cynical brand of individ

ualism’ (Salleh, 1981, p.5). What is evident, she argues, is the shared concern for EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

the merging of theory and practice, the moral commitment to social change, the

ongoing critique of all ideologies (including that of critical theory itself), and an

historically materialistic analysis which displays a sensitivity to subjectivity

without neglecting structural constraints, a dimension ignored or exaggerated in

positivistic and interpretivist approaches respectively to educational administra

tion. Salleh suggests that critical theory in fact contributes to the radical feminist

problematic in that its analysis rests upon a ‘more profound materialism than that

of the “mode of production”’, that perceives that social change must have a bio

logical and psycho-social basis and which has an epistemology which does not

split consciousness from the act of knowing (Salleh, 1981, p.12).

Lather and Fraser share similar optimism when considering how critical

ty, and the work of Jürgen Habermas in particular, can contribute to femi

nist theory. Lather suggests that critical theorists and feminists share the desire

to transform the production and dissemination of knowledge, a commitment to

more democratic forms of governance which empower disadvantaged groups, a
view that looks to the sociality rather than the autonomy of individuals as the

guiding force of practice (Lather, 1984). Whilst Fraser is happy to extrapolate

from Habermas what she perceives as the gender sub-text, she is still conscious

that Habermas fails to theorize ‘the norm mediated character of late capitalist

official-economic administrative systems . . . the systemic, money and power

mediated character of male dominance in the domestic sphere . . . nor the gender

based separation of the state-regulated economy of sex-segmented paid work and

social welfare. Ultimately, he also seeks to universalise experience’ (Fraser,

1987, p.55). Yet critical theory and feminist theory would appear to share

common concerns. The extent of this commonality needs to be explored further.

So far I have elaborated upon the ways in which gender-biased educational

structures, organization and practice have been justified as necessary and ration

al. The gendered and hierarchical division of labour in educational administra

tion, for example, has rested at various times upon notions of natural,

psychological and social difference. It is further legitimated by theories of

knowledge which are supportive of notions of rational and hierarchical forms of

administration as givens or technical necessities.
Leadership has thus been portrayed within liberal political theory and positivistic theories of knowledge as an individualistic enterprise essential to the given hierarchical arrangements and premised upon notions of technical expertise. Individualism, rationality and morality

A feminist critique of educational organizations and the ways in which educational leadership has been conceptualized would therefore involve a reconsideration of the concepts of the universal individual, abstract morality and bureaucratic rationality central to liberalism and positivism.

Carol Gould sees the starting point of liberalism as the assumption that ‘human individuals are essentially solitary, with needs and interests that are separate from, if not in opposition to, those of other individuals’ (Gould, 1983, p.24). It has already been illustrated how social contract theory, upon which liberal polemics is based, specifies the interests of the individual as protection of life, civil liberties and property as exemplified in the autonomous, abstract individual. The emphasis on the individual’s interests in liberal political and positivistic organizational theory has many consequences. In particular it denies the individual’s need for collective action and sociality. Elshtain argues:
The problem with a politics that begins and ends with mobilizing resources, achieving maximum impacts, calculating prudentially, articulating interest group claims, engaging in reward distribution functions and so on is not only its utter lack of imagination but its inability to engage the reflective allegiance and committed loyalty of citizens.

Oversimply, no substantive sense of civic virtue, no vision of the political community that might serve as the groundwork of a life in common is possible within a political life dominated by self-interested, predatory individualism. (Elshtain, 1982, p.141)

Liberal theory also produces an instrumental interpretation of rationality which known and constant, and that individuals are motivated purely out of a desire to individuals (as organizations) act to maximize their own interests. Gould refutes this assumption, arguing that humans must live in social groups, and that ‘human interdependence is thus necessitated by human biology and the assumption of individual self-sufficiency is plausible only if one ignores human biology’ (Gould, 1983, p.24). At the same time she is not advocating biological determinism, but rather recognition that ‘interests’ (whether self-interests or
altruistic interests) must take into account the material situation of people and
their relationships with others — that is, community. A rational person in
Gould’s perspective values her abilities to empathize and connect with particular
others by recognition not ignorance of social interdependence. It is a notion
which is both materialist and non-deterministic. This requires turning liberal
theory upon its head. Instead of community and cooperation being problematic
in liberal theory, the existence of egoism, competitiveness and conflict, which
liberalism sees as endemic and natural, would be the puzzle.

Thus feminists argue that the notion of the abstract individual so implicit in
liberalism ignores the essential interdependency of human beings. Sandra
Harding suggests that notions of abstract rationality expressed by Kohlberg,
Kant and Rawls exemplify a modern liberal ideal not only of the individual as a
citizen but also an abstract, transcendental view of morality which is ahistorical
(Harding, 1983, pp.40-50). In their view the resolution of moral problems in a 'rational' manner requires abstract judgments arrived at through abstract prin
ciples. Harding points out that such a view of moral reasoning does not take into
account the contextual and inductive thinking characteristic of taking the role of
the particular other. In so doing it creates an opposition between reason and affectivity. Furthermore, the hallmark of this moral reason is impartiality. Impartiality names a point of view of reason that stands apart from interests and desires. Not to be partial means being able to see the whole, how all the particular perspectives and interests in a given moral situation relate to one another in a way that, because of its partiality, each perspective cannot see itself. The impartial moral reasoner thus stands outside and above the situation about which he or she reasons, with no stake in it . . . . (Young, 1987, p.60)

This causes a problem which Adorno has called 'the logic of identity' in that it looks to order and describe particulars of experience, to create unity, to eliminate uncertainty and unpredictability. It requires the reasoner to treat all situations alike according to a set of rules, in effect to universalize, as a consequence of the opposition between reason and desire, moral decisions grounded in considerations of sympathy, caring, and an assessment of differentiated need are defined as not rational, not 'objective', merely sentimental. To the extent that women exemplify or are identified with such styles of moral decision making, then women are excluded from moral rationality. (Young, 1987, p.63)

This dichotomy between reason and desire, we have shown, appears in political theory as the distinction between the public realm of the civic and the state and the private realm of needs and desires (Young, 1987, p.63).

What are the implications of such a stance for leadership? Such a view does not require the impartial reasoner to acknowledge other subjects’ perspectives, since they are incomplete. Thus impartiality often results in authoritarianism, in
that one claims authority to decide. Furthermore, it is argued that the impartial reasoner has a holistic view, able to abstract himself or herself from self-interests in the interests of the unity (organization). Chris Hodgkinson in his books, A Philosophy of Leadership and A Theory of Educational Administration, exemplifies such an approach. Hodgkinson calls for a new form of moral leadership in which he posits a hierarchy of values giving priority to cognitive reason over human activity. Throughout his analysis he assumes Plato’s view of a leader as a philosopher-king, a rational individual able to abstract himself from value judgements embedded in specific situations but based upon universal principles.

(Hodgkinson, 1981). Such a position assumes a notion of transcendental moral identity which is ahistorical and ignores the sociality of humans. Such a view invests this capability for superior moral reasoning in the occupants of formal institutional positions, and would divest all others of the moral potential to take decisions which are rational. Hodgkinson does not tell us how to learn or acquire such superior moral powers or how they are recognized. In effect, the consequence would be to reassert the hierarchical relationships premised upon a concept of moral rationality and impose them upon
organizational reality in a manner which is detrimental to certain types of valuing and reasoning which are other centred, affective and caring.

Thirdly, in educational administration, as in organizational theory, the dominance of a science of administration has legitimated power relations in schools and maintained a myth of bureaucratic rationality and individualism. Administration is value-free, hierarchy is technically rational and domination legitimate. Urban talks of this bureaucratic rationality 'as a mode of thought, which can be understood as an expression of power relations in the social world, on the one hand, and a mystification of those relations on the other'. Furthermore, 'the defining element of relations inside a bureaucracy is hierarchy, itself another word for domination. Given the worldview of technical rationality, however, bureaucracy does not appear as a structure of domination; on the contrary, the bureaucratic hierarchy manifests itself as a technical necessity (to co-ordinate the subdivided tasks), as a rational organisational arrangement for the accomplishment of collective ends' (Urban, 1982, pp.23-4). The hierarchical arrangements in organizations such as schools are thus premised upon such notions of individualism and rationality. Rizvi has elsewhere developed the ways
in which this notion of bureaucratic rationality has particular political implications. He suggests that the traditional notion of administrative leadership reifies the role of the principal as a leader. Principals are seen to be effective only when they are ‘in charge’ or ‘in control’. This encourages manipulation and control of subordinates by principals, generally not conducive to mutual benefit (Rizvi, 1986). He suggests that if schools are seen in terms of individuals and their position in hierarchies, then ‘leaders will always be set apart from followers’, ‘relationships will be one sided’ and mediated through bureaucratic definitions of role (Rizvi, 1986, p.39).

Ferguson criticizes this bureaucratic mind set in which the ‘interaction with others is debased and the self is created as a rationalised commodity’ (Ferguson, 1984, p.20). In her view bureaucracy rests on assumptions of scientific rationality, the generalized other which is apolitical and ideologically invisible (Ferguson, 1984, p.16). Women are thereby a marginalized group who possess ‘subjugated knowledges’ located low down the hierarchy. At the same time women are both active creators and passive victims because their experience is more continuous with than in opposition to others. That is, women are neither
purely self-interested nor purely altruistic and self-sacrificing. Rather, self and other can be seen to be attached and continuous, making human sociality a fundamental component of the individual. Because women tend to assume educational leadership responsibility for taking care of others as defined by traditional roles, they tend to pass judgments that are based on contextual rather than abstract criteria, focus more on process than outcome. In management terms this has been recognized as women’s tendency (and failure) to be task- rather than organizationally oriented (Ferguson, 1984, p.25). This is not to deny that men live in families and women work, but the traditional public-private dichotomy means that the members of each gender carry the worldview of their own domain with them into the other realm, and must consciously put it aside to succeed in the other world on its own terms (Ferguson, 1984, p.27).

The masculine image of leadership in education is therefore historically constructed and maintained by its ideological underpinnings of dominant theories of a value-free science and liberal political theory. Leadership is justified on the grounds of rational necessity, individual behaviours and opportunities, and technically necessary hierarchical social arrangements. Founded upon a positivistic
epistemology which separates the body from the mind, which extracts feeling and emotion from the material, leadership is defined to be a rational, cognitive process. Because expressive behaviours are denigrated as irrational, it is possible to argue that gender relations are unproblematic and are not a substantive issue in the culture and structure of organizations. The lack of women in higher positions can be excused within such a theoretical framework as a consequence of women’s irrationality, subjectivity and emotionality. They choose not to aspire for such positions, or are excused on the grounds of their moral inadequacy in not being able to make the ‘hard’ decisions in the interests of the organization.

The question remains, how then can feminist theory not only deconstruct these dominant epistemological and political perspectives but also reconstruct an alternative which opens up different ways of seeing educational leadership.

What then would constitute a feminist perspective of leadership? The elements of a feminist reconstruction of leadership Feminist theory does not ask merely to include women as objects in the patriarchal discourse, in which sameness is emphasized rather than difference. It rapidly becomes evident that it is impossible to incorporate or ‘add on’ a feminist perspective. Rather, a feminist critique ultimately
leads to the need to reformulate the methodologies, criteria of validity and merit and ultimately the political and epistemological commitments underlying the dominant notions or discourse. Feminists demand not just equality, but that they become the subjects and objects of an alternative, autonomous discourse which chooses its own measures and criteria. It is necessary not only to explain the pervasiveness and persistence of gender divergence and gender subordination (which are not the same thing) but also to provide an explanation that avoids a rigid universalism and provides a way of understanding cultural and historical difference. It is also essential that theory provides the basis for a politics directed towards changing this subordination, a politics of change (Thornton 1982, p.53).

A feminist alternative to the view of leadership criticized in this chapter would consist of a number of elements including the central concepts already discussed, concepts which are common to most feminist perspectives. Such a view would focus on the relationship between the individual and a more egalitarian notion of community and civic participation which does not adhere to abstract principles of rational judgment or morality outside specific contexts.
Harding, for example, calls for a more practical, contextualized notion of rationality. Perhaps a more politically universal conception of human rationality would refer to normative conditions as personhood and human good in a relational morality which emphasizes attachments and responsibilities to others as well as to self. This suggests that ‘interest’ should not be regarded as either total self-interest or altruism. A relational view of morality and judgment recognizes the interdependence of people, and sees moral judgment as not being predicated upon some abstract universal morality or individual rights, but upon concern and responsibility consequent upon the relationships of self to others within specific contexts. In this sense administration as moral judgment would need to be aware of the context of the judgment and the responsibilities of the actors. In effect, it is arguing that the relational bias in women’s thinking, which has been seen to compromise their moral judgment in the past and impede their moral development, in fact has significant moral value for all. Gilligan has argued that this relational morality should not be regarded as the deficit model, but that it merely reflects a different social and moral understanding—a different set of interests (Gilligan, 1977, pp.481–2).
I do not take the stance that women’s worldview or perspective is either biologically determined or premised on an essentialism which perceives female morality, interests or behaviours as being superior to those of males.

Rather, I adhere to the view that at a specific historical moment, traditional patterns of behaviours prescribe certain roles to which individuals, males and females, partially conform to differing degrees. For example, women’s centrality to the family and as principal child rearer is not greatly challenged in practice, and is therefore a dominant part of women’s identity, value systems and needs. That is, women’s ‘interests’ are associated with caring and commitment to others. Carol Gould argues that ‘a dialectical conception of human biology sees human nature and the forms of human social organisation as determined not by biology alone but rather a complex interplay between our biological constitution, our physical environment and our forms of social organisation, including our level of technological development’ (Gould, 1984, p.22). Within this framework feminism would not expect that everyone be treated exactly the same, since responsibility and relationships have specific temporal and historical contexts.
Such a perspective would mean a reconstitution of the public sphere in what Markus calls ‘the more or less fluid self-organisation of a public committed to principles of equality, plurality and democratic forms’ (Markus, 1986, p.9). This is not to return to the Enlightenment ideal of civic public education which excludes the bodily and affective particularity as well as the concrete histories of individuals that make groups unable to understand one another. Emancipatory politics should foster a concept of public which in principle excludes no person, aspects of persons’ lives or topic of discussion and which encourages aesthetic as well as discursive expression. In such a public, consensus and sharing may not always be the goal, but the recognition and appreciation of difference, in the context of confrontation with power. (Young, 1987, p.76)

It is also time to consider why it is that women’s accounts of power differ so systematically from those of men. Men see in power domination, whilst Hartsock argues that women take a more emancipatory perception in that they see ‘power as a capacity of the community as a whole’. Women tend to characterize power over others as domination and illegitimate, without questioning why there are systematic relations in which some have more power over others. Individual power (or leadership) is often treated with scepticism. This comes largely from Arendt’s formulation, when she treats individual actions outside community with contempt, as non-political. Hartsock warns that in so doing power is described in terms that emphasise the submersion of the identity of the individual in the community, thereby falling into a form of female pathology of loss of self,
fluidity that may submerge individual identity. . . . It is better to have an understanding of power for the individual which stresses both its dimensions of competence, ability and creativity and does not lose sight of the importance of effective action . . . in part defined by its sensuality and its variety of connections and relations with others in the community. (Hartsock, 1983, pp. 253, 256)

Rather than condemn the notion of leadership as anathema to democratic community, it is essential to reconceptualize a different type of leadership in a caring community, to recognize that at particular instances individuals can and do act in a powerful manner but with good intention for the community, whilst laying themselves open to communal scrutiny (Noddings, 1985).

An adequate theory of power, according to Hartsock, would give an account of how social institutions have come to be controlled by only one gender; it would locate where and how the points of conflict between men and women are generated; and it would make clear the specific relations between individual intentional actions and structural constraints (p.254). Such an approach would necessarily subvert the hierarchical structures of social institutions such as bureaucracies. Ferguson argues that women already offer an alternative con struct to the dominant bureaucratic discourse in which ‘women’s lives constitute a submerged voice’. She continues: E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R
The traditional experiences of women in our society shed light on bureaucracy in two ways — by revealing persistent patterns of dominance and subordinance in bureaucracy that parallel power relations between men and women, and by suggesting a different way of conceiving the individual and the collective that reflects the caretaking and nurturant experiences embedded in women’s role. (Ferguson, 1984, p.x)

She suggests that a feminist discourse in organizations would therefore encourage the caring and reciprocity central to a relational worldview which gives prior concern to others, which would recognize both familial and friendship connectedness and acknowledge the civic as well as the personal importance of friendship. It would also be committed to participatory democracy, whilst being aware that the sharing of power, language and knowledge critical to participation can assume gendered formations which must be constantly analyzed.

Given the attack on abstract individualism and organizational hierarchy implicit in feminism, an alternative conception of leadership emerges. It is suggested here that leadership can take other forms than having power over others and that leadership ‘skills’ can be used in a different way. Rather than privileg
ing the individual who is often already in a position of status and power because of the possession of specialist knowledge, capacities, skills or role allocation, expertise can, in a cooperative environment, empower the individual and the group. Leadership, and the power which accompanies it, would be redefined as the ability to act with others to do things that could not be done by an individual alone. Leadership, therefore, would be a form of empowerment and not of dominance or control (Ferguson, 1984, p.206; see also Burbules, 1986). Hartsock takes up this point when she claims that ‘to lead is to be at the centre of the group rather than in front of the others’ (Hartsock, 1983, p.8).

Authority based on skill and knowledge (both of which are imbued with power) would be, according to Hartsock, ‘compelled persistently to demonstrate its force to those concerned in terms which they can grasp and, by dint of being so compelled, be made in some real measure responsible to them’ (Hartsock, 1983, p.10).

It is suggested that women have been alienated by the masculinist portrayal of leadership and organizational life which emphasizes control, individualism and hierarchy. The false dichotomy between fact and value, ends and means,
derived from the positivistic assumptions of the traditional 'science of educational administration' has political repercussions in the sense that it is exclusive of women's experience by rejecting all that is affective or experientially-based.

It casts particular groups as 'others', and privileges certain types of knowledge, experience and expertise over others. Furthermore, organizational theory has assumed and maintained the dualisms derived from social and political theory which have portrayed women's experiential and knowledge claims to be in opposition, and thus peripheral or insubstantial. This has been exacerbated in educational practice by the historical and social construction of the gendered division of labour in schools and educational administration.

What does this mean in practical terms and policy in educational administration? Educational leadership as portrayed in the conventional literature may have little to attract women. That is, the perception of what constitutes leadership is problematic, not women. If administration is no longer treated as separate from teaching, if leadership is not merely equated to formal roles and responsibilities, if what is worthwhile knowledge and experience is not restricted to formal qualifications or institutional experience, then it calls upon a new
set of informed judgments which must be brought to bear on the valuing of people’s activities in educational organizations. What counts as administrative and leadership experience and skills or potential could therefore include community activities, teaching, curriculum development and child rearing, which recognizes what difference can bring to education. This would go some way towards recognizing women’s experience in the ‘private’ sphere, and imbuing it with equal status to male experience in the public sphere. It may challenge what Jan Grant describes as the way in which organizations reproduce themselves in the masculine view via ‘homosocial reproduction’ (Grant, 1985).

It would also require a shift to be made from the individual to a collective focus in terms of what is meant by leadership. This would require going against the renewed push towards more masculinist notions of leadership embedded in corpor ate managerialism, the impetus for current restructuring of secondary and tertiary education, which equates efficiency and effectiveness with organizational rationality and hierarchy (Blackmore and Kenway, 1988). While administration and leadership are premised upon conventional theories which reify hierarchy, rationality and individualism, which are perceived to be
masculinist attributes or behav
iors, women’s experiences and values will continue to be
displaced. To conclude,

Hartsock suggests that ‘. . . it would raise for the first
time the possibility of a fully
human community, a community structured by its variety of
direct relations among

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Educational Policy and Man

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Summary This paper reports on data relating to management and leadership derived from a survey of all the female headteachers in England and Wales. The quantitative data presented here are complementary to previous research on gender in education which has tended to be qualitative. The use of the Gray paradigms in the research instrument has allowed an empirical redefinition of the ‘feminine’ style of management, but the research confirms that the majority of the female heads use a collaborative and ‘people-oriented’ style of management. In addition, the key values promoted by the headteachers are related to achievement and respect for all. The headteachers generally make themselves available to staff and spend a considerable proportion of their time in school outside their office. They tend to encourage staff development, often through individual consultation, but only a minority make special provision.
for the development of female teachers. Male resentment of female leadership was found to be relatively prevalent and the majority of the women felt they had to ‘prove their worth’ as a woman manager. Despite the difficulties encountered, once the women had achieved headship, they were aware that there were advantages in being a woman headteacher. They reported the ability to defuse ‘macho’ behaviour, the benefits of being unusual and therefore singled out and the fact that girls, mothers and female teachers found them approachable. The relative disproportion of female secondary headteachers raises issues of equity. However, in view of the effective management style of the majority, the question is also raised of the potential loss of leadership to our schools.

Introduction

The study of women in leadership and management in education is relatively rare. Hall (1996), when researching female headteachers, makes the point that:

I found it difficult at first to avoid using men’s behaviour as educational leaders as a yardstick for describing women in similar positions . . .

Putting the picture straight by changing the subject from men to women does not involve saying women are different or better. My purpose is rather to explain how they are in this role (headship), in this context (schools), in this period of time (1990s). (p. 3)

Theories of leadership and management have often been based on assumptions derived from the male discourse (Shakeshaft, 1989; Blackmore, 1989), but in relatively recent years the female manager in education has been studied in her own right (Adler, Laney and Packer, 1993; Ouston, 1993; Ozga, 1993). The dis...
proportionate number of female secondary headteachers, only 24 per cent in 1996 (GB. DFE, 1997), also raises issues of equity. Evetts (1994) studied 20 secondary heads of whom ten are male and ten female, making gender an important variable in her study, and Grace (1995) included a chapter on women in educational leadership. Studies of individual headteachers have included a balance of male and female heads (Ribbins and Marland, 1994; Hustler, Brig house and Ruddock, 1995; Ribbins, 1997). The present author has conducted interviews with five women headteachers (Coleman, 1996) and, most notably, Hall (1996) has undertaken an in-depth study of six female headteachers of whom three are secondary and three primary. Elsewhere, Hall and Southworth (1997) point to the fact that research into headship is the weaker for largely ignoring the variable of gender:

Using a gender perspective creates new possibilities for exploring the lives of men and women who teach, manage and lead in education. As researchers into headship we have both concluded that educational leadership is firmly rooted in professional identity. Gender, in turn, is a crucial component of that identity. Future research into headship that
fails to take this and the gendered nature of schools and colleges into account is likely to be incomplete. (p. 167)

However, research on the management and leadership of women in education has tended to be qualitative in nature. THE FEMALE SECONDARY HEADTEACHER Survey of female headteachers in England and Wales

In summer 1996, the present author undertook a survey of all the 670 female secondary headteachers in England and Wales covering their leadership and management styles, and their career progress to headship. The response rate of 70 per cent, well above normal response rates, gives an objective measure of the interest that the headteachers had in the area. Comments included on the returned questionnaires and accompanying letters showed the measure of this interest and indicated the relative isolation that was felt by many of the respondents. Female headteachers have not previously been surveyed separately as a group, although gender as a variable was included in the survey research of Weindling and Earley (1987), Jones (1987) and Jirasinghe and Lyons (1996).

The survey data reported here are those relating to the management and leadership styles of the headteachers, including the values that they were promoting in their schools. In addition, this paper covers
aspects of their experience

of management and leadership, including the ways in which they relate to their

staff and their professional development. Finally, data relating to the perceived
difficulties and the advantages of being a woman headteacher are reported.

Approximately half of the headteachers were aged between 40 and 49 and
half between 50 and 59, with very few under 40 or over 60. More than two
thirds of the headteachers were married, with marriage more popular amongst
the under than the over 50s. Just over half of the heads had a child or children,
but childlessness was more common amongst those under 50. Just over two
thirds of those responding were heads of coeducational schools, the remainder
were heads of single sex schools. Of these, only three individuals were heads of
boys’ schools. The management and leadership styles of female headteachers in England and Wales

In analysing management and leadership styles, there are certain qualities that
are identified with a ‘feminine’ or a ‘masculine’ style of management. Both of
these styles may be adopted by men or by women, although the expectation is
that men might adopt a style that is predominantly masculine and women one
that is predominantly feminine. The lists of qualities identified by Bem (1974)
and by Gray (1989, 1993) are both attempts to identify such a paradigm or ideal type. In the survey, the headteachers were presented with the masculine and feminine qualities identified by Gray (1993) and asked to indicate which of the qualities they felt applied to them. These qualities are derived from work associated with the training of headteachers, and are not based on empirical research.

Their use in this questionnaire was intended to provide a possible redefinition of the paradigms. The qualities were not identified in any way as ‘male’ or ‘female’ in the questionnaire.

Six of the adjectives and descriptions that are included in the feminine paradigm (see Table 1) were identified by 59 per cent or more of the headteachers.

More than three-quarters of them judged themselves to be ‘aware of individual differences’, ‘caring’ and ‘intuitive’. However, there were also four adjectives in the masculine paradigm which were identified by over half of the headteachers as applicable to them. Although the characteristics identified most often were from the feminine paradigm, those chosen by more than 50 per cent ranged across both paradigms (see Table 2). The qualities listed in Table 2 present an empirically based alternative to the feminine paradigm identified by Gray (ibid.).
Overall, it would appear that there is a strong identification with most of the feminine traits on the part of the headteachers, and a weak identification with most of the masculine traits. However, there are a number of masculine traits, specifically ‘evaluative’, ‘disciplined’, ‘competitive’ and ‘objective’, which are identified by 50 per cent or more of the respondents, and which therefore temper the picture of a pure feminine paradigm of management style amongst the female secondary headteachers of England and Wales and indicate a more androgynous style of management.

Table 1 Qualities identified by headteachers from the masculine and feminine paradigms of Gray (1993): percentages indicate they felt they had the quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feminine paradigm</th>
<th>Masculine paradigm</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of individual differences</td>
<td>86.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>79.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>76.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-competitive</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Qualities identified by 50 per cent or more of headteachers

| Aware of individual differences (f) | 86.0 |
Caring (f) 79.4
Intuitive (f) 76.2
Tolerant (f) 68.7
Creative (f) 63.0
Evaluative (m) 61.1
Disciplined (m) 60.4
Informal (f) 59.4
Competitive (m) 50.6
Objective (m) 50.6

Note

(f) = feminine and (m) = masculine in Gray’s (1993) paradigm. Key words to describe the headteachers’ style of management

Open-ended questions included in the survey were intended to allow the head teachers to express their own perceptions of their style and of the values that they are trying to promote in the school. The headteachers were given the opportunity to list three separate words that describe their style of management.

This question appeared in the survey before the question involving the list of masculine and feminine paradigms, so it is unlikely that these adjectives had any influence on the free choice of the three words. No guidance whatsoever was given, to allow them to provide unprompted responses. This led to there being a large range of adjectives offered. However, it was possible
to group them, and

establish some idea of the prevalent styles of management that the female head teachers considered that they adopted. The themes that were identified are listed below, with the percentage of the total number of adjectives in each group:

1 A collaborative style of management – e.g. consultative, open (38.5 per cent)

2 A people-oriented style of management – e.g. team-related, supportive (23.8 per cent)

3 An autocratic/directive style of management – e.g. decisive, firm (14.9 per cent)

4 An efficient style of management – e.g. focused, planned (11.7 per cent)

5 A values style of management – e.g. visionary, fair (11.1 per cent).

There is a clear indication that the single most popular style of management was that termed ‘collaborative’. However, it is notable that most of the headteachers use terms like ‘consultative’, ‘open’, ‘collaborative’ and ‘participative’ rather than ‘collegial’ or ‘democratic’. It appears that the majority of the headteachers adopting this style of management reserve the right to make the final decision.

The potentially overlapping ‘people-oriented’ style of management was also strongly indicated by the choice of adjectives grouped within that theme. The range of adjectives chosen is very wide, but the styles of management that are
indicated in the majority of responses are consistent with the adjectives most often chosen from the female paradigm – i.e. ‘aware of individual differences’, ‘caring’, ‘intuitive’ and ‘tolerant’.

Certainly, the identification of the collaborative and people-oriented style of management with the way that women manage is in accord with a range of earlier findings. Research on female headteachers and principals in the USA, the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada appears to indicate that female managers are likely to work in a cooperative style, empowering their colleagues and characteristically making use of teamwork (Blackmore, 1989; Adler, 1994; Hall, 1996; Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996). This generalization is borne out by research findings from outside education (Ferrario, 1994).

The author’s survey of all female secondary headteachers in England and Wales thus largely endorses earlier research, but although it is clear that the preferred management style of female headteachers is collaborative, there appears to be a minority of the heads for whom this is not true. Although the collaborative and people-oriented styles were endorsed by a majority, there were a considerable number of adjectives offered that were grouped as either ‘autocratic/directive’ or ‘efficient’. This represents a
proportion of headteachers who, through their choice of adjectives, identified their style of management as probably more akin to the masculine paradigm than the feminine. This style of management might be identified with some of the ‘male’ adjectives, such as ‘disciplined’, ‘evaluative’, ‘formal’ and ‘competitive’.

In the above analysis, the adjectives were considered singly. When considering the adjectives in their groups of three, it was rare for all three to be grouped within the same theme. For example, ‘efficient’ adjectives might be combined with either ‘people-oriented’ or ‘autocratic’ adjectives. However, a dominant style was considered to be where at least two of the three adjectives came from either collaborative and people-oriented or from the autocratic/directive and efficient categories.

For those headteachers aged 49 or under, about ten per cent chose at least two of their three words from the autocratic/directive style of management combined with the efficient style of management, but the proportion of those 50 or over doing so was just over 20 per cent. The tendency to be more collaborative may be linked with ‘youth’, and this appeared to be the case in earlier research with head teachers (Weindling and Earley, 1987). Alternatively, a difference in style of the
younger heads may be linked to a change in the expectations of what is required

in headteachers in the last years of the twentieth century. Several of the heads

interviewed by Hustler et al. (1995) indicated that their management style had

moved towards being one of collaboration in keeping with: 'a reformulated idea

of the leading professional' (Thompson in ibid., p. 90). Hall (1996) comments on

the need for a different style of headteacher to cope with the demands of the post

1988 reforms, and identifies that all six of the women heads she studied are different from their predecessors whether male or female. In addition, a more

'collegial' style of management is now generally considered to be normatively superior to other styles (Wallace, 1989; Bush, 1995), at least in Western cultures.

The final group of adjectives, termed 'values driven', represents a strand of thinking that is probably not separate from the others, but identifies the values that may well underpin the management style of many headteachers. The most common category of adjectives within this group referred to being 'visionary', the second to being 'fair' or 'honest'. Overall, there appears to be a range of management styles indicated by the lists of adjectives provided, with one side of the spectrum occupied by the
majority of the headteachers who adopt a ‘collaborative’ and ‘people-oriented’ style of management and the other side of the spectrum occupied by a minority of the headteachers operating an autocratic/directive style of management often linked to choice of the more ‘efficient’ adjectives. The ‘values-driven’ style may well underpin any or all of the other styles (see Figure 1). Key values promoted in the school

The headteachers were also given an opportunity to indicate a free choice of the key values that they are trying to promote in the school. The respondents tended to indicate phrases, rather than individual words. The sentiments that are included in the value statements can be divided into four areas.  1 Academic excellence and educational achievement

Many of the value statements mentioned academic achievement, sometimes in association with caring values: ‘academic achievement in a caring community which develops all pupils for their own potential.’ ‘The pupils’ learning is central.’  2 The importance of every individual achieving their potential

These statements are often linked to the importance of hard work: ‘everyone committed to the success of each student.’ ‘everyone has the potential to achieve, but you must work hard to succeed.’  3 Respect for self

There was awareness of the need to promote: ‘high self-esteem for all.’ ‘the importance of self-worth, and valuing others.’

There was awareness in these statements of the need for:
'respect for individual differences; valuing others [pupils and staff]'

and that:

'students should aim high, with compassion for those around them.'

The achievement of academic excellence could be considered an objective that

is innate in the purpose of almost any school. This value is very much in accord

with the key quality of strategic direction and development of the school out

lined in the National Standards for Headteachers (TTA, 1998), in terms of the

creation of an ethos and vision which will secure achievement by pupils.

However, the remaining values identified are related to the qualities of caring

and respect for individuals that the headteachers have already identified within

the Gray (1993) paradigms, where the four most popular qualities - 'aware of

individual differences', 'caring', 'intuitive' and 'tolerant' - were all drawn from

the feminine paradigm.

The words listed in Table 3, are those that were mentioned most in all the

statements about values from the headteachers. These words indicate the import

ance of both achievement and respect as key values - achievement sometimes,

but not always, specifying learning, and respect including respect for self and for

others, both individuals and the community.
Aspects of educational leadership can be seen very clearly in the key values that the headteachers in the survey were trying to promote in their schools, and these aspects also endorse the idea that women are particularly concerned with T H E F E M A L E S E C O N D A R Y H E A D T E A C H E R.

Table 3 Words mentioned most often in statements relating to key values promoted in the school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>No. of times used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High/higher/highest</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care/caring</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value(s)/valued/valuing</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual(s)</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil(s)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the teaching and learning aspects of their role in comparison with administrative or other responsibilities. There is no doubt that the two key value words used most frequently: ‘achievement’ and ‘respect’, are in keeping with the concept of educational leadership, and very much in line with existing
research on the ways

in which women in educational management operate (Gross and
Trask, 1976;

Shakeshaft, 1989, 1995; Hill and Ragland, 1995; Richl and
Lee, 1996; Grogan,

1996; Gold, 1996; Kruger, 1996). This research was
concerned only with female
secondary headteachers, and it may be that a survey of male
colleagues would
reveal that men too are moving towards a ‘feminine’ style
of management and
share many of the key values identified by the surveyed
female headteachers. Management in action

The headteachers were asked a limited range of questions
relating to the practi
calities of their style of management. In particular, they
were asked about their
availability to staff, and the amount of time they spent
out of the office when in
school. They were also asked about the ways in which they
couraged all
teachers to develop their careers, and if there was any
special way in which they
tried to encourage the careers of female teachers.

The majority of headteachers seem to make themselves
available to their staff

whenever possible (see Table 4). The headteachers also
appear to be visible in

the school for quite a large proportion of their time (see
Table 5). In answer to

the question ‘while you are in school, what proportion of
your time do you
spend out of your office?’, approximately 80 per cent
claimed that they spent between 10 and 50 per cent of their time in the school, but out of their office.

Most of the headteachers report that they spend a considerable proportion of their time out of their office. They were not asked how this time was spent, but presumably some of it would be in teaching and some would involve ‘management by walking about’. When coupled with the information about the availability of the majority to talk to teachers, there would appear to be some evidence to support the dominant management style indicated by the majority of the headteachers. It seems that a large proportion of the headteachers consider that they operate in an open way and are highly involved with their staff and the operation of the school. Encouragement of all teachers to develop their careers.
Headteachers sought various ways to encourage teachers to develop their careers. Courses, appraisal and mentoring were the most often cited means, but ‘other’ ways were written in by 52.9 per cent of the respondents (see Table 6).

Of those who indicated ‘other’, most stated that they were encouraging one-to-one meetings for all members of staff to discuss career planning. The meetings either took place with themselves as headteacher, with another member of the senior staff, the INSET coordinator, a consultant or an unspecified person. The general feeling was that it is: ‘very important to find time to have one-to-one conversations about individual strengths and needs.’

Other possibilities mentioned were career development opportunities inside and outside the school, and other, generally practical, means of encouragement such as practice interviews. The development opportunities included specific interventions:

‘departmental monitoring, work shadowing, teacher placement.’

There was some indication of encouragement of development through means other than promotion:

‘Involvement in teams to develop projects.’
‘Opportunity for role rotation, being given support to lead
initiatives
(curriculum and pastoral).’

One headteacher specified the development opportunity that
was available in a
largely female school: THE FEMALE SECONDARY
HEADTEACHER

Table 6 Means of encouraging teachers to develop careers
(percentages)

Courses 87.2
Appraisal 69.6
Mentoring 65.7
Role play 3.0
Other 52.9 ‘Taking on “acting” responsibilities during our
frequent maternity absences.’

Since a minority of headteachers in England and Wales are
women, they
present important role models for other female teachers. The
heads were asked
if they particularly encouraged women teachers in their
career progress. The
largest single group responding to this question indicated
that they did not
treat women differently from men (see Table 7).

Some of the headteachers indicated more than one way in
which they encour
aged female teachers. The large proportion indicating ‘No
special ways’ is actually
greater than 46.6 per cent, since some of those commenting
in the ‘other’ category
reiterated that all staff were treated equally in their
school (18.6 per cent) or that
staff were all treated according to the equal opportunities policy (4.2 per cent). A

further 6.7 per cent stated that they pursued the same policies that they had indi-
cated for the staff as a whole.

In addition, some of the headteachers of girls’ schools commented in the

‘other’ comments, that the question of treating female staff differently does not

really arise for them, since the majority of their staff are women. Such com-

ments accounted for about ten per cent of those in the ‘other’ comments.

It is therefore likely that the majority of headteachers do not have any special

policies with regard to the encouragement of female teachers. However, over 20 per

cent do state that they encourage women through women-only courses and a similar

proportion through mentoring. In addition, the largest proportion of comments

written in as ‘other’ referred to specific encouragement of women. This encourage-

ment often included the headteacher’s own importance as a role model and, in some

cases, referred to the doubts and lack of confidence evidenced by their women staff: ‘Personal conversation: I always encouraged competent women, from being a scale 1 teacher onwards, making sure they see themselves as possible runners, and boosting their confidence.’

‘Individual discussion, also with male staff, but I find many women, although very good, do not have confidence to put themselves forward for promotion. Three examples in my school spring to mind . . .’

The encouragement of women through being a role model was
important, particularly in the context of the domestic role of women: E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

Table 7 ‘How do you encourage female teachers in their career progress?’ (percentages)

No special ways 46.6

Women-only courses 21.3

Mentoring 19.6

Other 37.2

‘I talk to them about the issues, making it clear I have children, etc. -

i.e. trying to be a role model.’

There was also awareness of the need to overcome stereotyping:

‘There is a high percentage of female role models - SMT, heads of science and maths, etc.’

Finally, some of the encouragement specifically addressed to women was associated with issues such as the handling of maternity leave, and more radical suggestions to help women such as job-sharing:

‘Being flexible about moves between part-time and full-time. Job shares (though not yet at present school).’

‘Finding opportunities for responsibility in a variety of ways – particu larly important for returners. Enhancing the role of positive women in whole-school issues.’
‘Flexible return to work after maternity leave.’

Whilst there is a commitment to staff development as a whole, it would appear that a substantial minority of the headteachers are aware of a need to separately foster the career progress of women. However, it is only a small minority of the headteachers who have moved beyond courses and mentoring to actively encourage female staff in practical ways such as job-sharing and flexible work practices. Male resentment of female leadership

Over half of the surveyed heads reported experiencing sexist attitudes from their male colleagues. This experience was reported more by those under 50, and those who were married and had children, in comparison with those who were single and childless. Similarly, the heads of girls’ schools were less likely to report sexism from their peers than the heads of coeducational and boys’ schools (see Table 8). These differences are statistically significant. It would appear that women who are married and who have children, particularly those working in coeducational schools, may be identified more strongly with a domestic stereotype and implicitly considered less able to lead and manage. Once established as headteachers, they were strongly aware of the fact that men found difficulty in dealing with female leaders. Being patronized and
feeling isolated were two common features of the experience of headship. The female heads also reported examples of stereotyping linked to their sex. Many comments express: ‘difficulties with the concept of women as a boss’; some were more specific: THE FEMALE SECONDARY HEADTEACHER ‘I inherited a school with a good number of staff who didn’t want a female head. The secretary and caretaker threatened to resign, some male teachers made it clear they didn’t want a woman telling them what to do.’ Occasionally, the resentment is linked to disapproval of management style that is not seen as ‘traditional’: ‘Some staff wanted as head a “big man who shouted” – I’m the opposite.’ There was also expectation that females would manage in a certain way: ‘The assumption was that you will be a female stereotype – keep changing one’s mind, can’t handle difficult male pupils, etc.’ Whilst the stereotype of the woman as a ‘soft’ manager predominates, there is evidence of a different range of stereotypes associated with women: ‘the suggestion that career women are cold, hard and single-minded.’ ‘more a question of little bits of prejudice against single-woman role. Rumours seemed to vary: I’m assumed to be either a promiscuous heterosexual or a latent homosexual.’ The majority of the headteachers (62.7 per cent) stated that, as a woman, they had felt the need to ‘prove their worth’ in a management position. There was little difference in the proportion of women who felt this amongst those of differing age-groups, but some differences between those of different marital status and those who headed girls-only schools, compared with the
rest. The need to
‘prove your worth’ is felt more strongly by those with children, and less strongly
by the single and heads of girls’ schools. This difference may well be linked
with the tendency to stereotype married women who are mothers with the
domestic role, which was particularly evident in responses relating to discrimi
nation linked to promotion. The largest category of responses to the question of
Table 8 Percentage of heads stating they had experienced sexism from peers
Over 50 52.4 Children 57.7
Under 50 56.9 No children 51.1
Heads of girls’ schools 47.7 Married 55.7 Single 47.1
Heads of other schools 57.7 Separated 35.7 Divorced 66.7
the need to ‘prove your worth’ related to combating the range of stereotypes that
are held about women in management.
Despite the range of stereotypes relating to female leadership, much of the
resentment was linked to the softer, more participatory style of management of
the female heads on the part of subordinate males who were used to a more deci
sive, autocratic style. The present research appears to replicate the findings from
qualitative research in the UK (Hall, 1996) and quantitative work in the USA
(Riehl and Lee, 1996) and Israel (Goldring and Chen, 1994),
that there are consider

dable difficulties for some men in adjusting both to
working for a woman

and adapting to the preferred management style of most
women. The advantages in being a woman headteacher

The majority of the group surveyed have been successful in
terms of a tradition

ally male career path, and some have adopted the norms
associated with a career

that takes little account of family life. Only 10 per cent
identified ‘being a

woman’ as a reason for success. By far the most frequent
reason for success

quoted was ‘hard work’, with support from others being the
second most important

reason. Both of these tend to indicate the difficulties
that a woman may face

in reaching a position of leadership, particularly when the
leader is stereotypi
cally expected to be a man. However, there are benefits in
being a woman once

headship has been achieved. Nearly two-thirds of the
headteachers reported that

they had found it an advantage to be a woman headteacher
(see Table 9).

The most mentioned advantage was in terms of being able to
defuse macho

behaviour on the part of males: students, teachers and
parents. In this case, the

fact that men feel the need to be aggressive with other
men, and that aggression

is not associated with females, acts to their advantage. A
number of the head
teachers quite consciously acted up to the stereotype of femininity and played on the susceptibilities of males, such as governors or local authority personnel, who were likely to perceive them first and foremost as women.

**Table 9 Advantages of being a woman headteacher %age of total examples given**

Able to defuse 'macho' behaviour 35.6

Being noticed 15.1

Not constrained by male stereotype 14.7

Approachable to women and girls 10.9

Using 'feminine guile' 7.7

Empathy and use of emotion 7.1

None 3.2

Head of girls' school 2.9

Other 2.9

Another advantage quoted by the headteachers was 'being noticed'. Since they were a relative rarity as a female, they tended to be offered opportunities, particularly by the local education authority. It is possible that a rise in the number of female headteachers, which would lead to a reduction in such opportunities, might therefore not be entirely welcomed by some of the heads.

The headteachers were positive about their gender in terms of their approach ability. They felt that people, particularly girls, mothers and female members of
staff, could approach them more freely than they might a man. In addition, they considered that they had the freedom to empathize with families and be sympathetic in a way that most men could not. Although the general assumption that the leader and manager is male may prove a handicap for the female manager, there is the other side of the coin, namely the freedom of the female manager to behave in a way that is not constrained by the normal stereotypes associated with leaders. It may be that being a woman in management allows some freedom (Hall, 1996) and gives the opportunity to the female headteacher to develop in fresh ways that are unencumbered by the perceptions of others. In addition, Grogan (1996) refers to the life experience of women, as wives and mothers, moulding them as administrators – the experience making them different from males in the same positions. Conclusion The survey of the entire population of female headteachers in England and Wales has contributed in a number of ways to the understanding of the management and leadership of women headteachers in the 1990s. The high response rate to the survey gives confidence in the validity of the findings and allows the possibility of some generalizations to complement existing and future qualitative
One of the major findings emerging from the research is the continuing discrimination that has been faced by women who are now senior managers in education. The experience of isolation and instances of sexism recounted by the headteachers, indicate that they are operating in a context which may be inimical to success unless women are prepared to adapt to the prevailing values. These might include opting for a single state, childlessness or working harder and longer than any competitors, male or female.

Many of the headteachers in the survey reported on their experience of resentment, on the part of males and some females, at being subject to female leadership. However, the majority also identify ways in which being a woman leader frees them from the stereotypes of male leadership. Both of these factors exemplify the differences in the context within which male and female head teachers operate, indicating the relevance of gender to the study of leadership and management.

The research strongly endorses the view that most women manage their schools in a way that can clearly be identified as consultative and people orientated.
The majority of the headteachers, particularly those under 50, chose adjectives that identified them as collaborative and caring. The choices also endorsed the importance placed on teamwork and on 'power to' rather than 'power over'.

However, they do not claim to be democratic, rather they say that the final responsibility for decisions rests with them. In reviewing effective management in schools, Bolam et al. (1993) commented that the headteacher of an effective school 'Has consultative “listening” style; is decisive and forceful but not dictatorial; is open to other people’s ideas; and is easily accessible to staff’ (p. 119).

The headteachers’ choices of adjectives to describe their management style and values generally reflected and endorsed the findings of previous research.

The predominant management style was collaborative and people-centred.

However, there is a small proportion of the heads for whom this is not true.

About 15 per cent of the heads may be adopting, consciously or unconsciously, a style of management and leadership that may have more in common with elements of the more stereotypical ‘masculine’ style, which involves a more directive way of operating. The survey also endorses the tendency for women to be educational leaders, placing stress on the learning of
their students rather than
on the importance of administrative tasks. The values that
the headteachers
chose were indicative of the values of educational leaders,
'achievement and
respect'.

Whilst the quality of leadership may best be judged within
the context of the
individual school, the majority of the surveyed heads
operate in a manner that
largely coincides with concepts of effective leadership in
education. It was noted in
the introduction that the under-representation of women in
senior management in
education constitutes an issue of equity. Since women tend
to operate in a collabo
rative manner that is likely to empower others and endorse
values of educational
leadership, their under-representation also indicates a
loss of potentially effective

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NFER-NELSON. THE FEMALE SECONDARY HEAD TEACHER IS CHANGING THE DEAFENING SILENCE OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN’S VOICES IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP Tanya Fitzgerald

Source: Journal of Educational Administration 41(1) (2003): 9–23. Abstract The critique of western ethnocentric notions of leadership presented in this paper is informed by debates on issues such as gender and educational leadership that have produced meta-narratives that explore and explain women and men’s ways of leading. One of the troubling aspects of western leadership theories is the claim that the functions and features of leadership can be transported and legitimised across homogeneous educational systems. Despite changes that have been made in definitions and descriptions of educational leadership to provide a focus on gender, there is the implicit assumption that while educational leadership might be practised differently according to gender, there is a failure to consider the values and practices of indigenous educational leaders. Thus, the construct of educational leadership needs to be more broadly theorised in order for knowledge of indigenous ways of leading to emerge. Introduction

There are now considerable theoretical and empirical studies on women and educational leadership that have emerged predominantly from the USA (Chase, 1995; Grogan, 1996; Shakeshaft 1987), Britain (Adler et
al., 1993; Coleman, 2001; Ozga, 1993), Australia (Blackmore, 1999; Limerick and Lingard, 1995) and New Zealand (Court, 1995, 1998; Strachan, 1999). These studies have fundamentally contested claims such as those expounded by two of the “fathers” of educational administration theory, Hodgkinson (1991) and Sergiovanni (1992) that top-down “visionary” leadership is possible and permissible and that issues of social class, gender, race and ethnicity are unproblematic. In their critique, feminist authors have argued that the primacy of positional and proprietal leadership is a contested domain and that there can be no unitary explanation of what it means to exercise educational leadership. While the literature on educational leadership is expansive, conclusions that theorists posit pinpoint their concern with determining and defining the nature of educational leadership. Just who might be leaders and how circumstances of social class, location, ethnic and cultural world view might underpin their work and identity is not fully discussed and disclosed. Essentially while these discourses of “masculinity, rationality and leadership” (Blackmore, 1999, p. 4) and the search for a normative theory of leadership (Duke, 1998) remain gendered, they also remain
raced. That is, considerations of race and ethnicity are not uncovered to examine ways in which these trajectories impact on the exercise of educational leadership.

The reform of educational administration that was widely experienced in the late 1980s and 1990s has produced new images and understandings about the nature and role of educational leaders. In essence, good (male) leaders are portrayed as visionary, multiskilled, self-regulatory, facilitative, goal oriented, entrepreneurial and service oriented (see Duke, 1998; Marsh, 2000; Senge, 1990). In a subliminal and subtle way the literature popularises women’s leadership in oppositional ways and suggests that they might exercise traits characteristically described as flexible, supportive, nurturing, collaborative, collegial and socially just. Values such as openness, trust, empowerment and compassion provide a relief map for charting ways in which women inevitably exercise leadership in schools. In the process, debates centred on the common theme that “gender matters in educational leadership” (Blackmore and Kenway, 1993; Hall, 1999; Shakeshaft, 1987) have produced discourses of privilege. That is, women as educational leaders have been theorised about as if they are an homogenous
group and considerations of circumstances such as ethnicity/social class/location

and beliefs have been discounted. Or, at the very least, distinctions between and

among women have collapsed in the attempt to provide a meta-narrative that

describes and defines women’s experiences and practices as educational leaders.

Against a backdrop of the contested and continuing reform of educational administration, discourses that universalise the complex participation of women and “women’s leadership” have produced universal and somewhat troublesome narratives that privilege “feminine” values. In this way categories of “woman” and “educational leader” have become fixed and the possibility for substantive diversity among and between women does not appear possible. And in particular, whiteness becomes a privileging construct that is played out differently across gendered lines.

This paper will examine literature relating to educational leadership and critique assumptions concerning the homogeneity of this construct and the apparent invisibility of indigenous leadership models and discourses within these narratives. Despite the shared rhetoric about what it means to simultaneously occupy positions such as “woman” and “educational leader”, silences
surrounding indigenous women and educational leadership are deafening. Educational leadership in a reform framework

Since 1988, educational administration and the nature of educational work in the western world has undergone widespread reform that was predicated on the need to re-conceptualise education as a market commodity (Smyth, 1993; Thrupp, 2001). One of the direct consequences is that schools and their leaders have been required to shape their policies and practices according to the stated (and at times not stated) demands of their stakeholders (Glatter, 1999). Conservative and competing demands for parental choice and participation, school autonomy, cultural diversity, educational standards, core curricula, teacher accountability and leadership have radically altered the educational environment that teachers, students and educational leaders occupy (Court, 1998).

Despite differences in location, identity and (social and educational) structure, countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Britain have exported and imported educational policy solutions to rectify and resolve these complex educational problems (Thrupp, 2001).

One of the survival mechanisms that schools in New Zealand have adopted is the shift towards entrepreneurship. In an attempt to simultaneously retain a
financial and competitive advantage, schools have actively recruited fee-paying international students, sought corporate sponsorship (and in some cases have incorporated the corporate brand within the school name) and focused on image management (Ball, 1994). Schools that are able to offer well-resourced and comprehensive programmes that produce high performing students are deemed to be “good schools” with (presumably) “good leaders” (Education Review Office, 1998). Coincidentally, these schools are often situated in highly sought after residential areas (Gordon, 1994) and are most likely to be led by white, middle class and well educated men (Blackmore, 1999). This is primarily problematic as discourses centred on the conceptualisation of what constitutes a “good school” have been closely connected with models of “good leadership” that associate masculinity with rationality, accountability, efficiency, line management styles and practices, entrepreneurship and the requisite political and administrative expertise (Blackmore, 1999). In this way educational leadership is re-constituted as a “technology of the masculine” as Marjorie Theobald (1996, p. 174) has suggested. This is perhaps a partial explanation for the numerical dominance of men in leadership positions in schools and a
central reason to
interrupt orthodox educational leadership knowledge and
practices in raising
questions regarding the apparent silence of women’s voices
and, more specifically, indigenous women’s voices.

Gender and leadership
Debates about gender and leadership are, in the main,
raised by women for and about women as evidenced in bibliographies provided by writers such as Jill Blackmore (1999), Diane Dunlap and Peggy Schmuck (1995) and Charole Shakeshaft (1987). What is needed therefore is gender to be located at the centre of debates on leadership, not at its periphery where it is largely ignored. For this to be achieved a redefinition of educational management and leadership that “provides an appropriate stage for giving gender not only a speaking part” (Hall, 1999, p. 156) should be sought. In this way, persistent masculine images of leadership and educational leaders can be contested and questions can be raised concerning taken-for-granted-assumptions surrounding the gender neutrality of these images and discourses. Alternative possibilities for thinking about leaders and leadership may then be possible.

While systems that educators work within are hierarchical and centrally determined and controlled, this is not to suggest that
individuals might exercise leadership in a variety of valid ways. What is being called for is a discourse of leadership that does not seek to privilege gender but opens up opportunities for women and men to exercise leadership in non-exclusive ways. In order to achieve this we should begin with an understanding of the systematic inclusion of masculine discourses in the definitions and descriptions of educational leadership and management and pinpoint reasons for the perpetuation of privilege based on gender.

Recent claims by Duke (1998) that a normative theory of leadership is possible exemplify the probability that educational leadership is exercised in a linear, rational and uniform way and predicated on masculine forms of leadership.

Kerfoot and Knights (1993, p. 672) have variously described this as strategic or competitive masculinity that “privileges men vis-à-vis women, ranks some men above others, and maintains the dominance of certain forms and practices of masculinity”. In this way, women’s ways of leading are defined in oppositional ways.

Blackmore (1999) has identified ways in which power relations are reproduced and maintained within schools. These power dynamics have created assumptions regarding the normative role and position of
the male leader and

reinforced causal hegemonic links between masculinity, hierarchy and leadership. The "other" side of the picture is the inference that qualities such as nurturing and caring are necessarily feminine and that these qualities are in some way inferior to "normal" leadership traits. It is reasonable to suggest therefore that

the pedagogy of leadership is constructed as "normally" the domain of men and

the pedagogy of teaching as essentially the work of women. This form of hierarchical managerialism (Codd, 1993) is a privileging construct. The resultant emphases on technical, task-oriented responsibilities and accountabilities have been pinpointed as one of the central reasons why women predominantly occupy the lower level of workforce hierarchies (Court, 1998; Dunlap and Schmuck, 1995; Ozga, 1993). Changing the Debate

For women leaders the emphasis on hierarchical leadership that is embedded within a managerial framework creates tensions and uncertainties about what constitutes effective leadership. As Jill Blackmore (1999) has argued unitary theories that explain ways in which women lead and experience leadership are problematic: women leaders are neither the binary opposite of male leaders nor
can there be a model of the “natural and strong” female leader. Although

accounts exist that explore the complex and contested educational work of

women leaders (Strachan, 1999), further work needs to be completed on the

interplay between gender, ethnicity and educational leadership. In particular I

am concerned that indigenous voices are heard; not as a harmonious choir but as

a cacophony of voices that celebrates distinctiveness within an indigenous

framework. Indigenous educational leadership

Discussing differences and distinctiveness within the scope of educational

leadership is contested and dangerous terrain. Partially this is because these dis

courses are outside of my own territory as a Pakeha (white) academic in

Aotearoa/New Zealand and because I neither wish to “add-on” difference nor

theorise to produce an homogeneous discourse of indigenous voices.

There is a growing body of literature on cultural diversity and leadership

(Bajunid, 1996; Gunew, 1994; Henry and Pringle, 1996; Jones et al., 2000;

Pringle and Timperley, 1995) that conceptualises and constructs theories that

value and recognise indigenous ways of knowing, acting and leading. Signific

antly, the literature seeks to document ways in which leadership is experienced
and exercised within a multicultural framework yet does not offer an under
standing of strategies used to navigate dual cultures. This points to the possibil
ity that for indigenous leaders they face the dilemma of double consciousness as
they struggle to interpret, negotiate and survive in two distinct cultural worlds –
one Pakeha (European/white) and one indigenous. For indigenous women in
particular trajectories of ethnicity and gender present a tension-ridden and
deeply problematic dichotomy that has the capacity to shape and determine pat
terns of social interactions, relationships, mobility and life choices. There is a
need to formulate indigenous and non-western theories of educational leadership
that are grounded in research that account for and explain indigenous women’s
ways of knowing and leading.

This is not however a call for the “adding on” of indigenous women to
current narratives about educational leadership. We need to challenge debates
concerned with gender and educational leadership to ensure that the role and
position of Pakeha women is not placed at the center of our theorising, thus re
locating indigenous women to the margins and in redundant positions. Further
more, given location and family/whanau circumstances, we cannot unilaterally
assume that the experience of one indigenous woman can provide a universal understanding of the interests and positioning of all indigenous women. The effect of discourses of sameness is paralysing and constrains indigenous women to work in particular ways. A further difficulty is that the politics of gender and ethnicity define women in general and ethnic women in particular as problems. Categorical definitions render women as a female problem and race as a minority problem. As Sue Adler et al. (1993) have pointed out, these categories allow non-indigenous women to identify themselves as women, not as white women.

In this way, whiteness is the taken for granted norm that is deemed to be stable, unified and homogeneous. Difference is therefore expressed as a corollary of whiteness. This therefore has the potential to create a monoculture of the power that is expressed in gender and race specific ways as Penny Tripconey (1995) has documented.

One further criticism of the limited literature base is that indigenous women and women of colour are considered in unproblematic ways (Yeakey et al., 1986). That is, all women of colour are labelled as one group thereby negating their distinctiveness based on ethnicity, family, geographical location, language,
social and familial relationships, knowledge, spirituality, philosophy and aspiration (Moreton-Robinson, 2000, p. xviii). A further difficulty is the double bind that indigenous women face (Blackmore, 1999, p. 199). While indigenous women represent their communities, they are implicitly expected (by Pakeha administrators) to work as change agents to simultaneously challenge existing power structures in their educational organisations.

In order to uncover the complexities and contradictions that women of colour face as educational leaders, it is imperative that a conscious attempt is made to understand the historical, social, economic and professional circumstances of indigenous women’s lives. It is feasible that such an understanding will permit indigenous women leaders to define their own realities and contest prevailing notions of the “universal educational leader”. One possible way is through a focus on bicultural life stories that examine the interplay of ethnicity and the interrelationship of the individual and her environment. What is being called for therefore is an indigenous theory of educational leadership that places indigenous women at the centre of the narrative. This might reflect or be a sharper, more radical critique of the perpetuation of power and authority within tradi
tional hierarchies that questions the pedagogy of leadership and which cen

tralises differences. I would like to focus this critique on Aotearoa/New Zealand

and propose a framework that offers a possibility for indigenous leadership

within a bicultural framework. A framework for indigenous leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand

In 1989 the administration of New Zealand education was reformed. Although

the focus was improving the quality of teaching and learning through the decen

tralisation of school management based on a partnership model between the

school and its community, the net effect of these reforms was the demand for C H A N G I N G T H E D E A F E N I N G S I L E N C E

schools to be fiscally efficient and publicly accountable (Codd, 1993; Thrupp, 2001). This changing legislative and administrative environment and the resul

tant industrial relations framework impacted variously on women’s participa

tion as leaders and managers in schools. In particular, the legislative

imperative to hire individuals identified as belonging to minority groups

(including women, Maori, Pasifika) has satisfied specific institutional needs.

Yet these demands and the intense level of scrutiny placed on minorities

within a minority setting (Konrad and Pfeffer, 1991) have not been fully accounted for in explanations of educational leadership.
Furthermore, as Yeakey et al. (1986) have argued, minority school leaders are frequently appointed in urban areas where the majority of students are of colour. This has contributed to a legalised form of urban segregation based on residential patterns and the idea that “minority school systems are the appropriate places for minority administrators” (Yeakey et al. 1986, p. 124). In Aotearoa/New Zealand experiences and challenges faced by Maori women school leaders (as a numerical minority) cannot be articulated or explained in terms of similarities with and differences to the leadership of Pakeha (white) women (Bowkett, 1996; Smith, 1992).

Studies such as those conducted by Marian Court (1995) in New Zealand, Margaret Grogan (1996) in the USA and Marianne Coleman (2001) in England and Wales have uncovered similarities in women’s social, economic and educational backgrounds, career progression, family circumstances and leadership styles. However, there has not been a conscious attempt to theorise how power is exercised and differentiated in gender and race based ways. While some studies have provided evidence of “black women in educational management” (Blackmore, 1999; McGee Banks, 2000; Ozga, 1993;
Shakeshaft, 1987; Slack and Cornelius, 1995) a glance at these texts suggests that this knowledge has been organised in a marginal way. Invariably it is the latter chapters of these texts that focus on the problematic nature of educational leadership and women of colour. It is not a case of arguing whether gender and ethnicity are relevant to debates surrounding the nature of educational leadership, but why the case for their centrality to our understanding still has to be made. In other words, educational leadership needs to be subject to a process of redefinition to ensure that the voices of indigenous women and their experiences are conterminously theorised and legitimised from their worldview.

Western views of leadership have placed primacy on the role of individuals (Sergiovanni, 1992), the organisation (Senge, 1990) and notions of excellence and individual success (Glatter, 1999). Ways in which women exercise leadership (Blackmore, 1999) and the interplay of gender and ethnicity have not been fully considered (Henry and Pringle, 1996). In the case of Aotearoa/New Zealand ways in which Maori women have experienced and acted as leaders have been subject to constraints of gender, ethnicity and colonisation (Smith, 1992).
It is often and erroneously assumed that Maori leadership is primarily exercised by Maori men and that Maori women are subordinate to the authority of men (Henry and Pringle, 1996; Smith, 1992). This is a colonising assumption that rests on the predication that leadership is exercised by an individual and that the individual is “naturally” male. In traditional Maori society both men and women were necessary components of the collective whole and both formed part of the link through whakapapa (genealogy) to the past, the present and the future. All people were part of a collective identity and their survival rested on the collective responsibility of the group to value and respect each person for his/her skills, strengths and attributes. One of the more powerful indications of the gender-neutral way in which the Maori world operated was that there are no personal or possessive pronouns in the Maori language that signify a hierarchy of sex. In terms of stories, proverbs and language, women are spoken about in positive terms. For example, women are referred to as whare tangata (the house of humanity/people); hapu refers to a pregnant woman as well as the wider family group; and whenua means both land and afterbirth (Bishop and Glynn, 1999, pp. 11-25). The interrelationship between women, men
and the life-sustaining land is evident in the phrase “he wahine, he whenua, e nga ro a i te tangata”, the interpretation of which is commonly cited as “by women and land, men are lost”. Without the nourishing influences of women and the land, survival is not, and was not, possible.

Traditionally it was the whanau family that provided women with their source of strength. Maori women were not considered the chattels of their husbands; they identified more strongly with their own family and property was not transferred on marriage. Although a woman might live within her husband’s whanau, their role was to ensure she was protected; she always remained a part of her own whanau.

This form of social organisation did not confine Maori women within a nuclear family structure. Because of the extended nature of the family unit, child rearing was a communal task and this enabled women to perform a wide range of roles, including leadership roles (Smith, 1992).

Significantly, women played an important role in the maintenance and transmission of oral histories that ensured the survival of the history and identity of the iwi tribe. Missionaries who arrived in the 1820s brought with them culturally specific understandings of the role and status of women. This produced a shift in
emphasis away from the powerful female influence and the emergence of the male warrior as the primary leader. One of the direct concerns of the missionary groups was to rescue and reclaim Maori women who they considered in danger of sexual exploitation by men (Fitzgerald, 2000). As Linda Smith (1992, pp. 48–9) notes:

Maori women were perceived either in family terms as wives and children, or in sexual terms as easy partners. Women who had “chiefly” roles were considered the exception to the rule, not the norm . . . Maori women were considered attractive in the absence of a pool of white women. Their autonomy was interpreted as immorality and lack of discipline. Christianity reinforced these notions by spelling out rules of decorum and defining spaces (the home) for the carrying out of appropriate female activities.

One of the ways in which the colonisation of Maori women continued to occur was through the domestication of Maori women’s knowledge and status via the curriculum that was offered in the mission schools (Fitzgerald, 2000). These schools trained Maori women to inculcate the values of nineteenth century Christian and Pakeha society that rendered women subordinate to men as wives and mothers located within the domestic arena of the home.
While the impact of colonisation led to debilitating changes in the role and status of Maori women, leadership was still exercised by Maori women albeit in public ways within broader Maori society. Historical evidence points to the leadership roles of Maori women in Te Kotahitanga (Maori Parliament), the suffrage movement and the Maori Women’s Welfare League (Rei, 1993). In the Native Schools system, established in 1867 and disbanded in 1967, Maori women were head teachers in many of the schools as Simon and Smith (2001) have documented. This therefore raises two vital questions. In the first instance we need to question why it has become the norm to assume that leadership in Maori society was traditionally a male domain and that female roles are of less value than male roles. Second, why has the perception developed that Maori women leaders are conspicuously absent? This is, as Smith (1992) argues so poignantly, the colonised reality of Maori women’s lives. We must look beyond discourses that suggest that Maori women’s relative absence in school leadership roles is problematic to question why leadership theories are deeply problematic and demand serious critique as they fail to provide a forum for multiple indigenous voices to be heard, understood and theorised. This is not an easy task.
In more general terms, there are a number of central issues to be considered in the search for an understanding of “indigenous educational leadership”. In the first instance, it may not be possible to construct a unitary definition of indigenous leadership particularly as leadership may be exercised in multiple ways in a variety of settings as the previous discussion on leadership in Maori society has indicated. Second, personal qualities, skills and knowledge that contribute to “indigenous leadership” cannot be articulated as differences between indigenous and non-indigenous leadership, yet relationships within indigenous communities and relationships with non-indigenous communities are inextricably linked (Bishop and Glynn, 1999). This therefore points to the possibility that two layers of leadership may exist within indigenous communities: (traditional) community leadership that is derived from an indigenous worldview that recognises skills and knowledge according to the mana (authority, respect) of an individual; and leadership as advocacy between indigenous and non-indigenous communities: “indigenous leadership often requires people to be able to walk confidently and with influence in two worlds” (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 1998, p. 16).
In Aotearoa/New Zealand the official rhetoric of the State espouses the primacy of the Te Tiriti o Waitangi (1840) as the founding document of the country that acknowledges Maori as tangata whenua (the people of the land) and the affirmation of their sovereignty. The three principles that underpin this treaty are partnership, participation and protection. The expectation was that these principles would guide all aspects of public and civil activities. In terms of the provision of education and its delivery by all educational institutions, Maori were guaranteed a share in decision making (partnership), the mandate to define, guard and treasure their knowledge and language (protection) and the benefits of involvement in education at all levels (participation) (Bishop and Glynn, 1999, p. 199). While Te Tiriti (the Treaty of Waitangi) provides a measure of legislative compliance, accountability lies at institutional level for the implementation and institutionalisation of the three principles. Institutions of the state, such as schools and universities, are obligated to publicly state their commitment to the principles embedded in this treaty. This raises further questions concerning how this partnership might be constructed, articulated and legitimated and by whom. The suggestion could
also be forwarded that

the principles on which Te Tiriti o Waitangi is based
provide an opportunity for

institutions to recognise the sovereignty of their
educational leaders and stu-
dents. This is both difficult and deeply problematic.
Therein lies the challenge of

partnership, protection and participation within a
framework of indigenous (and
non-indigenous) leadership.

In considering how, if at all, indigenous leadership might
be described, the

work of Bishop and Glynn (1999) is insightful. While the
model developed by

Bishop and Glynn (1999) is directed at asking questions
about power relations in

education, it is a useful framework for conceptualising
educational leadership

that accounts for indigenous worldviews. There are a number
of similarities with

conclusions similarly drawn in the 1998 research report of
the Australian Insti-
tute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
(1998, pp. 15–16). Both

studies indicate the primacy of the following values:

• initiation of the role of the leader and authority to
speak and represent

indigenous communities;

• benefits and connectedness to indigenous communities by
their leaders and

wider benefits through interaction with non-indigenous
groups;
• representation and articulation of issues for and within indigenous communities and links with non-indigenous groups;

• legitimation of authority from indigenous communities as a core credential for leadership; and

• accountability to indigenous communities for the actions and activities of leaders.

The following model has been adapted as an organising concept to incorporate the five values listed above (the vertical axis) and provide a possibility for considering the three principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, partnership, protection and participation (the horizontal axis) as a metaphor for advocacy and leadership (see Table 1).

This model is not an attempt to offer a unitary model; rather a framework that recognises and respects multiple voices (representation) that are authoritative (legitimation) within a partnership where there is mutual accountability from the beginning (initiation) and the protection of what is valued and important. Conclusion

The central troubling aspect of western leadership theories is the limited and traditional way in which the work of school leaders and managers has been conceptualised. In suggesting that a normative theory of educa
tional leadership is possible, the assumption is tendered that leadership is an absolute and rational activity that can be exercised in culturally-specific ways.

We need to sincerely question whether these forms of leadership are relevant for the twenty first century. I would suggest not. It is impossible to create conceptualisations of leading and managing without taking into account issues of gender and ethnicity. One of the ways this can be partially achieved is through the authentication of indigenous women's voices and an understanding of ways in which background, ethnicity, religion, gender, family circumstances and other identities serve to transform and shape their educational work. What is needed is for multiple voices to be heard and a multi-voiced approach to educational leadership and management to be adopted. One of the ways this might be achieved is the adoption of a framework that positions indigenous ways of


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Zealand: co-option, subversion or withdrawal?”, in Limerick, B. and Lingard, B. (Eds),


Source: Educational Management & Administration 25(3) (1997): 309-324. Tracking down the invisible issue Accompanying the invitation to contribute to this anniversary edition of the EMA journal was the suggestion that I should begin by reviewing the journal’s treatment of gender and education management over the last 25 years. The editor was right in assuming that the task would not take long. Gender only began to emerge as a discrete topic after 1980 and, since
then, has hovered in the
wings like a wallflower at a party. The first clarion call to
its serious considera
tion was in Hough’s article which highlighted, but did not
attempt to account for
its previous scarcity (Hough, 1988). Prior to Hough a few
writers (mainly men)
had included gender as a factor in their exploration of
education management
issues. It must be assumed that the failure of women to
raise these issues in this
context (since gender is seen to be about women, even
though it applies to both
men and women) can be attributed to their more lowly
positions in academic
and professional life. Even Hough’s article concludes by
acknowledging a
woman colleague as having carried out all the empirical
work. She is not,
however, shown as joint author.

The articles by Johnston (1986) and Gray (1987) suggest men
taking gender
school leadership styles. He did not, however, question the
bias of the instru
ment he used—the Ohio Leadership Behaviour Description
Questionnaire—
which was based on studies of ‘head men’ in mainstream
formal organizations.

He found that men and women had different conceptions of
their ideal man and
woman headteacher and concluded that women managers in
primary schools
would run into difficulties if they tried to imitate men.
The parallel question of whether men primary heads would have trouble if they imitated women was not raised.

In contrast, Gray (1987, 1989 and 1993) aimed to keep gender on the agenda, particularly as it applies to the development of men as education managers. He notes the difficulties men face in engaging in personal change, whether in what he describes as the more ‘nurturing’ environment of the primary school or the more ‘macho’ culture of secondary schools. Like Johnston, he sees women managers under pressure to adapt to ‘the machismo of much school organization’ (Gray, 1987: 41). His proposals about differences between men and women’s management styles are based, however, not on research but on his experiences of running training programmes for educational managers. Later he writes of the challenge to management development to enable men to open up and develop a wider range and a new language of feelings (Gray, 1993). At this stage, gender is still segregated from other issues, rather than integrated into our understanding of the behaviour of men and women in education management. The seeds sown by these writers bore little fruit, though there was a brief flowering in the summer issue of the EMA journal in 1989, when four art
icles appeared (Jayne, 1989; McBurney and Hough, 1989; Weightman, 1989; Gray, 1989). The then editor summarizes them as being on the theme of ‘gender characteristics of management’. His phrase is vague enough to ensure that the articles appear so loosely coupled that they cannot be seen to constitute a serious attack on knowledge. Given the editor’s expressed concern with the difficulties faced by ‘chaps’ at the top, he missed an ideal opportunity to suggest that we all (not just women) might learn something by looking at women in management, few though they were and continue to be.

Articles referring to gender continued to maintain a token presence, with minimal impact on the journal’s dominant discourse. Drawing on their research on headteachers new in post, Earley and Weindling (1988) conclude that there were no apparent differences in the experiences of or responses to men and women and therefore gender was not a significant variable (p. 13). Martin’s (1993) closely argued case for the necessity of a masculine orientation for administrative positions adds fuel to the ‘management as masculine’ debate.

Using the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, she found the masculinity scores of women administrators were similar to those of their male counterparts and higher than
those of women teachers not interested in an administrative position. She interprets the women administrators’ higher masculinity score as a ‘coping strategy’.

Coleman (1996), on the other hand, in a small empirical survey of female head teachers, tentatively concludes that the headteachers were androgynous, able to select from a wide range of qualities. Both studies fail to explore the implications of their gender-based findings for both women and men in education management. This token presence was in spite of Shakeshaft’s influential review of women in educational administration, which raised issues about the ‘different world of women administrators’ (1987). Hitherto gender and educational management were mainly discussed in terms of why women were underrepresented in senior positions in every sector’s management hierarchy: primary, secondary and tertiary. While this remained the main focus of discussion it was unlikely that the debate would ever become central or include men. Shakeshaft’s (1987) review set the agenda for a wider range of questions needing to be researched, if knowledge about gender and educational management is ever to challenge or support a reconceptualization of theories of educational management. Changing ways of knowing...
A scrutiny of the changing discourse on educational leadership as reflected in the EMA journal over the past 25 years pays further testimony to the marginalization of gender perspectives. From Hughes’s (1972) account of school headship in transition to the intellectual jousting of Hodgkinson, Greenfield, Gronn and others, the frameworks and language for understanding educational leadership have shifted radically, in ways that parallel evolving ‘ways of knowing’ emanating from the tradition of feminist research. The word ‘feminist’ on the pages of this journal may, Medusa-like, turn many readers to stone. Of course not all research about gender is feminist but it would be unrealistic not to acknowledge the influence of some feminist research methods on the questions and data-collection methods that characterize much research into gender issues. It is precisely in the commonalities of the discourse on gender and that of new approaches to understanding educational leadership (e.g. Ribbins and Sherratt, 1992; Gronn, 1996) that the potential for integration rather than segregation becomes apparent.

Looking for the new ‘phoenix’ in administrative studies, Greenfield (1991) described his sense of ‘putting one’s self in jeopardy’ as a result of challenging others’ profound convictions and bias (p. 201). His experience is not far from
that of senior women academics who risk their professional
reputations by pur
suing gender issues (Acker, 1994; Delamont, 1989; Hall,
1996). Indeed, it is
easy to see those studies in the 1980s, which looked for
differences in the
behaviour of men and women managers or sought to establish
the superiority of
one approach over another, as falling into precisely the
technicist trap that
Greenfield attacks. Where his critique comes together with
the concerns of many
of those exploring gender and educational management in the
1990s is in
Hodgkinson’s vision of administration as a ‘moral art’
(Hodgkinson, 1991). Its
pursuit and the research methods needed to understand it, in Greenfield’s words,
‘need courage and resolution ... for it entails
clear-eyed observation of the re
alities, dilemmas, difficulties and defeats of life’ (p. 215). Taking gender into
their theoretical stances puts researchers and theorists
through the same painful
process that Greenfield quotes Perrow as describing; that of
thinking oneself
‘out of a mainstream paradigm that one had lived with and
even contributed to’

Whether the issues discussed in this paper can encourage
engagement with
that painful process will depend on the acceptability and
seductiveness of the
The shift in our attempts to understand educational leadership and management, represented in seminal papers in the EMA journal over the last 10 years, reflects and is strengthened by the questions raised by gender perspectives on these issues. My purpose in presenting some of the key findings from my own study of six women headteachers (three primary and three secondary) is to propose a modern version of educational leadership that does three things. It confronts the demands of educational change, it is both (or neither) ‘masculine’ or ‘feminine’; and it contributes ideas to the educational management agenda that result from the rejection of a narrowly defined androcentric view (the ashes from which Greenfield hoped his phoenix would rise). The discussion is organized around four themes: gender perspectives and research into educational leadership; becoming a school leader; being a school leader; and an alternative view on the debate about educational leadership as managerialist or emancipatory (Smyth, 1989). Background to the research Much literature on gender and educational management focuses on the barriers to women’s career progression in schools and colleges (see Hall, 1993, for a
summary). There is less research-based evidence about their performance once
in senior positions. Hence there continues to be a mystification about what it is
like to be a woman at the top in education, a leader as well as a follower. Two
years’ research funding from the Leverhulme Trust enabled me to explore the
experiences of women in senior positions in schools in England, through inter
views and observation. They were women who had broken through the ‘glass
ceiling’, to become successful leaders in schools. They had circumvented the
barriers that traditionally stand in the way of women seeking career advance
ment in organizations. In Beck and Steele’s (1989) words, they had gone
‘beyond the great divide’ and taken up leadership positions, with the implied
possibilities of power and influence. This differentiated them from women in
other sectors, where few are in positions of significant corporate power. It differ
entiates them too from other women teachers who either choose not to, or fail to,
achieve promotion within the school or college system. Power, culture, gender: using a triple metaphor
The book that details the research, Dancing on the Ceiling, shows women
leading the management dance and making the dance floor their own. As a study
of school leadership, as experienced by women, it
challenges ideas and assumptions about leadership in schools, particularly those written by, mainly about, and implicitly for men. Some male writers (e.g. Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Grace, 1995; Southworth, 1995) have called for more evidence about effective educational leadership that considers gender, but the field continues to be dominated by women (e.g. Shakeshaft, 1987; Ozga, 1993; Ouston, 1993).

The four themes addressed in this paper each show how a gender focus (on women and men) can contribute to our understanding of the appropriate skills and attributes needed for quality leadership as we approach the year 2000. In a study (with Mike Wallace) of Senior Management Teams in secondary schools (Wallace and Hall, 1994) we developed a dual power-culture perspective as a lens through which to view and interpret the phenomenon. Gender was included as a factor for consideration but not a specific focus for our observations of the teams’ operations. The project on women headteachers provided a further opportunity to use the power-culture metaphor; this time gender was added as a significant factor. The now triple metaphor provided an orienting frame for negotiating the territory of headship and gender and identifying the questions.
that data collection needed to address. A combination of the three perspectives (culture, power and gender) provided lenses for contrasting the ways in which the women heads interpreted and used power, and their impact on the school’s culture as, through their leadership, they worked towards changing the school in order to improve students’ educational experience.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. For many, a triple metaphor is indigestible and reduces the impact of individual flavours. Yet the study of women headteachers showed how a triple metaphor of power, culture and gender to examine women’s performance as school leaders provided insights that any one perspective might have failed to yield. It showed how men and women’s interactions in schools are influenced not only by their different uses of power and allegiance to particular cultural norms, but by contradictory gender expectations.

Daily interactions were simultaneously an expression of the use of power, cultural norms and gender expectations. Though the details might vary, the patterns of these triple influences on interaction are unlikely to have been different had the study been of men. Women on their own terms I would not, however, want to lose sight of the fact that the study was of women.

A primary intention was to show how women behave as school
leaders and

school leadership as done by women. They combined entrepreneurial character

istics with a value framework (particularly about relating to people) and a reper
toire of behaviours that differed from those often associated in other research

with men as managers. Conceptualizing education management by studying

women on their own terms constitutes a challenge to both men and women prac
tising, researching and writing in the field. I believed, and the belief was con
firmed, that the art of headship (particularly as a moral art) has its roots in

childhood and educational and career experiences that cannot be divorced from

an individual’s gender identity, whether man or woman. Some of our under

standing of individuals as school leaders must include an understanding of them

as women or men. Understanding leaders and managers in education means

understanding them as people. Understanding education management means

appreciating the values that underpin management choices about goals and ways

of behaving in the job. D U S T I N G O F F T H E P H O

E N I X Confronting the taken-for-granted

Most texts on research methodology stress the need for researchers to examine

and publicize their biases that may affect the validity of the data they collect.
Yet research on headteachers is replete with assumptions about what it is and is not important to address, and what is and is not worthy of comment. For example, most studies of women at work assume that an understanding of their workplace behaviour must take account of their lives away from work. This presumption stems from a recognition of the different and difficult choices women face as a result of conceptions of their role in contemporary western societies.

Where women managers are concerned, the constraints on seeking or being offered promotion are shown to arise from the conflicting expectations of work and family responsibilities and the failure of organizations (including schools) to (Marshall, 1984 and 1995). These same assumptions about the symbiotic relationship between men’s personal and professional needs and their impact on their workplace behaviour are rarely addressed.

In his plea for ‘a new world order in the study of headship’ Gronn (1996: 25) asks for: more and better leader-watching or on-looking: longitudinal, naturalistic and biographical investigations, particularly the latter, to better enrich knowledge of where leadership comes from and to ascertain what leading and following look like when scrutinised in any depth.

Similarly, the interviews with headteachers conducted as part of the 1995 BEMAS conference included a focus on the heads’ early lives, although Ouston...
(1995: 1) notes that, of the eight men and women interviewed, 'it is the four women interviewees who present their personal and professional lives as crucially entwined with each other'. Recognizing that this might be the outcome of mainly same-gender pairs of interviewers and interviewees, she asks whether female interviewers are more likely to elicit personal information.

Implicit in her question are two important pointers for future leadership research, particularly if it takes the road advocated by Greenfield (stressing values) and Gronn (stressing biography). First, men researchers need to subject their relationship to their subjects or co-enquirers to the same gender analysis as women researchers do. If, as many women researchers claim, some of their understanding of their women interviewees come from their shared experiences as women (see e.g. Coleman, 1991), then this is also likely to be true of men interviewing men. Unless this influence is recognized, the picture can be biased in unacceptable ways. Yet, in Wolcott's (1977) classic study of the man in the principal's office, the effects of 'man researching man' on the conclusions about school leadership are not questioned. Southworth (1995) acknowledges himself as a male researcher and Ron as a male headteacher but does not explore further E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R
the implications of this shared gender identity for his findings. Ribbins and Marland (1994) and Grace (1995) comment on their women heads as women but not the men heads as men.

What then is the status of information relating to personal lives in educational management theory? Holistic research focuses on private worlds of family and emotions as much as public worlds of career and reason (Marshall, 1984), regardless of the research subjects’ gender. The accounts in Headship Matters (Ribbins and Marland, 1994) are all the stronger for paying attention to all these factors, although they are less evident in the interpretations. They show how the paths to headship of both men and women and their performance as school leaders must be understood in the context of their past as well as their present contexts. My study found that the women heads shared a commitment to young people’s education and to teachers as professionals which was fundamental to their conception of the job. Once on the teaching path, their commitment to the central purpose of their work kept them on track. In this respect they differed from women managers outside education whose career trajectories are more likely to include moving between different services and different products.
(White et al., 1992). More research into men’s career trajectories in education is needed if we are to know what drives men towards school leadership positions.

Working with the same sample as Ouston, McMahon (1995) was struck by similarities between the values of the headteachers interviewed, whatever their gender. In the 1980s such similarities would be taken as evidence that gender was not a significant factor for understanding headship (as in the Earley and Weindling article referred to earlier). In contrast, I found a specific focus on gender revealed the numerous subtle ways in which the women heads dealt with expectations that the person in charge would be a man.

Taking over a new school has to be done within the constraints of existing organizational structures and cultures. Gender is a component of both of these, particularly when the new head is a woman. The people with whom she works will have expectations of her as a head that will be influenced by their relations with her predecessor and their experiences of and attitudes towards women in leadership positions. Margaret Thatcher’s thirteen years as prime minister did little to enhance the image of women as leaders in most people’s minds. What do we know about the constra\n
straints in the early years of headship on a man taking
over from a woman? Becoming a headteacher: looking for natural histories

In order to understand how these women arrived at their headship positions, I traced their experiences from family of origin, through school, college and early work experiences to family, educational and career experiences as adults. These experiences are set within the context of values about power, culture and gender that played a part in the choices made, and provided a basis for future leadership action. The study traces the relationships between the formation of personal identity (who you are), career decisions (what you want) and subsequent leadership behaviour (how you act). I assumed that, at different stages of their lives, starting in childhood, women who had become headteachers had made choices about the relative importance they would attach to the following behaviours:

- being academically successful at school,
- being a leader at school,
- gaining higher education qualifications,
- having a career,*
- whether and/or when to marry,*
- whether and/or when to have children,*
- seeking promotion,
- becoming a school leader.
I argue that the choices they made were influenced and at times constrained by factors that in turn created dilemmas at different points in their careers. The influences and constraints included:

- social class and parents’ educational background;
- division of labour in the household and expectations regarding men and women’s public and private roles;
- sibling relations;*
- the availability of role models at school, college and work;
- other non-family members’ influences;
- type of career chosen;
- type of support available from husband or partner where applicable;*
- other types of support;*
- number and ages of own children;* and
- demands of the job.

Some of the features shown in this list are evident in other research into school leadership; but those asterisked are less likely to appear in research with men school leaders. Then, they are either taken-for-granted or considered unimportant. Their potential for understanding what drives men as well as women as school leaders is lost.

Individual responses to the dilemmas faced in choosing a lifestyle are important components of learning to lead. As Kegan (1994: 182) shows in his discus
sion of ‘the mental demand of public life’, increasing mastery over one’s work:

‘is not merely time on the job or promotion to increasing responsibility, but the psychological capacity to find (or, really, to invent) one’s own way of “doing it”’. Within Kegan’s stage theory of development, the transformation of consciousness after adolescence or the personal unfolding of ways of organizing experience are not simply replaced as we grow but subsumed into more complex systems of mind (p. 9). Central to the transformations that occur are the processes by which individuals create meaning: of themselves, of others and of the world. If we are to understand the meanings that leaders and other make of their work in education, we need to understand the totality of their meaning frames. As people progress through their careers they are trying out ‘possible selves’ i.e. their ideas of what they might become, would like to become and what they are afraid of becoming (Markus and Nurius, 1986: 394). This concept is not unfamiliar in discussions of women and work where ‘fear of success’, absence of positive role models in public life and poor self-image are common themes. It is less familiar in discussions of men at work, yet the concept of pos
sible selves is relevant to both sexes. From Kegan’s perspective, the first issue

any management training oriented towards transformation has to address is what

the person has to manage psychologically. He aligns the ability mature indi

viduals have to take an overview of the self and see how the parts hang together,

with the same capacities required of leadership, management and administration

(p. 167). Stoll and Fink’s (1996) summary of their research on school improve

ment lends support to this view through their advocacy of ‘invitational leader

ship’ as the appropriate leadership style. They describe leadership as

‘communicating invitational messages to individuals and groups with whom

leaders interact in order to build and act on a shared and evolving vision of

enhanced educational experiences for pupils’ (p. 109). In order to invite others,

‘leaders must first invite themselves, physically, intellectually, socially, emo

tionally, spiritually’ (p. 111).

Levine (1989) draws on these psychological theories of adult development to

ask about the degree to which a principal’s own developmental level influences

her or his ability to lead and support others. She hypothesizes a relationship

between high ego level and the capacity to create a supportive and nurturant
environment. In order to be effective in a helping role, leaders need to be at a point in their own development which she characterizes as 'Autonomous' (p. 193):

Autonomous adults are able to transcend concerns for their own immediate experiences, becoming more realistic and objective about themselves and others. This last tendency is especially useful in helping [a principal] understand teacher’s needs and concerns independent of [her] own. The fact that individuals at the Autonomous stage can be both intimate and independent affords them the capacity to identify and empathize with others as well as maintain a sense of personal integrity.

Reaching this level of autonomy is not gender-specific, although Levine notes the relationship shown in research between effective leadership and individuals who demonstrate this high level of awareness, as well as an ability to integrate masculine and feminine tendencies (p. 192).

Sceptical readers may be asking whether this justification of a gender perspective is merely a back door to 'psychologizing leadership', for many an already well-trodden path. I would argue
that, combined with

a gender perspective, it allows for the systematic ordering
of biographical data

that Gronn (1996: 19) identifies as the basis for ensuring
the integration of

agency and structure in a ‘leadership career framework’.

As I traced the women heads’ paths to headship, a set of
themes emerged

relating to school leadership that highlighted the
centrality of the self-concept as

an organizing feature of the heads’ leadership styles. In
summary they included

the value placed by heads on:

• an inner as well as an outer journey to school leadership,
• developing an inner locus of control,
• being authentic,
• being consistent,
• self-presentation, self-management and self-efficacy.

None of these had emerged as explicit themes in other
analyses of headship

which include men, with the exception of Levine’s (1989)
case studies of principals’ own and support for others’ professional development;
and Southworth’s

(1995) research-based study of a single primary school
headteacher. Both

Levine’s conclusions about the relationship between adult
growth and learning,

and Southworth’s about the power of the head’s self-concept
in shaping his pro

fessional identity, meshed with my own observations of what
is involved in

becoming and being a school leader.

The relationship of self-concept to professional performance is more readily identified in other studies of women. For example, Dillard (1995) shows how

Natham (an African American urban high school principal) derives much of her leadership style from her own experiences of growing up black in the United States. In spite of a relatively affluent childhood, her shared experiences of racism with fellow African Americans led her to negotiate race relations and combat racism in the context of her school principalship through reinterpreting her responsibilities to those circumstances within her own African American framework. She is fully aware that her appointment related to this shared identity: ‘As the school population returns to being predominantly “white” again’, she says, ‘I’ll be reassigned somewhere else. The community, the teachers, they will want a white principal again’ (p. 547).

We still know little about how the life experiences of teachers and headteachers, both men and women, from ethnic minorities in the British context shape their approaches to the job. Dillard calls for ‘narratives of the principalship from those whose voices have much to tell us about relevant issues of leadership'.
through diversity’ (p. 541). The same idea is reflected in Ribbins and Marland’s advocacy of ‘a natural history of preparation for headship’ (p. 12). They include an interview with Elaine Foster, an Afro-Caribbean head of a girls’ comprehensive school. For her, values supersede ethnicity and gender as explanations of her behaviour as a head. At the same time, she recognizes management ‘as a big issue for women, and a big issue for black women and black people in general’ (p. 105). In the same tradition of understanding headship by allowing heads to speak for themselves, Mortimore and Mortimore (1991) include Vasanthi Rao’s account, as the first Asian headteacher in Birmingham. Rao vividly describes how ethnicity features in her own and Asian/Afro-Caribbean colleagues’ relations with staff, parents and pupils (p. 81): ‘I had to work hard—doubly hard to prove that I was a good headteacher. I felt I was in a glass cage all the time, being watched.’ A dominant theme arising from my own study of women headteachers’ career paths was their development of an inner locus of control. This can be defined as having high self-efficacy beliefs which are reinforced by successful performance, leading to a further belief that success is contingent on behaviour.
in the job and not luck or fate or 'who you know'. If crucial factors in the forma tion of 'manager' or 'leader' identities derive from life experiences, then any discussion of organizational life must take account of how men and women, as individual employees, have arrived at their conceptions of appropriate work place behaviour.

When the women heads’ experiences of family life are compared with those reported in the Ribbins and Marland and Ouston surveys, there appear to be as many similarities between men and women as between men or between women.

Two examples of similarities will suffice. Women heads often referred to the pleasure they took as children in playing at schools; they were inevitably the organizers, whether their pupils were other children or dolls. Peter Downes, in Ribbins and Marland’s study, also recalled always wanting to be a teacher (p. 16):

As far back as I can remember I never wanted to be anything else. My parents told me that I played at being teacher very early on in my life.

When other children were playing cops and robbers or mummies and daddies, I was playing schools.

What a shame the interviewers did not explore further with
him the form his

‘playing at teacher’ took. It might have contributed to an understanding of how

he sees headship now. The desire of parents of the immediately post-Second World War generation to encourage their children to take advantage of educational opportunities they had missed out on, was another common feature in the accounts of both men and women heads.

These similarities are not surprising since it is now commonly acknowledged in the literature on women that there are as many differences between them as similarities, yet another reason why the ‘differences’ literature needs to move on. Differences between men as men have always been taken for granted. All these accounts, including my own, show the different influences of each parent.

My focus on women, however, leads me to suggest that women may be exposed to a more diverse set of role options than men, as a result of the different conceptualization of men and women’s roles in society. The women’s accounts gave the impression of families in which tasks and roles were clearly differentiated along gender lines. Just one of the heads had a mother who worked full time outside of the home and she, together with a working grandmother,

constituted a powerful influence on this head’s attitudes to
having a career. Mar
shall (1984) suggests that women who positively value their mother’s role
within the private world of the home (which these heads did) develop an appre
ciation of their own feminine strengths and abilities that does not depend on
male approval. None of the heads, either as child or adult, felt the need to be
more like a boy or man in order to progress or win approval. However, as has
been shown in other research (e.g. White et al., 1991),
deciding to follow a dif
ferent lifestyle and career path from their mothers was the result largely of their
father’s influence. It therefore appears that women take both parents as role
models. This provides them with the potential for a broader range of behaviours
on which to base their own actions, particularly at work, in later life.

In contrast, research into ‘becoming a man’ suggests that, at the age of 6,
boys: . . . make clear distinctions between the concepts of male and female and begin no longer to model their mother, who in most cases has been their most nurturing parent. At that point they have to figure out how to act like men and start modelling the behaviour of the men they admire. (Harris, 1995: 42)

Harris describes this narrowing of role models to almost exclusively men ('the messages men hear') as presenting a picture 'of emotional tragedy'. Strong
words indeed, but they have their echoes in Gray’s concern (described earlier) of
many male heads’ reluctance to engage in personal exploration as a basis of professional development. Unfortunately Ribbins and Marland (as men) do not offer their own interpretation of their seven heads’ accounts. There remains a task still to be done to see whether and how the leadership repertoires of men are inhibited by their need to behave in men’s ways.

The family constitutes one of the first arenas for learning about power. There is a general consensus in the literature (e.g. Astin and Leland, 1991: Cantor and Bernay, 1992: Adler et al., 1993) that many (not all) women in leadership positions use power differently. Some, though not the authors just cited, explain this in terms of innate female characteristics: a shaky argument that divides rather than integrates new approaches to understanding leadership behaviour. I would argue that, as a result of the continued legitimacy for girls to take both mothers and fathers as role models, they may have access to a wider range of strategies for using power and influence (in the sense of ‘transformative capacity’, Giddens, 1984) than boys. My study showed that, when this is translated into leadership behaviour in adulthood, ‘power for’ is preferred to ‘power over’. The heads were ever vigilant against the possible abuses of the power that came with...
their position. Unlike many men colleagues, their reluctance to take power for

granted made them sensitive to its components and consequences.

Where does this discussion of men and women’s paths to school leadership
take us? It shows how we need to ask different questions about how women and

men learn to lead. If an inner locus of control is indeed a characteristic of effect

ive headship (whatever the context), then its identification and development or

sustenance are important tasks for those responsible for selecting and developing

school leaders. The research suggests that women who make it to the top
demonstrate this characteristic. Yet, in education, professional success cannot

and is not measured exclusively in terms of career success. Its true measure is

successful outcomes for students’ learning. A woman (or man) leading a school

that is failing its students cannot be called successful. Being a successful

manager in education entails having strongly held values about the central

purpose of the enterprise. Being a school leader: professing and doing

Ribbins and Marland talk of procuring and professing a headship. The problem

with professing is in its relationship to doing (other than for professors in uni

versities where the professing is the doing). What does
school leadership look

like from what Ribbins and Marland (1994: 6) call ‘a contextualised perspective

in action’ i.e. one that explores what school leaders say in the context of what

they are observed and seen by others to do? Interview data must be comple

mented by observational data if the relationship between espoused theories and

theories in action is to be identified. As those responsible for assessing appli

cants for senior management posts in any sector know only too well, candidates

can articulate their values forcefully on paper or in interview but fail to demon

strate them (or call on different ones) once in post. In interview the women

heads, for example, described the high value they gave to being consistent in

their behaviour in the job. I observed this consistency in action across a range of

situations and their concern on the rare occasions when they acted out of charac

ter. Demonstrating consistency of behaviour and consistency between values

and behaviour was the women heads’ basis for giving credibility to the role

models they provided for others.

McMahon’s (1995) interviews also reveal the declared importance to men

and women heads of modelling desired behaviour in the school. I observed in

action the strategies the heads used to lead their school
in desired directions and
to influence the organizational culture they considered appropriate for achieving
the school’s goals. They prioritized self-knowledge as a basis for action (hence
their willingness to engage in the intense scrutiny to which the research sub
jected them), thereby offering cogent role models for women and men’s devel
opment as managers and leaders. As Hodgkinson (1991) has proposed,
leadership as a moral art depends on the leader’s willingness to ‘know thyself’.
The relationship between their self-perceptions and performance was crucial D U S T I N G O F F T H E P H O
E N I X
to understanding their symbolic leadership behaviour, manifest in the simple
daily routines that communicate important messages. For example, they aimed
to create schools characterized by trust, openness, involvement and a sense of
self-worth: goals that probably most school leaders would profess. In order to do
this they had to be trustworthy, open, willing to share power, attentive to
people’s needs and confident. This included avoiding the ‘wheeler-dealer’ strat
egies they associated with some male colleagues; or being ‘political’, which they
saw as illegitimate behaviour.
Particularly evident was their continued vigilance in managing themselves as
leaders and as women. Their self-management strategies (of self-presentation, self-organization and self-development) were honed to enable them to demonstrate self-control as a legitimation of their claim to be in charge of the school.

Any interactions involving them were inevitably influenced by contradictory norms about being a school leader and being a women. The operation of these contradictory norms is difficult to establish empirically, since they happen at ‘black-box’ level and, in the context of education where at least-lip service to equality between the sexes exists, the box is tightly sealed. Gender also influences interactions between male school leaders and others. The difference is that the norms relating to being male and being a leader are not usually contradictory. Both men and women followers accept their congruence. In contrast, many of the women heads’ ‘political’ energies were directed towards establishing the legitimacy of their authority as heads without damaging their acceptability as women. At different times I observed them subtly adjust their behaviour, either to strengthen their influence as leaders (by playing down being a woman), or to remove any discomfort men and women might feel because they were a woman. In these respects they confirmed their awareness of what other research
has found: that the expectations others have of school leaders vary according to
whether they are a woman or a man. The women heads paid continual attention
to the semantics of self as headteacher, as evidenced in how they dressed, talked,
moved and organized their day. Their priority was to show that they were in
control of the situation and themselves. They had thought much about the mes
sages communicated by how they spoke, looked and moved, as well as what
they did, with whom and to what effect. In search of Florence Wayne and John Nightingale?

I have described some ways in which women heads seek to structure a domain
for discourse in which what women value in communication is as legitimate as
what men value. This conception of their influence on the domain of discourse
takes me to my fourth and final theme: school leaders’ responses to educational reforms, particularly in the context of self-managing schools. This section’s somewhat quirky subheading derives from Schein’s (1989) critique of androgyny theories that are based on innate socialized differences between men and women. For her: ‘The same sex role stereotyping that often excludes women EMOTION AND GENDER from managerial positions can now be used to enhance their opportunities. Florence Nightingale meets John Wayne and together they lead us into
a the sunset of greater leadership effectiveness’ (p. 155). It is clearly not a partnership she finds attractive.

It also misses the point. Identifying management as androgynous can open up possibilities for both Florence and John to extend and discover new dimensions of their repertories. I take androgyny to refer to the mainly comfortable integration of qualities which, although not in themselves exclusively masculine or feminine, are commonly associated with one or other gender. As Bem (1975: 6) says:

The concept of androgyny contains an inner contradiction, and, hence, the seeds of its own destruction . . . Androgyny necessarily presupposes that the concepts of masculinity and femininity will cease to have such content and the distinctions to which they refer will blur into invisibility. Thus, when androgyny becomes a reality, the concept of androgyny will have been transcended.

One stimulus to studying how women manage and lead schools was to provide an empirical base for supporting or refuting claims that ‘management is masculine’. This belief has often been cited as an explanation of why women are reluctant to apply for promotion (Al-Khalifa, 1989: Evetts, 1990). It derives from the indisputable fact that in most societies men
dominate numerically the higher echelons of almost every management hierarchy in the public and private sectors. The 'masculine' organizational culture that results from this domination reproduces to women's disadvantage as employees the gender relations that characterize the wider society. The concept implies too a requirement of managers to operate in ways that are rational, bureaucratic and technicist: the effective utilization of staff takes precedence over their involvement through communication, motivation, development and teamwork.

The effect of describing management as masculine is to create obstacles to women's promotion, implying that it is antipathetic to the qualities that draw people into teaching and, in its association with managerialism, possibly immoral. In the context of locally managed schools in New Zealand, Strachan (1995) finds management and the delivery of social justice inequitable. In Australia, Meadmore et al. (1995) take a more moderate line. Pointing to the paradoxes of devolution, in which accountability and surveillance sit uneasily alongside school-based autonomy, they ask how much space a school leader has to coopt managerialism into her own way of doing things. In the wider context of a Conservative government's education policies in
Britain, Evetts (1990) argues that the changes brought by recent reforms in the British education system require managerialist approaches that present cultural dilemmas for women headteachers. In her view, heads have to become tough, aggressive, competitive, directive and autocratic if they are to deal with the pressures created by the reforms. School management thus becomes an unsuitable job for a woman and women who aspire to and achieve headship are in a Catch-22 position. Demonstrating that they can do the job well, particularly by being successfully entrepreneurial, means they fail the critical theorists’ test by not challenging the effects of entrepreneurialism on educational values: and the feminists’ test for seemingly acquiescing to ‘masculine’ values. Yet is there any evidence that some successful education leaders are not also producing more efficient and equitable schools? Grace’s (1995) study shows that there are many men heads (and presumably deputy heads of both genders) who are unhappy with what is now expected of them in their role. The statistics on the reasons for the greater number of headteachers taking early retirement and the lower number of deputies applying for headships have their own story to tell.
The picture that emerged from my study failed to justify either of these disappointments. On the contrary, the women heads challenged the implicit fatalism of theories associating management and masculinity, first by going for and achieving headship; second, through their behaviour once in post. They had enough confidence in their own beliefs and values to use power in ways that they wanted to. This confidence led them to reject the need to become ‘masculine’ in management and question whether power was inevitably ‘political’.

They resembled Marshall's ‘creative individualists’ who have integrated their femininity into their sense of identity and learned how to combine individual power with structural constraints. The reforms were welcome as a way of providing them with the tools and opportunities to move their schools in directions both they and others associated with the school desired.

From observing their performance, a fundamental flaw in the 'management as a masculine' argument became apparent, as it applies to education. It implicitly divorces education from leadership. In education, every teacher is both a manager and a leader in the context of the students for whom they are responsible. However powerful the government's pressures towards reformulating
schools as profitable mini-businesses, the women’s approaches to headship demonstrated an interpretation of management that included leadership and the assurance that management acts can have a moral base.

In his own attempt to situate a study of school leadership in the context of critical perspectives, Southworth (1995: 192) supports the association between emancipatory leadership and gender. He concludes: ‘An emancipatory view of leadership is worth pursuing since it addresses both objections to power being understood as power over and the male bias of management theorizing.’

Gender thus becomes entwined with critical theories of education and leadership that condemn education management practice that controls rather than liberates and prioritizes efficiency and means over ethics and morals. Such leadership is seen by many (e.g. Bottery, 1992: Mac An Ghaill, 1994: Grace, 1995) as antipathetic to educational values and an attempt to replace them with the values of the market-place which encourage technicist, rational solutions to human problems. Yet, in common with the heads in Headship Matters and some of those in Grace’s (1995) study, they relished the opportunities the new reforms brought to practice ‘practical educational leadership’. E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R
Blackmore and Kenway (1993) have suggested that organizations advocate
‘feminine’ characteristics to bolster continuing male privilege. Organizational
recognition of what women have to offer that is different from men is, in their
view, pragmatically rather than ethically grounded. As critical theorists they
associate entrepreneurialism with masculinity: both men and women who are
successful in taking their schools forward within a market-led education system
are, within this perspective, failing. Women are failing doubly if they also
appear not to challenge equity issues, particularly as they relate to gender, within
their schools. This is rarely noted in the mainstream literature as a failing of men
school leaders. Unlike other studies of women leaders (e.g. Adler et al., 1993;
Astin and Leland, 1991; Strachan, 1995), the women headteachers in my study
did not claim to be feminists. Like their women colleagues in Grace’s study,
they rejected it as an explicit social label that would identify them with unwel
come stereotypes. ‘I am a personist, not a feminist’, said one head. Their con
ception of being a professional included taking care not to discriminate against
or in favour of either men or women. It might be argued that, unlike men, their
shared experience as women at least made them aware of the possibilities of dis
criminating on the basis of gender and keen to avoid it.

How far, then, can a gender perspective contribute to alternative conceptions of educational leadership? Inevitably, since my study was of women. I have concentrated on what we can learn from how they lead schools. Yet the lessons of both the research framework (with its triple metaphor of gender, power and culture) and the findings are equally relevant to women and men in education management, as well as those responsible for appointing and supporting them.

The women heads provide an example of school leaders dismantling and then recreating images of headship, as they make sense of their new roles and forge their personal and professional identities in a new context. Their attempts to be positive role models for men as well as women may be overambitious. Harris argues (1995: 193) that men need role models of other men who have courageously challenged the assumptions of patriarchy. The characteristics embodied in this role model include self-nurturing, conscious choices about how to live their lives, being able to parent self and others, admitting mistakes, listening well and expressing feelings. Yet Gray (1993: 114) concludes from his work with headteachers that women’s awareness is greater than men’s (regarding
gender and sexuality) and men fail to understand
themselves. In his view, as
heads become more aware of the importance of gender issues
in schools, there
will be a change in the way men and women think about each
other and how
teachers think about children. Florence and John may not
walk hand in hand but
they will at least talk to each other about their starring
roles.
What I have aimed to show in this paper is that an
understanding of the
impact of gender on life in schools and colleges is an
essential component of our
ways of knowing about educational leadership. By essential
I mean it is taken
for granted that it should inform all our enquiries. This
unquestioning accep
tance is of a different order from the one I described
earlier as conventionally D U S T I N G O F F T H E P H
O E N I X
characterizing our approaches to understanding educational
management. Using
a gender perspective creates new possibilities for
exploring the lives of men and
women who teach, manage and lead in education. It requires
researchers to look
at their own assumptions as and about men and women and the
effects of these
on their findings and interpretations. Making gender figure
rather than ground in
studies of school leadership contributes to a more
comprehensive picture of
current practice. It raises questions about the relationships between home and
work, family and career, early socialization and later performance. Educational
leadership is firmly rooted in professional identity. To understand one, we must

Acker, S. (1994) Gendered Education: Sociological Reflections on Women, Teaching and


Beck, J. and Steele, M. (1989) Beyond the Great Divide: Introducing Equality into the

chological Association, Chicago, Ill.


ment of Schools: A Report for the Department for Education via the School Manage


Polity Press.


A growing number of feminist accounts assert that gender matters when we examine leadership styles in schools and other educational establishments (Adler et al., 1993; Al-Khalifa, 1989; Grogan, 1996; Hall, 1996). In this paper we critically evaluate some of this recent feminist writing on gendered styles of management alongside more mainstream literature on educational management.

We discuss some of the contextual aspects of educational management before tentatively exploring a range of other issues that we suggest might also influence women’s contemporary management styles. We recognize that the term ‘management’ covers a wide spectrum of posts, with access to very differing degrees of power and leadership possibilities. In this paper we focus specifically on school headship as a management post which includes both power and leadership. Put simply our argument is that a number of feminist texts on management and gender work with essentialized notions of femininity in which homogenizing conceptions of what it means to be female depict women
as uniformly nurturant, affiliative and good at interpersonal relationships. In contrast, we suggest that gendered identities are in context more fluid and shifting than they are depicted in such texts. There are many different femininities and the form they take is powerfully shaped by the roles women undertake and the context within which they perform these roles. As a result, female leadership in practice frequently appears to be both more multi-faceted and more contradictory than the idealized depictions in some feminist texts. Finally we draw on research data from two ESRC funded studies in which a small number of female headteachers were interviewed. These data exemplify a number of the problems involved in depicting female management as essentially different from ‘male’ ways of managing. Management means men Patriarchal and male power has shaped the construct of leadership, its culture, discourse, imaging and practice for centuries. Alternative conceptions of leadership have to attempt to legitimate themselves against the pervasive influence of these established models. (Grace, 1995: 187)

As Grace points out, female managers are operating in a context of male hegemony. The history of leadership to which Grace refers has resulted in the conflation of traditional male qualities with those of leadership. As a result management is commonly conceptualized as ‘masculine’, concerned with ‘male’
qualities of rationality and instrumentality (Blackmore, 1993; Blackmore and Kenway, 1993; Weiner, 1995). This would suggest that women, as well as men, promoted to senior management positions will aspire to ways of managing which draw on styles widely perceived to be masculine rather than feminine.

Judi Marshall asserts that ‘leadership characteristics and the masculine sex role correspond so closely that they are simply different labels for the same concept’ (Marshall, 1984: 19).

This conflation of leadership with masculinity has significant implications for women headteachers and the ways in which they can, and do, manage and this is evidenced in various empirical studies. Morrison (1987) found that the psychological profiles of women who succeed in positions of executive leadership may be more like those of their male counterparts than they are like those of women in general, while Schein (1973, 1975) found that female senior managers were often ‘more like men than men themselves’. Meta Kruger found in her study of 98 paired male and female headteachers in Holland that women were no different to their male counterparts in terms of ‘internal communication’ and ‘personnel management’. She also researched whether women were ‘more involved
with others and less task orientated than men’ and found that they were not, con
cluding that ‘Women heads hardly differ from their male colleagues in the way
in which they experience power’ (Kruger, 1996: 454).

The feminist writing on management is a much needed riposte to mainstream
tendencies to conflate management with masculinity. At the same time feminist
accounts rarely explore women’s power over others, instead preferring to focus
on power as something that is exercised in relation to, rather than by, women. In
keeping with this general tendency, feminist texts on women and management
often seem to operate with a notion of ‘the universal feminine’ which is fre
quently posited as an unmitigated good (Grundy, 1993). To ignore the ways in
which the wielding of power modifies and reconstructs both men and women’s
sense of self and their relationships with others is to overlook the shifting nature
of gendered identities. As already noted, there is evidence that women in posi
tions of power display the same characteristics as men, regardless of whether or
not men are there to influence them (Fillion, 1997). E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

Psychological studies such as those of Snodgrass would support the view that,
as women achieve power, qualities normally associated with femininity are modi
fied. She found that women were not more sensitive than men overall when status was taken into consideration. Sensitivity varied according to status not sex, with lower status people being significantly more sensitive to the feelings of higher status people than vice versa (Snodgrass, 1985, 1992). In contrast, feminist work on women managers has repeated the oversights of mainstream feminisms, largely ignoring the impact of power and status on the construction of the femininities of powerful women.

In an effort to counter mainstream male conceptions of management a number of feminist writers appear to have played down the contradictory conjunction of femininity with power in the labour market. They work instead with an idealized model of femininity in which the assumption of power over others has little or no impact on female behaviour. Contrary to such idealized depictions, Kanter (1977) has argued that many of the so called gender differences in organizational behaviour stem directly from gendered differentials in opportunities and access to power. This would suggest that the acquisition of power within organizations results in women playing out their gendered identity in significantly different ways to those realized in normative, socially subordinate
femininities. Indeed, female headteachers have to deal with, and act out, a

number of contradictory and competing tendencies due to the

congruence of a

gendered socialization which prepares women for relative

powerlessness and a

current occupational location invested with power.

Holding power continues to be an ‘extraordinary’ situation for women in a

British labour market where only 4 percent of senior managers are women

(Davidson and Cooper, 1992). And the constitution of this 4 percent has its own

particular characteristics. The literature on women managers typically fails to

address the constitution of this 4 percent in terms of class, race, culture, ethnic

city, age and sexual orientation. Women who become senior managers in any

sector of the British labour market cannot be deemed to be representative of

women in general. They are largely recruited from a very specific group of

women: white, middle or upper class, and in most cases by definition highly cre

dentialed. Furthermore, in addition to particularities of class and ethnicity, exer

cising power for women is possibly influenced in significant ways by the

particular variant of gender socialization experienced in childhood, the culture

and ethos of the workplace, earlier role models, personality and political and
philosophical perspectives. In her study of female headteachers, Valerie Hall (1996) identifies an interesting theme in all the women’s personal histories, namely that they identified with their fathers rather than their mothers, suggesting perhaps that the masculine traits associated with leadership could be more acceptable for them than they would be for women whose main identification is with their mothers. The socially disembedded nature of much of the research on women managers means such issues have been ignored in the rush to essentialize.

Despite the recent trends in management theory which celebrate a ‘feminized’ management style, the practice of management, especially in educational institutions, remains a paradoxical context for women. While it may be that these style trends have had some impact on some aspects of management behaviour, it is patently unrealistic to argue that there has been a major transformation in management practices and culture, especially not in educational institutions. Indeed, as we go on to argue, the major transformation that has taken place in educational and other public sector organizations, that is, the introduction of the market form, has had the effect of
legitimating and encouraging assertive, instrumental and competitive behaviour.

As a consequence there remains an inherent paradox in women occupying the upper echelons of any public sector profession because such a positioning contradicts traditional notions of femininity. To be a successful professional near the top of an institutional hierarchy involves at the very least the performance of a markedly different femininity to that inscribed in traditional (or radical) notions of being female (see Tseelon, 1995). Within a wider social context in which femininity continues to be denigrated while masculinity is still frequently elevated as manifesting a superior form of development (Archer, 1989; Nicolson, 1996), it would be surprising for women managers to uncomplicatedly valorize feminine ways of working. The inherent tension between being female and being a leader invariably results in adaptations and adjustments and the assumption of a femininity that is more congruent with leadership than traditional variants of femininity which are grounded in positions of relative powerlessness. Efrat Tseelon’s study of the construction of femininity in Western society found that traditional conceptions of the woman continue to frame women in contemporary society. Femininity for most women is
lived out

through paradox in which they are ‘simultaneously socially invisible while being

physically and psychologically visible, an object of the gaze’ (Tseelon, 1995: 54). As social visibility is intrinsic to leadership, women in leadership positions

inevitably have to develop more masculine ways of interacting in order to be

seen as authentic leaders. Recent research by Kitch (1994) found that senior

women rarely call themselves feminists and often take a male view of behaviour

and knowledge for granted. Policy and discursive influences on educational management

Any analysis of gendered differences in management styles needs to take account

of the policy and discursive contexts within which educational management is

operating. Styles of management, administration and professionalism change and

evolve over time. Discourses of leadership in schools have shifted towards under

standings in which ‘the good head’ is conflated with strong leadership rather than

‘being a team player’ (Grace, 1995). The new managerialism, celebrated in the

school effectiveness literature, has given prominence to qualities such as ‘effeME M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R ciency, accountability, ambition, striving and competition’ (Evetts, 1990: 183) and

has led to a culture in which both male and female heads are expected to demon
strate particular kinds of effectiveness and leadership qualities. In this sense the

new managerialism can be considered ‘to be an indication that a new form of patri

archy is emerging wherein the perpetuation of traditional masculine values is more

important than the gender of the social actors whose actions reflect those values

(Hopton, 1999: 76). Management goals are increasingly preoccupied with measured outcomes rather than organizational processes, and yet it is in the processes that relationships with others can be emphasized. There is more attention given to monitoring of work, to speedy decision-making, to corporate culture and responsiveness to the customer; but arguably less to democratic decision-making, consultation and participation.

Nonetheless, Valerie Hall talks in terms of women heads’ use of power ‘as transformative capacity’ (1996: 141-2). For them power was about empowering others. She describes her female headteachers’ understandings of power as:

being able to make things happen by distributing the resources, interacting in ways which left others confident in their actions, enabling others to do things, being thoroughly organised and prepared, having a vision and shaping a culture. (Hall, 1996: 145)

Embedded in such a definition are tensions between
empowering others and the
images of directive leadership that ‘having a vision and
shaping a culture’

conjure up. Women and power have always been an
uncomfortable, problematic
coupling in which women find it difficult to deal with the
distance from other
women that leadership positions bring. This unease is
evident in the text of one
of Hall’s female headteachers:

I had to be tough and say it was staying but it’s not
something I did
comfortably, even though I felt justified. I see myself as
an equal and
don’t want to set myself apart as something different
because I’m a
headteacher. (Hall, 1996: 144)

Maybe, in part, what we are seeing here is (a) that Hall is
convinced by the ideo
logy of new management and its discourse of individual
empowerment, auto
nomy and devolution, and (b) that in relation to this she
is persuaded by the
heads’ self-serving accounts of their style and behaviour
through which occa
sional contradictions and difficulties peek.

Paula Nicolson comments that ‘much has been said in favour
of women man
agers and female management style, relying on the
assumption that it is fairer and
more democratic’ (Nicolson, 1996: 84). However, there
exists a conundrum, even
for those women who consciously aspire to operate in democratic, cooperative ESSENTIALS OF FEMALE EMANAGEMENT ways of working in the labour market, that is whether, in practice, maintaining caring, collaborative ways of working is consistent with career progression in management. Despite the rhetorics of ‘new management’, we suggest that in order to obtain professional success many women at, or near the top of, institutional hierarchies have had to modify some, if not all, of the qualities traditionally associated with femininity (see also Billing and Alvesson 1994). Arguably, career success may be seen as part of a distancing process from normative feminity. Such a thesis is supported by Tanton’s description of women attending a workshop on developing women’s presence in senior management. She found that the focus of the group was on positioning women generally as ‘the other’ to the characteristics of a male norm with which they themselves identified. Tanton concludes that their complicated positioning could be seen as a measure of the depth of the entrenched values within society that even this group of women concentrating their attention on the issue of women’s development approached it from the perspective of the ‘centred male’. (Tanton, 1994: 9)

There are further limits to the possibilities of either feminist or feminine management. Colin Riches highlights the role of sponsorship and mentoring in any
individual’s propensity to rise through occupational ranks, pointing to extensive evidence of the importance of sponsorship in managerial advancement (Riches, 1990). In education, no less than other occupational spheres, promotion is probably dependent on the sponsorship of more senior male colleagues (Davidson and Cooper, 1992; Evetts, 1990; Woodd, 1997). Both men and women who make it to the top of organizations have typically been sponsored along the way and because of the gendered nature of institutional hierarchies their mentor has invariably been a man. The result is that, for both men and women, role models for exercising power are primarily male. But there are more subtle and pervasive consequences. Adjusting and adapting to what senior male colleagues want can generate difficult contradictions for women: ‘Those women who accept the rules of the promotion game are likely to experience personal stress as they attempt to cultivate personal identities which are acceptable to their male colleagues’ (Evetts, 1990: 179–80). They are also not immune from acculturation into ‘the way things are done here’ (Marshall and McLean, 1987), which means increasingly operating with male frames of reference (Van Velsor and Hughes, 1990). Conforming or challenging? Women and power
Anne Gold (1997) raises an important issue in relation to management, gender and power. It is not simply a question of having previous experience of being located as relatively unpowerful. Rather:

If those people who came from less powerful positions than those privileged by our society reflected on the effects of their lack of access to power they would work differently with power when they had it from those who have never had to engage in such arguments. (Gold, 1997: 6-7)

Reflexive awareness of the potential damage of power imbalances then, just as much as gender, influences whether individuals conform to, or challenge, orthodox 'masculinist' ways of managing in the contemporary educational market place.

Concomitantly, there is the possibility that achieving a position of power as a woman is the end product of a process of conformity and collusion with, rather than challenge to, prevailing power dynamics. This is not the same as presenting male power as an unproblematic social positioning. Both female and male head teachers are far more likely to have assumed the role of 'conformist' rather than 'subversive' within organizational structures prior to promotion (Ganderton
1991). As Helen Gunter (1997) points out, invariably it is compliance and con-
formity that are rewarded by the powerful across different contexts. Women
who challenge organizational views, including orthodoxies around the ‘best way
to manage’, are unlikely to be promoted to the position of headteacher. Re-

inforcing such a thesis, Grace raises interesting issues around silences in both
male and female headteachers’ accounts in his research. Women heads were
relatively silent on gender relations of educational leadership and management,
and both they and the male heads were relatively silent on issues such as racism
and the political and ideological nature of government education policy.

We need new ways of reading leadership which move beyond simplistic
notions of meritocracy and viewing promotion as a straightforwardly positive
process in which merit and excellence are rewarded. It would be unsurprising if
the promotion process for both males and females did not comprise a difficult
balancing act in which conformity, collusion, acceptance of the status quo and
self-promotion jostled with conflicting ethical stances, criticisms of the organi-

zation and the ways in which it operates, and desires to be part of a collectivity.

As Grace (1995: 190) concludes: ‘Patriarchal domination of school leadership
positions had not been seriously threatened by the promotion of these women headteachers. They had been accommodated in what remained a largely enduring culture of male leadership.’ In a similar vein, Patricia Hill Collins (1998) has written about mastering the distortions and her own struggles as a black woman to gain acceptance within a white patriarchal system. However, as her terminology implies, it is inevitably a process of assuming dominant male ways of working.

In the review symposium of her book Dancing on the Ceiling, Valerie Hall highlights a continuing dilemma, not only for herself but for all feminist studies of female management. The desire to make women’s as well as men’s contributions to educational history visible can often conflict with a commitment to ESSENTIALS OF FEMALE MANAGEMENT critical perspectives which challenge the failure of those in power to question the status quo (Hall, 1999: 101). Hall’s women headteachers seldom questioned the prevailing educational status quo and although she writes in terms of ‘the possible transformations of formal power when it is held by women’ (Hall, 1996: 203), this has to be set against the discursive context of educational leadership in the late 1990s. The prevailing discursive
status quo threatens to

conscript both men and women into very particularistic
models of headship in

which strong leadership, individual competition, autocracy
and manipulation are

increasingly the prime characteristics (Grace, 1995). Thus

Wilfred Carr and

Anthony Hartnett describe the viewing of junior staff as
'subjects' to be manipu

lated and controlled rather than as autonomous moral agents
as one of the main

features of new managerialism (Carr and Hartnett, 1996:
180). New manage

ment translates into 'fellow followers' and 'my people', a
humanistic subjectifi

cation. As compliance with institutional values is often a
requisite for

promotion, it is arguable whether many of the women or men
who succeed in

becoming headteachers are able to challenge and stand out
against expectations

that they manage according to contemporary orthodoxies.
There are exceptions

but rates and patterns of early retirement among
headteachers suggest that,

despite the rhetorics of teamwork and flat hierarchy,

collegial methods of power

sharing fit uneasily into the 1990s competitive,
individualistic educational

market-place. The question remains whether women who move
into positions of

power in the new context of disciplines and incentives and
its 'debased' moral
environment are able to resist its influences and maintain their existing values. It seems likely the powerful in society, regardless of their sex, share more in common with each other than they share with relatively powerless members of either sex. Women’s ways of working: contextual influences

Context matters greatly in eliciting traits traditionally associated with women (Epstein, 1988; Rhodes, 1992). It has been suggested that women are more often able to behave in supportive, caring ways at work because they are locked into low-paid, low-power jobs (Hansot and Tyack, 1981). Such jobs, for example nursing and child care, rarely require competitive ways of operating. Studies of women in high-level management posts across the labour market report that they frequently adopted a career orientation more traditionally associated with men rather than women (Cox, 1996; Evetts, 1990; Fogarty, et al 1972; Schmuck, 1996). While we are not positing any uniformity in the femininities performed by women leaders, we do argue, on the basis of the research studies cited here, that on a continuum of femininity and masculinity the femininities they take up and play out as leaders have characteristics in common with those of male peers as well as female subordinates. The possibilities for the realization of particular
femininities differ according to position, context and moral environment.

Williams (1986) has written about the North American berdache, men who assume the tasks and roles of a woman and thus come to be seen within their Native American culture as a third gender categorization, stressing how the performance of gender influences the ways in which it is symbolically constructed. The point is that, when women managers take up the tasks of the new role and bring gender identity and behaviour to bear, there is no simple, essential playing out of fixed gender behaviour and relations but rather a process of accommodation and mutual acceptance. However, the conventional position is rooted in binaries which militate against seeing how both changes in roles and performativity result in new evolving gender identities which transgress normative gender divisions.

Researchers like Hall tend to highlight the play of femininity within the performances of women teachers, but give less attention to the acquisition and display of male characteristics. Some feminist writers on gender and headship (Adler et al., 1993; Ozga, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1987, 1993) do argue that female heads adopt a more caring, less hierarchical style of leadership than their male...
counterparts. However, we may be talking about a matter of degree here, being slightly less directive than a male counterpart does not constitute democratic, power-sharing ways of working. As Jenkin points out, Hall’s women headteachers’ discomfort with the language of power politics did not deter them from ‘politicking through bargaining, negotiating and moments of outright assertion’ of power (Jenkin, 1999: 108). Jirasinghe and Lyons’s (1996) study of 255 head teachers, 113 men and 142 women, found that there was no difference between male and female headteachers in their propensity for directive leadership. While women heads described themselves as less competitive, they also saw ‘themselves to be just as controlling in managing their schools as their male colleagues in directing and organising others, issuing instructions and in taking charge of situations’ (p. 60). Jirasinghe and Lyons point out that this is in direct contrast to the general population, where their research showed directive leadership was far more common among men than women. There are clearly enormous difficulties in translating what are traditionally perceived to be ‘women’s ways of working’ into senior management contexts, especially when, as research demonstrates (Hansot and Tyack, 1981; Snodgrass,
1985, 1992), such qualities are highly context specific. They may be more realizable in certain schools, in certain locations and at certain points in time. More generally, we would also suggest that they are more likely to be supported in some historical periods rather than others. The late 1990s, when capitalism is reinventing itself and is beginning to generate workplace cultures characterized by competition, insecurity and rampant individualism, is not a period conducive to ‘caring, sharing’ ways of managing by either women or men (Gee et al., 1996). Although, in the new human organization, it may be that ‘feminine’ styles accomplish a more subtle, individual and totalizing form of control, continually conscripting their ‘followers’ to the survival needs of the organization and its corporate culture. Hall emphasizes the development of power sharing teams as being a distinctive characteristic of her women headteachers’ management style, indicating their preference for ‘power for’ rather than ‘power over’ more junior staff. However, Sally Power argues that: The growth of these kinds of management teams is a widespread phenomenon that has been observed in many educational organisations as they are forced to respond to the increasingly diverse and often contradictory demands of the state and the market. (Power, 1999: 115)

As Jenkin asserts, power-sharing teams are an essential part of any head
teacher’s repertoire in the late 1990s. While many staff perceive them as participative and empowering, for the headteacher they are also about gaining broader support for an initiative and assistance in getting it developed (Jenkin, 1999: 109).

The primary role in which women occupy a powerful position in society is as mother. It would be unsurprising either for female senior managers to assume a maternal role or for their subordinates to treat them as a maternal figure. The position of mother has often been idealized and is invested with mythical qualities no less than that of the woman manager in feminist texts (Daly, 1979).

Mothering is routinely conflated with caring yet traditionally involves censure, discipline and control alongside listening and comforting (James, 1989). Being a mother involves training and guiding as the person ‘who knows best’. There are insufficient analyses of the complexities of power for both men and women in the existing literature, but, in particular, the extent to which assuming the role of mother is a powerful subject position women senior managers can draw on in relation to subordinates has been insufficiently analysed and discussed. It seems likely that at least some of the women promoted to powerful positions would draw on
the symbolic power invested in one of the most powerful
female roles in society.

Assuming a maternal role may help to mitigate the greater
difficulties relative
to men that face women promoted to positions of power. The
endemic sexism
which continues to permeate the labour market results in
female senior man
agers having to confront a complex mix of contradictory
expectations from both
subordinates and male peers. Women managers have to juggle
disparate con
flictual subject positionings in order to survive in what
are primarily male cul
tures. In one sense they are subject to both harsher
judgements and greater
expectations than male peers. As Hall's woman head implies,
they are expected
to lead and still remain an equal; to be tough and
simultaneously kind and nurtu
rant. Pragmatic adaptation inevitably follows. This brings
us back to women
drawing on a subject positioning as 'mother' in order to be
seen as 'authenti
cally, acceptably powerful' and this may work to sift out
women more clearly
displaying feminine styles or those committed to feminist
ideologies.

Far from being intrinsic and fixed we have argued that a lot
of so-called
‘female’ qualities vary according to differentials of power
and that it is
extremely difficult to disentangle those qualities which
develop specifically out
of women’s position of relative powerlessness in society and those which women retain regardless of how much power they acquire. While the oppression of women by men is still intrinsic to many contemporary feminisms, the issue of women oppressing other women still remains relatively marginal to feminist theory. The possibility that domination and instrumentalism can shape women’s relationships with other women has long been a silence in feminist writing and research.

However, recent work within black and ‘working class’ feminisms has begun to address this issue (see Brah, 1994; Mahony and Zmrocrek, 1997; Mirza, 1997; Reay, 1998a). Yet, as we have argued, the contemporary educational market-place conscripts headteachers of both sexes into goal-orientated ways of working that position all subordinates as means to senior management ends.

More specifically, a market culture has brought with it identifiable shifts in values within the schooling sector (Gewirtz et al., 1995) in which subordinates are increasingly viewed as means to management ends (Reay 1998b). Within such a context working in feminist ways would appear to be extremely difficult to realize and female ways of managing may turn out to have more similarities
to than differences from orthodox (male) ways of managing. Women headteachers: shifting femininities in play

In this section we draw on a set of case studies of schools, focusing upon a small group of female headteachers in order to exemplify some of the issues we have raised around gender and management. Using transcripts of interviews conducted in four London comprehensive schools we discuss the leadership styles and methods of their women headteachers. We argue that prevailing market conditions in the educational sector inhibit the development of innovative power sharing forms of management, whether feminist or otherwise. Rather, on the basis of this material, it appears that female heads are conscripted into competitive ways of operating in a prevailing ethos that encourages schools to view themselves as in competition with each other. We begin with Mrs Carnegie:

I think she likes to think of herself as hawkish . . . she likes to get people competing against each other in different areas of the school and it works . . . certainly within the school I’d say that applied very strongly . . . and in the first few years it was idiotic really . . . some of the things people felt they had to get up to. . . . I think Mrs Carnegie would prefer a much harder sell on the school than actually
happens. (deputy head of year)

Far from attempting to ameliorate the impact of market forces, Mrs Carnegie’s response to an increasingly competitive educational field has been to install hierarchically structured internal systems of accountability which ensure both

the regulation of teachers’ work and the institutionalization of the values of a performance-driven market (Gewirtz, 1997). But Mrs Carnegie’s enactment of leadership is not of a piece. Women managers are always drawing on a range of subjectivities, at times as a maternal figure, at times as stereotypically female,

but at other times constructing an identity as a powerful person which cuts across and conflicts with other historically derived aspects of feminine subjectivity. These varied feminine positionings are assumed at different times in different contexts and in relation to different agendas by Mrs Carnegie. A senior teacher, describing Mrs Carnegie’s reward system of ‘tiger stickers’ for the senior management team, presents her as a powerful mother figure: ‘I mean Bill used to put them on his wall . . . I’ve got 6 and then somebody would get 7 . . .

the proliferation has gone down but she still gives them . . . they’re more scarce

so you actually do take . . . its she’s noticed, mummy noticed.’
Overtones of both ‘feminist’ and feminine styles of management can, on other occasions, be seen to ameliorate what is normally a hard management line: She has kind of a split personality, one extremely businesslike and quite often very difficult to meet, will put you on the spot, will get very angry and so on which is juxtaposed with this personal thing where she suffers everything and will listen to you and is terribly interested about everybody.

Mrs Carnegie herself describes the quintessential ‘new manager’ when discussing her own practice. And her account has a generic quality, her management appears to have no specific educational characteristics: He thought that my style is quite similar to that used by a top Civil Servant, and that . . . I hope he meant it in the best sense, he says that what he thinks that what I do a lot is to set targets and make sure people are coming up to those targets and that’s a rather formal way of doing it, but I think it is a hallmark of my style. . . . I have a very, if you like, I don’t think it’s fair to say hierarchical, but a very systems based management style. I like to be aware of where the boundaries are, that people are working within their boundaries, hitting their targets but not actually poaching on other people’s ground . . . and I think that’s necessary for a large institution.

The key words in Mrs Carnegie’s text are ‘targets’, ‘formal’ and ‘systems based’; hardly a lexicon for people-centred management. At different points in the same interview she also refers to ‘my institution’, ‘my team’, ‘my heads of cluster’. As Hargreaves points out, ‘my vision’, ‘my teachers’, ‘my school’ are proprietary claims and attitudes that suggest an ownership of the school and of change which is ‘individual rather than collective, imposed rather than earned,'
hierarchical rather than democratic’ (Hargreaves, 1994: 250). Hargreaves goes on to comment that this ownership is more often male ownership in which power is exercised over women. However, such proprietary attitudes are clearly evident in Mrs Carnegie’s text.

Mrs Carnegie, like the two female headteachers quoted below, manages through a model of pragmatic adaptation to the marketization of education rather than out of any feminine or feminist principles. Also in line with our contention earlier that female managers adopt ‘masculine’ alongside ‘feminine’ traits, in the excerpt below, she places herself on a continuum of femininity and masculinity at the point at which ‘the feminine and the masculine dovetail’. But, crucially, she defines the feminine perspectives of her junior colleagues as ‘unprofessional’.

We advertised one head of year, we didn’t advertise two, because the second one came up a week later, and colleagues were saying here well . . . if we’d known there were two we wouldn’t mind applying, cos we wouldn’t then have to apply against another colleague . . . and my reply was that I thought that that was a very feminine way of thinking and really an unprofessional way . . . if a job was there you
should go for it

and in a way I was doing down women and I think that perhaps . . .

that’s the Margaret Thatcher side of me . . . that my management style

is, I don’t know that you would differentiate it from a man . . . but it’s

very focused on women’s achievement. I like to think it’s not so much

feminine or male, I think I would like to think I was the feminine end

of the male spectrum to be honest, which I do regard as a thinking,
civilised, cultured end. I loathe extremes, I loathe the macho male or
the woman who plays the feminine thing so somewhere in the middle
and perhaps that is, as I say, where the feminine and the masculine
dovetail.

The interviews with Mrs Baxter, head of Overbury display similar themes to

those with Mrs Carnegie, in particular the prioritizing of market imperatives
over democratic, collegial ways of managing: ‘I introduced a meeting for
parents to meet their children’s form tutors and class teachers which was resisted
. . . strongly resisted by the staff but I did it anyway.’

Talking of a previous
culture of collaboration between heads in the same LEA, she commented:

My job is to keep the school full even if it flies in the
face of what other
colleagues want from me so I’m much less likely to adhere to a corpor
date decision of the heads now and much more likely to serve this
school’s interests and if these interests fly in the face of what is corpo
rately judged to be best then I shall pursue what’s best for the school.

Market and institutional imperatives are reshaping both male and female head
teachers’ management styles emphasizing accelerated decision-making and the
prioritizing of parental rather than teachers’ interests. Democratic forms of man-
agement are at risk of becoming associated with inefficiency and inertia in the
developing market culture if they appear to stand against, and work in opposi-
tion to, market imperatives.

Mrs Anderson, the headteacher of Trumpton, also describes a hard-hitting,
interventionist style of management: When I arrived part of my analysis was that the school was complacent and it was . . . and that needed shaking . . . and actually having to stand up for yourself is incredibly good for staff. . . . and I hit them hard with it that year I have to say and that year everybody worked quite hard. I intervened on every front you can think of and some you couldn’t. I ran this school like some sort of demented gnat. Then the following autumn for the open evening I pulled out all the stops with the staff, I really gingered them and by god they worked for that and I think the combination of that and other various odds and sods that we had done during the year was what made the difference . . . and it was I think discipline which I altered substantially. I upped it hugely, uniform then the curriculum and we hammered those
things.

Mrs Anderson’s account of her first year as head at Trumpton combines themes of strong directive leadership, accelerated decision-making and a conception of staff as means to management ends with traces of coerciveness; few signs of soft nurturant management here. When I came here I discovered that money was being spent like water, and not any of it in the right place I thought . . . so I put them on a strict diet immediately. So it was all rather harsh. But the biggest joke was we provide teas for parents’ evenings for the staff cos they work right through so it’s actually not totally unreasonable to give them a crumb or two and I stopped the sausage rolls so they just had a sandwich and a cake and I only did it for fun actually . . . I was actually pulling their legs and it caused absolute riotous fun.

Although Mrs Anderson does not specify, it caused ‘absolute riotous fun’ for herself and the senior management team, not the staff who are the objects of their derision. Underlying this ‘harmless joke’ are traditionally masculinist ways of operating which permeate her text. The market becomes a means by which she can ‘hammer’ reluctant staff, ‘shaking’ them out of their complacent dependency. However, at other times, like Mrs Carnegie and Mrs Baxter, she mobilizes a softer approach to management more in line with conventional views of feminine practice. The methods and lexicon of feminine management are part of an extended repertoire, a bilingualism (Clarke and Neuman, 1992),
which may be deployed at ‘appropriate’ or ‘useful’ moments but they do not appear to be the defining characteristics of these women managers. E M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R

The fourth female head, Ms English, is the only one quoted here to openly espouse the label ‘feminist’. In her text she struggles with the conflict between feminine modes of management and the prevailing new managerialist ethos:

I think LMS has changed how people can manage schools and I think that links directly to the gender thing. I’m not saying all women managers have a—what I would call a more feminine style of management—they don’t obviously—but it’s much more difficult under LMS, and if you are a woman, to be open and consultative and less hierarchic. It’s much more difficult than it used to be. And all those important decisions about money and people’s jobs and so on—it’s really hard. And it’s the kind of thing a lot of women don’t want to go into management.

Yet, rhetorical distancing from the practices of new managerialism does not translate into either feminine or feminist ways of working. The prevailing staff view in Ms English’s school was that she was both autocratic and unsupportive of staff.
Despite her stated opposition to authoritarian management, she still talks in terms of having to act in an authoritarian manner. This returns us to an earlier theme: the pervasive sexism surrounding female managers results in them having to confront a complex mix of contradictory expectations from both subordinates and male peers. Conclusion

These examples of female management in practice have been included to underline

An important focus of many of the feminist texts on gender and management is on the agency of the individual. In this emphasis on how women heads shape the job of being a headteacher, the extent to which context shapes individuals’ actions and perspectives is downplayed. One consequence is that ‘any discussion of how women headteachers may act as tools of the state in terms of their practices, knowingly or unconsciously, becomes muted’ (Reynolds, 1999: 112).

Instead, such accounts rip the headteacher out of the context of politics and policy and present their practices as though it were the simple realization of a set of idealistic aspirations. The power of women to change structures is emphasized at the cost of failing to understand how structures change women. As Jill Blackmore (1999, 156) points out: ‘One cannot talk about “women’s ways of
leading” therefore, without being aware of the structural constraints and dis
courses shaped elsewhere that undermine leadership committed to such notions
of feminist practice’.
The notion of a continuity and inevitability of a ‘female’ self across time and
space which is embedded in much of the writing on women and management is
have highlighted the impact of marketization on the formation of identities and E S S E N T I A L S O F F E M A L E M A N A G E M E N T
relationships within the sphere of education. Complacencies about feminine or
feminist ways of working ignore the masculinist mode of the market with its
technicist emphasis on systems and outcomes at their peril. We would not want
to argue for a simple determinism in understanding the realization of leadership
styles, as there clearly is always some room for manøuvre for most heads in
most schools. At the same time we are going to need something more than


Buckingham: Open University Press.


London: Cassell.


M O T I O N S A N D G E N D E R
PART 3 Politics and micropolitics


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Both practitioners and theorists regard administration as an essentially rational process. Although the current emphasis on contingency theory recognises that
effective patterns of administration are relative to the
contexts in which they are
to operate, there remains the fundamental assumption that
if plans are well-con
ceived, clearly set out, and adequately communicated, then
systems can be
improved. Yet everyone working in organisations is all too
well aware of their
often idiosyncratic, adventitious, unpredictable and
intractable nature when
every day brings a new organisational “pathology” to
disrupt well laid plans.
This uncertainty occurs at the highest levels of
policy-making and implementa
tion. In his much cited work on the Cuban missile crisis
Allison (1971) showed
that what had been interpreted as the outcome of
carefully-considered and
rationally-enacted policies could be viewed as the result of
actors within a
highly uncertain situation bargaining within their own
camps as well as across
national boundaries. In an interview, Zbegniew Brzezinski,
President Carter’s
adviser on national security stated: “My overwhelming
observation from the
experience of the last four years is that history is
neither the product of design
nor of conspiracy, but is rather the reflection of
continuing chaos. Seen from the
outside, decisions may often seem clear and consciously
formulated . . . but one
learns that so much of what happens . . . is the product of
chaotic conditions and a great deal of personal struggle and ambiguity” (Urban, 1981). Policy-makers and administrators in the less lethal field of education will recognise the aleatory dimension of the institution - described by Kogan (1975) as “pluralistic, incre mental, unsystematic and reactive” - as they attempt to improve the service in conditions which appear to be perennially turbulent.

Evidence of the quirky and idiosyncratic nature of social institutions could lead one into a consideration of fundamental questions about the nature of the social sciences. However, this path will not be taken in this paper. The question to be considered is whether social scientists have explored sufficiently all dimensions of institutions as a source of explanation of what, within the prevail ing paradigms of social science research, appears to be irrational, adventitious and peculiar to a unique setting at one point in time. It is the purpose of this paper to suggest that there is one dimension of organisations which has been largely ignored in administration and organisation theory. We can refer to this as the “micropolitics of organisations”. It is an organisational underworld which we all recognise and in which we all participate. We acknowledge it when we speak of “organisational mafias”, “hidden agendas”, “playing
politics” and

“Machiavellism”. It is a dark side of organisational life which provides the

source of much staff gossip. Ironically, micropolitical activity is engaged in by

the very administrators who profess a rational theory of administration. Yet it is

very rarely made the focus of academic study. For enlightenment on micropolitics and for enjoyable confirmation of what we know of this dimension of organisations, we got to television serials, films, plays and novels: “Wilt” does more than Weber can to reveal the FE world to man.

There may be good reason for the academic neglect of micropolitics. It is

perhaps considered slightly unrespectable, or too self-indulgent (“the cute school

of organisation theory”, Ouchi, 1981), or a threat to conventional administrative

theory - which it is, or as having no practical application - which it may not. Or

it may be that it simply is not a single dimension of organisations at all but a

range of different processes each best handled separately through existing bodies

of theory and research.

The purpose of this paper is simply to put the issue of micropolitics on the

agenda. The sections which follow deal with the hypothesised domain of micropolitics, reasons for its omission from the major approaches to the study of
organisations and their administration, the approaches to organisation and
administrative theory which deal to some degree with micropolitics, and

implications of micropolitics for the training of administrators. The domain of micropolitics

Micropolitics embraces those strategies by which individuals and groups in

organisational contexts seek to use their resources of power and influence to

further their interests. The cynic might well say that this is simply a definition of

administration. It is true that the relationship between administration and

micropolitics is symbiotic in that in practice they are inextricably linked, but it

can at least be hypothesized that there is some measure of independence.

Administrative theory focuses on structures and the associated processes of

power, decision-making, communication, etc. But the space between structures

is occupied by something other than individuals and their motives. This “other”

consists of micropolitical structures and processes. It is characterised more by

coalitions than by departments, by strategies rather than by enacted rules, by POLITICS AND MICROPOLITICS

influence rather than by power, and by knowledge rather than by status. The

micropolitical dimension may be largely shaped by the formal structure – which

may well be the dimension which best accounts for
organisational activity - but

it is nevertheless worthwhile reversing the traditional approach by treating the

micropolitical as the “figure” and the administration as the “ground” to explore

whether this throws a different light on the operation of organisations. Such a

procedure would lead to a focus on the major elements of micropolitics: inter

ests, interest sets, power and strategies.

Politics is inevitably concerned with interests. Administrative theory often

underestimates the plurality of interests in organisations because it tends to be

attuned to organisational goals as determined by the leadership. That there are

interests other than those of organisational effectiveness has of course long been

taken into account by most administrative theories, but they nevertheless tend to

be treated as recalcitrant, a suitable case for leadership, or socialisation or coer

cion. It is beyond the scope of this paper to offer a taxonomy of interests, but

any classification would at least include personal, professional and political

interests. Personal interests would include autonomy, status, territory and

rewards. Professional interests involve commitments to particular forms of prac

tice: curriculum, pedagogy, organisation and so forth. Political interests involve

a commitment to certain macro or party-political policies.
It is easily seen that,

taking these three areas of interest alone, it is difficult to disentangle the personal, the professional and the political at a substantive level. The tendency is perhaps for personal or political interests to be presented in terms of the professional, since normatively this is the most “respectable” form of interest in education. Thus a proposed innovation which threatened the territorial interests of a teacher might well be resisted by mobilising “professional” arguments against it.

Similarly, political interests can be presented as professional interests. However, it can be seen that here even the conceptual distinction is very difficult to sustain. In institutions other than education the distinction between personal and political interests is blurred. The conceptual difficulties are particularly acute when one considers “the micropolitics of macropolitics”, where the question is whether X is espousing a political interest per se or as a means of pursuing a personal interest in a political career. A large part of the fascination of Crossman’s Cabinet diaries (Crossman, 1975, 1977) is his revelations about micropolitics within the Cabinet and the ambiguous relationship between personal and political interests.

Interests constitute the content of micropolitics but it
can be seen that the area

is fraught with conceptual and methodological difficulties. It is perhaps for this

reason that those who have addressed themselves to

micropolitics have tended to

focus on strategies rather than content.

Interests are pursued by individuals but frequently they are most effectively

pursued in collaboration with others who share a common concern. Some of

these may have the qualities of a group in that they are relatively enduring and

have a degree of cohesion, but others - which are perhaps best referred to as MICROPOLITICS OF EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

interest sets - will be looser associations of individuals who collaborate only

infrequently when a common interest comes to the fore. Some interest groups

will be coterminous with formal organisational groupings, e.g. departments or

teams. These will be particularly strong. Others will transcend formal bound

aries and will form when a common interest has to be pursued. The basis of

group or set association may be age, sex, professional interests, politics, union

activity, etc. Burns (1955) distinguished between cliques which are committed

to sustaining the status quo and cabals which are committed to organisational

change.

Coalitions have been the focus of attention of a number of
writers. Selznick (1957) has made a sociological contribution to their study. Bacharach and Lawler (1980) review the major socio-psychological theories of coalitions before offering their own theory which is essentially a sociopsychological approach to the political dimension of organisations. They define a coalition as “a grouping of interest groups who are committed to achieving a common goal”. In turn, interest groups are defined as “groups of actors who are aware of the commonality of their goals, and the commonality of their fate beyond simply their interdependence with regard to the conduct of work”. Some interest groups will be permanently mobilised; interest sets will mobilise as and when their interest becomes salient. Components of the formal structure will remain the most powerful set of groupings in an organisation, but there is at least a case for viewing an organisation in terms of the alternative structure of shifting interest sets which, in fact, interpenetrate with the formal organisation at many points.

Power is one of those social science concepts which refer to an important social phenomenon but about which there are theoretical and empirical disputes which are likely to remain unresolved. Given the libraries of works on power
produced by political scientists, philosophers, sociologists and social psychologists, it would be impossible to review the complex theoretical and methodological issues involved in this short paper. Thus the remarks made will be those of particular relevance to micropolitics.

The distinction between two major aspects of power are important. Authority is the legally supported form of power which involves the right to make decisions and is supported by a set of sanctions which is ultimately coercive.

Influence is the capacity to affect the actions of others without legal sanctions.

The distinction is conceptually important but difficult to sustain empirically because, since authority can be latent, it is difficult to establish when control is exercised through influence or through latent power. However, the distinction between authority and influence remains potentially useful since the power deployed in micropolitics frequently takes the form of influence since interest sets will draw on resources other than those of authority to achieve their ends.

Administrative theory tends to focus on authority which has its source in the hierarchical structure of the organisation. Micropolitical theory would give greater prominence to influence. Influence is derived from a number of sources,
e.g. personality (charisma), expertise, access (especially to information) and resources (material or symbolic). Influence differs from authority in having a number of sources in the organisation, in being embedded in the actual relationships between groups rather than located in an abstract legal source, and is not “fixed” but is variable and operates through bargaining, manipulation, exchange and so forth.

The headteacher in Britain has a high degree of authority; but his exercise of this authority is increasingly modified as teachers’ sources of influence through expertise, access to symbolic resources, etc., increases and thus involves the head in a greater degree of exchange and bargaining behaviour (Hoyle, 1981).

These are the aspects of power which are the appropriate focus of micropolitics.

Micropolitics takes account of the strategies used by interest sets to attain their ends and gives these greater attention than formal procedures. Organisational politics has been insufficiently studied to yield a systematic taxonomy of such strategies although there are good individual studies. For example, Petti grew (1973) identified four strategies used by a group of programmers to protect their interests: norms which denied the outsider’s
competence, protective myths, secrecy, and control over recruitment and training. Handy (1976) discusses a number of protective strategies such as the distortion of information, the imposition of rules and procedures, the control of rewards, etc. There is so little discussion of micropolitical strategies in educational organisations that it is perhaps appropriate to invent some examples: An FE college may have a “collegial” structure, but the principal, caught in the dilemma of all who would manage pluralistic organisations, i.e. the reconciliation of legal authority and the expectation of participation, may indulge in micropolitics in order to cope with this dilemma. Thus he may attempt to handle situations by: “losing” recommendations from working parties by referring them to other groups in the hope that they will disappear or become transformed, “rigging” agendas, “massaging” the minutes of meetings, “nabbling” individuals before meetings (“I’m glad you see it my way. I hope you’ll make your views known at the meeting”), “inventing” consensus (“Well, we all seem to be agreed on that”) when consensus has not been tested, “interpreting” the opinions of outside groups (“The governors would never accept it”. “The LEA wouldn’t finance it”) and so forth. As Noble
and Pym (1964) discovered, “collegial” organisations are characterised by a “receding locus of power”. The course of power is difficult to identify in a collegial organisation. The principal can draw on his resources of legal power, but other members of staff have their own resources. Thus micropolitics involves a study of interests, interest sets, power and strategies. These are intimately related to the more formal aspects of an organisation which is the main focus of much administrative theory, but the political dimension of an organisation constitutes an alternative focus for understanding organisational processes. However, from the brief discussions of these four components in this section it can be seen that it is likely to be a conceptually and methodologically complex area of enquiry. 

The neglect of micropolitics Theories of organisations and administration are relative, i.e. products of their place and time, partial, i.e. in adopting one theoretical perspective others are inevitably excluded since a total perspective is not a possibility, and normative, i.e. to a greater or lesser degree they are infused with values. The dominant paradigm in organisational and administrative theory is one in which political aspects do not easily fit. Although it is a great over-simplification
to group all prevailing theories within one paradigm, and although it is impossible to do justice to the diversity of existing theories, some broad points can be made in order to illustrate the reason for the neglect of micropolitics.

Current organisation theory has two origins: Weber’s theory of bureaucracy and early theories of management. These two strands converge and diverge at many points in the development of theory. Sociological theory in the Weberian tradition is potentially concerned with understanding organisations; management theory is potentially concerned with improving them. However, theories of management need to be based on understanding if they are not to be merely recipe theories, and organisation theory has not retained a detached purity since its proponents have also been concerned with improving organisations in various ways: their efficiency, the quality of life of participants, and, hopefully, both.

Hence they share a common paradigm which can be termed the maintenance paradigm.

It is impossible to give a detailed account of this paradigm let alone the variations within. Nevertheless, the following are its major lineaments: its metatheory assumes that the social world is to a greater or lesser degree, rational, amenable
to scientific study and predictable. Its perspective on organisations follows from this in emphasising the centrality of structure, the legal authority inherent in that structure, a relatively high degree of integration and systemness, participants who will continue to be committed given an appropriate mix of rewards, and conflicts which are either “creative” or arise from some malfunction of the structure or leadership. The associated management theory is concerned with the effective use of resources, maximising the fit between organisational goals and personal needs, and an organisational responsiveness to contingent conditions in the environment. The theory of change inherent in the model is essentially that of planned change whereby adaptation to a changing environment is handled by structural changes and the retraining and re-socialisation of participants. Overall the paradigm views organisations in a top-down manner.

The operation of the maintenance paradigm in education can be – again in a gross over-simplification – summarised as follows: Educational organisations - schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities - have to cope with changes in their environment: cultural, technological, economic and political changes of various kinds. Political changes are initiated at the macropolitical level and tend
to focus on the allocation of resources, legal enactments and overall structure

with rather less focus on matters of curriculum and pedagogy. It is assumed that POLITICS AND MICROPOLITICS

practitioners will interpret these external changes in an attempt to keep in

balance the interests of society and the interests of clients. Hence the expectation

is that innovation will be professionalised rather than politicised. In order to

equip institutions and practitioners to cope with the professional demands of

innovation, programmes of professional development, organisational develop

ment and the development of inter-personal skills have emerged. The appropri

ate strategy of change, within the coercive strategies of national and local

government, is considered to be a mixture of rational and re-educative

approaches.

A major alternative is the action paradigm which again has a complex

history and embraces a wide range of perspectives so that to bring them

together under one heading is to oversimplify. Nevertheless the lineaments of

the action paradigm are as follows: its metatheory holds that the social world is

nothing other than the construction of the minds of men and hence has no

objective reality “out there”. Social life is sustained
because men, through their
daily interaction and their language, create
intersubjectively shared meanings.

These meanings may be relatively persistent and perhaps
come to have the
appearance of objectivity but, in fact, as men continue to
solve the problems of
their daily lives, they can voluntarily construct new
meanings. It follows then in
strict terms there can be no action theory of organisations
since organisations
are not “objects” but social constructs, and the meanings
attached to them, will
differ according to one’s perspective. The action theorist
is interested in activ
ities within what are conventionally termed organisations
because he is inter
ested in how participants construe organisations and their
processes. He treats
as “problematic” the organisational structure and
administrative processes
which organisational theorists take for granted. As there
can strictly be no
organisation theory, there can likewise be no theory of
management since man
agement is only a constructed label for a group of
organisational processes
dominated by those who have resources of power which tend
to become prob
lematic only if treated phenomenologically. It should
follow that an action
perspective is neutral in relation to change since it is a
paradigm more con
cerned with understanding the world - or, more precisely, understanding

others’ understanding of the world, than with initiating change. Its active con

tribution to the change process is the assumption that social theorists of this

persuasion should work with practitioners at any level of the organisation

helping them to clarify their own perspectives, helping them to question what

had previously been taken for granted which then becomes potentially

amenable to change. Thus it generally encourages an “active” stance on the part

of participants. This sounds rather like the process consultant operating within

the maintenance paradigm but whoever the process consultant is, however

independent of management he may profess to be, ultimately he is concerned

with improving organisational functioning in relation to the goals of manage

ment. The action theorist tends to be orientated towards enabling the lower

participants to perceive the possibility of reconstructing the organisation in M I C R O P O L I T I C S O F E D U C A T I O N A L O R G A N I S A T I O N S

ways alternative to that perceived as “effective” by management. In short,

action theory, like maintenance theory is relative, partial and normative. Yet

there is more potential within the action perspective for focusing on micro

political activities since these are actions which can be
made the strict focus of enquiries and not treated as pathological or deviant activities. 1

What can be termed the radical change paradigm has political activity at its centre. It is concerned with understanding the social world in order to change it in accordance with a set of political beliefs. This perspective is strongly Marxist in orientation. Again, at the risk of great over-simplification the following are some of the main characteristics of this approach: the metatheory may, according to the particular view of Marx taken, share the same view of the world as the maintenance theorists, in that it is taken that there is an objective world out there which is amenable to scientific understanding and control via the manipulation of structures and the socialisation of individuals, or of the action theorists.

Essentially it is not an organisation theory but a broad socio-political theory in which organisations are seen as arenas in which occur the clashes between the prevailing ideology and the alternative radical ideology. Thus the political transformation of organisations is a necessary step towards transforming society.

This is captured in the phrase about “the long march through the institutions” which became prevalent in the late 1960s. Thus there is no management theory
as such, only a theory-in-waiting. Current theories of management are held to be
simply theories supportive of the capitalist hegemony. There are theories about
using “the organisational weapon” in the period of transformation but only when
the transformation occurs can a radical, egalitarian and democratic theory of
organisation – “management” is perhaps a tainted word – emerge. Although this
perspective certainly has political concerns, organisational politics are subsumed
within macropolitics, with micro-political activities which do not obviously con
tribute to the political transformation of the organisation being regarded as
pathological. Approaches to micropolitics
The chief elements of micropolitics: power, coalitions, strategies and interests
have been the focus of studies in a number of social science disciplines. In social
psychology there has been considerable study of interpersonal power particu
larly in group settings. However, the socio-psychological study of organisations
has been largely concerned with problems of leadership and communication and
is clearly located within the maintenance model. Weick (1979) is an exception
to this trend in that he has concerned himself with the “negotiation” of organis
ational order, but the focus has not been directly upon the micropolitical. The
concern of political theorists has been games, choice and coalitions (Brams, 1975; Laver, 1980). They have tended to be concerned with establishing formal theories rather than with understanding political activity in vivo. 2 There are a number of sociological approaches which, though not focusing directly on Politics and Micropolitics, are nevertheless concerned with relevant issues. Of particular significance there is exchange theory which is predicated on the assumption that many aspects of social life are explained in terms of the implicit and explicit bargains struck between groups which, though they may be different in relation to the degree of relative power which each has, necessarily needs to reach an accommodation with the other in order to serve their mutual interests (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964). Other sociological theorists of organisation, particularly Selznick (1951, 1966) and Gouldner (1954a, 1954b) attended to the “dysfunc
tional” elements in organisations which were often the outcome of the pursuits of group interests rather than organisational interests via what we are here terming micropolitics. However, neither has pursued the implications of this in the direction of making micropolitics central to his analysis. Selznick resorted to classical functionalism and although Gouldner was to come
to adopt a radical
view of social institutions, this was developed within a
Marxist rather than a
micropolitical framework.

In decision-making approaches to organisation, Simon’s
(1964) notion of
“bounded rationality” is concerned with the boundary
between rational and non
rational aspects of social behaviour. The “non-rational” –
which we would now,
in these post-phenomenological days, refer to as
“alternative rationality” –
relates to the activities which we have referred to as
micropolitical. However, in
the theories of March and Simon (1958) organisational
analysis remains well
within the maintenance framework in noting these aberrant
behaviours as evid
ence that organisations do not in fact function according
to the rational model.

Three organisational theories which are more directly
concerned with
micropolitics can be noted.

The first is the later work of March who now appears to have
brought what
was earlier considered to be “non-rational behaviour” in
the decision process,
i.e. micropolitics, to the centre of the stage. In
Ambiguity and Choice in Organi
sations (March and Olsen, 1974) he and his colleagues
concentrate less on how
decisions ought to be made if they are to conform to canons
of rationality, than
on how in fact they are made. What is described is how
decisions, which are
rarely the clear cut events usually described, emerge out
of a complexity of
micropolitical activities. They advance what is now their
well-known “garbage
can” model of decision making:

“Although choice opportunities may lead first to the
generation of
decision alternatives, then to an examination of the
consequences of
those alternatives, then to an examination of the
consequences in terms
of objectives, and finally to a decision, such a model is
often a poor
description of what actually happens. In a garbage can
situation, a
decision is an outcome or an interpretation of several
relatively
independent ‘streams’ within an organisation.”

They consider four streams which might go into the “garbage
can”: MICROPOLITICS OF EDUCATIONAL
ORGANISATIONS

Problems: These are the personal problems of participants
as they relate to such
matters as pay, status, promotion, personal relationships,
families and even the
problems of mankind.

Solutions: They reverse the normal view of solutions and
see them as sometimes
preceding problems. They cite the installation of a
computer in an organisation
which may represent a solution to problems not yet conceived. In the educa

tional context one could conceive a new curriculum or a plan for school-focused

in-service training generating new problems rather than solving existing ones.

Choice opportunities: These are occasions such as those when a new member

of staff is to be appointed or where a responsibility allowance is to be alloc

ated which generate behaviour which can be called a decision.

Participants: Individuals come and go and their different attributes will shape

the outcomes which are termed “decisions”.

The rates, patterns of flow and confluence between these four streams shape

certain organisational events which come to be labelled as “decisions”. March

and Olsen write of organisations “running backwards” in the sense that organi

sational events are the outcome of bargaining, negotiating and exchange and

only after they have occurred is their history “re-written” by managers to give

them the appearance of having been the outcome of a rational decision-making

process.

Michel Crozier (1964) has long been interested in how power and influence

operate in organisations and has developed the view that organisational

processes are best understood by focusing not on formal
organisation and power

as a commodity but on the games which individuals and
groups play in order to

solve problems, and in which power is treated as a
bargaining relationship. He

argues for a change in paradigm. Thus the research problem
is to explore how
different systems of games can solve the problems which
organisations face. He

believes that the way forward is to learn more about
current games in all forms

of organisation and the forms of regulation inherent in
these games. This will be

best approached by case and comparative studies at the
present time with the

prospect of formalisation and measurement left until the
future. He has written

(Crozier, 1975): “The dominant paradigm revolved around the
basic question concerning the structure: how contextual
variables determine the basic structural features of an
organisation and how these features command the behaviour
of the members and the performances of the organisation.
The new paradigm emerges first around the idea that the
contextual features of the organisation should not be
considered as variables determining the structure of the
organisation, but as problems to be solved, P O L I T I C S
A N D M I C R O P O L I T I C S

and second around the idea that structure is not the
necessary nodal
point of the organisation, but that the games with their
rational math

emathical features as well as their human parameters will be
a much

more concrete and rich focal point.”

Bacharach and Lawler (1980) set out their concerns as
follows:
“An understanding of organisational politics requires an analysis of power, coalitions and bargaining. The power relationship is the context for political action and encompasses the most basic issues underlying organisational politics. As the primary mechanism through which individuals and subgroups acquire, maintain, and use power, coalitions crystallise and bring to the foreground the conflicting interests of organisational subgroups. Through bargaining, distinct coalitions attempt to achieve their political objectives and protect themselves from encroachments by opposing coalitions. Power, coalitions, and bargaining, therefore, constitute the three basic themes in our theoretical treatise on organisational politics.”

They review the existing literature and argue that in sociological studies there has been too great an emphasis on formal structure and power and that the traditional social psychology of organisations has tended to focus on motivation, leadership and so forth and have thus ignored the political nature of organisations. They therefore focus on the activities of work groups, e.g. departments, interest groups, i.e. groups of actors with common goals which are not necessar
ily coterminous with work groups, and coalitions, i.e. groups of interest groups

who engage in joint actions against other interest groups. On the basis of a
detailed analysis of power, authority, group formation, and bargaining, they
develop a formal theory incorporating over 100 hypotheses.

In sum, there have been a number of approaches to the study of micropolitics,
but at the present time they cannot be said to constitute a coherent body of
theory. The question is whether such a coherence is likely to be achieved and, if
so, what its contribution to the study of educational administration might be.

Empirical studies of micropolitics are extremely rare. Some exceptions are
Thompson (1967) in the US and in this country Pettigrew (1973) and Mangham
(1979) but none of these studies was conducted in educational organisations. The prospects for micropolitical studies
This paper is based on the assumption that a considerable gap exists between the
organisational world which is presented in theory and research and the organisational world which we all experience. This gap is acknowledged by administra
tors who perhaps gain little help from administrative theory because it is not of
their world, or at least it relates to a rather sanitised version of the world in MICRO Politics Of ed uc ational Organisations
which they function. The gap is also increasingly recognised by theoreticians

and researchers who have become somewhat disenchanted with the prevailing

paradigm but are not wholly happy with the action and radical change alternatives. Thus the importance of the micropolitical world is existentially acknowledged.

The question is: can it be captured by the theories and methods of the social sciences and, if so, will what is learnt be of value to practising administrators?

The answer to the first of these questions must remain tentative. There are two basic levels of answer. One relates to the fundamental problem of the social sciences of whether in principle a knowledge of the social world can be attained by the methods of objective enquiry. This is no place to rehearse the arguments yet again, except to note that of the three broad positions: a knowledge of the social world is in principle impossible, that it is possible only through an understanding of the meanings which actors ascribe to situations, and that the social world is in fact, knowable by the procedures of the natural sciences. If we make the assumption that it is, in principle, knowable, then we have to ask how it might be knowable. It could be argued that the micropolitical world is so ideographic,
idiosyncratic, contingent and volatile that in practice it cannot be grasped. It could be further argued that it is indeed of this character but it can be grasped in its particular concrete setting via a detailed case study, but that generalisations are very difficult to achieve in practice. Or it can be argued that the micropolitical world is amenable to study by the methods of the social sciences which permit generalisation.

If one takes the latter position, then two things have to be said. One is that “the real stuff” of micropolitics is particularly elusive. As we have seen, different approaches focus on different components of micropolitics, so the interactive nature of power, coalitions, interests, and strategies is unclear. However, if studies to concentrate on one or other aspects in an effort to clear the way towards formal, testable theory, then the configuration disintegrates. Thus we are left, as we often are in the social sciences, with a choice between case studies providing rich data and formal studies providing – hopefully – generalisable findings. And one inevitably comes to the familiar conclusion that both approaches should proceed, if, indeed, it is worthwhile pursuing at all the study of micropolitics in education. It may be that it is not a viable area of study as a
whole and that its components are better pursued independently.

If one concludes that it is worthwhile getting to grips with the micropolitics of educational organisations, by whatever method, one has to ask whether the outcome is likely to improve the practice of educational administration. Would it, in fact, provide theory-for-understanding or theory-for-improving? It would appear more likely to provide theory-for-understanding. Studies of micropolitics could well bring the area much more into the arena of open discussion, but it isn’t easy to see in what ways this might improve the quality of administration or the quality of life in educational organisations for participants. It is even more difficult to see how the outcome of the study of micropolitics would feature in POLITICAL SCIENCE courses for practising administrators other than as a general mirror-raising component and as theory-for-understanding. In what sense could it contribute to improvement of skills? It could form the basis of various forms of simulation and games, but the degree of transfer from gaming to practical decision-making contexts must be somewhat dubious. And even if it were possible to teach micropolitical skills to practising administrators, this would – to say the least – generate some obvious moral issues.
It is clearly the case that micropolitics is difficult to embrace within the conventional theory, research and training patterns of educational administration since administrative theory is normatively oriented to rationalising order and control and eliminating the alternative world of micropolitics. This paper offers no solutions. As stated at the outset, its purpose has been to put micropolitics on the agenda. Notes

1 Perhaps the best known protagonist of an action or phenomenological approach to educational administration is Greenfield (1975). For a recent interesting exchange between the relative merits of a phenomenological and a flexible system approach see Greenfield (1981), and Willower (1981). More generally on the potential of one action approach see Silverman (1970) and the same writer’s more thoroughgoing phenomenological approach (Silverman and Jones, 1976). For a good review of current organisation theories see Burrell and Morgan (1979).


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POLITICS AND MICROPOLITICS

REAPPRAISAL The problems and prospects of studying the micropolitics in reforming schools Hanne B. Mawhinney


This analytical paper examines the themes and issues of current research and literature on the study of micropolitics in the context of leadership in educational reform. The implications of a dissociation of research and policy making on systemic reform from research on micropolitics are discussed. In particular the problems arising when macro directions meet micro realities are described as a rationale for reexamining what can be learned from the study of micropolitics. I make a case for reexamining some of the conceptual orientations that have been taken including organs.
zational theorizing from control, natural and interpretive systems perspectives. The predominance of an emphasis on conflict rather than consensus in micropolitical studies is noted. I describe the similarity of concerns of micropolitical research with the conceptual challenges confronting those who are rethinking organizational theory who examine problems associated with macro-micro links, and those related to notions of agency and interest. I argue that the conceptual pluralism evident in the range of orientations taken in research has both enriched and limited our understanding of micropolitical effects. As a point of departure for this collection of reflections from academics and school leaders from around the world, I conclude that there is a need to both clarify the conceptual dimensions of micropolitical analyses of schools, and to examine what school leaders involved in reforming schools can tell us about micropolitics. Introduction Among the dialogues running through current research on the organization of schooling, are two focused on the problems and prospects of changing schools that cross and occasionally bump into each other. One dialogue dominates educational research on the systemic requirements of reform.
Themes in this dialogue are captured by the titles of recent articles on North American educational reform such as ‘What is the system in systemic reform?’ (Cohen 1995), ‘Structural reform in educational practice’ (Elmore 1995), and ‘Turning systemic thinking on its head’ (Fullan 1996). The dialogue has been variously labeled: restructuring, re-invention, and more recently, ‘systemic reform’. This most recent version of the dialogue has been preoccupied with orchestrating systemic coherence through: developing unifying visions and goals for all students, creating coherent instructional policies aligned to support common goals, and restructuring the systemic of governance and resource allocation so that the greatest authority and discretion for instructional decisions rest at the school site (O’Day & Smith 1993).

The second dialogue focuses on the micropolitics which swirl in and around schools, often constraining the systemic efforts at changes which challenge taken-for-granted practices. Micropolitics, whether or not addressed explicitly in the dialogue on educational reform, pervade the organizational lives of those involved with schools: students, parents, teachers, administrators and support staff, who must act jointly to respond to the uncertainty
and controversy generated. Micropolitics are inevitable where disagreements emerge over the direction of such action. That is not to say that reformers have explicitly recognized the micropolitical conundrums posed by systemic change efforts. Indeed, although the influence of a systemic vision of reform is evident in current educational policy, observers like Fullan (1996) and Sykes (1996) remind us of the need for continued dialogue on associated problems. They include those micropolitical effects which are associated with the ‘implementation dip’ that occurs when reforms attempt to guide practice. Fullan (1996: 421) argues that ‘there is no reason to assume that the debate about systemic reform has added one iota of clarity to the confusing picture faced by the majority of teachers’ who are overloaded by the continuous stream of planned and unplanned changes which often work at cross purposes in schools. Teachers, students, parents and administrators confront the problem of overcoming the disagreements which inevitably arise over the direction of reform. If the goals of systemic reform are to be achieved, members of the school community must find ways of resolving conflicts which ensure that decisions made command enough respect that they are widely
accepted.

Resolution of controversy is not the only challenge confronting reformers.

Restructuring the organization of schools is not a simple task when reforms generate uncertainty as well as controversy. Structural alignments will only occur, according to Fullan (1996: 421) ‘when greater clarity and coherence are achieved in the minds of the majority of teachers’ who experience reforms as fragmented, disjointed and incoherent changes. Sykes (1996: 467) similarly observes that ‘schools and classrooms are the vessels into which a torrent of new ideas pour . . . [and] teachers must shift through and select among the many POLICIES AND MICROPOLICIES competing ideas for change’. Ideas about systemic reform comprised of an amalgam of critiques of current practice and implication drawn from research on school change efforts, may work well ‘in the ongoing rhetorical battle over American education’, however, they may be of little help as guides to practice for teachers.

In recent years research into the micropolitics of life in schools confronting change, has provided some insight into the forces at play when macro initiatives are buffeted by micro realities. Unlike the reformers of schooling currently
engaged in direct and often public dialogue on the merits of different avenues to promote systemic change, those who have sought to speak truth to the power of organizational micropolitics have done so largely in monologues. As a result the distillation of conceptual problems and prospects we see in the debates over the merits of systemic reform has not occurred in micropolitical analyses of schooling. Sticky problems such as the organizational tensions generated in schools as macro-micro forces collide, have not been adequately addressed. The conceptual boundaries set out by those who have undertaken micropolitical analyses of schools are not clear, rather they have encompassed almost any phenomenon which could be construed as political. In her review of the state of micropolitics of education research, Malen (1995: 159) was prompted to observe: ‘if micro politics is about much ado about everything, is it much ado about anything?’ Conceptual diversity: embedding frameworks of micropolitical lenses Micropolitical research has emerged as one of the new thrusts in understanding the complexities of organizational life in schools. During the past decade researchers in the UK (Hoyle 1986; Ball 1987), Canada (Townsend 1990), and the US (Blase 1991; Iannaccone 1991; Marshall & Scribner 1991; Willower 1991; Anderson & Herr 1993; Bacharach & Mundell 1993;
Lindle 1994; Blase & Anderson 1995; Malen 1995) have explored the conceptual dimensions of a micropolitical lens for analyzing school administration. The micropolitical perspective was first applied to educational organizations by Iannaccone (1975) who examined the interactions of administrators, teachers and students in California schools in the early 1970s. Iannaccone defined micropolitics as being concerned with the interaction and political ideologies of social systems of teachers, administrators and pupils within school buildings. These may be viewed as internal organizational subsystems. Micropolitical analysis is also concerned with external system issues such as those arising in the interaction between professional and lay subsystems.

Like others who have followed a micropolitical line of analysis of schools in the two decades since he first called attention to this thrust, Iannaccone was influenced by developments in organizational thinking. We find in current research on micropolitics in education traces of at least four different models that have captured the attention of theorists. Although various metaphors have been attributed to them, they are widely recognized as depicting organizations as control systems, natural systems, political systems or interpretive
systems. For example, the

view of organizations as political systems implied in Iannaccone's definition of micropolitics emerged in the 1960s in studies of public administration and manage

ment. At that time theorists began to rethink the robustness of the models of organi

zations as control systems, or as natural systems which dominated thinking about organizational questions (Hault & Walcott 1990). The control systems model which we can find traces of in current micropolitical analyses of schooling, emphasizes authority but neglects power in organizations. Organizations, are seen as rational tools for achieving maximum predictability of actions and outcomes.

Challenges to this view of organizations as largely self-reliant, closed and 'mechanistic' systems has come from those who attribute 'organic' features similar to those characterizing natural systems. The natural systems model which underscores the imperative of organizational survival in a larger environ

ment can be found framing current micropolitical research on the responsiveness of schools to imperatives to reform. It depicts environmental forces as shaping goals, structures and activities in a way which stresses the functional inter-rela

edness and harmony within organizations.

Both control and natural systems models posit a highly
integrated view of organizations where questions of human purpose, and of conflicting goals arising from the exercise of that purpose are largely ignored. In recent years both models have been criticized as being biased toward technical rationality and failing to account for complexity, instability and conflict within organizations.

Critics conclude that rational control and natural systems models tend to ignore the values, ideologies, choices, goals, interests, expertise, history and motivation of individuals in organizations.

In previous decades these limitations led organizational theorists like Burns (1961) to call for a new focus on organizations as political systems. Burns was one of the first organizational theorists to argue against consensus models of organizations and to propose examining both co-operative and conflictual behaviour. He viewed political behaviour as a central impetus for social change in organizations. Other theorists like Cyert and March (1963) examined decision-making in organizations and found that it occurred within a framework of disparate goals where coalitions may emerge to achieve political ends. Similarly Pettigrew (1973) suggested that decision making can’t be explained without understanding political power and the strategies
used by individuals and
groups to gain such power. The tension between individual
and collective strat
egies were examined by Mangham (1979), who concluded that opportunities for
individuals to exercise strategic choice will inevitably create conditions of goal
conflict within organizations. Although negotiation among individuals to reach
goal consensus will call forth techniques of politics, such as persuasion and bar
gaining, Mangham argued that these strategies could ultimately be the impetus
for the creation of shared meaning among individuals and groups within organi
zations. POLITICS AND MICROPOLITICS

In recent years other organizational theorists have acknowledged the role of
dialogue, debate, and coalition formation in forging a sense of collective
meaning among organizational members. These notions have been elaborated by
Bacharach and Lawler (1980) who have argued that victory in debates generally
goes to the strongest coalition. This line of micropolitical organizational theoriz
ing has had an important influence on educational researchers. The approach
taken by Bacharach and Lawler is distinguished by an emphasis on group-level
coalition politics over individual action, and particularly by the ‘tactical use of
power to retain or obtain control of real or symbolic
resources’ (1980: 1). Their structural perspective focuses on systems of authority and control carried in various organizational roles, which influence the outcome of bargaining. They conceptualize organizations as political bargaining systems dominated by net works of coalitions of stakeholders all seeking to further their partisan interests.

Furthermore, Bacharach and Lawler suggest that the tactical use of power by coalitions to retain or gain control of real or symbolic resources is fundamental to the politics that occurs in organizations. Similarly Pfeffer (1981: 31) argues that organizations can be seen as political arenas where ‘shifting coalitions and interest groups’ become winners and losers in their struggle for power and come into conflict.

Bacharach and Mundell (1993) extended this pluralist perspective into their analysis of organizational politics of school life. Their explicitly pluralist orientation seeks to explain the conditions which provoke interest groups to mobilize, to act separately, or to form coalitions in order to achieve a desired organizational outcome. Power, from this pluralist perspective is manifest through the overt actions of coalitions seeking to influence decisions. Political action involves the acquisition and exercise of influence,
authority, control and power.

Other researchers have taken a less pluralist orientation in their use of the political arenas model to analyze the micropolitics of life in schools. These ana

lysts question whether all organizations reflect a plurality of interests. They argue instead that the expectation of pluralism common in many North Amer

ican efforts to apply a political model of organizations to the study of school micropolitics obscures larger truths, such as the fundamental class cleavage between management and labor. Ball (1987), for example, views schools as arenas for struggle rife with conflicts because they are poorly coordinated and ideologically diverse arenas of conflicting interests.

This more critical perspective to organizational analysis is found in the inter

pretive approaches to organizational analysis. Although several interpretive approaches found in micropolitical research in education have in common a focus on an actor’s perspective, they have taken different orientations toward the nature of cultural systems in organizations. Some interpretive approaches view organizational cultures as integrated entities. These approaches emphasize processes of gaining organization-wide consensus through developing shared values and cognitions. The assumption that members of an
organization can share the same taken-for-granted interpretations has typically been adopted by those focusing on the role of leaders and managers in typifying policy, inducing commitment to it, building organizational community and, thus, coherence.

Other interpretative orientations acknowledge the lack of consensus that commonly exists across organization’s sectors. Their focus is on the conflicting cultural understandings of different subsystems of actors within organizations.

Discrepancies among these understandings leads researchers taking this orientation to use a critical-conflict perspective to analyze their findings. They share this tendency with those who adopt a third interpretive orientation, one which embraces ambiguity as the endemic condition in all organizational cultures.

Whereas the unity view of interpretive systems assumes consensus is the fundamental order in organizations, the ambiguity view sees consensus as fluctuating across issues. This negotiated order view assumes that organizational actors perceive structures as defining their lived experiences. Anderson and Herr (1992)

take this perspective in arguing that the theme of student invisibility: . . . has become a popular metaphor in educational writing as more researchers are viewing schools as consisting of multiple realities in which some realities are ‘defined out’ of the dominant social construction. (59)
While Anderson and Herr (1992) are correct in observing that educational research has taken an interpretive turn in recent years, it is also the case that micropolitical analyses have been particularly eclectic in their conceptual borrowings. Organizational theorizing from control, natural and interpretive systems perspectives and cross-perspective dialogue and debate has enriched the body of literature from which educational analysts interested in the organizational dynamics of schools are now able to draw. Educational analysts have taken advantage of the diversity offered by these conceptual perspectives to such an extent that those who have examined the state of micropolitical research conclude that it is currently best described as a ‘disparate field of inquiry’ where ‘conceptual boundaries and distinctive features await definition’ (Malen 1995: 159). Indeed, the accumulated micropolitical research, best characterized by a conceptual pluralism framed from diverse perspectives, offers insights on interrelationships among dimensions of organizational structures, decisions, sources of power, goals, values, purposes and strategies. Marshall and Scribner (1991: 350-353) capture this diversity in their analysis of themes found in current research on dimensions of micropolitics of school administration. They identify
seven focuses in micropolitical research. One common focus of research is on
the ideologies and values of subsystems of teachers and administrators in
schools. Other micropolitical studies examine the negotiations of boundaries and
turf between administrators and teachers. A third theme in micropolitical studies
is that school site actors often assert bureaucratic rationality for political ends. A
fourth theme in micropolitical studies is that street-level bureaucrats such as teachers often revise and remake policy during implementation to fit their site.
Studies also document the mobilization of bias in organizational life. Bias is
often taken for granted or ignored. Often the dilemmas arising from conflicts
among the common goals of education—equity, choice, efficiency and quality
are subverted by micropolitical processes. Perhaps the most powerful form of
mobilization of bias occurs through reality creation in organizations. Those who
have the power to determine which issues and questions are seen as relevant and
critical and which will be viewed as irrelevant and illogical play the most
powerful micropolitical games. Finally, micropolitical studies document the pri
vatization of conflict within the school walls, or within one subgroup on the site.
Research on these dimensions of the micropolitics of school life have given us a new understanding of organizational dynamics. The problem is that these insights are weakened by their dissociation from each other and from the developments in the broader field of organizational theorizing. The result is an accumulation of ad hoc analyses of individual cases of micropolitics from unique perspectives that do not generate much overall theoretical insight into organizations or tell us a great deal about how to inform policy-related thinking about systemic reform. In order to address these limitations, micropolitical analysts must, at the very least, lay out the model of organizations and the assumptions which frame their research. This will not in itself do a great deal to inform problems of systemic reform unless researchers also cut to the core of the organizational dilemmas posed by restructuring proposals and efforts. In the interest of responding to these challenges I turn now to discuss two of the problems bedeviling systemic reformers which could be informed by micropolitical analyses: the problem of macro intents and micro realities, and the problem of agency and interest. Revisiting the problem of macro perspectives and micro realities.

Putting aside the issue of perspective diversity, micropolitical research has been
largely framed outside the dialogue on reform which dominates educational dis
course in academic and policymaking arenas. The problem of reforming the
organization of schools taken up in these arenas has taken a decidedly systemic
orientation (see O’Day & Smith 1993; Cohen 1995; Elmore 1995; Fullan 1996)
which has been largely set aside by current micropolitical research in education.
The general abstraction of micropolitical analyses from the larger and more
dominant dialogue on educational reform in North America has not gone unno
ticed by critics. Townsend (1990), for example, challenged the robustness of a
micro analysis of political phenomena divorced from the macro forces which
frame demands for far-reaching reforms of schooling. Viewed from the systemic
perspective which has dominated politics of education scholarship in North
America, Townsend’s criticism applies to much of the micropolitical research
that has been published in recent years. R E A P P R A I S
A L
Similar issues are raised by Malen (1995) in her review of the state of
micropolitical research. Malen captures the extent of the unresolved conceptual
problems this poses. She concludes that questions about macro-micro political
tensions remain unanswered. She asks of micropolitics: How
does it differ from macropolitics? Or does it? Is ‘micropolitics’ defined by the size of the arena? The level of the system? (159)

Malen’s question deserves our attention, because we know from the past decades of research that micropolitics is not wholly concerned with internal politiking that occurs within organizations. It also focuses on the interaction of organizations with their environments. Micropolitical analyses have not always assumed a deterministic stance, rather many depict organizations as manipulating and influencing their environments. At the same time, as Townsend (1990) points out, micropolitical research has tended to focus on the local level, some times emphasizing teachers’ conflicts to the exclusion of the political tradeoffs among larger political and societal purposes. Other studies confirm that macro level factors (or factors external to schools), significantly influence the micropolitical character of schools (Blase 1991). The impact of formal legislation on school-based structures, the impact of district level policy mandates on the relationships among teachers, the impact of community values and beliefs expressed through parental demands on the school, the influence of school district ideology on principal behaviours, and the impact of community demographics on the interactions between administrators
and teachers documented in many studies show how external influences impinge on school micropolitics. The problem of agency and interest Despite the recognition of macro forces, the nature of macro-micro links are not well understood. These links pose a conceptual challenge for researchers seeking to understand the micropolitics of organizational life in schools. Educational analysts are not alone in examining this problem. The concern forms the basis of the notions of agency and interest that cut across conceptual perspectives as diverse as those taken by organizational ecologists like Aldrich (1992), and those who follow Foucault’s (1979) post-structural frame of analysis of governmentality and the problem of the micro dimensions of power. These approaches set quite different directions for analysts of the micropolitics of educational reform. Macro-micro links pose a problem for organizational theorists like Aldrich (1992) who are struggling to define the levels of analysis of organizational change. Aldrich posits a nested system where the units of analysis are the constituent components and the agents of change. He suggests that: Politics and Micropolitics The types of relations between units that are relevant to social change differ across levels: at the group level, we examine...
relations between

individuals; at the organizational level, relations between
groups; at the

population level, interorganizational relations; and at the
community

level, relations between populations . . . Agency, then
arises from the

collective actions of interested parties (individuals,
groups, organi

zations, populations) at each level. (29)

Those who have taken up Foucault’s (1980) direction offer a
contrasting view

of collective action, one that depicts power as shifting,
inherently unstable

expressions of relations evident in networks and alliances.
This view is captured

by the notion of governmentality, and implies that there is
no discontinuity

between the macro and the micro practices of power. In this
context the concept

of governmentality, means ‘something like a form of
activity designed to guide,
or to shape or to affect, or to change the conduct of some
person or persons’

(Marshall 1995: 373). The dissolution of macro-micro
discontinuities suggested

by Foucault offers a view of power operating through a set
of technologies and

mechanisms rather than through levels: ‘it is diffused
throughout society’ (Fiske
1993: 11). Conceptions of micropolitics focus more directly
on strategic dimen

sions of power when people are viewed as social forces, as
consisting of ‘varied
and changing social allegiances’ (11). Of course this
notion is not new. Machi
avelli has a great deal of offer those who take this view
of social interactions. Problems in studying the
micropolitics of organization of schools

The various perspectives on the link between macro-micro
forces raise some of

the emerging problems defining the nature of school
organization. The models

of organization which have informed our understanding of
micropolitical phe

nomenon reflect two basic orientations. One sees
organizations as ‘social
systems sustained by the roles allocated to their
participants’, and the second
views organizations as ‘associations of self interested
parties, sustained by the

reward the participants derive from their association with
the organization’

(Aldrich 1992: 27). These views are not mutually exclusive, but they do reflect

some of the themes we find in reform proposals, and in micropolitical analyses.

Current dialogues on systemic reform illustrate the
embedded assumptions

about the nature of organizations. We can find them in the
challenges I noted at the

beginning of this article to creating coherence faced by
systemic reformers who

call for structural alignments to enhance the capacity for
school change. The prob

lematic issue of this macro reform perspective encountering
micro realities has
been a preoccupation of educational policy analysts at least since the Rand Change Agent study first concluded that local implementation choices dominate outcomes, and that what matters most to macro policy outcomes are local capacity and will of teachers. In a retrospective analysis of the Rand Change Agent study which anticipated the themes in current dialogue on systemic reform, McLaughlin (1990: 13) affirms the earlier finding that the presence of teacher motivation to embrace policy objectives ‘is essential in the generation of the effort and energy necessary for a successful project’. McLaughlin concludes, however, that the motivation and will of individual teachers is significantly constrained by local level capacity and variability and by organizational micropolitics. Nevertheless, like reformers relying on a more systemic than associative model, she views school organizations as relatively coherent, stable entities. Like others sharing this orientation, she emphasizes socialization and other processes that make the transmission of shared meaning easier. For example, McLaughlin argues that factors which enable changing teaching practices are engendered through decidedly micro-level systemic conditions: . . . productive collegial relations, organizational structures that promote open communication and feedback, and leadership that ‘manages’ opportunities for professional growth and nurtures norms of individual
Many of those who have taken up the analysis of micropolitics of schools in recent years would find the assumption of stability and coherence problematic.

Their concern lies more with issues of agency and interest, and with questions such as: Who or what is responsible, and who benefits? These are concerns not only of researchers like Bacharach and Mundell (1993), who adopt a pluralist orientation to micropolitics, but also of those who have taken an interpretive approach. Interpretive analyses, based on conceptions of organizations as associations of self-interested parties, recognize that different, and conflicting views on what constitutes legitimate action often coexist. Micropolitics reflects the organizational dynamics that occur in schools where conflicting views exist for the legitimate direction of change.

Blase (1991) suggests, for example, that micropolitics is concerned with power and how people use it to influence others and to protect themselves. Power relationships are established by individuals and groups to manage potential or real conflict and to enforce a dominant agenda of action, and to maintain order and regulate behaviour both formally and informally through influence and authority. Defined from an associative view of
organizations, micropolitics is about conflict, and how people compete to get what they want in the face of scarce resources. Conflict arises when groups and individuals seek social domination. Some theorists have examined the darker side of organizational life, by studying the non-sanctioned means used to gain power. Others like Hoyle (1988) emphasized the strategies adopted by individuals and groups to use authority and influence to fulfill their interests. In many studies micropolitics focuses on competition for support of a coalition’s position through strategies such as persuasion, compromise, bargaining, and destabilization. In Townsend’s (1990: 200) words micropolitics is ultimately about the ‘conflictive interests that swirl around schools’.

This view of organizations as associations of self-interested parties does not deny the potential to attain a more integrative state. Many agree that there is also a need to broaden the focus of inquiry into the micropolitics of school life from the current extensive emphasis on conflict to the exclusion of consensus. Blase (1991) observes, for example, that micropolitics is also about cooperation, and how people build support to achieve their ends. Townsend (1990) calls for a new
micropolitical research agenda that recognizes that cooperation is as important as conflict. This research agenda would focus on the nature of both in the context of choice and control, state and class. It would examine both power for coordinating collective purposes, and power as individual coercion. Others support this research agenda by reminding us that it is really a refocus on the traditional thrusts taken in micropolitical research on school administration which examine power, control, ideologies, interests, conflicts, consensus and negotiation (Willower 1991). Conclusion: organizational theory in the postmodern era.

Problems of agency and interest and macro-micro links are among the bundle of conceptual challenges faced by those who are rethinking organizational theory.

In a postmodern era marked by a move away from orthodox consensus on the definition of an organization, and on the nature of the practice of organizational analysis, this thinking is characterized by the pluralistic diversity we see in research on the micropolitics of schools. Its diversity carries the potential for diffusing the kind of focused dialogue among researchers needed to enhance our understanding of the effects of current initiatives to reform the deep structures of schooling. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that we can return to the unitary construc
tion of organizational problems of earlier eras.
The challenges to the rational/systems orthodoxy are part of a broader recognition that the wide range of organizational forms emerging cannot be accommodated within this model. The turn to micropolitical analysis can be seen as part of a growing interest in social rationalities and the power struggles through which they are formulated, implemented and contested. This interest further signals a shift in emphasis from the earlier study of organizational forms towards a concern with 'the dynamics of change and the “logics” through which it proceeds' (Reed 1992: 7). The challenge cannot be met by only refining Weberian conceptions of a logic of action as Bacharach and Mundell (1993) have done. Researchers of micropolitical phenomenon must grapple with the discontinuities between organizational perspectives which stress the logic of institutional change and those which emphasize the centrality of social construction. As Gergen (1992) points out in his exploration of organizational theory in the postmodern context of diversity, plurality, uncertainty and fragmentation, micropolitics can only have conceptual meaning for the organizational analysis of schools if it allows us to simultaneously challenge the taken-for-granted and open new departures for action.
It remains to be seen whether or not the path of micropolitical analysis of school life first set out in the 1970s by students of politics within organizations like Iannaccone (1975) allows us to do either. Despite current educational research activity there is little consensus about what defines phenomena as uniquely micropolitical and distinct from those which are ‘macropolitical’. The unit of analysis used in much micropolitical research is underspecified and conceptually weak. Much that is now defined as specifically ‘micropolitical’ is hardly distinguishable as uniquely ‘political’ human interaction.

These observations suggest that although the study of micropolitics is an emergent enterprise, it is also one that draws from some of the familiar concerns of educational leadership and management. What remains unclear are the implications of micropolitical analyses of schools for proposal to reform schools. In order to inform policymaking to restructure schools, we need to clarify the conceptual dimensions of a micropolitical inquiry. As Townsend (1990: 220) concludes such a goal is also grounded in the clarification of a normative framework ‘that takes a stand on basic issues about how schools should work—both within themselves and in relation to the
larger and increas

ingly politicized environment in which they exist’.

At the same time, we also need to examine what the study of micropolitics con

tributes to the practice of leadership in reforming schools. In the following sec

tions we do so from the perspectives of academics and school leaders in Canada, UK, Australia and the US. The themes and issues raised by these contributors are discussed in a concluding section by Eric Hoyle, whose important work in the 1980s has helped set the direction for the research on micropolitics that I have reviewed in this introduction. We hope that our reflections on the study micropol


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THEORY 22 EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT Towards a research agenda Ray Bolam

Source: Tony Bush, Les Bell, Ray Bolam, Ron Glatter and Peter Ribbins (eds), Educational Man-

The tasks of re-thinking and reviewing research in this field from a British perspect-
ive have been carried out at roughly ten year intervals since the 1960s when Baron

and Taylor (1969) edited what proved to be a seminal text on educational admin-
istration and the social sciences. Subsequently, Baron (1980) produced a major survey
ed the first book on British research in education

management and policy follow

the 1988 BEMAS research conference. Now, ten years on, the papers from the

1997–98 ESRC Seminar Series, many of which are in the present book or the special

issue of the journal Educational Management and Administration, confirmed that,

although we have undoubtedly moved on a great deal, we continue to wrestle with

several important issues which have been of concern from the outset.

The next part of this chapter attempts to deal with, if not resolve, some of

these apparently intractable dilemmas by offering a series of propositions about

the broad field of educational administration together with some proposals for

the theoretical part of a research agenda. It should also be read as an attempt at

ground-clearing for the third part which proposes a thematic framework for a

research agenda and priorities on school leadership with particular reference to

teaching and learning. The conclusion outlines some strategic ideas about how

this agenda should be carried forward. Contributions to the ESRC Seminar

Series are used to illustrate the argument. 2. Towards a conceptual map

The tasks of building a research agenda and identifying priorities would be
greatly facilitated by easy access to a conceptual map. Unfortunately no such
map exists at present, in part because its potential scope is so broad. What
follows is a contribution to the important meta-task of developing this map, a
task which will have to be ongoing to take account of contextual changes. What’s in a name?

First, we should recognise and act upon the fact that three terms - educational
management, leadership and administration - are in common usage and that the
differences between them are far from clear, still less agreed. My own view is

that the case for defining administration as the superordinate category continues
to have considerable pragmatic force: it is consistent with the conceptualisation
and terminology which are widely accepted internationally; it enables us to
adopt a broader concept of the field, and thus to embrace policy studies as well
as institutional management; and it enables us to be inclusive rather than exclu
ive in building a research agenda. In adopting this approach, however, we ought
always to make clear which aspect of the field is under scrutiny at any one time
by offering a stipulative definition from the outset.

So, in this paper I use ‘educational administration’ in a broad, generic sense
to cover educational policy, leadership and management activities at all levels; I
I take 'educational leadership' to have at its core the responsibility for policy formulation and, where appropriate, organisational transformation; I take 'educational management' to refer to an executive function for carrying out agreed policy; finally, I assume that leaders normally also have some management responsibilities and that both leaders and managers must take due account of their governing body and wider context. 

What is it? 

Second, I regard educational administration as a field of study and not a discipline. Like teaching and teacher education, it is essentially a practical activity and, in deciding how it should be studied and researched, we may profitably adapt the approach used by Hirst (1966) who argued convincingly that education does not have the logical characteristics of a discipline; rather, it is a field of study which draws upon several forms of knowledge and a range of disciplines. Thus, I take educational administration to be a field of study which draws upon several disciplines, mainly but not exclusively in the social sciences (e.g. sociology, political science, philosophy, history, law and psychology), and forms of knowledge (e.g. economics, general management studies, education and training and andragogy).
A second ongoing meta-task is to evaluate the usefulness of each of these disciplines and forms of knowledge for researching and understanding specific problems in educational administration. Why do it?

Third, we need to address some of the dilemmas and tensions around the question: what are the fundamental purposes of study and research in educational administration? Some of these have arisen because, in discussion, we often conflate and confuse our own roles and activities as members of a scholarly community whose purposes include, but are not confined to, research. I suggest that we engage in four separate projects, each with its distinctive rationale, mode of working and target audiences.

a. The ‘knowledge for understanding’ project

The immediate aim of this project is to understand the nature and processes of educational administration, via theory building and basic research. Researchers, and lecturers, in this tradition use mainly social science-based, theory and research methodology to describe, analyse, explain and criticise. Researchers are usually funded by a research council or their own university. Typical questions are: what happens and why; and what are the most appropriate theories and methodologies for answering such questions? The outcomes are targeted mainly
at peers, i.e. other theoretical researchers, applied
researchers and lecturers, and
outcomes are communicated mainly in reports for the funding
agency and via
articles in international, refereed journals, academic
books and also, to a lesser
extent, in professional journals and books. Although the
ultimate aim may be to
improve educational administration, this aim is not always
‘up front’ and, in any
case could only be achieved indirectly by working through
other people via the
other projects. Lecturers engaged in this project design
and teach on ‘tradi
tional’, social science-based Masters and Doctoral
programmes. The aim of a
distinctive sub-group is to offer a critique of practice
and policy: The point of theory and of intellectual
endeavour in the social sciences should be, in Foucault’s
words, ‘to sap power’, to engage in struggle, to reveal and
undermine what is most invisible and insidious in
prevailing practices. (Ball, 1995, p. 267) b. The
‘knowledge for action’ project

The immediate aim here is to inform policy-makers and
practitioners about the
nature, processes and effectiveness of educational
administration in order to promote
its improvement. Researchers in this tradition are often
funded by a government
agency, may be based in a university and pursue various
forms of applied research
including survey, development, and evaluation research.
They, too, describe, analyse
and explain for understanding but, in addition, make
evaluative judgements and
recommendations for action. Typical questions are: how effective are various inter
ventions and which one is most appropriate to the problem in hand?. Their proxi
mate aim is usually to improve educational administration by working through
others. Hence, the outcomes are targeted mainly at policy-makers and educational
administrators, at other ‘knowledge for action’ researchers and lecturers and at
‘instrumentalists’. Lecturers engaged in this project design and teach on ‘traditional’
and ‘new’ Masters and Doctoral programmes and on some continuing professional
development (CPD) courses. Written outcomes are communicated in technical and
evaluation reports and via articles in professional journals and books. c. The ‘instrumentalist’ project

The immediate aim of this project is to improve the practice and effectiveness of
education managers via training and consultancy, often by providing structured
schemes and practical instruments or methods. Examples include preparatory
and training schemes for headteachers, often competency-based; individual
focused methods like mentoring and coaching; organisation-focused consultan
cies (e.g. Total Quality Management and Investors in People); and some ‘new’
Masters programmes, especially those with a work-based component. These
training and consultancy activities are usually funded by the participants or clients themselves or by their employers. They are directly aimed at change for improvement, often utilise practitioners’ experience, possibly supplemented by,

but not usually rooted in, theory and research which is selected from a range of sources (e.g. social science, industrial management training, occupational psychology, adult learning), and concentrate on activities for the development and enhancement of participants’ skills. A typical question is: how can this be improved? But, equally typically, it is often implicitly assumed that the trainers and consultants already have an acceptable answer to this question and so they offer prescriptive solutions, instruments or methods from the outset. The activities are targeted directly at practitioners although some outcomes, including ‘training trainers’ courses and published accounts in professional journals and books, may be targeted at other trainers and consultants.

d. The ‘reflexive action’ project

The immediate aim of those engaged in this project is to improve their own, their team’s or their organisation’s, performance and effectiveness via action research, survey feedback, self-evaluation for school improvement, team building and other variants on experiential learning, reflective practice, organisation development and
evidence-based practice. It is, in many ways, similar to the ‘instrumentalist’

project with which it shares several characteristics. Its distinctive status derives

from the fact that it is self-directed and that it has now developed its own body of

theories and procedures, not always entirely compatible one with another (e.g.

Kolb, 1975; Schon, 1987; Schmuck and Runkel, 1985; Argyris et al., 1985; T H E O R Y

Elliott, 1991), although many of its exponents operate atheoretically and without

incorporating systematic research in their action processes. Moreover, it is seen as

being consistent with current initiatives to promote evidence-based practice in

classroom teaching and, by extension, in school management (Cordingley,

Chapter 17) although not by everyone (vide Eraut, Chapter 9).

These distinctions and labels are unavoidably arbitrary but the four ideal

typical projects and the typology should be judged on the basis of their utility as a

heuristic. Most members of the educational administration academic community

probably engage in more than one of the projects. However, each project has its

own rationale and involves different activities and role requirements. The first two

projects clearly involve basic and applied research, mainly social science-based,

whereas the third does not. The fourth project is more
problematic. Where it is implemented in an instrumentalist fashion, then it does not constitute a research activity; where it is theory-based, rigorous and open to peer scrutiny, then it does.

Moreover, it also offers considerable potential for innovative research.

I suggest that research in educational administration is mainly located within the ‘knowledge for understanding’ (or basic) and ‘knowledge for action’ (or applied) projects. I propose, further, that we should continue to work on critical studies of a policy sociology kind but that, in addition, greater emphasis should be given to ‘knowledge for action’ research which focuses on activities within the instrumentalist and reflexive action projects and that we should explore the potential of research within the reflexive action project itself. These proposed priorities are unexceptionable if, as researchers, we are content to seek funding from a range of agencies. However, a great deal of work will be needed if proposals in the ‘knowledge for action’ and the ‘reflexive action’ projects are to be funded by the hitherto unreceptive, Economic and Social Research Council, and thus to carry weight in the Research Assessment Exercise as it is currently structured. iv Theory for practice or theory for research?

We ought also to be clearer about the different purposes of theory in the practice
of educational administration on the one hand, and in research into educational administration on the other. Following Aristotle, Hodgkinson (1991) distinguished between three modes of action: theoria, theory which abstracts and generalizes by induction, deduction and hypothesis; techne, technique or technology which applies and interacts with theory; praxis, purposeful, ethical action in a political context. He went on: Praxis . . . clearly applies to all administration . . . [and] . . . suggests the conscious, reflective intentional action of man as opposed to mere reflex or mechanical responses to stimuli. (p. 43) and concluded that praxis is at the core of educational administration. 

Researchers engaged in the first two 'projects' are clearly concerned with theoria. They see theory as an essential foundation for, and as integral to, the research process. Those engaged in the instrumentalist project are concerned with techne and so, too, are practitioners like heads, inspectors and key decision makers. They take an essentially pragmatic view of theory: they want it to inform, and preferably to underpin, practice and, by extension, they want research findings to fulfil the same purposes. Those engaged in the reflexive action project are involved in praxis and, like the instrumentalists, take a pragmatic view of theory.
Thus, it is unsurprising that, although organisation and leadership theories designed for theoria or research purposes have deepened our understanding,

they have provided little practical help either for school managers or their train ers (vide Hoyle, 1986). A research agenda should, therefore, address these two parallel problems regarding the role of theory by:

• dealing with the continuing fall-out from the presumed failure of the so-called ‘New Movement’ which sought to use positivist social science as the basis for research and practice in educational administration (vide Griffiths, 1988; Strain, 1998). This would require more explicit consideration of the appropriateness for research in educational administration of particular paradigms (e.g. positivist or interpretive) and their implications for research design and methodology, using, I suggest, ‘fitness for purpose’ as the main criterion;

• exploring the role of different types of theory in the instrumentalist and reflexive action projects, particularly in relation to evidence-based practice. Levels and topics

A conceptual map of educational administration would also explicate two further components:

• Potential levels or units of analysis, for example: individual roles (e.g. teacher/lecturer, head of department, headteacher/principal/vice-chancellor); organisations (e.g. pre-school, nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, independent schools, adult and community education, youth and careers services, tertiary and FE colleges, universities); organisational subunits (e.g. departments and teams); local education authorities and agencies; unions and professional associations; consultants and private agencies; national agencies (e.g. DfEE/WO/DENI, Ofsted/ OHMCI/NII); political parties and politicians; international organisations and agencies (e.g. OECD; World Bank, EU).

• Major topics, topic areas and research questions, for
example: the impact on educational leadership and management of personal factors (e.g. values; gender; training); major policy changes (e.g. the national curriculum, assessment, inspection, LMS, centralisation and ‘new managerialism’); contextual developments (e.g. work and labour markets; governance and accountability within a democratic context; social exclusion, inclusion and justice); changing strategic tasks (e.g. the management of induction, CPD, performance management and the use of value-added data). vi Comparative studies and alternative futures

Finally, the map would highlight the possibilities for informing research and practice in educational administration via comparative studies across countries, sectors and alternative futures. Thus, McEwen (1997) reported that because of administrative tasks generated by marketisation and other Northern Ireland reforms, secondary headteachers had difficulty in exercising their professional knowledge and skills, were often reluctant to delegate major leadership tasks and concentrated on low and middle order priority tasks. Crowther et al. (1997) reviewed research on educational leadership and site-based management in Australia, concluding that efforts to re-conceptualise leadership must take account of the complexity of site-based management and the maturity of the teaching profession in any one country. Karstanje (see Chapter 3) pointed to increasing de
centralisation in many European countries, especially those in the former Soviet bloc, as the major influence on the role and training needs of school leaders and
outlined a comparative analytic framework, based on three degrees of centralisation and regulation, for researching the national and local contexts within which school headteachers in various European countries operate. Hart (1999)

reviewed changes in the USA in the nature of the knowledge base and the preparation of educational leaders, concluding that we could learn from each other in clarifying and re-defining theory and re-assessing its utility for research and practice. The Seminars also included contributions focused on experience in other sectors, notably further education (FE) colleges, higher education institutions (HEIs) and private sector business which, albeit incidentally, illuminated issues in school management. Wallace (see Chapter 10) combined two theoretical perspectives - cultural and political - to analyse and explain the management strategies used by an LEA in a major reorganisation of its schools, together with the associated staff re-deployment, across the authority. Bottery (1999) argued that research should aim to help us understand and deal with future global challenges to educational management. 3. A framework for research in educational leadership

It is against the background of this embryonic conceptual map that the following
framework for a research agenda is proposed. It deals with only one part of the field, focusing exclusively on educational leadership and management in leadership and management in primary and secondary schools and, more specifically, on the management of teaching and learning, or pedagogy. It is organised under three thematic headings. i The management of teaching and learning

The management of school improvement and, more directly, of teaching and learning, emerged as key themes in the Seminars. Ouston (1999) was doubtful as to whether the emphasis on the role of the headteacher in school effectiveness and school improvement was warranted whereas Hallinger and Heck (see Chapter 14) argued that principals do contribute to student achievement, that the effect is indirect and small, though statistically significant, concluding that future research should concentrate on explaining the means whereby principals exert such influence.

Turner and Bolam (1998) used a provisional model, based on contingency theory, to analyse the role of heads of subject departments in improving teaching and learning in secondary schools, together with the factors which influence them.

Cordingley (see Chapter 17) used her central concept of 'teaching as evidence
based practice’ to pose a series of research questions about the role of education managers in promoting it, and proposed that education managers, too, ought to engage in evidence-based practice. She summarised her arguments thus: current priorities for the education management research agenda should be shaped by and accede priority to work which takes pedagogy as the starting point and which explores the capacity of education management and leadership to contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning. (p. 228)

As a priority, the research agenda should focus on the distinctive core processes of educational leadership, i.e. its linkages with, and its effects on, teaching and learning, and should explore directly the extent to which research in educational leadership can and should be carried out by practitioners and have evidence based leadership as a desirable goal. In so doing, account should be taken of the ESRC’s ‘Teaching and Learning’ programme (BERA, 1999) and the policy outcomes of the Green Paper proposals (Secretary of State for Education and Employment, 1998) on performance management. Individual characteristics and contextual pressures Several papers dealt with the influence of individual characteristics and contextual pressures on heads’ tasks and performance. Hall (see Chapter 12) argued that we should recognise the centrality of gender. Levacic et al. (see Chapter 2) analysed the impact of external requirements that heads should
adopt a rational-technicist style. Four common themes emerged from Southworth’s study of the impact of recent policy and legislation on primary head teachers: intensification of work; increased accountability; an emphasis on school development; a range of feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (see Chapter 4). Bell (see Chapter 5) concluded that, in spite of the pressures, an educational market has not fully evolved in primary schools. McMahon found that much CPD now took the form of short workshops and courses aimed at the national agenda and that, as a result, it was now extremely difficult for headteachers to use CPD to promote sustained professional learning and growth (see Chapter 8). Simkins (1999) argued that the impact of recent and current policy changes on educational management should be researched using managerialist and bureau-professional models of organisations. It is essential that the biographies and characteristics of individual heads should continue to be researched. In a dynamic and changing national context, it is also essential that the impact of policy changes on educational management tasks and roles should be studied and that such research should recognise the interdependence of policy and practice in the provision of a public, democrati
cally accountable service. As an illustration, strategic research questions are generated from the ways in which four sets of external change processes - the increasing centralisation of power to government and its appointed agencies, the redistribution of power amongst organisations which influence schools, the widespread adoption of ‘new managerialism’ style techniques and a quasi market model of schools - impact on, for example:

- the values, vision and behaviours of educational leaders;
- organisation design, structures and procedures;
- professionalism, teachers’ work and how these are managed;
- accountability and boundary management;
- leadership and management strategies and methods.

In addressing these questions, account should be taken of Glatter's (1999) arguments against the selective and uncritical adoption from industry of certain ‘new managerialist’ methods (e.g. performance management) and rejection of others (e.g. human resource development). iii Training and development for educational leadership

A third priority theme relates to questions about how school leaders and managers learn and how they are and might be trained and developed in general and, specifically, to promote evidence-based practice. Bolam (1997) presented an analytic and semi-historical account of recent developments
in the organisation

of school management training, its content and teaching methods, its underlying theory and its use of research into the professional knowledge base. Weindling (see Chapter 7) re-examined data from a series of studies of secondary head teachers over a ten year period using socialisation theory while Ribbins (see Chapter 6) explored the concept of ‘leadership as a career’, applying it to the development of headteachers via the NPQH. Hall (see Chapter 12) argued that adult learning theory should be central to management development. Eraut (see Chapter 9) analysed the nature of headteachers’ knowledge, learning, cognition and practice, presented a critique of the national standards approach, exemplified in the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and posed fundamental questions about the feasibility of the evidence-based practice model.

Glatter (1999) proposed that CPD for educational leadership should focus on the whole job, warning against the atomisation implicit in the standards approach, that a national strategy should be pluralist not centralist, that HEIs should be given a bigger role in leadership training and that the complex issues raised by Eraut (see Chapter 9) about the learning and use of propositional and procedural
knowledge are of central importance.

The research issues generated by these ideas should be pursued. In addition:

- the implications of evidence-based leadership for training and development, including studies, should be explored;

- so, too, should the potential of cognitive and problem-based approaches (Hart, 1999);

- finally, the contributions of the NPQH and related TTA programmes, including the projected National Leadership Centre and the implications of the projected introduction of performance management, should be studied and evaluated as a high priority.

4. Conclusion

This chapter presents a preliminary conceptual map of educational administration and an outline research agenda for educational leadership in the light of the ESRC Seminar Series and other related literature. The underlying rationale for the research agenda and priorities is, in summary, that they should:

- be both reactive and proactive and, therefore, be responsive to funding initiatives as well as pursuing carefully argued priorities based on a refined conceptual map;

- aim to improve the quality and relevance of research by building on earlier work through the accumulation and replication of empirical findings and by aiming to promote school improvement, thus taking account of the issues (vide Hargreaves, 1997; Hammersley, 1997; Tooley and Darby, 1998; Hillage et al., 1998) and policy initiatives (Sebba, 1999) generated by the wider debate on educational research;

- aim to inform policy and practice by publishing evidence-based critiques, for instance on the nature, scope and impact of ‘new managerialism’ and by developing and testing middle range theories;

- be grounded in a strategy based on greater collaboration
and consultation with practitioners when planning and undertaking research, in improved collaboration, coordination and communication between ourselves as researchers, and in more systematic dissemination to targeted audiences, for example by using commissioned reviews of an aspect of the field.

Three caveats are offered by way of conclusion. First, it was beyond the scope of this paper to consider issues of design and methodology which, of course, are of critical importance and should be seen as integral to the development of a conceptual map. Second, the proposals are illustrative, not exhaustive and the thematic framework aims to assist researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in setting specific operational priorities in the context of available funding opportunities. Third, I have deliberately adopted a limited, even restricted, definition of educational leadership and management, locating it firmly as a sub-set of educational administration. This is essentially a technical distinction adopted primarily as a necessary, sensible step towards the production of a conceptual map of the wider field. Yet even this limited definition generates a host of important and difficult research topics and questions. Moreover, it enables us to be critical, to be explicit about our value positions and to collaborate with policy sociologists and others in the ‘knowledge for understanding’ project in order to ‘speak truth to power’ (Fitz, 1999). Equally important, as
we collectively seek to

improve education within the ‘knowledge for action’, ‘instrumentalist’ and

‘reflexive action’ projects, it also enables, and arguably requires, us to offer

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Secretary of State for Education and Employment (1998) Teachers: Meeting the chal
As we approach the new millennium there are few certainties in the world of work. The global nature of the economy, and the rapid pace of technological development, force changes in the workplace that would have been unimaginable just a few decades ago. ‘Jobs for life’ are as rare now as they were com
monplace in the 1950s and this means a radical reappraisal of the nature of work and its place in people’s lives.

Handy (1994) draws attention to the contrast between those who have ‘proper’ jobs and those who are on the fringe, with poorly paid, often part-time, employment; ‘bits and pieces of pocket-money work’. He points to the dilemma of economic growth being increasingly underpinned by this low-wage philosophy:

‘America, in the years from 1973 to 1989, managed to create 32 million net new jobs . . . but it was mostly hamburger work for hamburger pay’ (Handy, 1994, p. 8).

In contrast with this economic underclass is the remaining group of people in full-time employment who continue to enjoy good pay and conditions but in a climate of high pressure to perform. The ‘shakeout’ of employees means that those remaining must work harder, to sustain output and to demonstrate the commitment necessary to provide a (partial) guarantee that their heads will not be the next on the block.

Handy (1994) points out that such ‘totally consuming’ jobs are not for everyone. They tend to exclude other aspects of life, including family and hobbies, and may create other problems for society. There is also the very real risk of
'burnout' as the stress of the long hours, high pressure and insecurity begin to affect performance. Megan Crawford examines some of the dysfunctional con sequences of stress in Chapter 8 but the wider issue is the problem of society fragmenting into the 'haves' with good, well paid but insecure jobs, and the 'have-nots' who are unemployed, underemployed or working for low wages.

The impact of these changes on education have been limited but seem certain to become more profound in the future. Preparation for the world of work is a powerful imperative for education, with a significant impact on both the aims and content of the curriculum. Lofthouse (1994, p. 144) refers to this vocational approach with its emphasis placed on instrumental values where the needs of the individual are subordinated to the requirements of society. Employment and enterprise are perceived as vital to the growth of a free-enterprise society. With over-riding weight placed on individual survival through employment, vocational definitions of the curriculum stress the transmission of useful knowledge.

A fundamental problem with this approach is that the precise nature of a work related curriculum is difficult to define in the context of such rapidly changing work patterns. Flexibility and transferable skills may be more important than specific knowledge focused on a single industry. This has particular salience for further education but is relevant for all sectors. The decline of the coal, shipbuilding and
textile industries, for example, exposes graphically the limitations of a specific vocational curriculum and the human consequences of non-transferable skills.

Schools have been relatively sheltered from the impact of employee ‘shakeout’ and unemployment. In the 1990s, however, there are signs of growing insecurity and of increasing stress and ‘burnout’ with stress-related retirements at a record level (Williams, 1996). The research by Campbell and Neill (1994a; 1994b) shows that there is significant overload in schools in England and Wales arising from what they describe as ‘teacher conscientious’.

Staff in further education colleges have been expected to adjust to rapid, and often painful, change since incorporation in 1993. Funding is increasingly linked to recruitment of students and successful completion of courses. Business values have become prominent, conditions of service have been ‘eroded’, more part-time staff have been employed and senior managers are increasingly drawn from the business sector. Elliott and Hall (1994, p. 9) point to the dysfunctional consequences of ‘the cultural transformation from education to business’ in further education: While such foundations may prove adequate for the survival of colleges as financially viable institutions, they are inadequate for their survival as providers of high quality post-school educational experiences... The danger is an obvious one. Starved of adequate staffing, courses are reduced to minimum contact time, staff are overworked, overstressed and overtired, conflict between teaching and management staff becomes
systemic, morale falls, staff goodwill is withdrawn.

O'Neill (1994) refers to the potential for self-managing schools and colleges to determine the precise nature of their staffing on the basis of their specific needs rather than have a staffing structure imposed by the LEA. He argues that educational institutions need to be able to exercise maximum discretion in three aspects of staffing:

- The type and length of employment contract offered.
- The linkage between pay and market forces.
- The range of additional benefits which form part of a complete retention and development package.

This increasing flexibility is already evident in further education where almost half the total staff are part time and 52 per cent of teaching staff are on part-time contracts (FEDA, 1995, p. 11). It is also beginning to impact on schools where local management of schools (LMS) forces senior managers and governors to prepare a cost-benefit analysis, explicitly or implicitly, when selecting new teachers or associate staff. The perceived quality of current and potential staff, once the decisive factor, has to be considered alongside the budgetary implications of recruitment or retention. This change in stance has led to an increase in the early retirements of experienced, and more expensive, staff, and the replace
ment of departing staff with newly qualified teachers. There is also evidence of greater use of part-time staff, a significant increase in temporary contracts to provide flexibility and the employment of classroom assistants as an inexpensive alternative to teachers (Levacic, 1995). Self-managing schools and colleges

The pressure for developed and developing economies to become more efficient in order to compete effectively on the world stage has led to a heightened awareness of the links between educational capability and economic performance (Dearing, 1996). A skilled workforce depends largely on the achievements and outputs of schools, colleges and universities. This has led to a plethora of legislation as governments have sought to raise educational standards.

A major thrust in the legislation has been the development of self-managing schools and colleges in many countries. The Australian writers Caldwell and Spinks (1992, p. 4) define this concept: A self-managing school is a school in a system of education where there has been significant and consistent decentralisation to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources. ... The school remains accountable to a central authority for the manner in which resources are allocated.

Self-management in England and Wales takes one of three forms:

- LMS which devolves funding and resource management to governing bodies and limits the powers of LEAs. This is the dominant mode of ...
self-management which applies to some 23,000 primary, secondary and special schools.

- Grant-maintained status which applies when schools choose to 'opt out' of LEA control and receive their budgets direct from the Funding Agency for Schools (FAS). This applies to about 1,100 schools.

- Incorporation of further education colleges, independent of LEAs, which receive their budgets mainly from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

The shift to self-management is underpinned by the assumption that management is likely to be more effective if it happens 'close to the action' rather than at a distance from the institution. School and college managers are able to determine their own priorities on the basis of an assessment of their specific needs rather than simply responding to priorities set by national or local governments.

Caldwell and Spinks (1992, p. 14) argue the case for self-management: It is simply more efficient and effective in the late twentieth century to restructure systems of education so that central bureaucracies are relatively small and schools are empowered to manage their own affairs within a centrally determined framework of direction and support. Two arguments have usually been offered, one is concerned with responsiveness, the other with priorities for resource allocation in times of economic restraint or budgetary crisis.

The emphasis on self-management has been welcomed by many principals in schools and colleges (Bush et al., 1993) because it facilitates greater institutional control of policies and resources. However, it poses problems for small primary schools whose heads often have a full-time class teaching role. The extra man
agement demands have to be accommodated during evenings and weekends,

adding to the stress referred to earlier.

The shift to self-management has been accompanied by a new accent on

accountability to parents as surrogate ‘consumers’ rather than to teachers, the

‘producers’ of education. The concept of ‘open enrolment’ in England and

Wales allows parents to express a preference for the school their children will

attend, although that preference may not be met if the school is oversubscribed.

This limitation diminishes parental choice but the concept remains a powerful

component of government ideology in the UK and elsewhere.

The emphasis on consumer power also applies in further education where

responsiveness is to the needs of employers as well as to those of students.

These developments in both sectors mean that managers have to give heightened

services, directly or indirectly. Inevitably, this means that market accountability

has become more significant: ‘The notion of market accountability has been

reinforced by the legislation and this model is probably the most relevant for T H E O R Y

schools and colleges in the 1990s. Satisfying customers and potential customers

is now the most important indicator of success’ (Bush, 1994, p. 323). The pres
sure for schools to compete for clients is sharpened by the publication of 'league tables' of performance in public examinations and tests. A low placing in these lists is likely to lead to a fall in demand for places with knock-on effects for pupil numbers, budgets, staff levels and the quality of teaching and learning.

Adherence to national educational norms is sought through the imposition of a National Curriculum for schools and through a national inspection regime for both schools and further education. The shift to self-management, and the inspection regime, are intended to raise standards. In further education, funding is linked closely to student retention and completion rates. For schools, there is intense pressure on headteachers and staff to improve their position in the league tables. The weakness of such a powerful competitive environment is that it is bound to lead to 'winners' and 'losers'. Only one school can top the table but this does not mean that children and staff in the other schools should be valued less.

The presence of a National Curriculum, and state-sponsored inspection, means that self-managing schools have limited scope to develop on an individual basis. All schools offer a standard 'product' and competition is confined to the perceived quality of the educational process, as evidenced by
inspection reports and examination and test results, and to the ‘image’ presented to prospective clients. Managing people in a new climate

The shift to self-management, and the pressure on resources, have led to two major developments in the management of people:

- traditional staffing structures and historical divisions between professional and non-professional work are increasingly being called into question;

- organisations are less tolerant of ‘organisational slack’ or of suboptimal performance by teachers and other staff. Schools and colleges are under pressure to ensure competent performance from all staff (O’Neill et al., 1994, p. 29).

The change to self-management means that governors and senior managers need to take full responsibility for the management of staff. It is no longer possible to hide behind national or local government officers and inspectors or to blame them for shortcomings. Human resource management, in all its aspects, has to be handled within the organisation. In particular, schools and colleges have to operate in accordance with both legislation and changing societal expectations. Equal opportunities

One significant area influenced by the law and by changing attitudes is that of equal opportunities. As David Middlewood indicates in Chapter 10, recruitment and selection procedures must have regard to legislation on equal opportunities.

Applicants should not be disadvantaged because of race, religion, disability or
gender but, in practice, it can be difficult to ensure equality of opportunity.

In Chapter 9, Marianne Coleman points out that there are several barriers to career progress for women despite the legislation enshrining equal opportunities.

These obstacles may be summarised as:

- women make fewer applications for promoted posts;
- women are more likely to experience conflict between their professional and family roles;
- women are more likely to take career breaks;
- educational culture is male-centred;
- there is overt and covert discrimination against women; and
- there is a limited number of suitable female role models.

Some of these barriers also apply to other areas of disadvantage, including race.

There is a dearth of black teachers in British schools despite the legislation out lawing discrimination. As long ago as 1986, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE, 1986) drew attention to the shortage of black teachers and the need for strategies to increase their numbers. Research in eight LEAs with a significant proportion of people from ethnic minorities found that only 2 per cent of teachers were black. The proportion of black teachers in promoted posts was even lower. There was little improvement by the end of the 1980s. Clay et al. (1995) report that in 1989 only 2.4 per cent of students on
BEd courses were from black ethnic groups.

It appears logical to assume that the following barriers, adapted from the Coleman analysis, operate to limit the appointment and advancement of black people in education:

- Black people make fewer applications for promoted posts.
- Educational culture is Eurocentric.
- There is overt and covert discrimination against black people.
- There are few suitable black role models.

The CRE (1986) research presents evidence of perceived discrimination and also implies that cultural factors and the absence of suitable role models may apply to black teachers and aspirants. Singh’s (1988) survey of Asian sixth-formers indicates that well-qualified pupils were deterred from becoming teachers because of their personal experiences of racism from other pupils and staff.

McLaughlin (1993) also refers to racism as a disincentive for prospective teachers: ‘Bigotry is probably another factor reducing the number of black and Asian teachers . . . Many [people] believe minority teachers get a raw deal - and that pupils know it’ (quoted in Clay et al., 1995, p. 22). There may be a double disadvantage for black women seeking to enter, or advance within, the teaching
profession. The stereotype of the white male manager in education is a significant barrier for aspiring black women, as one headteacher suggests: ‘I had to work hard – doubly hard to prove I was a good head, a good black headteacher, a good, black, female headteacher. I felt I was in a glass cage. I felt very lonely’ (Mortimore and Mortimore, 1991, p. 81). The under-representation of women and black people in senior posts in education is unfair. An even more significant consequence may be the underutilisation of human capital and the lost potential for more effective teaching and leadership in schools and colleges. If women and black students are deterred from pursuing careers in education because of the lack of suitable role models, and/or through perceived discrimination, the effect is to limit the overall quality of the teaching force with inevitable implications for the quality of teaching and learning. Associate staff

Another potential area of disadvantage in education relates to associate staff. Teachers are invariably regarded as the prime resource in schools and colleges because of their central role in the teaching and learning process. They are also usually paid significantly more than associate staff, although the differential has narrowed to some extent since the introduction of LMS.
There may be a double disadvantage for the high proportion of associate staff who are women.

The increasing emphasis on managerial effectiveness in education has led to a reappraisal of the role of associate staff. Mortimore et al.'s (1992, p. 19) research shows that flexible deployment of associate staff can enhance the cost effectiveness of schools: If two schools which are comparable in every respect are equally effective in terms of performance, the one that uses the smaller amount of resources is the more cost-effective ... Cost-effectiveness, in this sense of the term, is highly desirable. A school that uses its resources more cost-effectively releases resources which it can use to promote further development.

There is increasing evidence of schools using the flexibility provided by LMS to deploy associate staff in imaginative ways. Wallace and Hall's (1994) research shows that some schools now include a bursar in their senior management teams.

In many schools, associate staff are undertaking administrative tasks formerly performed by highly paid senior staff (Mortimore et al., 1992). Research by Levacic (1995) shows that many schools have increased the use of classroom assistants, technicians and librarians during the 1990s. ‘Local management has stimulated the growth of a para-teaching force in schools’ (Levacic, 1995, p. 155).

There are similar trends in further education. Kedney and Brownlow (1994)
refer to the introduction of new para-professional roles such as workshop super

vision, student guidance and support, and course design which would have been CHANGING CONTEXT OF MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATION

regarded as lecturers’ work until the early 1990s. There has also been an increase in the number of senior managers appointed from the business sector (Elliott and Hall, 1994). There has been a reduction in the proportion of time spent by students in formal classroom programmes and an increase in learning supervised by associate staff. Kedney and Brownlow (1994, pp. 11-12) spell out the financial pressures driving these changes: The imperatives to reduce unit costs in the drive for efficiency set by the funding mechanisms will mean more than reducing taught hours for students and expecting lecturers to teach longer and more flexibly... The future points to the potential removal of the institutionalised distinction between academic and support staff and the development of a new and more flexible model.

Schools and colleges make their own judgements about the balance of staffing in the light of their specific requirements but making the best use of the talents of all staff makes good sense. The effective management of associate and teaching staff is an essential element in education as O’Neill et al. (1994, p. 7) suggest: A broader definition of the term people is inclusive rather than exclusive. It suggests that each adult employed within the school or college plays a critical role in its success. Acknowledging the unique contribution of individuals engenders their commitment. People and performance

The management of staff in self-managing schools and colleges is located with
governing bodies, principals and senior staff. The link between the leading pro
essionals and lay governors is vital for the health of the organisation and
requires ‘managing’ just as much as other relationships. Where governors and
staff work together constructively and harmoniously, it provides a powerful
basis for success (Bush et al., 1993) but conflict, or separation, between profes
sionals and lay governors, may serve to inhibit development.
People are the most significant resource available to school and college man
agers. Their selection, induction, deployment, development and appraisal are the
responsibility of principals and senior managers, reporting to the governing
body. The quality of their work, and their motivation to perform well, are related
directly to the nature of the human resource management process. Where staff
management is skilled and sympathetic, a successful organisation is likely to
result. Where it is clumsy and inadequate, poor performance may occur. The
fundamental issue of managing for people or performance is examined by Colin
Riches in Chapter 2.

The pressure for schools and colleges to compete for clients reinforces the T H E O R Y
need for high performance which is necessarily related to the quality and
commitment of all staff. Teachers and associate staff often work significantly more than their contracted hours in order to deliver the performance needed to meet the requirements of internal managers and external assessors.

The contract of employment introduced in 1987 requires school teachers in England and Wales to work for 1,265 hours of ‘directed time’. This time includes five days of compulsory in-service training. During these hours, head teachers are able to specify the activities of teachers: Under the contract teachers have to perform such duties as may be reasonably assigned to them by their head teacher. For example, head teachers could ensure, by the allocation of directed time, that teachers attend parents’ evenings, curriculum planning sessions, and other school meetings. (Busher and Saran, 1992, p. 23)

Teachers are also required to work beyond their contracted hours to perform their duties satisfactorily. Preparation for teaching and marking pupils’ work, for example, are expected to be undertaken during this additional time. As a result, the 1,265 hours constitute a minimum rather than a maximum figure, as research by Busher and Saran (ibid., p. 39) demonstrates: Some heads pointed out that teachers in their schools . . . worked far more than 1265 hours . . . By 1990 most heads commented that their staff were working incredibly long hours, that there was sickness and work-related stress, that they were having to protect their staff and in some cases ‘tell them to work less’.

The problem of ‘overcommitment’ also emerges from the research of Campbell and Neill (1994a; 1994b) in primary and secondary schools.
Teachers were working for 54 hours a week, well beyond their contractual commitments. The researchers explain this ‘overcommitment’ and point to some of its dysfunctional consequences: The teachers were primarily motivated by a sense of vocation or obligation to their pupils. The occupational culture of the school remained stubbornly at odds with the assumptions of central government’s legislation on working conditions. It is unlikely that anyone other than the teachers themselves will take steps to reduce work overload, since most of the overload is in the teachers’ own time. (Campbell and Neill, 1994a, pp. 223–4)

The partly self-induced heavy workload of teachers suggests that most staff fulfil O’Neill et al.’s (1994) assumption that commitment is an essential component of successful organisations. However, long working hours may serve to diminish effectiveness and reduce the quality of work performance.

In this context, senior managers have a responsibility to limit overload in order to promote the quality of teaching and learning: A major function for heads and other managers in the post-ERA period might be to find ways to limit teacher workloads by identifying priorities for their schools, and filtering out demands which make the most conscientious teachers’ workloads unreasonable. There is no evidence that very long hours lead to better quality of teaching. (Campbell and Neill, 1994a, p. 224)

The evidence of overcommitment suggests that teachers and associate staff are highly motivated but may be risking ‘burnout’ through working long hours over extended periods. In this context, managers need refined
motivational skills to build high morale, sustain good performance and avoid dysfunctional overload.

Riches (1994, p. 239) refers to the link between motivation and the ‘high performance cycle’:

- There should be high expectations of staff. Low expectations are demotivating.
- Managers should ensure a sense of satisfaction in return for effort.
- Satisfaction will derive from personally meaningful work which members are capable of and in part from managers taking pains to reward performance.
- Managers should encourage staff to set specific, challenging but realistic goals for high performance.
- Feedback on performance helps staff to effective task strategies and to be motivated.

This approach is reinforced by Torrington and Weightman (1989, p. 52) who stress the importance of valuing staff. They identify four types of esteem on the basis of their research in secondary schools:

- Consideration and praise.
- Feedback.
- Delegation.
- Consultation and participation.

Another dimension of motivation relates to staff development. Taking a proactive stance towards individual professional development provides tangible evidence of managers’ appreciation of staff commitment. Elliott and Hall (1994, p.
8), however, caution that staff development in further education may be directed towards organisational rather than personal objectives and form part of a response to changes imposed by external bodies: T H E O R Y

Staff development is likely to be highlighted to greater prominence, but as a means of widening staff competence in order better to meet institutional needs. It is further likely that multiskilling will be privileged in order to maximise 'output'. Retraining and redeploying staff provides one alternative to declaring staff redundant.

While individual staff development may serve to increase motivation, there is an emerging view that high performance may also be linked to pay. In England and Wales, this is specifically encouraged by the formal pay and conditions policies and in rhetoric from ministers (Tomlinson, 1992a). Performance related pay (PRP) is discussed in detail by Keith Foreman in Chapter 14.

The rationale for PRP is that people work more effectively with financial incentives (Tomlinson, 1992b), but the evidence of Campbell and Neill (1994a; 1994b) shows that teacher conscientiousness is widespread and arises from commitment to pupils rather than financial reward. The argument that financial incentives promote improved performance in vocational employment remains unproven. Conclusion: managing the context

The context for human resource management in education provides a searching text of management capability. High unemployment, and an
increase in short term, low-paid jobs, raise important questions about the purpose of education.

While governments urge schools and colleges to prepare young people for the world of work, specific skills are subject to obsolescence as a consequence of industrial change.

The international trend towards local management means that senior managers, and lay governors, are increasingly responsible for handling the human consequences of multiple change. The emphasis on consumers rather than producers, by governments in the UK and elsewhere, requires responsiveness to the needs of students, parents and employers. However, effective education can be achieved only by motivating teachers and associate staff to ‘deliver’ high quality.

Campbell and Neill’s research, discussed in Chapter 7, shows that teachers demonstrate their commitment to their students by working long hours. As Riches (1994) and Torrington and Weightman (1989) stress, praise for teachers and associate staff is essential if this overcommitment is not to lead to dysfunctional stress or ‘burnout’. A genuine concern for staff welfare should not be sub


Changing Context of Management and Education


Hong Kong, like many societies, is undertaking major restructuring of its school system. A close examination of the three policies forming the backbone of the reform reveals a remarkable similarity to those introduced in the United States, Britain and Australia over the past ten years. Indeed, in one of the three Hong Kong policies, explicit mention is made of its origins in reforms emanating from Australia, with additional influence from research in the USA. In addition, consultants from
both of these countries and Britain are frequently called on for advice. The blueprint for school restructuring initiatives has been exported from the West, and imported into the Asian culture of Hong Kong. In this respect, Hong Kong is no different from many other Asian and Western countries in ‘cloning’ reform policies initiated elsewhere. This is part of the ‘globalization’ of education currently taking place.

Importation of policy raises important questions about its appropriateness for indigenous cultures. Researchers working in the field of educational management have, to date, paid relatively little attention to detailed analyses of the cultural matching of educational policy. Undergirding this paper is the assumption that successful take-up of an innovation depends heavily on the extent to which there is cultural fit between policy imperatives on the one hand and the beliefs, values and behaviours of those charged with implementation, on the other. The central purpose of this paper is to explore the appropriateness and synchrony between the policy reforms imported into Hong Kong and central features of its host culture. A process of deductive reasoning is followed by juxtaposing the policy reform with cultural characteristics, in order to clarify the likelihood of adoption and implementation of the intended
policies. The conclusion is that some aspects of the reforms appear to harmonize well with the indigenous culture, while others may require rather greater degrees of autochtony and adaptation at the implementation stage.

The paper first outlines the major features of Hong Kong’s current school restructuring. It then attempts to conceptualize and to map key aspects of societal-level culture by describing and applying Hofstede’s (1980, 1991) cultural dimensions to provide a framework for identifying and gauging the culture of Hong Kong in juxtaposition with other cultures. The final part of the paper is constructed around a dialectic between the policy imperatives of school restructuring and the characteristics of Hong Kong’s culture, as reflected by Hofstede’s cultural dimensions. Tentative conclusions are drawn about the extent of fit between the restructuring policy and Hong Kong’s culture, and the possible need for adaptation. School restructuring in Hong Kong: theory, policy and practice imported from the West.

Attempts to restructure Hong Kong’s schools began in the early 1990s and, to date, centre on three major policy initiatives, namely, the School Management Initiative (SMI), the Target-Oriented Curriculum (TOC), and Quality Schools (ECR7). In common with the restructuring of school systems
elsewhere, these initiatives can be conceived as two-pronged, one aimed at reforming the administrative, managerial and governmental aspects of schools, the other targeting the curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment. A summary of each policy follows. The school management initiative

After several decades of education policy focused on quantitative and logistical concerns, especially coping with growing student numbers, the Hong Kong Government, in 1991, turned its attention to improving the quality of education, a theme which has dominated policy throughout much of the Western world for most of the final decade of the 20th century. In its policy document, the School Management Initiative (SMI), the Hong Kong Government (Education and Manpower Branch (EMB) and Education Department, 1991) set out the background prompting, and the proposals for, the reform of the school system. The SMI is to be seen within the context of public sector reform, with its emphasis on accountability for performance and within the context of the school effectiveness movement, with its characteristic features of devolution and delegation of decision making in support of the principle of subsidiarity.

The policy aimed to define more clearly the roles of those responsible for
administering schools, particularly sponsors, managers and 
principals; to

provide for greater participation by teachers, parents and 
former students in

school decision making and management; to encourage more 
systematic plan

ning and evaluation of school activities; and finally, to 
give schools more flexi

bility over the use of resources. The recommendations 
cluded, first, that the

Education Department (ED) change its role from a 
controlling to a supportive, T H E O R Y

advisory function. Second, new more effective management 
roles for school 

management committees (SMCs) and principals were 
recommended. Accord

ingly, every SMC should produce a constitution setting out 
the aims and object

ives of the school and the procedures and practices by 
which it will be managed.

Third, greater flexibility in school finance was advocated 
and schools would be 
given a block grant to decide their own spending patterns 
within the policy

framework set by the ED. They were to be given the 
discretion to use their

savings and to seek non-government sources of funding. 
Fourth, the participa

tion of teachers, the principal, the SMC, and to 
appropriate degrees, parents and 

students in decision making was to be encouraged. SMI 
specifically singled out 

teachers and parents as excluded from decision making. Few
schools had parent-teacher associations and closer contact between schools and parents was urged as a means of fostering more effective learning. Fifth, a framework for accountability was to be established, involving a staff appraisal system. In addition, each school should produce an annual school plan, setting out its goals and activities for the coming year, against which it could be held accountable. Such a plan would allow the school to assign priorities, allocate its budget, and provide the community with information about school direction. It also proposed that each school prepare an annual school profile covering its activities in the previous year and detailing its performance by developing indicators in a number of key areas.

By 1995–6, only a minority of schools (approximately one-quarter) had chosen membership, an outcome regarded as somewhat disappointing. A survey of SMI progress (Education Department, 1994a) found that member schools had constituted their SMCs with extensive involvement of principals, and to a lesser extent teachers, but with minimal involvement of parents and alumni. Most schools were successfully managing their decentralized block grants. There was evidence of more systematic planning, with all schools having an annual
plan, including statements of mission and goals. Such planning, however, may be illusory since involvement appeared to be confined to the senior levels of staff, especially the principal. The implementation of staff appraisal schemes also appeared to be causing difficulties. Respondents indicated an increased workload, with especially heavy demands falling on middle managers. The reform had not penetrated to affect the work of teachers at the classroom level. School personnel felt a lack of support at system level and some complained of time constraints (Y.C. Cheng, 1992). These latter findings are in line with restructuring experiences elsewhere (Dimmock, 1995). Quality school education (ECR7)

Five years after the introduction of the SMI policy, the Education Commission published its Seventh Report in the form of a consultative document called Quality School Education (Education Commission, 1996). There is a significant shift between SMI and ECR7 from ‘effective’ schools and schooling to ‘quality’ schools and schooling, in line with changes of policy nomenclature in the West.

The following recommendations were made. First, a framework should be established for developing and monitoring quality school education. A Quality Devel
opment Commission should advise the Director of Education on quality school education. In addition, a new whole-school approach to school inspections is advocated. The present inspection divisions should be reorganized into a Quality Assurance Inspectorate to coordinate resources for periodic comprehensive assessment of the performance of each school.

At school level, school development plans, annual budgets and staff appraisal schemes should be institutionalized. Teachers should contribute to the improvement of quality education through active participation in the SMC and the School Executive Committee (SEC), the latter being a second-tier executive arm of school management, chaired by the principal and responsible to the SMC.

School management should pay greater attention to the needs of students according to their abilities and aptitudes and to identifying meaningful input, process and output indicators by which to judge school quality in line with a value-added approach. Second, key stakeholders should receive appropriate training and professional development, especially in financial and human resources management. Third, performance indicators and the concept of value added achievement should be introduced in order to assess school performance.
This would provide an equitable base for school self-evaluation and external quality assurance. Schools should also develop as soon as possible a proper appraisal system for assessing the performance of teachers and principals.

Fourth, in order to build a quality culture, the government should provide incentives for schools to strive for continuous improvement. Consequently, a ‘Quality Development Grant’ should be introduced to fund worthwhile innovative projects on a competitive basis. Cash awards might also be available to a small number of schools demonstrating the most impressive value-added performance.

This should raise the morale of teachers. It would be up to the principal to decide, after having consulted with the SMC, teachers and parents, how the money should be used. Fifth, all schools by the year 2000 should practise school-based management in the spirit of SMI. The Target-Oriented Curriculum Restructuring of the Hong Kong school curriculum follows trends evident in Britain, Australia and the United States. Noteworthy in this regard is the introduction of the Target-Oriented Curriculum (TOC) (Education Department, 1994b).

The TOC policy centres on notions of improved practices of teaching and
learning based around more learner-centred approaches, the division of the curriculm into progressive learning targets and objectives for four key stages of learning, and the development of content, teaching methods and assessment strategies geared to the learning targets. Emphasis is placed on setting learning targets and on close assessment of individual children in terms of target achievement. In accordance with the introduction of the TOC, a framework of learning targets and related support materials is being developed for the three core subjects of Chinese, English and mathematics. A pilot scheme began in 20 primary schools in 1993. Despite some teething problems, it was decided that the TOC should be introduced to Primary 1 classes in 70 primary schools in 1995.

In summary, observers of Hong Kong’s school restructuring policy frame work would not be able to differentiate it from similar initiatives taking place in Australia, the USA and in Britain. Even the changes of terminology and of policy emphasis which have characterized school restructuring during the 1990s in English-speaking Western countries are replicated in the Asian cultural setting of Hong Kong. Having outlined salient aspects of policy reforms in Hong Kong, the question arises as to their suitability for, and degree of fit with, the
culture. It is therefore to aspects of Hong Kong’s culture that the paper now turns. First, however, it is necessary to clarify the concept of culture and its possible measurement. Hofstede’s cultural dimensions and their application to Hong Kong Education, as an essentially human activity, is culture-bound. Policy makers and school leaders, therefore, need to be mindful of societal and organizational cultural characteristics when formulating, adopting and implementing policies. The prospect of successful implementation is enhanced when policy makers and school administrators adopt policies consonant with the characteristics of the prevailing societal culture.

Agreement on a definition of a complex concept like culture is not easy. Hofstede, one of the leading advocates of cultural comparative research in international management, defines culture as, ‘patterns of thinking, feeling and acting’ underpinning ‘the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another’ (1991: 4-5). The ‘collective programming of the mind’ refers to shared beliefs, values, and practices of a group of people, whether that group be a society, nation state, or organization. He goes on to argue that culture is learned, not inherited, and
that societal and organizational cultures are qualitatively
different concepts.

Since culture centres on shared values, beliefs and
practices, the expressions

of which are both visible and intangible, it can be a
difficult phenomenon to

measure, gauge or even describe. The identification of
cultural dimensions,

defined as ‘core axes around which significant sets of
values, beliefs and prac
tices cluster’ (Dimmock and Walker, 1998), not only
facilitates their description

and measurement, but promotes comparison between different
cultures. In short,
dimensions provide common benchmarks against which cultural
characteristics
at both societal and organizational level can be described,
gauged and compared.

Despite their usefulness, however, Hofstede’s cautionary
remarks about RESTRUCTURING HONG KONG’S
SCHOOLS

dimensions are correct, when he claims that the same
limitations apply to them

as to culture itself: ‘They are also constructs that should
not be reified. They do
not “exist”: they are tools for analysis which may or may
not clarify a situation’


Minimal research on cultural dimensions has taken place in
educational
administration. We therefore have to rely on Hofstede’s
work in the inter

national management field (Redding, 1994). While the need
for further refine

ment of Hofstede's dimensions should be acknowledged (indeed, Hofstede

himself admits that the dimensions are not necessarily

exhaustive), his work

remains definitive for the time being.

Five generic cultural dimensions underpin Hofstede’s

framework (1980, 1991). All five, he claims, are empirically verifiable and

are applicable universally across all societies or nations. Presented as choices

between pairs of

alternatives the dimensions allow the emergence and

identification of patterns

within and between cultures, and facilitate their

meaningful ordering (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede and Bond, 1984). The five dimensions are

outlined below. Each

is applied to Hong Kong in order to present an exposition of its distinctive cul

tural characteristics. Power Distance

This (PD) refers to the distribution of power within

society and its organizations.

It is defined as the extent to which the less powerful

members of institutions and

organizations within a country expect and accept that power

is distributed

unequally. In societies with large PD values, greater

inequalities of power distri

bution are expected and accepted in the family, in school

and in the workplace.

Many Asian societies are high PD cultures, while many

Western societies have
low PD values. The more Westernized is the Asian society, the more likely it is
to change from a high to low PD.

Hong Kong, like Singapore, displays a high Power-Distance
Index (PDI),

being ranked 15th out of 50 countries. By contrast, the USA
is ranked 38th,

Australia 41st, and Britain 44th. Not only do most Asian
societies traditionally

exhibit high PD, but in the case of Hong Kong, the British
colonial government

has further enhanced PD. Individualism versus collectivism

This dimension (IC) is the degree to which individuals are
integrated into groups

and to which there is closeness between persons in a
relationship. Vecchio

(1995) describes it as the extent to which a person is
‘inner-directed’ or ‘other

directed’. In individualist societies, individuals place
their personal goals above

those of their in-group, the ties between individuals are
loose, people are

expected to look after themselves and their immediate
families. In collectivist

societies, people place group goals above their personal
goals, they are brought T H E O R Y

up to be loyal to, and integrate in, strong cohesive
groups, which often include

extended families.

On this dimension, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and
Thailand are ranked

towards the collectivist end, Hong Kong being placed 37th
out of 53 countries.

At the individualist end of the spectrum, the USA, Australia and Britain occupy the first three places. Large power distance societies, like Hong Kong, tend to be more collectivist, while small power distance societies tend to be more individualist. Masculinity versus femininity

This dimension (MF) is concerned with the ways in which ‘biological differences between sexes become perpetuated in differences in social and organizational roles played by men and women’ (Harrison et al., 1994: 246). The assertive pole is termed masculine and the modest, caring pole, feminine.

Hong Kong ranks 18th out of 53 countries and regions, compared with Britain, USA and Australia, which are 9th, 15th and 16th, respectively. All of these societies tend towards the more masculine end, indicating much less of a Western/Asian divide on this dimension. Uncertainty avoidance

This dimension (UA) relates to how people react to, manage, cope with, and tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity in their lives. Uncertainty-avoiding cultures tend to proliferate laws, rules, safety and security measures and, on a philosophical and religious level, tend to believe in absolute truth. Conversely, people in uncertainty-accepting cultures are more tolerant of a range of different opinions,
they prefer fewer rather than more rules and, on the philosophical and religious level, are more relativist and tolerant of different faiths and creeds.

Most Asian societies rank low on uncertainty avoidance. Hong Kong, for example, is ranked 50th out of 53 countries and regions. Singapore is 53rd.

Britain is 48th, USA is 43rd, and Australia 37th. People in these societies do not feel sufficiently insecure and threatened by the unknown, unfamiliar or uncertain that they take measures to regulate their lives. Long-term versus short-term orientation

This fifth dimension (LS) was added to Hofstede’s original schema after research by Chinese scholars (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987) and is less validated than the other dimensions. Values associated with long-term orientation, such as thrift, perseverance and willingness to make short-term sacrifices for long-term gains, are counterbalanced by values associated with short-term orientation, such as respect for tradition, fulfilment of social obligations and protection of one’s face. Although many of these values are associated with Chinese (Confucian) values, they also seem to apply to other societies without a Confucian heritage.

China, Hong Kong and Taiwan rank first, second and third out
tries and regions on this dimension. Australia, the USA and Britain rank 15th, 17th and 18th, respectively. Hong Kong, like its East Asian neighbours, ranks very high on long-term orientation. Assessing the compatibility between Hong Kong’s school restructuring and its culture

In common with most policy documents, SMI, ECR7 and TOC emphasize objectives, goals and directions more than the processes and practices necessary for operationalizing and institutionalizing reform. Yet, the importance of the latter in successful reform is undeniable. The points at which policy is trans formed into practice are critical, too, from a cultural perspective, since culture is deeply embedded and manifested in the beliefs, values, practices and behaviours of actors at the school site. While it is argued that policy should be tailored where necessary to harmonize with culture, it is not assumed that culture is a fixed, immutable and unchanging phenomenon. Rather, it is assumed that societal culture does change, if only slowly, and that policy and culture need to be juxtaposed. Even in situations where restructuring policies are aimed at changing the culture, the relationship between policy and host culture is iterative.

In the following section six key aspects of Hong Kong’s school restructuring
agenda (reflected in the SMI, ECR7 and TOC), all based on policies imported from Australia, Britain and the USA, are matched for appropriateness of fit with features of Hong Kong’s culture, as characterized by Hofstede’s dimensions. The six aspects of restructuring are: planned reforms to teaching and learning; changes demanded in principals’ leadership style towards collaborative and participative decision making; decentralization; school development planning; staff appraisal; and professional development and training. Planned reforms to teaching and learning Although the SMI and ECR7 policies are primarily concerned with management issues, there is a strong tacit understanding that the ultimate objective is improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and curricula. Two recommendations of the ECR7 address issues of direct concern to teaching and learning. The first refers to the need for a pluralistic school system ‘to cater for the needs of students according to their abilities and aptitudes’, and the second to the aim of developing fully ‘students of different abilities in the spirit of equal opportunities’ (Education Commission, 1996: 39).

Each of these citations suggests major reforms in the way students and teachers are to be grouped for learning and in the teaching methods to be used. It
is implied that teachers must change their teaching methods 
and approaches T H E O R Y 

towards more student-centred strategies. The TOC policy 
also endorses this aim 
as indicated in the Programme of Study for English Language 
(Curriculum Development Council, 1995), which advocates 
'learner-centred methods and 
strategies for teaching' (p. 43) and 'learning should be 
experiential rather than 
instructional since students learn best through activities 
that demand involve 
ment' (p. 41). The same document goes on to advocate how 
teachers can cater 
for individual differences by being 'sensitive to each 
student's needs, by evalu 
ating each student's development of cognitive ability, 
judging the materials to 
challenge each student, arousing each student's interest, 
responding to and 
helping the student who needs extra attention, and 
appraising each student's 
capacity to learn and improve' (p. 44). How well adapted 
are current teaching 
learning methods in Hong Kong's schools to meet these 
expectations? And what 
influence might culture have? 
These questions are best addressed by referring to the 
prevailing cultural 
characteristics of Hong Kong's classrooms, to recent 
research showing signific 
ent differences between how Chinese and British and 
American teachers teach
According to Hofstede, in large PD societies such as Hong Kong, teachers are traditionally expected to take all the initiatives in class and they tend to be seen as gurus transferring their personal wisdom. Students are not expected to speak up unless invited by the teacher, and are more comfortable speaking in small groups than large. Formal harmony and preservation of relationships is important at all times (Hofstede, 1986: 312). The attainment of those student-centred learning methods which are dependent on assertive expression, persuasion and argument between group members, may thus be more difficult to attain. Moreover, because Hong Kong is more collectivist, children learn to think more in terms of ‘we’ than ‘I’, and this may run counter to more individualized instruction. Students in collectivist societies, for example, may not feel comfortable or motivated to compete with one another in class. By the same token, however, the collectivist values of Chinese students appear to be receptive to more cooperative methods of learning. Hong Kong’s students and parents place high value on examination results. Thus new teaching-learning methods which emphasize processes of learning rather than results may find some disfavour. Although Hong...
Kong society in general is classed as a low uncertainty avoidance culture, its schools display many characteristics of a high uncertainty avoidance culture. School life, including the teaching syllabus, is regulated by an abundance of prescriptive rules and regulations. This degree of prescription may work against the fostering of more exploratory forms of teaching and learning. In addition, Hong Kong students tend to feel more comfortable in tightly structured learning situations. Finally, the long-term orientation of Hong Kong educators is characterized by an innate conservatism and by values such as perseverance and observing the ordering of relationships by status, all of which tend to militate against the easy acceptance of new relationships between teachers and students.

The prevailing ethos in East Asian societies values effort rather than ability and competition is seen as a way of improving results and as a means of socialization in order to prepare the young for tougher competition in society (Cheng and Wong, 1996). Students are ranked according to their academic scores and in Hong Kong this ranking is important in allocating primary students to secondary school. This leads Cheng and Wong to conclude: In this context, individualized teaching, where students work towards diverse targets at different paces, is almost
inconceivable in East Asian societies. Therefore, the emphasis on the administration of teaching is more on how students of different abilities could learn to adapt themselves to the common curriculum and common examination, rather than adapting the curriculum and teaching to the diverse needs of the students. (1996: 44–5)

Recent research findings on differences between Asian and Western students in how they learn (Watkins and Biggs, 1996) are also instructive in throwing light on the question of the cultural appropriateness of recent educational policy directions in Hong Kong. These authors claim that Hong Kong students are representative of students in other Chinese cultures, namely, Singapore, Taiwan and Mainland China, in that they all share a Confucian-heritage culture (Watkins and Biggs, 1996: 269). They argue that many of the views typically held by Westerners in relation to Chinese (and other Asian) learners, are in fact, myths.

The first misconception centres on the contribution made by rote learning to memorization and understanding. All agree that Chinese and Asian students have a tendency to rote learn. Western interpretation of rote learning is derogatory, implying that little understanding or reflection takes place. Marton, Dall’Alba and Tse (1996) claim that memorization can lead to understanding, although whether it deepens understanding, or is a precondition for it, is not clear. For some Asian students, the relationship between
memorization and understanding is a two-way cause-effect phenomenon. That is, while memorization is sometimes used to deepen understanding, at other times it is simply used for passing exams. The Asian student appears sufficiently sophisticated to vary the process to suit the objective. Westerners often fail to see the advantages of rote learning in enhancing understanding.

A second myth relates to motivation. On this matter, Watkins and Biggs assert, ‘Western ways of categorizing motivation do not travel well, at least not to the Orient’ (1996: 273). Westerners tend to see intrinsic motivation as the pre cursor to meaningful deep understanding. The Chinese student, however, taking a more pragmatic view, may be motivated by a mixed set of forces, including ‘personal ambition, family face, peer support, material reward, and yes, possibly even interest’ (1996: 273).

Collectivist notions also affect the teacher-student relationship, which although hierarchical, can also be warm, caring and supportive (Chan, 1993). T H E O R Y

Tang (1996) found Chinese students collaborated much more outside the class room in helping each other to obtain material useful for the completion of, and entering discussion on, assignments, than did their Western counterparts. In
addition, although it is seldom attempted, Winter (1996) found that organized peer learning can work very well in Hong Kong schools. Watkins and Biggs (1996: 275) conclude, ‘Hong Kong secondary school students would in fact prefer a more collaborative learning environment which they consider would promote the deeper, more achievement-oriented approach to learning’. In these ways, some of the new directions for core technology espoused in TOC and ECR7 might well be supported by prevailing cultural characteristics.

If there are at least some cultural characteristics which appear supportive of policy changes in core technology, current classroom conditions in Hong Kong’s schools do not favour the student-centred and individualized methods.

Most Hong Kong classrooms are cramped and crowded. It is commonplace to find 40 students in a class. Desks are formally arranged in rows. Classrooms are typically small, so that both students and teachers work in confined spaces. Opportunities for mobility and flexible classroom layouts are therefore severely restricted. Most classrooms are not well equipped by Western standards, having no more than the bare essentials of a blackboard, desks and chairs. These conditions dictate that few alternatives exist to direct
teaching methods supplemented by discussion in pairs or small groups. Opportunities for catering to the variability of student needs and abilities as well as introducing more flexible student-centred learning approaches seem to be severely curtailed.

Given the prevailing cultural characteristics of Hong Kong, are reforms to teaching and learning recommended in Hong Kong's restructuring policies appropriate? Evidence suggests that the collectivist dimension of the Chinese culture seems well suited to cooperative learning and peer tutoring, both of which are consistent with the reform policy. Present classroom conditions of large class sizes and confined spaces will, however, present major difficulties to teachers when implementing these methods. However, peer tutoring and cross-age tutoring are convenient and appropriate teaching methods for overcoming large student:teacher ratios and would seem to fit well with the culture. While the current over-reliance on didactic teaching needs to be reduced, it could serve as a useful base from which to develop best practices of direct teaching, itself a highly effective teaching method. Decentralization

Decentralization of much of the responsibility for school management is at the heart of the SMI policy in Hong Kong. According to Hofstede
societies such as Hong Kong traditionally prefer centralization. Centralization, however, can take place at different levels. Power and responsibility may be decentralized from the central bureaucracy to individual schools, only to be centralized again at school level in the person of the principal, who captures and monopolizes them, aided by staff who are only too willing to display subordination. This seems to have already happened in Hong Kong. Problems ensue in high PD societies where administrative responsibility is decentralized, while the traditional hierarchical pattern of social relations remains intact. Principals’ leadership style: collaborative and participative decision making.

A strongly advocated feature in both the SMI and ECR7 is the change required in principals’ leadership, from an authoritarian to a more collaborative, participative style. SMI, for example, states that ‘because proper management structures and processes are lacking, some principals are insufficiently accountable for their actions and see their post as an opportunity to become ‘little emperors’ with dictatorial powers in the school’ (EMB and ED, 1991: 14). It goes on to refer to a lack of educational and managerial leadership in schools. Effective leaders, by contrast, ‘would provide strong support for school-based
management and collaborative decision making within a framework of school objectives, and provide the link between the school and the SMC’ (EMB and ED, 1991: Annex 2). This belief is reinforced in ECR7 where the recommendation is made to set up a two-tier management structure in schools: an SMC and a School Executive Committee (SEC). The SEC would be the executive arm of the SMC and be headed by the principal. This is a clear attempt to disperse some of the present power and authority exercised by principals. Elsewhere in ECR7 the statement is made that the teachers’ role should be more than just classroom teaching: ‘Teachers should participate in school management to help develop the various school activities in a professional way’ (Education Commission, 1996: 30). Teacher participation is thus advocated in both the SMC and the SEC.

Collaborative leadership styles are currently advocated in school restructuring policies in Britain, Australia and the USA. The assumption is that collaborative leadership brings multiple benefits, including better quality decisions, sharing of workloads, and greater staff commitment to implementing decisions.

However, even in Western societies, where it is strongly advocated, some of these supposed benefits appear more rhetorical than real.
Collaboration may, in fact, have negative effects, such as slowing down the decision-making process.

It can be difficult to achieve: the concept itself is capable of many interpretations and may operate at different organizational levels; it is also inextricably intertwined with power, authority and responsibility. In sum, leaders are often reluctant to collaborate when they fear loss of personal power and control, especially in situations where they are ultimately held accountable.

In Hong Kong, as elsewhere in Asia, the collectivist culture would seem to favour collaboration. However, high PD seems to predispose them to following and respecting the authority and power of a strong leader to whom they look for direction and structure. Hui, for example, arguing that participative leadership is counterproductive in Chinese societies, states, 'a participative superior is seen as theoretically indecisive and, therefore, not worthy of respect' (1990: 203-4). Cheng and Wong (1996) remark that teacher participation in schools is hierarchical, that is, teachers at different levels of the administrative ladder hold different expectations of participation. They claim that rank-and-file teachers often see participation as a privilege granted from above rather than as a right. Hence, in East Asian schools, 'participation is often seen as a matter of
pragmatic needs rather than a matter of democracy’ (Cheng and Wong, 1996: 44).

Taking cognizance of these characteristics, the conclusion is that collaboration fits well with the prevailing culture of Hong Kong when it takes place at levels of school organizational life which preserve the vertical hierarchy or authority gap between the principal and staff. In other words, collaboration is well suited to departmental and faculty levels of school organization, but concepts of senior team management may be more difficult to reconcile. In advocating the SEC, ECR7 appears to be in conflict with the high PD culture of Hong Kong. School development planning is generally favoured in low PD, high UA societies. When PD is high, there is too little trust to make planning effective (Triandis, 1982–3: 156). Planning is also promoted in cultures with an orientation towards the future rather than the past. In terms of Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, societies with high UA have a pre-disposition for structure and direction. Although Hong Kong’s ranking on the UA scale is not high, in respect of its school life, it displays typical characteristics of a high UA society. On the other hand, Hong Kong’s ranking on long-term orientation is high, suggesting a preference among its people for planning and thinking about
the future. A further cultural characteristic which seems to favour planning is what might be called a gestalt capacity, an ability to see the whole picture. Cheng (1995: 96), citing Liu (1988) summarizes this characteristic as follows: I would not hesitate to say that Westerners have ingrained in their culture and milieu, a very strong analytic ability. As if created by God for a contrast, the Asians, and in particular the Chinese, seem to have a high sense of synthesis.

This seems to be an ability which the Chinese possess in abundance.

In addition, according to Cheng and Wong (1996: 44), Chinese societies have a general belief in collective aims and objectives. In relation to Hong Kong, these authors state: ... successful schools are often led by objectives beyond individualistic aims such as 'full development of personal potential'. Even in schools where the school objective is not explicit, there is a general ethos that teachers who work in a school belong to the school. There is some subtle bonding among teachers in a school, that members of the same school unite and work towards the common goal of the school. . . . However, submission to the common goal is not the result of rational consensus building, or anything emerging from any device of the system. It is a traditional value where individuals are expected to submit to organizational goals.

This cultural trait might thus favour teacher submission rather than commitment to the school plan. Staff appraisal

Both the SMI and ECR7 are unequivocal about introducing a staff appraisal system. The importance of appraisal, as set out in the SMI, is its assessment of staff strengths and weaknesses, clarification of staff development needs, and its
contribution to ensuring a meritocratic basis for promotion. The same arguments are repeated again in the ECR7, only this time appraisal is seen as part of a quality assurance process. By 1997, few schools, even those which were part of the SMI scheme, had introduced appraisal. In the absence of strong teachers’ unions in Hong Kong, difficulties associated with the introduction of appraisal seem more attributable to practical problems of implementation at the school site.

Part of the problem is that Advisory Committee documents (Education Department, 1992, 1993) on appraisal do not detail clear procedures for operationalizing an appraisal system. This situation typifies a key dilemma of school reforms elsewhere: the ED is either unwilling or unable to provide schools with detailed guidance and direction on implementation, thereby leaving it to each school to work out its own response: schools rarely seem to possess the technical knowledge, expertise, initiative and resources to make such reforms happen.

Is Hong Kong’s culture suited to appraisal? Hofstede (1995) has addressed this issue in the context of the business world, noting that performance appraisal systems, strongly advocated in Western management literature, suggest that
employees' performance will improve when they receive direct feedback,

usually from a superordinate. This may be true, he says, for individualist cul

tures. Western models of appraisal not only assume direct feedback, open com

munication and more equal relationships between the superordinate and subordinate, but also that organizational members see themselves as individuals

rather than as team or group members. In collectivist societies, however, these assumptions may not hold, and the giving of direct feedback can destroy the

harmony which is considered so important in governing interpersonal relations. The employee may lose 'face' and, with it, personal loyalty to the organization.

The implication of Hofstede's remarks for introducing appraisal into the collectivist societies of East Asia, is that feedback should be given indirectly, T H E O R Y 'through the withdrawing of a favour, or via an intermediary person trusted by both supervisor and employee' (Hofstede, 1995: 157). In other words, appraisal in Hong Kong's schools may need to be adapted from Western approaches relying on direct face-to-face feedback between appraiser and appraisee. It would also probably need to place greater emphasis on peer appraisal. The
significance of culture is particularly highlighted in the management of interpersonal relationships. Professional development and training High priority is accorded in SMI and ECR7 to the professional development of principals, teachers and other key participants. This is rightly seen as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of restructuring policies. Both reports, however, are extremely cursory in detailing the form and delivery such training should take, or the standards or quality to be met. In fact, despite the acknowledgement that the successful implementation of all three reforms rests heavily on professional development, it is noteworthy that in none of the three policy documents is there an account of the quality and type of professional development required.

According to Cheng and Wong (1996: 45), schools in Chinese societies are judged by their 'atmosphere' (xiaofeng) or culture/climate. This means that: Management skills are seldom a concern among Chinese school principals, because they do not believe that schools are managed by skills. They believe that petty skills and techniques in management are no replacement for a good principal who is respected by all the teachers, students and parents as a comprehensive leader-gentleman.

Moral leadership is therefore very important. As Hallinger and Leithwood (1996: 112) state, Traits such as dedication, discipline, strong will and persistence are considered highly important as are age, seniority and experience. This reflects a
different sense of administrative priorities from the performance-oriented normative descriptions of administrative practice that characterize Western nations.

This view of school principalship has clear implications for the knowledge base of programmes for administrator preparation and for understanding how Chinese principals might approach professional development activities based on imparting skills.

It is not only Western educational policies but also professional development programmes that are imported into Asian societies. In this regard, Hallinger and Leithwood (1996: 110) state: Restructuring Hong Kong's Schools Both the content and methods used in the administrative training programmes of developing countries have generally been borrowed more or less directly from Western societies. Although exceptions do exist . . . this has been the case even when there is neither conceptual nor empirical validation of the knowledge base in the receiving culture.

They go on to argue that it is imperative for Asian and other non-Western coun tries to localize the knowledge base underlying administrator preparation. There is a need ‘to explore the empirical basis for the application of theoretical knowledge, craft knowledge and school/system policies’, since ‘learning is a culturally-mediated activity’ (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996: 111). There is also a real danger that even where Asian principals understand and correctly apply Western knowledge they do so in a context of different assumptions, relation
ships and expected behaviours, the outcome of which may be unpredictable.

If it is reasonable to assume that the restructuring of Hong Kong’s school system is predicated on professional development, then more thought needs to be invested in the quality and type required, especially with respect to the knowledge, skills and attitudes of its school leaders. As Muller and Watts (1993: 361) caution, ‘organisations often adopt first-rate strategies that are implemented by managers with second-rate education and training. When these managers work in out-of-date work environments, the result is that the organisations become third-rate.’

Conclusion

The contemporary culture of Hong Kong consists of Western culture grafted on to an otherwise historically ingrained Chinese culture. The Western elements in Hong Kong’s culture are attributable to its exposure to education, religion, law and government associated with a long period of British colonization, and to commerce, trade and tourism, all promoted by Hong Kong’s strategic geographical position. Despite these powerful Western influences operating over a long period of time, the majority of Hong Kong people have maintained their inherent Chineseness.
School system restructuring and the globalization and internationalization of educational policy will predictably continue. The phenomenon of policy cloning, seen as part of the globalization of education, enables the process of policy formulation to be hastily completed, with the consequence that minimal attention is paid to the receptivity of the host culture to the imported policy.

The present analysis finds this to be the case with Hong Kong’s reform initiatives. Autochtony and adaptation will fall on the shoulders of principals and teachers working at school level, where cultural dimensions find expression in the processes of teaching and learning and of leadership and management. As Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) note when citing Hofstede (1976), how people approach space, time, information and communication are shaped by the cultural context and appear broadly to differentiate Eastern (high context) and Western (low context) cultures. They go on to claim, ‘we view culture as having an impact on schools at the institutional level, on the community context, on the beliefs and experiences of administrators, on administrative practice, and on a school’s particular culture’ (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996: 108).
Cultures are changing, especially in East Asia, where rapid economic growth,

the opening up of economies and societies to world markets and competition,

international tourism and the media are all tending to graft Western influences on to indigenous cultures. This is clearly the case in Hong Kong, and is becoming so in China. Younger generations hold different cultural values from their more traditional parents and grandparents. As Cheng and Wong (1996) note,

with the spread of education in East Asian societies involving entire populations rather than just a selected few, the present emphasis on conformity and effort may change. Will the present faith in work effort as a means of achievement be undermined by Western philosophies geared to catering for individual needs and adaptive teaching? Will a tension develop in Asian school systems between progressive teachers who advocate change on the one side and traditional teachers and conservative-minded parents on the other? How much attention will be paid to special needs and heterogeneous abilities? Will schools be expected to adapt to the diversity of their clientele rather than expect the clientele to adapt to schools, as at present? Will the traditional hierarchical structures give way under capitalist market reforms? How will societies like Hong Kong reconcile Eastern
and Western values and trends in their education systems?
Paradoxically, with

the convergence of educational policies and school systems around the world,

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limits to scientific views of administration and on the provision of alternatives.

For example, scientific approaches are said to be incapable of dealing with ethical issues; yet the practice of administrators, managers and policy analysts is irreducibly value-laden, being routinely concerned with questions of what ought to be done or what is the right course of action to advise or follow. Or, since organisational behaviour involves vast networks of intentional human activity, no adequate understanding of organisations seems possible without some appeal to human subjectivity, to the interpretations people place on their own actions and those of others. Yet scientific models of administrative behaviour in the name of objectivity, seek to eschew interpretations, intentions and the inner life of agents in general. In the realm of research too, case studies, cultural studies and ethnographic methods seem able to deliver important detailed knowledge about administrative processes. But again, these are methodologies that are hard to place within a scientific tradition of controlled experiment or statistically significant reproducible results.

Such major differences between the orientation of traditional scientific approaches to educational administration on the one hand and the focus and
direction of often quite systematic rivals or alternatives on the other, clearly lie

behind much of the perceived intellectual turmoil in the field. Educational administration, in common with most of the applied social sciences, has experi

enced a growing appreciation of the methodological weaknesses inherent in pos

itivist construals of science and its methods. Ironically, however, the natural sciences go from strength to strength and hardly any part of modern life remains untouched by the application or use of some aspect of natural science: for example, medicine, transport and communications, to name just a few. So at a time when natural science has never been more successful in explaining and pre

dicting phenomena and in enhancing our understanding of the world, paradoxically its methods and content are increasingly being questioned or even denied in the social sciences.

We suggest a resolution of this paradox as it arises in educational administra

tion. In our view, the paradox is generated principally by the still widespread but mistaken belief that positivism, in its many varieties, can be equated with science. But in philosophy positivism, in all its main forms, is now regarded as false, its key tenets clearly refutable. The most plausible current developments
in philosophy of science and theory of knowledge reflect post-positivist views.

Our point, therefore, is that while many of the criticisms of administrative science in educational administration are sound, they are directed at a narrow target. They discredit only positivist versions of administrative science. An alternative post-positivist science of educational administration, we believe, is not only possible but theoretically and practically desirable. The argument we employ for this conclusion has the following broad structure. First, we acknowledge the importance theoretical writers have attached to epistemology or theory of knowledge, by arguing that the weaknesses critics have identified in traditional administrative science flow from foundationalist epistemological assumptions embedded in traditional views. Instead, we claim that the proper justification of knowledge is structured by coherentist considerations such as theoretical simplicity, consistency, comprehensiveness, conservativeness and fecundity. If the justification of scientific claims, including administrative claims, proceeds according to the coherentist canons of our holistic epistemology, then the scope of science is very much broader than is usually conceived and will fail to sustain significant distinctions between fact and value, the
subjective and the objective, and the alleged 'paradigms' of educational research.

Second, we note that major recent criticisms of traditional administrative theory assume theories that in turn share foundationalist epistemological structure. Critics tend to argue for more or different foundations for knowledge to supplement the deficiencies of positivist science. We advance our case here by offering some coherentist epistemological criticism of the Theory Movement, critical theory, and administrative decision-making.

Educational administration and the theory of knowledge

Since the mid 1970s, educational administration, as an area of study has undergone a fundamental transformation. Although traditional views of science still dominate understandings of theory, research and administrative practice, there are now systematic alternatives to this approach. As a result, educational administration is now theoretically much richer, more diverse and complex than at any other time in its short history.

These developments have not occurred without controversy. For example, following a relatively brief period of intense, indeed unprecedented, academic debate in journals, books and conferences, Daniel Griffiths (1979, p43)
remarked, in 1979, that, 'if educational administration is not in a state of intellectual turmoil, it should be, because its parent, the field of organisational theory, certainly is'.

Griffiths could well have added a number of related areas of applied social science to make his point such as policy analysis (Garson 1986), educational studies and educational research methodology, (Phillips 1987) and social theory (Giddens 1982). These areas, too, were in turmoil, and for much the same reason. The traditional scientific view of knowledge was increasingly perceived to be inadequate as a basis for social science because it ignored values, human subjectivity, and the social and political context in which organisations exist and in which administrative practices occur.

It is unlikely that objections such as these would have been so effective in reshaping the agenda of educational administration were it not for the existence of alternative philosophical perspectives on the nature of knowledge which could function as frameworks for rival systematic conceptions of administration.

And in our view, what has made the alternatives seem credible is the work done in the 1960s by Thomas Kuhn (especially his 1962), Paul Feyerabend (1981)
and other philosophers of science which showed, successfully, that traditional
views of scientific knowledge are inadequate even for the physical sciences.

The importance for administrative theory of philosophy in general and theorems of knowledge, or epistemologies, in particular has been widely acknowledged by writers such as Greenfield (1975), Griffiths (1979) and Willower (1981). In a recent analysis of the state of educational administration conducted as part of a review of contributions to the Handbook of Research on Educational Administration, Willower (1988, pp730-1) identifies six trends representing ‘... directions in which educational administration as field of inquiry appears to be moving’, and he completes the list by remarking: ‘The sixth trend is a turn towards philosophy, and especially towards epistemological questions’. In our view, Willower is perfectly correct. The only caveat we would want to enter - and one with which we expect he would entirely agree - is that philosophy, especially epistemology, has always been significant, though perhaps not widely recognised as such until of late. Epistemology and administrative knowledge

We argue that all major developments in educational administration, from the rise of the Theory Movement (see Culbertson 1981) in the late 1940s onward,
have been driven by philosophical considerations. Although the reasons for this are complex and vary with the particular developments in question, the general pattern is clear enough. For any set of organised interrelated claims that purports to be knowledge, such as a theory of administration, is subject to constraints that THEORY applies to all knowledge claims. However, within philosophy it is epistemology that deals with questions concerning the nature of knowledge, what makes claims knowable, and how they may be justified. Our central argument is that what epistemology counts as a satisfactory justification imposes powerful con straints on the content and structure of administrative theory. Or, in other words, the structure of justification, as specified by epistemology, determines much of the overall framework in which theorising in administration is conducted.

Three major developments in epistemology may be cited to illustrate this point. Logical empiricism, which developed out of, and partly in opposition to, the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle provided the first systematic philosophical influence. (For an overview, see Achinstein and Barker 1969.) In particular, it is Herbert Feigl’s version of logical empiricism which has been critical in the development of the Theory Movement (Feigl
1974) which in turn

has shaped much of mainstream educational administration throughout the

1960s, 1970s, and the 1980s. In it may be found the bases for separating fact

from value and observation from theory, for employing the methodological con

straint of operational definitions, and for seeing administration theory as a clas

cial hypothetico-deductive structure with laws at the top and facts at the

top. (See Feigl 1953.)

The second development is the paradigms approach associated with the work

of Kuhn and Feyerabend. Originally formulated as a systematic critique of

logical empiricist views of scientific knowledge, their work – and especially

Kuhn’s since it is written in non-technical language – has functioned increas

ingly to underwrite attacks on objectivity in the social sciences, and to promote

varieties of relativism and subjectivism. It has been able to do this because, cru

cially, a paradigm is supposed to contain within itself the standards for its own

assessment. (See Kuhn 1962, pp109–110.) In this intellectual climate, if altern

ative views of administration are construed as either different paradigms, or as

developing within different paradigms, then they are presumed to enjoy some

methodological immunity from objections arising from one
particular paradigm, say a systems scientific view. At the extreme, different paradigms are said to be
incommensurable, or unable to be compared or adjudicated (Kuhn 1962, p150).

Two important results of the Kuhn-Feyerabend critique of logical empiricism are alleged to support this extreme view as well as a number of other familiar subjectivist conclusions. The first result is that empirical adequacy is not a sufficient criterion for deciding the merits of competing theories: the same empirical foundation may adequately confirm any number of different theories. The second is that what counts as empirical evidence is partly determined by theory.

Observations are said to be theory laden, mainly because the vocabulary used to describe observations is also part of a wider theoretical vocabulary.

Consistent with the paradigms approach, a further conclusion drawn from these results is that science is significantly non-empirical, that considerations of empirical adequacy place no essential constraints on the construction of scientific theories.

Thomas Greenfield (1978, p8), whose writings have been largely responsible for the subjectivist turn in educational administration, needs to presume something as strong as this in order to say: The process of truth making in the academic world . . . does not differ materially from
what goes into truth making in the world at large. Truth is what scientists agree on or what the right scientists agree on. It is also what they can get others to believe in.

And this, in turn, yields talk of reality being mind-dependent, of us inhabiting different worlds or their being multiple realities all of which outrun any empirical evidence for distinguishing them. It also suggests a certain methodological infirmity when it comes to the question of evidence for adjudicating the merits of different interpretations of human behaviour, the stuff of hermeneutics, ethnographies and cultural studies of organisational life. (See Evers 1988.)

The third, most recent approach, and the one we prefer, acknowledges the soundness of certain key results arising out of the 1960s critiques of logical empiricism; notably the underdetermination of theory by observation and the theory ladenness of observation. However, the correct conclusion to be drawn from these results is not a flight from objectivity and realism. Rather, it is the admission that there is more to evidence than observation or the establishing of mere empirical adequacy (Churchland 1985). After all, any theory can be made to square with empirical findings if we are prepared just to go on adding statements to it. What is more, a contradictory theory will square with any finding whatsoever. On this third approach, which we endorse,
theory choice needs to be guided by a consideration of the extra-empirical virtues possessed by theories. These virtues of system include simplicity, consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness, conservativeness and fecundity, though they are often referred to collectively as coherence considerations or as the elements in a coherentist account of epistemic justification (Quine and Ullian 1978; Williams 1977).

In the following, we want to demonstrate briefly, how the constraints on justification imposed by our preferred coherentist or holistic epistemology can be used to reshape and redefine the substantive content of educational administration in the direction of a new science of administration.

Foundational epistemologies and coherence justification

Since coherentist epistemologies are best seen as responses to the problems of foundational theories of justification it will be useful to begin by sketching a classical solution to the problem of knowledge. How do we know anything at all? What is knowledge and what makes it possible?

Within the classical empiricist tradition the candidates for immediate knowledge - the foundations - have been, in decreasing order of strictness, sense data, first person sensory reports, and observation statements (Hooker 1975).

However, as the history of philosophy readily attests, the
hope of justifying all knowledge in this way is fraught with difficulty, especially in view of some of its consequence for science. For example, many of the objects posited by physics are unobservable, at least directly – such things as time, curved space, electrons and quanta – and are known only through economical theorising about more gross observable consequences. Worse still, the law-like universal generalisations characteristic of our best theories, seem to require as evidence an infinite number of observations. Yet only a finite range of observations is ever available for justifying claims of the form ‘all X are Y’. It would be nice if we had some sound principle of induction that would enable us reliably to infer from a finite set of observations to an infinite set of past, present and future events of the sort that scientific laws can delimit; but no such principle has ever been forthcoming (Popper 1963, especially Ch 1). Because so little of what ordinarily passes for reliable knowledge can be deduced from empirical foundations, classical empiricism functioned more as an attack on knowledge, with scepticism the end result, rather than a rational reconstruction. The crucial methodological worry here is that the knowledge claims ruled out
appear more reliable than the epistemology that rules them out. This is because
an epistemology, in specifying conditions for claims to count as knowledge, also
embodies a theory of the powers of the mind (Churchland 1987). For what we
can know will depend, to some extent, on our cognitive capacities, our skills for
learning and, in general, what sort of creature we are. One weakness of classical
empiricism is that it embodies a singularly implausible empirical psychology of
learning. For example, the process of learning from perception is not one in
which a passive mind more or less faithfully records copies of sensory images,
permuting them (or their decomposable components) according only to the laws
of logic. Our current most sophisticated neurological theories of sensory
information processing tell a vastly more complex story of human knowledge
acquisition (Churchland 1986).
A further methodological worry with the classical view is that it appears to be
unknowable on its own account of itself. To see this recall that the epistemology
makes general or universal claims concerning all (human) knowing. On its own
terms, either these are known directly or indirectly. But classical empiricist epis
temology in all its generality cannot itself be a sensory experience, that is, part
of the foundations, if for no other reasons that only a limited number of relevant observations are ever possible. Nor can it count as derived knowledge because of the problem of induction, the problem of using finite observational evidence to infer a general claim. On our view, these methodological problems suggest that the epistemology is incoherent.

In response, logical empiricism, in common with twentieth century varieties of positivism, reversed the earlier classical relationship between theory and foundational evidence. For logical empiricists like Hempel (1965) or Feigl (1974) observation statements are deduced from theories rather than the other way around. That is, logically, theories imply observations. The relationship between theory and observation is therefore one of testability. EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Roughly speaking, theories, as networks of general and particular empirical statements, are supported by evidence to the degree that the observation statements they imply are confirmed or the tests are successful. As a method for testing hypotheses by matching deduced observation statements against actual observations, logical empiricism is sometimes identified with the hypothetico deductive method.
For present purposes, two clear difficulties which lead to revisions along coherentist lines, may be briefly noted. The first, mentioned earlier, is that the same finite observational base may equally confirm different theories, as pointed out by Karl Popper (1959, p266). Piling up more and more confirming instances, he argued, is of little value when it takes only one disconfirming observation to falsify a theory. It is falsification that is crucial for promoting the growth of knowledge, for improving our theories, not confirmation. Theory change is driven by counter-examples, unexpected observations and predictions that are shown to be false. And our best theories are those that have been subject to the most severe testing but have not been falsified.

However, more is required for excellence of theory than just passing severe tests, for it is never individual hypotheses that are tested but, rather, whole networks of statements (Hesse 1970). And if networks or conjunctions of statements are needed to deduce observation statements for testing, a counter-example, or unexpected observation, shows at most only that one or more statements in the network are faulty. It does not, by itself, show which particular statements are in need of revision, as Quine (1951, p43) has argued.
We can even adjust the troublesome observation statement if we feel that those parts of our theory under threat are more reliable than the theory implicit in making the observation.

How then are we to choose the best theory from among an infinite number of empirically adequate alternatives, all equally supported by whatever they deem to be a foundation for knowledge? Our suggestion is to choose the most coherent theory, that is, the one that enjoys more than any other the extra-empirical virtues of system. (See Lycan 1988; Bonjour 1985.) To see how a coherence approach can work over the question of choosing theories of knowledge, consider again the two methodological weaknesses we noted in classical empiricism. One was that the epistemology could not explain how it could ever be known. It failed to be comprehensive over the matter of self-reference. In seeking to adjudicate on the status of all knowledge claims it assumed an external vantage point which it could never know to be true. Other things being equal, therefore, we would prefer an epistemology that was truly comprehensive; one whose embodied psychology of knowledge acquisition renders it knowable. Once we see an epistemology as itself a set of knowledge claims, we can ask whether the claims it rules out as knowledge are more
reasonable or plausible

than the epistemology that rules them out. For classical empiricism this is an acute methodological issue since it attempts to disqualify all of the most characteristic features of good science on the strength of a very modest empirical psychology used to select foundations for knowledge. It renders this particular programme of foundational justification incoherent by robbing it of its point. The way to avoid the problem is to require an epistemology to embody our most powerful and sophisticated theories of knowledge acquisition. But if we are appealing to our best natural science of human learning to justify knowledge there is no need to bother with foundations. We just appeal to science outright to justify and explain how scientific knowledge is possible. In our view, there is no knowable epistemically secure and privileged vantage point from which the whole of knowledge can be adjudicated. There is just our most coherent scientific practice. Epistemology becomes naturalised, as Quine (1969) suggests, and falls into place as a part of psychology.

How then can we apply coherence criteria to theories of educational administration? In general we require consistency; we would aim for more comprehensive theories — those able to explain more phenomena rather
than fewer, and

with fewer anomalies, counter-examples and falsifying instances rather than

more. We would prefer simplicity to complexity in the sense of using the least

amount of explanatory apparatus to account for the largest range of phenomena.

We prefer theories that do not outrun their own explanatory resources, that do

not posit distinctions for which there is, on their own terms, no evidence.

Finally, we require that administrative theories be learnable in the sense that

they meet the following two demands that were applied specifically to episte

mologies: first, that they cohere with the broad demands of our best naturalistic

accounts of human learning and second, that they are not inconsistent with more

reliable bodies of knowledge elsewhere in our total or global world view. The

net effect of these demands is to require administrative theory to be a part of the

most coherent global theory we can construct. We end up with a science of

administration to the extent that this global theory also includes our most reli

able scientific knowledge (Evers 1988).

Applying these general considerations is always a matter of detailed critique

of particular issues. Coherence justification, because of its global character, is

just a more intricate and difficult business than
foundational justification.

However, since foundationalism is mistaken, there is really no serious altern

tive. The following applications, because of their brevity, are only methodo

gical guides. Nevertheless, they do go some way towards illustrating the use of

a coherentist methodology. The theory movement

In the late 1940s an increasing number of scholars doing research in educational

administration, sought to develop a more systematic and rigorous basis for their

work and findings. (For a historical overview, see Moore 1964.) As an antidote

to the so-called ‘naked empiricism’ (Halpin 1958, p1) of fact finding and anec
dote collection assumed typical of the field, a number of attempts were made to

establish a theoretical structure for administrative theory as it was then being EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION applied in educational studies. The notion of theory that found favour, as we

oted earlier, was Herbert Feigl’s logical empiricist account of scientific theory,

and so what became characteristic of the Theory Movement was the attempt to

structure administrative theory and research according to the strictures of Feigl’s

vision of science and its methods. The results, always energetically pursued, met

with varying degrees of success. We here consider one.

Of the many ways in which the epistemological doctrines of
logical empiricism shaped the early development of the movement, none is perhaps so counter-intuitive and unrepresentative of ordinary administrative thought and practice as the removal of values from the scope of administrative theory.

Administrative theories that disqualify themselves from addressing the value question have, however, a theory/practice problem: theory fails to be relevant for a large part of administrative practice.

This methodological infirmity arises if it is believed that every empirically significant term in a theory is meaningful because it corresponds to some specific range of sensory experience. Terms like ‘chair’ and ‘table’ readily satisfy this condition; terms like ‘good’ or ‘just’ appear problematic. Similarly, we have a fair idea of what counts as favourable or unfavourable evidence for testing the claim ‘there is a chair in my office’; for a claim like ‘that person was treated unjustly’ there is a difficulty. Essentially the difficulty is this. All the sensory evidence we may ever gather for the claim will merely describe how the person was in fact treated, the facts of the matter, as it were. But the injustice is not a fact there to be observed. It is not some kind of object that produces sensations of injustice. Rather, so the story goes, the basis for our
judgment of injustice

resides in our subjective response to the observational evidence. So if cognitive

significance resides in term by term correspondence with specific sensory

experiences, or even in testability then, as Hooker (1975, p191) remarks in his

critique of empiricism’s theory of language, ‘... empiricists, like positivists,

offer no cognitive content to ethics, aesthetics, religion, metaphysics, or indeed

to philosophy ...’ Stripped of its cognitive content, moral deliberation and

judgement collapse down into mere affective preference.

We will outline here just one line of response to this argument. We can begin

by noting that if the argument is sound our knowledge of scientific concepts like

electron or quantum is as problematic as our knowledge of moral concepts since

neither many of the theoretical terms of science nor the sentences in which they

figure correspond to any definite range of observations. The demand that all con

cepts be operationally defined – that is, defined as the operations to be per

formed in some test – is the traditional way of meeting this difficulty (Hempel

1966, pp88–97). Hence the common practice of attempting to give operational

definitions in traditional science of administration. (See Griffiths 1959, pp75–91,

for examples.) However, strictly speaking, every purported
definition admits of
an infinite number of alternative possible operations, which
would make a
scientific vocabulary potentially limitless, and hence
unlearnable. To be sure,
many of the differences would seem trivial; for example
distinguishing ‘length’ as measurement with a wood rule from ‘length’ as
measurement with a plastic
rule. But the distinction between trivial and non-trivial
differences is a theo
retical distinction, drawn with the aid of an antecedent grasp of the concept to
be operationally defined. This is an instance of a logical empiricist epis
temological procedure outrunning its posited resources.
The source of this difficulty is the belief that a specific range of sensory
experience exhausts the meaning of a term. Once we need to
use theory (as turns
out to be the case in foundational justification) to select the relevant sensory
experiences, we end up blurring the distinction between observation and theory.
Since the portions of theory being used are assumed to be cognitively signific
ant, in our view it is more reasonable to suppose that the significance of more
theoretical terms like ‘electron’ or ‘quantum’ resides in their conceptual role
within the theory rather than in any immediate connections with experience.
The view we wish to defend is that moral terms like ‘good’
or 'right' are significant in the same way that the most theoretical terms of science are. In realist fashion, we assume the unobservables of science exist because they are posited by the most coherent global account we can give of our interpreted experience (Quine 1960). Similarly, we suppose a moral theory and its associated judgments to be warranted to the extent that they also are part of the same global theory. On a coherentist approach to scientific knowledge there is therefore no sharp epistemological boundary to be drawn between administrative theory on the one hand and a large class of naturalistic moral theories and their normative claims on the other. Critical theory and administration among the many critics of traditional science of administration are those who have been influenced by the writings of Jürgens Habermas. There is now a considerable body of literature in educational administration that might be regarded as falling within the critical theory perspective. (See Foster 1986, for an overview.) Although critical theory approaches to administration are complex and multi-faceted, covering ethical, political, social, linguistic and personal dimensions, at least one strand of Habermas's thought that has been developed
and applied to administrative contexts is uncompromisingly epistemological and lends itself readily to some brief coherentist remarks here.

We have in mind Richard Bates’s thesis that a science of administration is essentially manipulative and concerned with social control (Bates 1980, 1983).

In developing this claim Bates draws on a reading of the early work of Habermas for an understanding of science; particularly the epistemological theses of Knowledge and Human Interests and the ‘General Perspective’ lecture published as the Appendix to the English translation (Habermas 1972).

In this work, Habermas (1972, p308) identifies three ‘knowledge-constitutive’ interests: the technical presumed by the empirical analytic sciences; the practical underlying the historical-hermeneutic sciences, and the emancipatory represented by critical education social science. Traditional (so called positivist) science which Bates, following Habermas, identifies with empirical-analytic science, is seen as hypothetico deductive after the Nagel/Hempel empiricist model, with predictive success a measure of technical exploitability. For Habermas (1972, p309) . . . theories of the empirical sciences disclose reality subject to the constitutive interest in the possible securing and expansion, through information, of feedback-monitored action. This is the cognitive interest in technical control over objectified processes.

In Bates’s view, the technical scientific definitions of
knowledge and rationality are far too narrow for social science and need to be supplemented by critical dis-
course. A suitable broadening, he suggests, . . . is argued at length by Habermas, who contends that the annexation of rationality by dominant scientific, technical, manipulative interests has prevented the continuation of an historical discourse directed towards a rational administration of the world . . . (Bates 1980, p68)

He goes further, asserting that: ‘as currently conceived by professor and profes-
sional alike, educational administration is a technology of controls’ (Bates 1983, p46).

And finally, in summarising a robust and systematic indictment of poor philo-
sophy for this state of affairs, he declares: The inadequacies of the hypothetico-deductive model of positivistic science and the positivist, apolitical model of society were argued to be intellectual products that provided the illusions necessary for the continued employment of techniques of hierarchical administrative control that perpetuate the injustices of an unequal society. (Bates 1983, p30)

There are a number of things that are puzzling about this account of science and administration, especially in view of the fact that Bates thinks traditional empiri-
cist accounts of the practice and conduct of science are mistaken. For if the traditional view of science is wrong, and we know that it is thanks to the work of Quine, Kuhn, Feyerabend, Hesse and others, then the story Habermas tells of empirical science being constituted by technical interests of control and manipu
lation is also wrong. This is because Habermas’s account of empirical-analytic science is as much dependent on traditional empiricist theories of science as the traditional science of administration that Bates is using Habermas’s machinery to criticise. In more recent work Habermas recognises some of these difficulties.

(See Hesse 1982.)

One attempt at avoiding the major incoherence threatening knowledge constiutive interests is worth briefly noting. The key move would involve distinguishing between traditional accounts of science being wrong on the one hand and people acting as though these wrong accounts are true on the other. A revised Habermasian argument might then run as follows: If traditional views of science (positivism, logical empiricism and the like) were true then technical control and manipulation would occur. Therefore, if everyone (professor and practitioner alike) acted as though they were true then technical control and manipulation would occur.

The missing premise in this argument is a subjectivist claim to the effect that my having a particular theory of the world somehow makes the world that way, or brings it into line with my theory. This is perhaps an extravagant extension of the reasonable epistemological thesis that all observation is theory laden. To see the limits of the thesis, however, consider another example. Suppose, for the moment, that the dominant orthodoxy concerning water says
that it flows uphill.

We know that the orthodoxy is wrong but we also know that if water did flow uphill it would require a special form of technical handling. It does not follow that if everyone acted as though water flowed uphill it would require a special form of technical handling. Presumably, water would continue to defy orthodoxy in a range of ways.

Critical theorists may be sympathetic to certain subjectivist theses since bad theory may influence humans more than it influences water. But they cannot be too sympathetic to this one without undermining the reality of human suffering and injustice, or the objectivity of the class and political analyses that underwrite their approaches to human emancipation. Administrative decision making

The last two examples of epistemological critique were directed mainly at views of the content and structure of administrative theorising. Our final example will draw attention to the importance of epistemological views for organisational design.

The classic work in the field of administration is undoubtedly Herbert Simon’s Administrative Behavior, first published in 1945. In that work Simon identifies rational decision-making as the locus of administrative theory. As against the prescription to make optimal decisions, the
cornerstone of Simon’s theory of decision-making is the bounded or limited nature of human rationality.

We satisfice rather than optimise. He identifies three sources of limitation that organisational structures would need to address to enhance decision-making.

First, an individual is limited in skills: dexterity, reaction times, powers of computation, thought and understanding. A second limitation concerns individual values and the understanding of organisational values and goals. Finally, there are limits to relevant knowledge, both knowledge of theory and knowledge of all the conditions that must obtain for a sound application of theory (Simon 1976, pp34–41).

Simon is reluctant to endorse any ‘principles of administration’, for enhancing administrative efficiency in advance of specific analyses of case by case administrative arrangements for reducing these limitations. Nevertheless, a particular approach to administrative reform is suggested by his theory. For example, if the growth of knowledge is a matter of accumulating more and more information, as the empiricism behind Administrative Behavior implies, a satisficing strategy will have a characteristic emphasis. For if optimal decision
making requires optimal initial information inputs to best
theory, a less than
optimal or second best approach will involve not a
difference in kind but a dif
ference in degree of ambition. Resulting administrative
arrangements will place
a premium on ensuring the highest practicable quality of
initial input into the
actual point of decision-making. Depending on cases,
reforms may focus on
ensuring suitable concentrations of expertise,
communications structures aimed
at enhancing the availability of that expertise, and so on.
But on a coherentist epistemology, very large changes in
knowledge are seen to
occur through the promotion of a systematic virtue like
simplicity in a theory
network that includes among its statements a number of
theory laden contrary
observations. For the big gains in knowledge appear to flow
more from the theo
retical resolution of error than the incremental
accumulation of data. Given that the
existence of limitations to our knowledge is likely to
promote the occurrence of
error, a case by case analysis of decision making may show
greater gains to be had
by the promotion of error correction at the expense - given
only finite resources -
of extensive attention to error prevention. Of course, in
any administrative design
for sound long term decision making there is always some
trade-off, in the alloca
tion of resources, between error prevention and error correction. But a theory of
learning, the core of which conceives knowledge as growing through a process of
conjecture and refutation, is more sensitive to the possibility of learning through
mistakes. The option of securing efficiencies in decision making through the rapid
correction of error becomes, on this approach, a more explicit methodological guide
to defining a suitable prevention/correction trade-off. Empirical studies by Chris
Argyris and co-workers (Argyris 1982; Argyris and Schon 1978) show some of the
conditions under which error correction by administrative feedback loop structures
is more valuable. Not surprisingly, these are where the organisational environment
is unstable or undergoing rapid change; where organisational knowledge and
expectations are most likely to be falsified, and where there is a greater premium on
more rapid acquisition or growth of knowledge.
This epistemological consideration suggests that theories of organisational learn
ing can impose important constraints on the administrative structures of decision
making. Simon’s position in Administrative Behavior does not deny this. However,
in noting the relevance of epistemology for administrative theory it is sufficient to
observe, for our purposes, that significant differences in organisational consequences
can flow from adopting divergent theories of human knowledge acquisition. THEORY

Summing up, in applying coherentist considerations very briefly to some

issues concerning the Theory Movement, critical theory, and a view of decision

making, we suggested a number of conclusions. Since our holistic epistemology

places severe limits on attempts to partition knowledge into different compart-

ments, we challenged both the fact/value distinction posited by logical empiri-
cism and the three-fold division in knowledge posited by Bates’s use of the

earlier work of Habermas. Both challenges have extensive consequences for the

administrative theories that employ these partitions in knowledge. Finally, we

explored some organisational consequences of different views of the growth of

knowledge on the question of enhancing structures for decision making. Note

1 This chapter is based on parts of the Preface and Chapter One of CW Evers and G

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on Educational Administration. New York: Longman. T H E O R Y 26 FROM STRUGGLING TO JUGGLING Towards a redefinition of the field of educational leadership and management Ron Glatter

In this article I will discuss and attempt to draw connections between four of the major current preoccupations within our field of study:

- the framework for educational policy-making;
- the technical-rational approach to leadership and management;
- ‘best practice’ in management outside education;
- professional development, research and the contribution of higher education.

In each of these areas there are currently major challenges, particularly for those of us working in academic settings within the UK context. I will indicate those which I find most salient, and where relevant will suggest what responses we might make to them and what shifts in our own focus and practice might be appropriate. The framework for policy-making

The emphasis in much research following the 1988 Education Reform Act has been on the effects of devolution (e.g. Bullock and Thomas, 1997; Levacic, 1998a) and marketization (e.g. Whitty, 1997; Woods et al., 1998). This is not surprising and is understandable, given our focus on leadership and management and our consequent major research objective of discovering the impact of policy on practice at institutional and community level.

Arguably, however, the growing power and influence of the central state has been a more significant trend of the past decade than either
devolution or marke
tization, yet scholarly work in our field has rarely focused on it directly (Bottery, 1998; Riley, 1998a). Maclure (1993: 7) charted the rise of state centralism in education since 1944 and predicted the loss of any meaningful political contri
bution by locally elected members in a system ‘directed by an authoritarian central government’. Raab’s (1994: 16) analysis of the changing governance of education led him to conclude that The uprooting of old ‘partnership’ understandings in favour of newer ones operating at several levels . . . can be seen as government’s attempt to restructure networks within the education system that will be more reliable instruments of policy implementation, or at least less resistant to central initiatives.

Jenkins’s (1995) excoriating but well-researched critique chronicled the advance of the central state in numerous fields including education. The change within a single generation has been remarkable. In 1970, a prominent local authority education officer described the fragmentation and dif
fusion of the English system and lamented that there appeared to be no clear sources of power from which changes could spring (Birley, 1970: 114). The system was until the 1980s widely regarded as one of the most decentralized in the world. Today it is among the most centralized of the advanced industrial countries.
The trend appears if anything to have intensified since the coming to office of

the Labour government in May 1997. At a press conference to launch the School

Standards and Framework Bill in December 1997, the Secretary of State for

Education and Employment, David Blunkett, was reportedly asked why the
government was imposing unprecedented central government control over local

authority schools. His quoted response indicated that it was . . . because our experience led us to understand that central government carried responsibility without power. It would be to delude the electorate to suggest the Government could deliver change without the mechanisms to deliver it. We are taking the necessary structural powers to ensure the people on the ground do their job. (Carvel, 1998)

This quote presents an argument for further centralization in terms of securing

the mechanisms to achieve strategic objectives and promote the effective implementation of national policy. Most people would regard the achievement of
greater coherence, clearer outcomes and fulfilled promises as desirable. Prob
lems, however, may be thought to attach to the extent of central control now
being established.

The history of national policy-making has been erratic and often short

termist. The public profile of education has risen sharply since the early 1980s,

with the result that successive waves of ‘reform’ have been introduced in appar
ently shortening cycles, often before the previous reform
has been properly evaluated and without the intention of building upon the knowledge and expertise gained from it. Stronach and Morris (1994), who proposed the label ‘policy hysteria’ for this process on the basis of their experience with projects such as the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) and Compact, argued that reform initiatives tended to be ignored as their political significance waned and that ‘the speed and overlap of reform waves meant that few of these initiatives could succeed’ (p. 7). It remains to be seen whether a still more powerful central government can now operate a more consistent, evolutionary policy process.

Such ‘policy hysteria’ is clearly not a UK prerogative. Fullan, writing from a North American perspective, considered the impact of this phenomenon on school principals: ‘Not only are the demands fragmented and incoherent, but even good ideas have a short shelf life as initiatives are dropped in favour of the latest new policy. Overload in the form of a barrage of disjointed demands fosters dependency’ (Fullan, 1998: 6). He argues that such dependency is debilitating, and that successful renewal in modern conditions demands that the bonds of dependency be broken. We will return to this argument later.
Many of the policy developments are justified by reference to the assumed connection between educational attainments in basic subjects and our national economic performance. However, a careful study of the available international data concluded that there was no evidence to support such a link and that ‘any generalisations about the assumed inadequacies of English education are unfounded’, adding that ‘what could be a sober and informed debate about English education is in danger of being drowned out by the simplistic and often shrill rhetoric which seems to dominate policy making in education’ (Robinson, 1998: 9 and 10).

This ‘simplistic and shrill rhetoric’, which contributes to what I have elsewhere called the ‘rather monolithic ideas context’ faced by educational managers (Glatter, 1997: 106), includes key slogans which are frequently repeated and amplified through the media. One example is the contention that ‘standards matter more than structures’ (DfEE, 1997: 12). Such a dichotomy surely needs to be questioned, not least by people working in the management field, given our understandings of the ways in which performance is powerfully affected by organization. ‘Flaws in the structure . . . have consequences for education, and if they are not tackled and improvements made, the learning opportunities and
experiences of children will be adversely affected’ (Woods et al., 1998: 213).

Another is the claim that a context of social and economic deprivation is no excuse for poor school standards. The complex relationship between social disadvantage, educational opportunity and school improvement has been reviewed by Mortimore and Whitty (1997) among others.

The signs at present are that the dominance of central government in education and elsewhere will grow further. The position of local authorities, for example, given their lack of constitutional protection, appears entirely conditional on the government’s assessment of their performance, defined in its own terms: ‘If you are unwilling or unable to work to the modern agenda then the government will have to look to other partners to take on your role’ (Blair, 1998: 22). The significance of this appears far-reaching. There may be substantial devolution to individual educational institutions, but even the largest of these is too small to provide a credible source of countervailing power. In this scenario, fears that local authorities and school leaders are becoming simply agents or instruments of national policy (Riley, 1998b) have substance.

Yet there appears to be a paradox at the heart of
government policy regarding governance, as Marquand (1998: 21) has pointed out: on the one hand the style of policy-making is centralist and authoritarian, resting on the premise ‘that government at the centre not only can, but should remake society to fit an a priori grand design’, while on the other there exists a radical constitutional agenda pointing the way ‘towards a profound transformation of the British state’. There appear to be acute tensions in the reform of governance between a centralist and a more pluralist conception, and these tensions are clearly reflected in the proposals for the development of local government (DETR, 1998).

Numerous issues relevant to educational management surround this set of developments, but perhaps two stand out. One is philosophical and normative: to whom should the schools (and other educational institutions) belong in an advanced modern democracy (Riley, 1998a)? I will not seek to tackle this here, while fully recognizing its significance. The second is much more pragmatic. How well suited is such a system of educational governance to respond to the current and forthcoming challenges of educational leadership and management?

This issue is touched on at various points in what follows. The technical-rational approach

The perspective underlying much of the current approach to
government of the public services is that of performance management (Grayson, 1997), an attempt to deal with the problem neatly encapsulated by Drucker, when he wrote about managing non-profit organizations, in his question: ‘What is the bottom line when there is no “bottom line”? ’ (Drucker, 1992: 81). Target setting, performance indicators, standards, performance reviews, audit and inspection are key concepts within the approach, which was well exemplified in the White Paper Modern Local Government: In Touch with the People (DETR, 1998). The well-publicized requirement of the Treasury to be given evidence of outputs in return for the allocation of additional resources is undoubtedly an important current driver of this movement.

One phenomenon which has emerged from this development is what Power (1997) called the ‘audit explosion’, which has left very few people in the public sector untouched by the need to give more and better accounts and which has led to many new career opportunities in the audit and inspection fields. He argued that what is involved is ‘ritualized processes of verification’ (p. 14) with image management and legitimation as key purposes. ‘Worse still, audits may turn organisations on their heads and generate excessive...
preoccupations with, often
costly, auditable process. At the extreme, performance and
quality are in danger
of being defined largely in terms of conformity to such
process’ (p. 143). T H E O R Y
These processes are, of course, essentially
technical-rational, and our field
has long been concerned with the significance and
limitations of rational models
(for example, Bush, 1996; Wise 1977). Moreover, the
symbolic importance of
rational models as a basis for policy-making ‘in a secular
industrial society
which believes in technology and rationality’ (Colebatch,
1998: 108) is hardly
surprising. Two relatively recent developments are, on the
one hand, the very
substantial growth of technical-rational approaches and, on
the other, the much
greater awareness of turbulence and complexity in the
macro-environment. In
this context, Samier’s analysis of the bureaucratic
language of technical-rational
ality is interesting. She refers to the expression of
ideologies or myths ‘elevated
to inviolability’ such as ‘teamwork’ and ‘high standards’,
and also to the use of
such language in ‘helping to maintain a belief that order
still prevails in a world
in which chaos threatens to break through’ (1997: 420).
It is very important to stress that I am not implying here
that rational-tech
nical approaches are without value nor that their public
use is always only for 

purposes of legitimation. Indeed, I have referred elsewhere 
(The Open Univer 

sity, 1996: 85) to the potential value of work such as that 
of the National Audit 

Office on strategic planning in schools. There is evidence 
that OFSTED’s ‘ratio 

nal’ resource planning model may have beneficial effects on 
curriculum and 

assessment planning in primary schools (Glover et al., 
1997). The issue is rather 

how far the tightly coupled, performance-based system which 
the present 

government (like its predecessor) has been pursuing is 
likely to be viable, and 

for how long. 

In her review of a range of models of managing change, 
Ouston (1998) 

argues that those which make ‘rational’ and ‘linear’ 

assumptions are most suit 

able for stable environments and conditions in which the 
outcomes of manage 

ment action are regarded as predictable (see also Bell, 
1998). In the coming 

years it will be extremely difficult to meet the first of 
these conditions even if 

some of us still retain a degree of faith in the second. 
Hargreaves goes consider 

ably further. He comments (in terms similar to Samier’s 
quoted above) that 

‘Politicians play to people’s fears and dreams, and in 
particular their fears of 

social disintegration and dreams of stability and cohesion’
(Hargreaves, 1997: 11), and argues that the discontinuity and pluralism endemic in (post)modern society will render the notion of a distinctive and coherent state-managed system meaningless within a relatively short time, to be replaced by polymorphic or much more variegated educational provision, loosely coordinated and monitored from the centre.

Such a set of developments appears to be partly foreshadowed within current policy. Alongside the attempt to apply a ‘tight’ control over much of the school system, the arrangements for Education Action Zones, EAZs (DfEE, 1998: 3) to operate a set of licensed experiments, or ‘testbeds for innovation’, may emerge as the start of a response to one of the major weaknesses of the system as it has developed over the past decade—the tendency to discourage and marginalize innovation. This trend, ironic in view of the explicit policy goal of promoting FROM STRUGGLING TO JUGGLING choice and diversity, was clearly evident from our work on the Parental and School Choice Interaction (PASCI) study at The Open University as well as from other work on choice and competition (Glatter et al., 1997). A more competitive system does not of itself increase diversity between schools or encourage innovative approaches to education . . . Innovation is and has been undertaken by schools, but it is increasingly running counter to the centralising trends of educational policy.
With the encouragement of innovation there need also to be structures that facilitate their critical evaluation and dissemination. (Woods et al., 1998: 209, 213)

The strategy on Education Action Zones is in alignment with prescriptions from chaos and complexity theory to tolerate parallel developments, permit experimentation and provide organizational ‘slack’ to develop future frame works and processes alongside existing ones (Turner, 1996).

In general, little attention has been given to broader macro-environmental developments and their potential implications for educational leadership and management (Caldwell, 1997; Davies, 1997). We have tended to stay close to the action in the here-and-now. The uncertainties which are associated with ‘futures thinking’ and the danger of being trapped in highly speculative activities gives substance to this approach. However, some trends are now quite well established, for example, the significant changes in the nature of work and the rapidly growing impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on education. The report of the ‘Redefining Work’ initiative of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) (Bayliss, 1998) has shown how with careful analysis and strategy development it is possible to respond creatively to such major challenges. There are significant implications both for leadership and research which
we need to pursue urgently. The report gives substance to the truisms about the constancy of change and about educators and learners facing a much more turbulent, complex and fluid future. Its conclusion about education—that ‘we are still preparing people for a world that is fast disappearing’ (p. 68)—and its call for a new educational philosophy and a radical reappraisal of the system ‘covering structures, standards, processes and outcomes’ (p. 50) are clearly not the last word, but they are surely topics that need to be addressed. The RSA report’s prescriptions for recasting the curriculum and assessment as well as school organization and the role of teachers in initial education would, if accepted, pose a considerable challenge to both the prevailing technical-ratio
nal model of performance management and to the social conservative, traditionalist ideology which has underlain policy on state schooling for most of its history (Edwards and Whitty, 1997). Whether such a transformation would be politically feasible, especially given the attachment of many politicians, professional interest groups, parents and voters to perceptions of education based firmly on their own schooldays (Levin and Riffel, 1997), must remain in considerable doubt. Nevertheless I hope it is evident that this is a key area of work for
the future, and that there is a contribution to be made by those with expertise in

educational leadership and management. Best practice outside education

The connection between leadership and management (both in theory and practice) outside and within education has been an issue for debate from the beginning of educational management studies in the UK. I have previously discussed the notion of ‘best practice outside education’ (Glatter, 1997) and it seemed worth revisiting it here, both because of its relevance to the theme of this paper, and also because of its continuing use by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in connection with their training programmes for headteachers. Thus, for example, one of the key principles of the national Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) is that ‘it draws on the best leadership and management practice inside and outside education’ (TTA, 1998: 4).

I drew attention previously to some of the difficulties surrounding the term. ‘As in education itself, there are different approaches and contending schools of thought’ (Glatter, 1997: 187). It is also important to be clear whether we are referring to the literature of general management or to actual practice outside education, since these often diverge. Are we assessing best practice as portrayed by acad
mics and other writers in the management field or by business (or other) practit

tioners? Another distinction is that between best practice now and best practice in the future—for example, the RSA report on redefining work makes suggestions regarding the appropriate nature of management in virtual and near-virtual organizations (Bayliss, 1998: 66).

Bearing these caveats in mind, it is striking that reports of or prescriptions for good practice outside education do not generally relate to performance management or other aspects of the dominant rationalistic paradigm within education.

Indeed, it is because of dissatisfaction with the results of elaborate corporate planning that, according to Kay (1993: 356), the familiar idea that ‘successful strategies are often opportunistic and adaptive rather than calculated and planned’ has recovered ground.

Most of the reports focus on the key importance of the management of people and of human relationships. For example, a study of a large sample of employees by the Industrial Society emphasized the severe limitations of command-and-control and centralized approaches to leadership in modern conditions, prescribing instead ‘liberating’ leadership, with a focus on trust, integrity, fairness and
belief in self and in other people (Turner, 1998). There are claims that some com-
panies have gone so far as to reject the job title ‘manager’ in favour of ‘coach’ (Baker, 1998)—as in professional football—raising the intriguing possibility that the roles of ‘manager’ and ‘teacher’ may be merging in at least some parts of industry. However, one research-based study suggests that the practice does not generally match the rhetoric, that the claimed modernization of employment relationships has not taken place and that there has instead been an intensifica-
tion of authoritarian control systems in the UK (Gallie et al., 1998).

Of particular interest is a longitudinal study of 67 companies for the Institute of Personnel and Development by the London School of Economics and Sheffield University, which related company practices in various areas to ‘bottom line’ performance measures such as productivity and profits—appar-
tently a pioneering study in the UK. The results indicated that effective human resource management (HRM) practices contribute far more, in statistical terms, to company performance than do strategy, quality, technology and research and development combined. Such practices were found in only a minority of organi-
zations studied, but in these it was clear that HRM and
employee commitment, satisfaction and participation were the central elements in their business strategy. Our data suggest this latter orientation is the correct approach for most effectively promoting company profitability and productivity. Satisfied employees are more likely to co-operate with each other and to perform beyond stipulated job requirements in order to promote organisational effectiveness. (Patterson et al., 1997: 21)

Similar results have apparently been obtained in the USA by the Gallup organisation, this time using hard measures of employee retention and customer satisfaction as well as of profitability and productivity (Caulkin, 1998).

The increasing emphasis on people management is reflected in the growing literature on the significance in modern conditions of the 'intellectual capital' of organizations (e.g. Allday, 1998; Stewart, 1998), with its implications for valuing, motivating and developing staff. A study of workplace learning with 120 managerial, professional and technical staff in engineering, business and health care drew attention to the tension between performance management systems, which focus on short-term results and key activities which directly affect 'the bottom line', and a human resource development approach focused on the development of staff capability over a longer time scale. (Eraut et al., 1998: 31; emphases in original)

Research on leadership in education mirrors that reported in the general management literature in pointing to the importance of the quality of relationships and communication processes (Hallinger and Heck, 1998) and this is supported by
teachers’ perceptions of the features of effective leadership (Weindling and Earley, 1987). People working in education like to think, of course, that this emphasis on the human factor is a special characteristic of our service. Morrison (1998: 227), however, argues that commercial companies are often more person-centred than schools.

**Theory**
The swing in business towards human resource development as the key to productivity through the fulfilment and self-actualisation of employees has been taking place for decades. The business literature was seen to take with the utmost seriousness the twin notions of organizational development and human resource development in deliberate, planned and supported ways. The achievement of productivity was seen to reside in these rather than simply the development and use of new technologies.

This is Morrison’s conclusion from a survey of the applicability of ideas from business to educational settings. It may be more accurate in respect of the general management literature than of a wide spectrum of business practice.

Nevertheless it appears likely that the notion of ‘best practice outside education’ in the minds of educational policy-makers relates more to technical-rational approaches such as performance-related measurement than to human resource and process issues. Despite the difficulties of defining ‘best practice’, the above suggests that this perception needs to be seriously questioned. Professional development, research and the contribution of higher education A key conclusion suggested by the previous analyses is that continuing profes
sional development (CPD) for educational leadership should take ‘the whole
job’ as its central focus (Eraut, 1998). In an earlier article prepared before the
National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) got under way
(Glatter, 1996), I referred to the reaction of a very successful and experienced
headteacher who, on seeing the first draft of the TTA’s standards for headteach-
ers, said ‘Where’s juggling?’ It appeared to me then that the standards were in
danger of fostering an excessively atomized and disaggregated approach which
would not reflect the reality of the job and that insufficient attention was being
given to the integration of the various leadership and management capabilities.

Also, as experience of elaborately detailed approaches to CPD accreditation in
other fields had shown, it ran the risk of producing ‘a system which is mono-
lithic, mechanistic and expensive to operate, which makes the recognition of
existing skills and achievements unnecessarily difficult and which can deter suit-
able candidates from coming forward’ (Glatter, 1996: 28).

The argument against close specification does not rest only on its cost and
bureaucratic implications. As Bolman and Deal (1991: 16) maintain, such speci-
fication ignores the fact that ‘in a rapidly changing world . . . the behaviours that
work today may be irrelevant tomorrow'. In a fluid world, emphasis needs to be
placed on the more holistic meta-competences (such as judgement, analytical
ability, self-management, self-evaluation, the ability to learn from experience
and of course juggling!) as well as specific competences (Brown, 1994). Levin
and Riffel studied the problematic link between environmental change and FROM STRUGGLING TO JUGGLING
organizational response in Canadian school districts, and concluded that part of
the problem of low responsiveness in education lay in the training of educators
which ‘tends to focus on technical skills of managing the system rather than on
conceptual analysis of the system or discussion of alternatives to it’ (1997: 53).
So far as the evolving framework of national programmes of leadership
development is concerned, some of the ‘lessons’ suggested in this article are
being applied. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that the Leadership Programme
for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) has been designed and developed (by Hay
McBer, The Open University and the National Association of Headteachers) on
the basis of a model which is
• based on research undertaken over a considerable period in a variety of contexts,
• founded on the development of meta-competences rather
than isolated skills, and
- centred on human resource development approaches.

This programme could well make a significant contribution to tackling the issue
of achieving adequate integration that I raised in relation to the NPQH. Whether
my concerns prove justified in relation to the latter must await detailed and
hopefully genuinely independent evaluations.

A second issue that I mentioned prior to the start of the NPQH related to
pluralism. 'The framework needs to be sufficiently open and flexible to allow
different routes to the qualification. No-one has a complete answer, and every
one involved can expect to be on a steep learning curve' (Glatter, 1996: 28).

This issue is closely bound up with the growing centralization across the
system as a whole. It is given added point by the control which the TTA is now
exercising, not just over national programmes like the NPQH and the LPSH,
but also over funding for other programmes in educational leadership and man
agement such as award-bearing courses provided by higher education institu
tions (HEIs). The latter, where they are receiving TTA funding, are to be
subject to inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). This
raises a major question: will debate about, and the critical analysis of, govern
ment policy be allowed within TTA-funded and OFSTED-inspected CPD pro
grammes in educational leadership and management? This is particularly
apposite in the light of the constancy of change and the importance in this sce
nario of having a critical edge in training programmes (see the quotation given
from Levin and Riffel, 1997). The tacit, if not the overt, pressures in this situ
ation are likely to be towards convergence rather than divergence (Lukes, 1974)
with the consequent likelihood of limited and inadequate responses to the chal
lenges presented by the macro-environment.
The issue of pluralism is also relevant to the nature of professionalism in
education. The growing central control of CPD is differentiating education
more sharply from other professional and occupational groups who are free to T H E O R Y
choose from a more diverse range of offerings in universities supported by
funding from the Higher Education Funding Councils. The trend for an
increasing amount of CPD to be provided through contract arrangements
against explicit, centrally determined criteria raises significant issues of
accountability and responsibility (Mahony and Hextall, 1997). It also fosters
among both providers and participants a relationship of dependency with the
centre which, as Fullan (1998: 8) argued, is not well attuned to dealing with

the present challenges. Leaders for change get involved as learners in real reform situations. They craft their own theories of change, constantly testing them against new situations. They become critical consumers of management theories, able to sort out promising ideas from empty ones. They become less vulnerable to and less dependent on external answers.

I suspect that most providers in higher education would strongly assent to this quote and its implied critique of heavily directive forms of CPD for educational leadership. However, it also presents a significant set of issues for such providers, which are relevant to our increasing dependency and loss of control.

Our expertise is strongly identified with what Eraut (1997: 552) has called ‘Type A’ or ‘propositional knowledge, codified and stored in publications, libraries, databases, etc., subject to quality control by editors and peer review’. Developments in the governance of research are aimed at strengthening this expertise and sharpening still further the focus upon it. We are not widely seen as being proficient in supporting learners to enhance their Type B knowledge or ‘personal knowledge—i.e. what people bring to practical situations that enables them to think and perform... It includes propositional knowledge along with procedural and process knowledge, tacit knowledge, and experiential knowledge in episodic
memory’ (Eraut, 1997: 552). (Eraut views skills as part of knowledge rather than separate from it.) This Type B knowledge is closely related to the notion of meta-competences discussed earlier. If this formulation and my interpretation of its significance are accepted, a key issue arises: if our main focus is perceived as being upon the development of Type A knowledge, how do we ‘position’ our selves in relation to Type B knowledge vis-a-vis our CPD programmes in educational leadership and management?

A further point concerns the transfer of learning. Eraut (1997) concludes from his work on knowledge use that learning to use propositional knowledge, and generic skills, in a work context presents a considerably greater challenge than learning to use them within a formal educational situation. Therefore the transfer process itself and how it can be supported or accelerated becomes a key issue for CPD providers if they are to be able to secure credibility, and it is arguably at least as significant as the selection of ‘content’ for programmes.

Once again, this is not an area in which our expertise (to the extent to which it exists) is generally acknowledged. FROM STRUGGLING TO JUGGLING

It need hardly be said that these are not new issues, and there have been
numerous attempts to wrestle with them, both practically through methods such
as action learning, project work and problem-based education and, less often,
conceptually (e.g. Hall, 1998; Levac˘ic´, 1998b). However, they seem to be
becoming ever more salient as they are juxtaposed with other developments
which themselves present notable challenges. Brown, for example, writing from
a management education perspective, has suggested that both competences and
meta-competences pose problems for management educators. In the case of
competences, this is because of their technical-rational features, the sense of cer
tainty and predictability on which they are based, implying (as with the NPQH)
‘that managerial skills can be rendered universal, standardized to explicit cri
teria, taught (or trained), and clearly and fairly measured and assessed’ (Brown,
1994: 297). The problem with meta-competences is precisely the opposite—
their uncertainty and ambiguity: ‘Meta-competences are problematic because
they are fluid, dynamic, often intuitive, aesthetic and innate. But they can be
learned, they cannot be explicitly taught’ (ibid.). Neither of these key modern
concepts appears strongly aligned with the production of propositional know
ledge which is seen as the distinctive expertise of HEIs.
A number of strategic options suggest themselves for HEIs, including:

• seeking a ‘niche’ market composed purely of those practitioners and others who want to be exposed to the latest Type A knowledge;

• seeking to broaden the actuality and/or the perception of our expertise to cover, explicitly and unambiguously, Type B as well as Type A knowledge, and transfer processes as well as content (recognizing of course that many institutions would lay claim to possessing this breadth already!);

• developing partnerships with other, non-HE, organizations to attempt to secure such breadth.

Surprisingly little research has been undertaken on issues surrounding CPD in educational leadership and management, considering that this is one of the main preoccupations of staff concerned with this field in HEIs. There needs to be considerable development of work in this area. The TTA has identified the impact on professional practice in schools as one of the criteria to be addressed in bids for CPD funding. This appears to me an important development, since it offers an incentive to investigate the interactions involved in CPD and to assess its relationships with practice (Smith and Bennett, 1998). It is perhaps regrettable that more attention was not given to this area sooner.

The discussion so far has focused on tensions relating specifically to CPD. A wider tension is that between research and teaching, which is of course ever
present in universities, but is currently exacerbated within our field. On the one hand the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), as a centralist technical-rational procedure focused on the measurement and assessment of research performance, is pulling staff towards the increased production of outputs in the Type A knowledge domain. On the other hand, a different centralist trend is making CPD more instrumental, targeted and convergent, with a considerably reduced emphasis on Type A knowledge and scholarship. This diminishes the possibilities for creative inter-connections between research and teaching. It is an acute and growing tension. Somewhere along the continuum between these two activities are hybrid ventures such as the new Doctor of Education degrees, where the possibilities for synergy perhaps seem greater (Hall, 1998) but whose character still appears to need definition.

In an era of such strong centralization, it seems vital that critical and independent assessments of educational policy and governance (Raab, 1994) are conducted within our field. Such studies undertaken from a standpoint of educational management would imply greater engagement—with an intention of contributing to educational improvement rather than simply offering critical assessment—than
when using the lens of ‘educational policy sociology’ (Ball, 1990) or ‘policy scholarship’ (Grace, 1995). The obstacles to pursuing such work, in an era when official attempts to circumscribe research agendas may be expected (Hillage et al., 1998; Tooley and Darby, 1998), are likely to be formidable.

Other aspects of macro-environmental change might also be given greater attention than they are at present. For example, the RSA report on redefining work to which I have referred proposed the establishment of a Learning Institute. Among other functions, this would promote and support research on the learning needed by individuals to enable them to function effectively in all aspects of their lives, in a world in which the boundaries between work and non-work are likely to become more fluid (Bayliss, 1998). There seems a need for contributions on the leadership and management aspects of the coming changes.

A somewhat related point was made in the 1997 White Paper which contained a section on the government’s intention to encourage ‘research and development into schools of the future’ (DfEE, 1997: 43). It contrasted what it saw as the remarkable stability of the teaching and learning process with the dramatic pace of innovation in many other sectors: New thinking about leadership and management, operational research, new uses
of ICT and the ever-increasing pressure for high quality have led to a transformation in many knowledge-based industries. Teaching and learning should not be exempt from this revolution. (DfEE, 1997: para. 22)

As with EAZs, the government appears here to be breaking out of the technical rational mould.

It is worth making particular mention here of research on the relationship between information and communication technologies (ICT) and educational leadership and management. Numerous issues and aspects of this relationship could be explored but there appears to be almost no literature at all in this area, at least in the UK. FROM STRUGGLING TO JUGGLING

In summary, I would argue for future research to be more strongly focused on:

• the changing context, broadly defined, within which educational leaders and managers work, and

• the connections between leadership and management on the one hand and curricula and methods of teaching and learning—which may be about to undergo radical change—on the other hand. Conclusion: towards a redefinition

In an era of high centralization and a dominant rationalistic paradigm, the field of educational leadership and management is becoming increasingly resource dependent and facing growing pressures to play a purely technical role in both teaching and research. Institutional leaders are seen as conduits of government
policy and the content of the field is beginning to be defined by government agencies rather than within the field itself. The challenge of retaining academic integrity and an appropriate degree of independence in these circumstances is a formidable one, but it must be addressed if our contribution is to be more than transitory.

This set of conditions calls for reflection, redefinition and repositioning. A start might be made by redefining the field’s relationship with the educational enterprise. By focusing on how educational management differs from general management, we have tended to define the field in terms of what it is not rather than what it is. Perhaps we need to reconnect with education, in respect of both:

- the processes of human learning and development (as distinct from the specific and limited concept of ‘the classroom’), and

- the changes which formal educational provision will undergo in response to macro-environmental and social forces in the years ahead.

The question to be considered might be stated thus (Boyd, 1992): ‘What is edu...’


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Macmillan.


Source: British Journal of Educational Studies 51(3) (September 2003): 254-261. The field of educational leadership is multi-site, in which those who study and
practice leadership are located within networks which connect across institutions and sectors. Charting the growth of this dynamic field is the central purpose of this paper and six interconnected typologies of knowledge production are presented: Producers, Positions, Provinces, Practices, Processes and Perspectives. We argue that these typologies enable those involved to generate descriptions and understandings of the interplay between researching, theorising and practising in educational settings. This focus on knowledge production enables us to be mappers, to undertake mapping and to produce maps. These, we would stress, are all political processes through which we challenge what is said to be known and make our own claims to know. As such our agency to make choices within our practice as researchers, theorists, and practitioners is exercised within a complex setting of organisational, cultural and social structures.

1. Introduction

Enquiry into knowledge production in the field of educational leadership is a challenging but necessary project. The approach we have taken is to develop ways that make it possible to describe and understand those who produce knowledge, what they produce, why they produce it and where they produce it. We label this as a study of mappers (who), mapping (how, why and where), and maps (what) and will outline our thinking through six typologies: Producers, Positions, Provinces, Practices, Processes, and Perspectives. These typologies can be used to describe and explain knowledge production but they also have the potential to support professional practice across all sites of educational activity.

More specifically, they can enable questions and activity surrounding research, theory, policy and practice to be scoped and the choices that are made, along
with orientations towards them, to be opened to scrutiny.

2. Knowledge production within the field of educational leadership

Leadership, as a field for study and an arena of practice, is a territory where net

works around improvement, effectiveness, management and policy are engaging

in a dialogue about purposes, theory and research, and hence are creating and

testing boundaries. This is done in two main ways: through the activity of

research and publication; and, through reviews of this activity and attempts to

conceptualise the purposes of the activity. If we pragmatically focus on the

study and practice of headship we can see how the first aspect is illustrated

through research activity seeking to describe, understand and theorise the

meaning of headteachers’ work. This has been done by headteachers (Barker,

1999; Rae, 1993), by headteachers who became professors (Hughes, 1973;

Southworth, 1995), by professional researchers (Fullan, 1992; Hall, 1996) or

within partnerships (Rayner and Ribbins, 1999; Tomlinson et al., 1999). In

reviewing this activity we can see where work has been done and where more

work is needed (e.g. Hall and Southworth, 1997).

Clusters have developed and as such the positions that have been adopted

have been clarified through the promotion of distinct
purposes, and formalised

through labels, networks and journals. The field of educational leadership is a
territory where those labelling their work as policy sociology, educational
management, school effectiveness, and school improvement locate their activity (see Gunter, 2001). For example, boundaries have been drawn between education policy sociology and educational management, both in how they have described themselves and also each other. Both share a common intellectual heritage in the importance of the social sciences (Ball, 1990, 1995; Baron and Taylor, 1969; Bush, 1995; Glatter, 1979), but have sought to distinguish their approach to educational leadership from the late 1980s (Grace, 1995).

The field of educational management in the UK sees itself as practitioner oriented through the production of better ways of knowing within day-to-day practice, and the development of longer-term perspectives through the description of practice and an understanding of that practice. This has not always been true of educational administration in the USA. From the early 1950s the field there was dominated by claims that a science of organisation and a profession of administration based on that science were about to be realised.
Labelled the ‘New Movement’ (Hughes, 1985) or ‘Theory Movement’, it sought a grand theory of human behaviour, within which the theory of administration in education would be a sub-set, with the natural sciences providing the model (Griffiths, 1957, p. 388). This, as Greenfield, a critic, put it, meant:

‘The professor supplanted the practitioner as the source of valid knowledge about administration. If practitioners did not know or accept they were no longer masters of the basic knowledge that underlay their craft, it did not matter . . . in educational administration . . . we need the scientist and his theory to interpret for us’ (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993, p. 3).

By the 1960s doubts were raised. Schwab (1964, p. 47) dismissed ‘the pursuit of one sufficing theory of administration’ as ‘a manifest impossibility in the foreseeable future, and an uncritical aping of the wrong model’. And Griffiths admitted that, ‘the search for one encompassing theory (if anyone is searching) should be abandoned. . . . We have learnt a modest approach to theory pays off’ (in Baron et al., 1969, p. 166).

Members of the field of educational administration in higher education in the UK have generally resisted the blandishments of such grand theorising. In part,
this is because most have begun their careers as practitioners in schools rather than as researchers in universities. They then shifted the location of their work because they wished to know more about that practice through research (Gunter, 1999a). In this sense the field is largely made up of those having a 'practitioner academic' habitus (Gunter, 2002a) or a disposition towards working within and understanding the interplay between theory and practice. Conversely, educational policy sociologists tend to have biographies that lead them to more of an academic habitus where the emphasis is on understanding practice as a site of contested power relations through which the state delivers its goals.

While there are arguments that these two positions have compatible purposes (Bolam, 1999; Glatter, 1979) disputes over knowledge claims between the two areas of activity have focused on: first, who produces knowledge regarding educational leadership? Is it those who are involved actively in its practice or, as claimed by the advocates of the Theory Movement, is it professors engaged in studying it? Or is it a combination of both? (Ribbins and Sherratt, 1992).

Second, how is such knowledge produced? Is it through theorising from the practice of role incumbents or through the use of theories
of power from within

the social sciences to explain the practice of role
incumbents? Third, what forms

can such knowledge take? Is it, as Eraut (1999) defines,
meaning in 'professional discourse' 'public knowledge' or 'private knowledge'
(sub-divided into

'professional knowledge' and 'management knowledge')?

Fourth, where is

knowledge produced? Is it through every day practice
regarding what Eraut

(1993) describes as 'knowing how' within action or is it
through access to theo

ries and case studies or 'knowing that'? Fifth, what types
of knowing are

regarded as constituting the truth regarding the human
condition? Are claims

regarding this based on an objective view of the world in
which procedures can

be designed in order to gather data or is it based on a
subjective orientation in

which the world is constructed through practice and
attributing meaning to that

practice? Sixth, what do we know about the practice of
educational leadership

when in the doing of it much goes unrecognised and
unrecorded? Are attempts

to change practice based on what we know or on what is
regarded by particular

interests as normatively good practice? Seventh, how do we
know about educaT H E O R Y

tional leadership? Is it through informal dialogue and
reflection or through sys
tematised research or both? Eighth, how do we bring our own perspectives into the generation of knowledge about educational leadership? How much weight do we give to our experience, to our intellectual heritage, to the demands of the current policy context, to the predictions of what the school of the future will be like? 3. Developing and using typologies

Questions of the kind listed above can tell us a lot about knowledge production because they identify points of difference and similarity regarding purpose, and demonstrate the importance of dialogue on position. When we listen to a lecture or read an article we are engaging in knowledge production, we can see that it is contested and can live within the problematics of what is and is not regarded as the truth and truthful. While there have been attempts to describe knowledge production, they usually focus on a particular aspect. They categorise producers of knowledge, or the types of knowledge being used, or the contexts in which knowledge producers produce knowledge. The scope of the task and the positioning of the knowledge worker tends to shape the focus of the study, and so while aspects of knowledge production are illuminated much can remain in darkness.

For example, Fitz (1999) identifies three types of knowledge
producer - the academic, practitioner and entrepreneur - but overlooks the learner and community in knowledge production (Fielding, 1999; Ranson, 2000). Harries Jenkins (1984, p. 215) catalogues knowledge as a series of approaches: comparative, organisational, managerial and environmental, without a full recognition of the users and producers of this knowledge of the kind that Ball (1995) offers in his categorisation of policy science, policy scholarship and policy entrepreneurship. Thus while there is a tradition of categorising different types of knowledge, of knowledge producer, and of knowledge use, no conceptual typology is available designed to facilitate a dynamic approach to describing and understanding knowledge production. We have taken up this challenge not with a view to settling the border disputes, but to provide a framework through which knowledge production within and between these borders can be conducted and problematised. Before turning to this, we should problematise 'types' and 'typologies'. There are 'tight' definitions. The Encyclopaedia Britannica (1993) defines 'Typology' as a 'system of groupings . . . usually called types, the members of which are identified by postulating specified attributes that
are mutually exclusive, groupings set up to aid demonstration or inquiry by establishing a limited relationship among phenomena’ (p. 89, our italics).

There are also ‘loose’ definitions. For Mitchell (1979) ‘A typology is no more than a classification. A classification may be an ad hoc . . . where the categories are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive’ (p. 232, our italics).

For Hodgkinson (1996), typing: ‘is a very basic human instinct. It is a first attempt at imposing order upon a welter of experience so as to derive meaning and form. We cope with an excess of information by arranging its disorder into . . . schemes of meaning . . .’ (p. 89). It makes complex social life possible. On this Mennell (1974) recalls Schutz’s claim ‘that we experience the external world of things, people and events as typifications. Typifications are classifications . . . we have to classify and group in order to organise reality, and that most of these typifications are socially learned and handed down to us . . . Any unique qualities are seen against a background of typification’ (p. 47).

Given this, as Hodgkinson (1996) argues, it is not surprising that: ‘In the
study of administration the typing instinct has not been inactive. It has ranged
from the trivial to the profound. . . . Perhaps the most influential scheme has
been Max Weber’s formulation of charismatic, traditional and rational-legalistic
administration with their corresponding modes of leadership . . . [His] ideal
types . . . facilitate . . . inquiry, research, philosophy and policy’ (p. 89). Schutz
goes beyond Weber. As Mennell (1974) puts it, ‘one consequence of Schutz’s
view of knowledge is that ideal-types no longer appear to be a methodological
device peculiar to social science, as Max Weber implied, but an inherent feature
of everyday knowledge . . . Weber’s famous ideal-types . . . then appear merely
as highly formalised and unusually coherent typifications consciously created
for sociological purposes’ (p. 47). In applying such ideas to the study of leader
ship, Hodgkinson (1996) points to an ‘overload of information and a surfeit of
data’ and asks, ‘How can we make sense of this plethora?’ (p. 89). For him ‘real
understanding . . . must be grounded in qualitative aspects of the human con
dition and a depth of understanding of human nature. This intellectual territory
is vast and much of it is terra incognita but a first mapping may be achieved by
using the techniques perfected by Max Weber . . . That is, by seeking ideal types
as a first patterning of administrative modes. Taxonomy is the beginning of

science’ (p. 90).

This approach can be interpreted in more than one way. As Sanders and

Phiney (1983) put it, ‘Typologies are simply classificatory schema composed of
two or more ideal or constructed types. Ideal types provide abstract categories in
terms of which individual or group phenomena can be analysed. The difference
between ideal type categories can be conceptualised as a gradual continuum or
as discrete’ (p. 284). The notion of locating types within a continuum has
informed key aspects of our own approach to field mapping, particularly on the
identification of knowledge provinces. Culbertson (1981) contends that organi
sational theory faced a serious epistemological crisis related to questions about
the nature and validity of knowledge’ and we have been influenced by his solu
tion through identifying ‘three scholarly traditions . . . contending for the alle
gence of social science scholars and professors of educational administration

. . . logical positivism, hermeneutics, and critical theory’ (p. 1). The contrasting
features of each of these traditions in terms of their disciplinary links, major T H E O R Y
authors, central purposes, significant outcomes, modes of generalisation,
assumptions about knowledge, and criteria of validity are discussed. In challenging this model, Burnett (1981) claims that, ‘epistemologies of the types which Culbertson cites are ‘school epistemologies’, the distillation of thinkers each of which is considerably more complex than the distilled, composite version of their views . . . [and] profound contradictions are often discovered when one analyses the thoughts of one as opposed to another, of the thinkers within a given, composite view’ (p. 16). He also asks, ‘why just these three epistemologies?’ (p. 17).

These are forceful criticisms, somewhat diminished insofar as they would seem to apply with equal force to any approach to types and typing. On this Greenfield takes a pragmatic view that we share. In commenting on a Culbertson style typology proposed by Ribbins (1985) he acknowledges that: ‘No doubt there are methodologies or enquiry and positions about the truths of social reality that do not fit within this typology. It is nevertheless a good working beginning for anyone trying to understand what characterises and distinguishes the modes of enquiry in the field and what watersheds of assumption and world views divide them’ (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993, p. 179). With this in mind,
what is involved in Burnett’s criticisms and the assumptions on which they are based? Two seem pertinent. First, that any acceptable typology needs to be able to offer a satisfactory explanation of why the types that it identifies are both the best available and fully sufficient. Second, that each of the types it includes must be wholly discrete from each other and from all other possible types. These may seem reasonable expectations, but they assume, rather than seek to justify, the supposed merits of a ‘tight’ definition of types and typologies. We have opted for a ‘loose’ definition; and in doing so are content to settle for the modest merits that Greenfield is prepared to accord to a choice that is otherwise so determinedly non-Cartesian.

Against this backdrop we propose six typologies that facilitate the production of maps (see Figure 1). In doing this we have sought to strike a balance between the need to respect the complexity and dynamism of the field while at the same time creating a framework that is useful without being too elaborate. These typologies have a heuristic purpose and as such their categories are meant to illuminate rather than stifle, and to open up rather than create barriers. The typologies are meant to aid thought rather than replace it.
We propose that these approaches to categorising the field can be used to
produce maps in the form of books, lectures, research projects etc.; the process
of doing this we identify as mapping, and those who undertake this work we
identify as mappers. This metaphor enables us to capture what it means to use
and produce knowledge, and it facilitates questions about the past, present and
future, while issues of purposes and direction can be foregrounded. 2 Neverthe
less it is possible that this type of work can be seen to be another example of
indulgence by 'wacky theorists' (Woodhead, 2000), or a contribution to unpro
ductive 'paradigm wars' (Oakley, 2000). We would position ourselves differently, and like Alvesson and Willmott (1996) do not see critical evaluation
as necessarily taking an oppositional stance but as creating spaces for dialogue
about what we know and why we know it. Consequently, we are mindful of how
our own agency and the structures we inhabit shape how we read and use such
typologies. We have a disposition to draw on a multiplicity of intellectual
resources including the philosophical (Ribbins, 2003a,b), critical (Gunter, 1997,
2001) and humanistic (Pascal and Ribbins, 1998; Rayner and Ribbins, 1999;
Ribbins and Marland, 1994) and the use of qualitative
methods (Gunter, 1999a,b; Ribbins, 1997; Ribbins, 2003c). The philosophical tradition within the
field and our work gives us permission to speak out loud about our thoughts and ideas, and to be inconclusive. In other words, what we propose does and does not need to lead to immediate action, but could lead to a better understanding of the actions that have happened or could happen. Locating ourselves here means a rejection of what Popkewitz et al. (2001), drawing on Walter Benjamin, depict as: an empty history: the picturing of a universal, boundless human progress associated with ideas of an infinite perfectibility, an additive viewpoint whose illusions are of a seemingly continuous movement from the past to the present, and whose methods have no theoretical armature. (p. 4, authors’ own emphasis)

Instead history, ‘is the critical engagement of the present, by making its produc

tion of collective memories available for scrutiny and revision’ (p. 4). Work on issues of social injustice such as gender (Blackmore, 1999; Hall, 1996) means the authoring process is more open to scrutiny and the values on T H E O R Y

Producers the people and their roles (e.g. practitioner, researcher) who are knowers through using and producing what is known

Positions the places (e.g. training sessions) where knowers use and produce what is known

Provinces claims to the truth regarding how power is conceptualised and engaged with

Practices the practice in real time, real life contexts of
leaders, leading and leadership

Processes the research processes (e.g. observations and interviews) used to generate and legitimate what is known

Perspectives descriptions and understandings we reveal and create as processes and products (e.g. teaching, disciplines, books) through the inter play between producers, positions, provinces, practices, and processes

Figure 1 Knowers, knowing and knowledge in the field of educational leadership (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003).

which choices are made can be displayed so readers can position themselves within the account. 4. Typologies of knowledge production in the field of educational leadership (i) Provinces

We have identified six provinces, as illustrated in Figure 2.

The identification of these provinces is based on an analysis of the publica

tion outputs of the field (Bush et al., 1999; Gunter, 2001), producing clusters around differentiated approaches to purpose. Knowledge provinces mean what is being asserted as constituting the truth underpinning the intention behind any leadership activity. These provinces have been placed along a continuum – with the conceptual at one end and the instrumental at the other - that symbolises praxis. All six are places where theory and practice are central to field activity but the emphasis and disclosure of purpose varies. For example, those to the left of the continuum put more emphasis on understanding doing, while those to the right are more concerned with particular types of doing. This paper is a map of
the field and in producing it we have drawn on the knowledge claims underpinning the conceptual and critical provinces. We are both investigating issues of ontology and epistemology within the field and producing a dialogue regarding the contested nature of the issues. We are taking action through the production of typologies, and are commenting on action by identifying the dominance of the evaluative and instrumental knowledge claims in the field. 3 (ii) Practices

The experience and understanding of everyday practice and how that activity can be challenged and developed is a core purpose of the field. The question is how the six knowledge provinces interconnect with questions of what we know of practice. By juxtaposing Figure 2 with the practice of leaders, leading and leadership we can generate the questions which are central to our interrogation and understanding of current and possible practice. What is described as past, current and possible practice of educational leaders by themselves and/or by others is too vast to engage with fully in this paper. However, we are mindful that educational leadership should be located in an educational setting, be about educational practice, and be intrinsically educative. Therefore we have adopted the ‘components of the process’ of effective school
leadership identified by

Reynolds and Teddlie (2000, p. 144) in Figure 3 to produce a typology of leadership practice.

The knowledge worker can use Figure 3 to read authors, publications and key issues, and/or draw on it to view current practice through research. For example,

we would expect to see recognition of research in the critical domain that THE FIELD OF EDUCATION NAL LEADERSHIP Conceptual Descriptive Humanistic Critical Evaluative Instrumental Concerned Seek to provide Seek to gather Concerned to Concerned to Seek to provide with his issues of a factual report, and the orise from reveal and measure the le aders and others ontology and often in some the experiences emancipate impact of the effective epistemology, detail, of one or and biography eспрactitioners leadershiп and st rates and and with more aspect sof, of those who are from injustice it seffectiveness tactics to deliver conceptual or factors, relating leaders and and oppression of micro, meso, organizational and clarification to leaders, leading managers and of established and macro level syste moms level goals, and leadership. those who are power structures of interaction managed and led. Figure 2 Knowledge provinces in the field of educational leadership (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003).

focuses on evidence, descriptions and explanations of how and why gender has an impact on how and why leadership has been experienced as a power struc
ture. This is in contrast with work in the evaluative domain that can show the
emphasis on isolating and using organisational variables to
measure impact on
outcomes.

Using the knowledge provinces to interrogate what is
presented as an effect
ive model of school leadership enables a strategic overview
of knowledge
claims. Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) present evidence
regarding the importance
of leadership and in particular the primacy of the
headteacher in effective school
leadership. However, the conceptual, descriptive,
humanistic and critical enables
us to ask questions that generate understandings about
whether effective school
leadership is educational leadership. We can also ask
whether a model generated
from distilling the findings from work done at different
times and in different
nation states and cultures can be transferred to other
settings. The language of
instructional leadership could suggest that the headteacher
is directly located in
contextualised teaching and learning, and yet the research
evidence that this
approach draws on (Murphy, 1990) characterises it in
organisational terms, and
is North American. Instructional leadership is about goal
setting, resource allo
cation, the creation and maintenance of a performance
culture, and enabling par
ticipation by stake-holders. This is the type of generic
organisational leadership
that is rooted in business management rather than educational leadership. (iii) Processes

Understanding the processes by which knowledge is produced is more than a methodological issue, and needs to take into account the use and production of knowledge within practice. Figure 4 juxtaposes the six knowledge provinces with the methods by which effective leadership is currently being researched.

Instrumental approaches are a synthesis of ‘interesting’ findings usually combined into a convincing strategy for enabling change to happen. In contrast, evaluative approaches put emphasis on quantitative measurement, while humanistic approaches seek to gather experiential accounts through qualitative methods. Increasingly, quantitative methods through randomised controlled trials are being favoured and the literature is being read and weighed in the form of systematic reviews. It is intended that this type of work will support evidence informed practice where practitioners have access to what works, and so can make the right decisions regarding how to teach and facilitate learning. This positions practitioners as secular consumers of knowledge that they can efficiently and effectively purchase commercially to change their practice. We would argue for a wider understanding of consumption where
the emphasis is on

how the user of knowledge is knowledgeable and is a
producer of new know

ledge (Ribbins and Gunter, 2003). We raise these matters
because work that is

conceptual, critical and humanistic is in danger of being
marginalised as suppos

edly lacking relevance, rigour and validity. This is so
because knowledge T H E F I E L D O F E D U C A T I O N
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Leadership Being firm and What does it mean to be firm when we witness those in being firm does being firm and education and purposeful firm and needed to purposeful? organisation had an exercise of purposeful being firm and What are the impact of being firm and power both by have on purposeful? implications for What do we see purposeful and of the organisation?
r u c t i o n a l o u t i n p r a c t i c e ? l e a d e r s h i p ? l e a d e r s h i p , W h a t d o a g e n t s a n d h o w c a n d o o n t h e i r o w n c o m p l i a n c e a n d w i t h o t h e r s ? b e s e c u r e d ?
F r e q u e n t W h a t i s m o n i t o r i n g W h a t d o t h o s e W
Personal and how does the who do frequent experiences of justice issues (e.g. data generated attributes and monitoring process and the data and personal monitoring, and gender, age, from monitoring skills needed, collected interplay monitoring do, how is frequently ethnic identity) of some measure to practice with rights and how do and personally frequently experienced and organisational frequency duties? those who are understood and personal outcomes, and personal frequently lived? monitoring? how do we monitoring and personally handle frequent monitored do? and personal alas variables? Selecting and What are the moral What happens What experiences What power What are the What are the Replacing staff issues sink knowing when staffing have agents shades structures and most costs strategies how to select and matters are in staffing issues cultures are effective and for there replace staff? dealt with? in their own career visible in organisationally organisationally and that of others? selecting and rational selection effective and What do were replacing staff? processes? effective when the selection and processes for replacement recruitment is of staff? taking place? Figure 3 T hinking about the practice of educational leadership. Effective Conceptual Descriptive Humanistic Critical Evaluative Instrumental leadership Being firm How dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe use H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe H ow dowe and purposeful know about record the capture and theories of power measures and identify and the interplay complexities of describe and engage in predicting the distil published Inv olving others between being effect
The impact of evidence to informed leadership in understanding variables on produces simple involvement? practice? How and why explain effective organisational models and exhibiting do we use case leadership within outcomes. But let points? instructional. What parts? How and why studies of the policy context? leadership does reading, do we use case individuals? How do we use? e. How and why do thinking, and studies soft through. How and why do surveys and we use inclusion? Frequent, dialogue place individuals and biography, use case studies of multilevel and exclusion personal in the creation of groups using observation, organisations and/or modelling? criteria for the monitoring of knowing observation and interview? or individual selection of about effective ethnographic through biography show how do we use usable materials? Selecting and leadership? approaches? and interviews? randomised and evidence? replacing staff controlled trials? Figure 4 Researching effective leadership. The field of educational leadership production that draws on these knowledge provinces is based on the complexities of what we know and is enriched by analysis of how and why we come to know it: the choices we make, what we accept and what we discount, what we store and what we forget. These knowledge provinces are more about conceptually informed practice where we can and cannot witness intellectual work, where practice is and is not immediate, where context does and does not shape out.
comes (Gunter, 2001). (iv) Positions

We identify five positions knowledge workers can inhabit: training, consultancy, expertise, intellectual work and citizenship. Training is a position where there is no direct association with an explicit ideology and the model of pedagogy is facilitation. Learners as knowers are given opportunities to display their knowledge rather than have knowledge transmitted to them. Nevertheless, the learning process is highly structured and controlled by the facilitator. In consultancy a particular belief system is usually adopted but this may not be made explicit because the emphasis is on enabling others to improve their work. Learning is about reflecting on current practice as a means of accepting the new strategies provided through consultancy. Research and theory are played down in the training and consultancy positions; if evidence and ideas are used they tend to be located in the instrumental and evaluative provinces. Expertise is a position where the emphasis is on providing evidence and argument promoting particular solutions; its pedagogic model is to inform others. Learning is through engaging with this knowledge and transferring it into practice. Research is amplified in this position with the use and production of empirical data from a range of
methodologies, leading to theorising in the form of models of good practice. In

the positions presented so far the stress is on presenting the self as politically neutral and so seeks to disconnect the individual and group from the political,

and contrast with the two next positions which are overtly political and social.

Intellectual work is concerned with providing evidence and argument about fundamental questions in society. The emphasis is on praxis, and within this the self is politically committed. The pedagogic model is focused on mediating between theorising from practice and using theories developed by the social sciences. Learning is engaging with these ideas, and building a commitment to a political position. Research is a key aspect of this position through the use and production of empirical data combined with insights and argument based on judgement and discretion. Citizenship is a position with an explicit commitment to democratic practice. Pedagogy is a political commitment to develop citizenship and the identity of being a citizen. Learning is a social and socialising process through dialogue, listening, challenge and agreement. The skills associated with research and theorising are a prerequisite for effective citizenship so that evidence, argument, and knowledge can be described, understood and
evaluated.

Figure 5 presents how we might begin to characterise the possible positions that have been, currently are, or could be taken up around the production and use of knowledge regarding the Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) model of effective school leadership.

The emphasis in Figure 5 is on doing the knowledge work rather than being a trainer, consultant, expert or intellectual, though it is the case that knowledge workers do seek to explain what they do by titling (or typing) the self or are titled (typed) by others. It is possible to inhabit all the positions within professional practice at once and/or over time. In asking questions about effective school leadership then we need to ask where those arguing for or against it locate their work, and for what purpose. The positions that are becoming very crowded are those of training and consultancy, and we need to recognise that there are other positions than that of training teachers to implement effective school leadership. In particular, if headteachers and others in schools need to develop effective educational leadership, how do we develop alternative models to that produced by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) if we are herded into particular
positions (e.g. training and consultancy) and we are so over worked that the
other positions remain out of our reach? If some positions are in the ascendancy
and others in decline we need to ask why this is the case and what the implica
tions are for knowledge production. (v) Producers

Researching educational leadership needs to be understood through questions
about who the knowers are, what they claim to know, why they know, how they
claim to know, who legitimises their knowing. A central feature of the field is
that it is multi-site and hence inclusive of a range of practitioners from school
teacher to administrative officer, and from researcher to policy maker. We have
argued elsewhere that there has been a tendency to downgrade knowledge pro
ducers in universities, and to focus on role incumbents (particularly heads) in
schools as the authentic knowers (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003; Ribbins et al.,
2003). Not only does this fracture the culture and practice of partnerships
between schools/colleges and universities in professional development and
research, but it also perpetuates exclusion as a strategy within knowledge pro
duction. By labelling one part of the field as irrelevant to practice does not help
the case to be made for others in the field to be given more recognition. We
would want to argue that parents, students and wider communities are a part of
the field and are knowers about educational leadership.

Knower identities are a complex matter, and there are many identities an indi
vidual may inhabit that shape how s/he sees themselves as being and doing. An
individual may be a school governor, a teacher, a parent, local councillor and
church-goer to name but a few. In addition to these functional identities there are
social, historical, cultural and economic ones such as class, race, age, sexual ori
entation and gender. We can best understand this through the interplay of T H E O R Y
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What are the How and why How do we How do we How do we mean to when training is experiences of if power measure the create a
training training role taking place? Those being exercised impact of package to incumbent trained and in the
training training on guarantee effective. What do training do? What do training do? process? the individual school leaderships school leaders? do and what do process? and the trained do? organisation? Consultancy what is the what do we see? What are the how and why How do we measure? How do we create relationship when consultancy experiences of expertise the impact of a model of between he is taking place? consultancy? exercised consultancy on the consultancy? that person as How has practice in the individual and the guarantee? client consultancy and What do consultancy been influenced consultancy experiences of expertise the impact of package expertise knowledge to being shown? expertise? exercised expertise? experienced on the that enables been expertise? How has this within individual and the effective use of expertise? organisation? effective school practice? leadership? Intellectual what, how and what do we see? What are the how and why How do we measure? How can we use work? Why do we come when intellectual experiences of expertise the impact of the outcomes of to know through work is taking place? intellectual work? exercised intellectual work? on intellectual work doing intellectual How has this through the individual and to design models work? impact on intellectual the organisation? of effective school practice? work? leadership? Citizenship what, how and what do we see? What are the how and why How do we measure? How can we why do we come when citizenship experiences of expertise the impact of identify the best to know
through his taking place? citizenship? exercised citizenship on the model of citizenship? How has this through individual citizenship that impacted on citizenship? and the organisation? guarantees practice? effective school leadership? Figure 5 Positions in knowledge production.

The agency and structure. The agency of the person to engage in effective leadership depends on their dispositions to do so and how structures support or stifle this. If we view effective leadership from the vista of headteacher identity within a school then there is a direct interest in and more direct experience of practice compared with a parent who may not acknowledge their role in and contribution to effective school leadership. Furthermore, effective school leadership as defined by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) is organisational in relation to purposes and activity, while other approaches could characterise effective school leader from the point of view of the wider community. Figure 6 presents a selection of possible identities and juxtaposes them with the knowledge provinces, and this enables issues regarding the dimensions involved in describing and understanding knowledge producers to be developed. (vi) Perspectives

The development of maps is a road well travelled. We are building on an intellectual tradition of debating knowledge claims in the UK
(Baron and Taylor, 1969; Bush et al., 1999; EMA, 1999; Gunter, 1997). As a field of study, educational leadership and management has drawn on various disciplines including philosophy and history, but it is the social sciences, especially sociology, that have dominated perspectives on knowledge and knowing. These perspectives are political and powerful constructs. In tracing the emergence of the field we can see how the validity of the social sciences is central to its legitimacy for professional researchers (Baron, 1979), and researching professionals (Hughes et al., 1985). We can conceptualise and argue that a thesis, or an article, or a book is a map or even make claims for it being the map. Certainly we need to give recognition to work over time that has captured field purposes at a particular time and made recommendations for future directions (for example, see Baron (1979) on research, and Hall (1999) on how gender needs to feature within research aims and practices). However, we also need to consider how maps of the field of educational leadership are not abstracted outcomes of knowledge production but are deeply embedded within it. This is not just an issue for how professional researchers and writers make transparent the published knowledge
they are drawing from and building on, but also the
position they take in making
selections to include and exclude. What we are raising here
is how we bring to
our practice at one and the same time the pre-developed
maps of practitioners
and researchers that can be full or partial, or explored or
unexplored. Therefore
when we are in particular contexts such as a meeting, a
research interview or a
training session then maps are in use and are being drawn
and redrawn through
knowledge production. By juxtaposing producers, positions,
provinces, practices
and processes we can both enquire into the use and
production of knowledge
within real time, real life action, and into the published
research that seeks to
describe, explain and theorise action. In this way we can
show the integration of
theory and practice, and remove the dichotomy that not only
fails us as
S e
l e
C t
e d
C o n
c e
p t
u a
student identities Student What does it When students What experiences Does effective How does it mean for a student to have student leadership? The student provides student to be what does it see of effective school discipline or impact of strategies to involve taking place? leadership? emancipate effective school discipline guarantees effective school discipline? student leadership? Is it effective? Have they student compliance school experience? other How can outcomes? with effective? Is this leadership? type of leadership? research and school education and how has this theory helped leadership? leadership? Do we see affected their identify other aspects of approach to models of leadership effective school not covered by leadership? the model? Teacher What experiences Does effective How does it mean for a student to have teacher who is professional or impact of strategies to not have role practice what leadership? emancipate effective school guaranteeing? implement to do what teachers? leadership when teachers had leadership measure the provide teacher who is professional or impact of strategies to not have role practice what leadership? emancipate effective school guaranteeing? implement teacher being involved in taking place? Have they teacher compliance effective school that is effective experienced other How can performance? with effective leadership? school types of leadership, research and school leadership? and how has
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other aspectseffective school of leadership leadership?
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Selected
Conceptual
Descriptive
Humantisticti
c
Critical Evaluation
Instrumental Identities

Es Headteacher What does the When a hat experiences Is the How does How does Teddie and headteacher have he adteachers headteacher measure the e provide Reynolds model is engaged
In hado effective as an effective impact of strategies to effective school professional school leader ship? school leader effective school guarantee leadership mean practice what being leadership on head teacher for the see have they discipline on head teacher compliance head teacher? taking place experience more emancipated performance with the model that is effective types of leadership, through the and effective Does it enhances school and what is this exercise of organization school or limit leadership? affected their power? outcomes? leadership? educational approach to leadership? Does see effective school How can other aspects of leadership research and leadership not theory help covered by the identify other model? models? Parents What does it? When parents? What experiences Does effective How does? How does mean for a are going about have parents had school measure the provide parent to be their daily lives of effective school leadership impact of the strategies to involved in what does see school's discipline or head teacher's guarantee effective school that is effective emancipated effective school parent leadership? school have they parents? leadership on compliance Is this type of leadership? has experienced other parent with effective leadership types of leadership? How can involvement in school supportive or Does see research and school? leadership? contradictory other aspects? How does their birth theory help to parenting as of their lives experience of their identify other leadership that can be work place affect models? given different their interpretation meanings? of effective school leadership?
researchers have professional implications for leadership. What knowledge data was collected to understand the effectiveness of school leadership?
secure claims underpin and what research have渊leadership? compliance their work andjudgments they done onto themodel why? are made about other models of effective effective school and how has schoolleadership? this affected leadership? their work? Figure 6 Knowledge producers.

knowledge workers, but also enables political positioning to privilege one type of knowing from another. 5. The onward journey

We have reached a stage in our work where some questions might usefully be generated to stimulate discussion: Provinces: are the six knowledge provinces the only ones or might there be others? We would want to continue to challenge our reading of the published maps of the field and to interrogate the knowledge claims regarding how assumptions about praxis underpin them. Practices: how do we engage with educational leaders, leading and leadership as distinct from leaders, leading and leadership in effective educational institutions? We are concerned here to continue to ask what is educational and educative about leadership in educational institutions because it enables us to challenge the politically motivated importation of generic models. Processes: how might we use our typologies to enable the development of systematic reviews? We are concerned here with how our typologies can enable the identification and development of a review question to be more scholarly and hence systematic. Furthermore, we would argue that our typologies provide understandings of research methodologies and methods that generate alternative ways of knowing to those produced by systematic reviews. Positions: how might we understand the movement between positions, and the choices that are made in professional practice? We are concerned here with the interplay between agency and structure, and how choices are made regarding what is and is not appropriate practice and how this links to the formation and development of identities. Producers: how might we develop a more inclusive approach to knowledge production by embracing students, parents and wider communities? We are concerned here with the democratisation of knowledge production, and how we give recognition to and facilitate knowledge used and produced in these complex networks of interactions and processes. Perspectives: how can we create spaces and places where predeveloped maps (in our minds,
practices, disciplines, publications) can be accessed and critically analysed? We are concerned here to see maps as living and dynamic knowledge that are open to scrutiny and to development.

A fundamental issue underlying the thinking we have done is how power is conceptualised and informs our understandings of educational organisations. Much more has to be done. In doing so educational leadership needs to be put into the context in which our attempt to exercise agency as practitioners and as researchers is being shaped and structured. There are preferred models, effective school leadership is a current example, and we should ask how they are being configured, who by and why, and which types of research and practice are being airbrushed out.

6. Notes

1 A fuller account of the development of the typologies is in Ribbins and Gunter (2002) and Gunter and Ribbins (2002).

2 See Gunter and Ribbins (2002, 2003) for a fuller account of the development and use of the maps, mapping and mapper metaphor.

3 In this paper we engage with a conceptual approach to the development of the typologies but do not directly address the theorising of the practice of field members and how we might explain knowledge production. For this see Gunter (1999b, 2000, 2001).


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THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT Meredydd Hughes

Introduction

Theory and practice are uneasy, uncomfortable bedfellows, particularly when

one is attempting to understand the complexities of human behaviour in organi

sational settings, and still more so if the purpose in seeking to achieve such

insight is to influence and improve the practice.

Such issues have been faced for nearly a century in industrial management

and public administration. The main traditions in these areas are considered in

the first section of the chapter, ending with a brief review of their application in

education.

A sustained attempt to develop an explicit theory of educational management

or administration, which was initiated in the USA in the late 1950s, is then con

sidered because of the challenging and innovative way in which it sought to

tackle the relationship of theory and practice. Later development in the UK and

in other parts of the world, both developed and developing, has inevitably been

influenced, whether positively or negatively, by the US experience.

The third section of the chapter adopts a more catholic and flexible approach

and seeks to show the kind of theorising within the social sciences on which

contemporary students of educational management are able to draw. An attempt
is made to examine in some depth the extent to which the ever-present challenge
to lessen the gap between theory and practice has led to the development of new
perspectives, which provide different kinds of insight, helpful to participants in
appreciating the complexities of the diverse facets of organisational experience.
The final section briefly reviews the continuing tension between theory and
practice, which is seen as an opportunity for further development rather than as a
cause for despair. The empirical roots of traditional management studies
It has often been noted that the pioneering works on the management and func
tioning of organisations were written by engineers, managers and industrial con
sultants who were very familiar with the practical problems encountered in
operating large productive organisations. There were later developments on
similar lines in business management and in public administration, but it was the
managers of industry who first sought to derive management principles of
general application from their personal experience in factories and foundries.
Some of the milestones celebrated in traditional management texts will be
briefly mentioned. The scientific management movement of Frederick Taylor
The leading figure of the scientific management movement,
which was influential in the early decades of the century, was Frederick Taylor. He trained as a mechanical engineer and rose from labourer to foreman, and then to chief engineer at a US steelworks, subsequently becoming a management consultant. In his definitive work Taylor (1911) called for a systematic study of working practices to discover the most efficient means of performing every task, and a corresponding study of management to determine the most efficient means of controlling the workers. Such ‘scientific’ management, resulting in low labour costs and high wages, would be in the interest of both employers and workers, and would lead, it was claimed, to the general elimination of all causes of dispute between them.

Taylor favoured time and motion studies, involving systematic observation and measurement of workers, coupled with incentive payment schemes. He applied similar ideas to management also, insisting on the advantages of maximum specialisation and separation of functions. All organisational members, in his view, could be regarded as essentially rational beings who, with appropriate instructions and agreed incentives, could be expected to operate like machines to increase productivity.
The scientific management movement had many supporters, and Taylor’s methods achieved wide currency on both sides of the Atlantic. They also gave rise to bitter resistance and controversy among those who regarded his analysis of human motivation as inadequate and crude, so that the pejorative overtones of the term ‘scientific management’ are still not entirely dispelled. Classical management theory

A number of writers, also from a practitioner background, developed a more general analysis of organisations than is implied in scientific management. An early example was a French mining engineer, Henri Fayol, whose major work (Fayol 1916) was the outcome of thirty years’ experience as an industrial managing director. He defined the fundamental elements of management as being ‘to fore cast and plan, to organise, to command, to coordinate and to control’. Pugh, Hickson and Hinings (1971, p. 65) identify him as the earliest known proponent of a theoretical analysis of management activities. He formulated what have become known as Fayol’s general principles of management, which begin with an insistence on division of work and specialisation and end by proclaiming the desirability of management actively fostering the morale of employees.

Fayol’s writings on management may be described as
classical both for their concern with form and structure and because of their emphasis on management principles of general application. He has been praised for his clarity and criticised for his apparent rigidity and authoritarianism. Baker (1980, p. 15) perceived him as a kind of Napoleon of industrial and general organisation theory:

‘immensely creative in opening up clear straight lines through hitherto not easily penetrable jungles; and hence, like Napoleon, stimulating the creativity of others’.

Among those others was Colonel Urwick in Britain, who drew substantially on Fayol’s work and on his own military experience in his treatment of principles of administration (Urwick 1947). In the USA James Mooney, a General Motors vice-president, and Luther Gulick, a prominent public administrator, were among the enthusiastic advocates of general management principles.

Gulick (1937), in a volume which he edited jointly with Urwick, described the work of a top executive as consisting of seven distinct tasks: planning, organising, staffing, directing, co-ordinating, reporting, and budgeting. In countless management lecture rooms these have since been recalled by means of the well known acronym, POSDCORB.
It may be noted that the readiness with which the generalisations of Fayol and other classical writers were widely and uncritically accepted owed much to their impeccable practitioner credentials. Their robust and wide-ranging common sense pronouncements, relying more on individual personal experience than on systematic study, were usually expressed clearly and authoritatively. They gave little attention, however, to constraints and qualifications, or to the conditions which would need to be satisfied for their propositions to be of value in predicting future performance. They were pioneers whose confident generalisations provided a basis for conceptual clarification and further refinement. Organisations as bureaucracies

The word ‘bureaucracy’, which may be traced back to pre-revolutionary France of the mid-eighteenth century (Albrow 1970, p. 16 ff.), belongs to a different world, the world of government departments. It referred to the rule of officials in public administration, and was discussed in such terms by a succession of writers, including John Stuart Mill. Described as ‘the giant power wielded by pigmies’, bureaucracy was both popularised and castigated by Balzac (1836) in his novel, Les Employés.

In the late nineteenth century the German sociologist and
jurist, Max Weber,

offered a succinct and influential statement of the essentials of a bureaucracy

which had a profound influence on later writers on organisation, and was in close accord with the ideas independently promulgated by the classical management writers. As conceived by Weber (1947), a bureaucracy has the following characteristics:

a a clear-cut division of labour leading to specialisation;

b a hierarchical authority structure, the scope of such authority being specified;

c a comprehensive system of rules and regulations to ensure uniformity and continuity in organisational decisions;

d impersonal relationships among officials and between officials and clients;

e employment and advancement based on objective criteria.

Underlying Weber’s classic formulation is a concept of authority which is legal and rational, carefully distinguished by Weber from both charismatic authority, which is dependent on the personal quality of the leader, and from traditional authority, which is based on custom and precedent. In contrast to social groupings involving charismatic and traditional authority, a bureaucracy, according to Weber, can be relied upon to ensure rational decision-making which is neither arbitrary nor compromised by inappropriate and irrelevant considerations.
Silverman (1970, p. 74) has suggested that it was ‘in an uncharacteristic moment of dogmatism’ not typical of Weber’s general emphasis on understanding the subjective meaning of situations to individuals, that Weber boldly asserted that bureaucracy is the most efficient form of administrative organisation. The claim was not based on empirical research, and it has been noted by several commentators (e.g. Blau and Scott 1963, p. 34) that Weber’s characterisation of bureaucracy was intended as a conceptual construct or ‘ideal type’ rather than as a composite description of actual organisations.

Whereas Weber was concerned to explain the contribution of formal structure to efficient organisational functioning (and may thus be regarded as adopting a ‘structural-functionalist’ viewpoint, as described by Ribbins in Chapter 9), subsequent research and theoretical analysis (Gouldner 1955; Merton 1957; Blau and Scott 1963) have focused attention in contrast on the dysfunctional consequences of bureaucracy, which are more apparent to the general public. Some later empirical studies, as will be noted, have questioned more basically the unitary assumptions of the ideal-type conceptualisation. These further developments, however, in no way diminish the intellectual power of Max Weber’s
precise and perceptive characterisation of bureaucracy rooted in the world of European officialdom, or lessen the profound and far-reaching influence it has exerted indirectly on society in general and, more specifically, on the thinking of both practising administrators and organisational theorists. **Theory** Human relations perspectives It could be argued that the tenets of scientific management, the general principles of the classical management writers and the impersonal structures of bureaucratic theory give only cursory recognition of the fact that organisations basically consist of people with varied personalities, purposes and perceptions.

The Human Relations Movement, which developed and gained recognition within industrial management in the 1920s and 1930s, was a conscious attempt to redress the balance and modify the emphasis of the earlier theorists. The research conducted by Elton Mayo and his associates from 1927 to 1932 at the Hawthorne Plant of the Western Electrical Company in Chicago has been frequently cited and is well documented (Mayo 1933; Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939). Mayo concluded that the relationship of workers with management and each other may be more significant in affecting productivity than the streamlined procedures and incentive schemes proposed by
Taylor or the ratio

nal management principles advocated by the classical
theorists. The potent influ
ence of informal groups on motivation and behaviour came to
be appreciated, so

that organisational goals were modified in practice through
the pressure on

members of their peers’ expectations.

The concept of informal organisation, defined as ‘the
aggregate of the per
sonal contacts and interactions and associated groupings of
people’, was intro
duced by Barnard (1938, p. 115) as a necessary concomitant
of every formal
organisation. In an influential text on the functions of the
executive, based on his
experience in commerce and government, Barnard’s emphasis
was on team
work and communication: ‘Authority depends upon a
co-operative personal atti
tude of individuals on the one hand; and the system of
communication in the
organisation on the other’ (1938, p. 175). Paradoxically,
he also referred to a
need for managers to indoctrinate those at the lower levels
with general purposes
and major decisions (p. 233). In order to strengthen the
influence of the formal
organisation, he suggested, the informal organisation
should be manipulated by
management through friendship ties and deliberate leaks of
information.

Not surprisingly Barnard has been criticised for the basic
inconsistency in his
approach (Perrow 1970; Greenfield 1975; Burrell and Morgan
1979). More
broadly, his work provides an apt illustration of two
general criticisms which
can be made of the human relations approach: first, that
because of a managerial
bias human relations adherents tend to disregard genuine
conflicts of interest
between workers and their employers (Clegg and Dunkerley
1980, p. 134); and
second, that human relations studies tend to ignore
external factors such as
mobility aspirations, market forces and union membership
(Silverman 1970, p.
76).
On the other hand, human relations theory may be regarded
in retrospect as
an approach which directed attention to important personal
variables in organi
sations, which had previously been neglected. As such the
theory has been seen,
particularly by practitioners, to provide a valuable corrective to views of THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
management which rely exclusively on the abstractions of organisational charts
and bureaucratic structures. Management ideas applied to
education
In a subtle and pervasive way the management ideas briefly indicated in preced
ing sections have become part of the intellectual currency of our time. Most
people will readily appreciate what is involved in time and motion studies, lines of command and faceless bureaucracy, and a good number will be familiar with the Hawthorne effect. Those with responsibilities in educational management during the last half-century or so are likely to have had a broad familiarity with the main issues involved, though probably few of them would have studied the texts of industrial management or public administration. It is of interest to note some examples of educational management practice which may be regarded as anticipating, or more frequently echoing, the management traditions which have been described.

The level of funding of the new elementary schools in England and Wales in the latter part of the nineteenth century depended directly on the performance of pupils in oral and written examinations administered by HM Inspectors. The resulting slogan, ‘payment by results’, was in common usage some thirty years before Frederick Taylor’s workers’ incentive schemes, but was very much in the spirit of scientific management. The mounting opposition to the scheme, which finally led to its abandonment by the turn of the century, may be compared to the resistance often engendered by scientific management crudely applied in indus
In the USA, performance-based accountability in education came a little later, as Callahan (1962) has shown in fascinating detail. It was evidently as committed advocates both of scientific management, and of the wholesale application of general principles of management to education, that the early professors of educational administration, Bobbitt, Spaulding and Cubberley, gained nationwide recognition. According to Cubberley (1916, p. 338), education had to have its corps of efficiency experts like 'every manufacturing establishment that turns out a standard product or series of products', while 'it is the business of the school to build its pupils according to the specifications laid down'.

Such ideas might nowadays be regarded as crude and simplistic. It is salutary to note, however, that some of the thinking about assessing educational outcomes—which has led to competency-based training for educational administrators in North America (Lipham 1975; Project ASK 1980) and to the progressive development of objective testing techniques in Britain on lines already well established in the USA (Becher and Maclure 1978; Holt 1981)—is essentially similar to that of the scientific management advocates of the early years of the
twentieth century.

An updated version of Taylorism is also (arguably) implicit in recent detailed studies of managerial activities in industry, as Hodgkinson (1978, p. 17) suggested in commenting on Mintzberg’s (1973) influential study, which involved the intensive systematic observation of five chief executives. Similar studies in education, mainly relying for their data on diary entries (Webb and Lyons 1982), on structured interviews (Jenkins 1983) and on structured observation (Martin and Willower 1981; Dulgan 1980; Willis 1980; Thomas, Willis and Phillips 1981) respectively, have all drawn to some extent on Mintzberg’s work. They provided support in an educational context for his conclusion that managers are not reflective planners, and that their activities ‘are characterised by brevity, variety and fragmentation . . . with the trivial interspersed with the consequent’ (Mintzberg 1973, p. 51). The observational studies, which followed Mintzberg in incorporating a time-study element, were among those criticised by Gronn (1982; 1984) for introducing ‘Neo-Taylorism’ into educational management, a charge rebutted by Willower (1983). From the lively interchange between the two writers it may at least be concluded that the ideas of Frederick
Taylor are still meaningful in current controversy.

A similar conclusion may be reached concerning Max Weber’s ideas about

bureaucracy. Over the years, the terms bureaucracy and

bureaucratic, which are

almost invariably used pejoratively by frustrated

participants, have been found

relevant in describing the functioning of educational

systems and institutions.

Schools and colleges, particularly if they are large,

conform to a considerable

degree to Weber’s specification of bureaucracy, as judged by

their division of

work, their hierarchical structures, their rules and

regulations, their impersonal

procedures and their employment practices based on

technical criteria (Ander

son 1968; Jones 1974).

Adopting a historical perspective, Musgrove (1971) has

written of the advan

tages of bureaucracy in education, and has argued that the

bureaucratization of

schools has given more dignity and power both to school

heads and to assistant

staff (p. 98). It has been shown that some aspects of

bureaucracy, such as the

precise definition of individual responsibilities, are not

necessarily unwelcome

to school staff (Hughes 1977). There is evidence that the

heads of larger schools

tend to be bureaucratic, in the sense that they lay greater

emphasis on the appli

cation of rules and regulations to govern procedures (Cohen
same study also indicated that they appeared no less concerned than the heads of smaller schools for the individual child, the individual teacher or the particular parental request.

Cohen’s study is thus an example of both a bureaucratic and a human relations viewpoint, and the strength of the latter emphasis is further illustrated in the work of Bates (1970) and Bernbaum (1976), both of whom show heads of schools giving priority to the traditional human relations aspect of their work.

There have also been many studies of staff morale and satisfaction in educational institutions—sometimes explicitly drawing on similar work in industry—which have typically explored the relationship between satisfaction and staff participation in decision-making (Chase 1952; Sharma 1955; Belasco and Alutto 1972; Nias 1980).

The influence on education of the human relations movement of the 1930s, occasionally with specific reference to the Hawthorne studies, was soon evident in books advocating democracy in educational administration (Koopman 1943; National Society for the Study of Education 1946; Hughes 1951), and was reflected in texts on school management (Yauch 1949;
Griffiths 1956; Bassett, Crane and Walker 1963). A generation later, staff development and involvement and participative leadership continue to receive close attention in texts on the management of educational institutions (Newell 1978; Bush et al. 1980; John 1980; Gray 1982).

It is also of interest that a model for higher education recently proposed by Becher and Kogan (1980) distinguishes at four levels (individual, basic unit, institution and central authority) between an operational and a normative mode, concerned respectively with what people actually do and what they count as important. Their normative mode at the individual level is specified in terms of job satisfaction, personal wants and expectations and subscription to group norms (Figure 2.1, p. 19), i.e. in terms of basic concepts which today are familiar and generally accepted, but which were new and unexpected when put forward by the human relations management consultants of the Hawthorne Studies era.

The extent to which general management theory can be applied to schools has been considered on a number of occasions, e.g. by Thomason (1974), Landers and Myers (1980), Paisey (1981) and Handy (1984), to name only a
few. It has been maintained by Everard (1984) and in publications of the Indus trial Society for heads of schools (Warwick 1984; Trethowan 1984) that school management has much to learn from industry, a view challenged by Fielding (1984) and White (1984). Research by Jenkins (1983) has identified a number of similarities, but also some significant differences in the ways in which managers in manufacturing industry and those in schools in England and Wales actually perceive their job.

In concluding this section it may thus be claimed that the various concerns and emphases of management writers, ranging from scientific management to human relations theory, have found expression in a variety of ways in the management of education and in the related literature. To begin with, this happened in a very piecemeal and haphazard manner. Even in the USA, where courses in educational administration had been mounted since early in the century (generally staffed by former administrators drawing anecdotally on their past experience), there was, for a long time, little attempt to integrate or reconcile the various disparate approaches available, or to consider how, if at all, the management of education differed from other kinds of management. From the mid-1950s the position changed significantly.
with the emergence in the USA and Canada of what came to be known as the ‘New Movement’ in educational administration. Its influence in Britain and other Commonwealth countries was somewhat indirect and came later. This was a period, as Culbertson (1980, p. 326) later recalled, of ‘an intense romance with theory’. The New Movement sought to provide coherence in educational management by emphasising the importance of theory. Sceptical practitioners were assured, in the oft-quoted words of John Dewey (1929, p. 17), that ‘theory is in the end . . . the most practical of all things’. It involved nothing less than a new paradigm and a new approach to the relationship of theory and practice in educational management. Its aspirations, achievements and limitations are considered in the next section. The theoretical bias of educational management’s ‘New Movement’ paradigm.

In this section the emergence and major achievements of the New Movement in US educational administration will be described, followed by an account of some of the doubts and challenges to its basic viewpoint which later developed. But first it will be helpful to clarify the meaning of the term ‘paradigm’ as used in the title of this section. Paradigm: a term of multiple meanings. The word ‘paradigm’ is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as ‘example,
pattern, especially of inflexion of noun, verb, etc.’, and thus has a very specific, concrete meaning as used by philologists. Nowadays the term is widely used with very different connotations, this being largely a result of the work of Thomas Kuhn, a historian and philosopher of science. As he later recalled in a volume of selected papers (Kuhn 1977, pp. XVII and 318), the concept of paradigm was first extended by him in 1959 to refer by analogy to shared examples of successful practice within a scientific community, as distinguished from agreed rules and definitions. Acquiring an arsenal of exemplars, according to Kuhn (1977, p. 307), is ‘integral to the process by which a student gains access to the cognitive achievements of his disciplinary group’.

In Kuhn’s influential book, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962), the concept of paradigm is progressively broadened from its original meaning, so that one commentator (Masterman, 1970) has identified at least 21 different usages of the term. As Kuhn later admitted, paradigms took on a life of their own: they expanded their empire to include, first, the classic books in which these accepted examples initially appeared and, finally, the entire global set of commitments shared by members of a particular scientific community. (1977, p. XIX)

The essential point which Kuhn made in his major work is that what is called
normal science involves the solving of problems without questioning the
assumptions, explicit or implicit, of the generally accepted frame of reference or THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
paradigm of the scientific community. There are, however, other periods of rev
olutionary science in which the paradigm itself is called into question, because
of deep-seated anomalies which it cannot resolve. Such transitional periods, it
was suggested, lead in due course to the emergence and acceptance of a new
paradigm.

The concept has been broadened even further within the social sciences with
the recognition that alternative frames of reference may be available simulta
eously. Thus Burrell and Morgan (1979, p. 36) argue that 'social theory can be
conveniently understood in terms of the co-existence of four distinct and rival
paradigms defined by very basic meta-theoretical assumptions in relation to the
nature of science and society'.

The progressive extension in meaning of the term paradigm is thus itself a
potent reminder of the essential inter-penetration of theory and practice. 'Para
digm' was originally introduced into scientific discourse to signify the specific
examples of problems and their solutions. It is these exemplars which provide
the constituents of the shared understandings embedded in alternative views of

reality presented by paradigmatic theorists. The emergence
in US educational administration of a ‘New Movement’

The mid-1950s may be identified as a period of intellectual ferment in relation to

educational management studies in the USA, as evidenced by a number of

significant publications (Coladarci and Getzels 1955; Campbell and Gregg 1957; Griffiths 1959a, 1959b). There was a significant infusion of new ideas, propogated

by a new breed of able enthusiasts whose expertise in educational management was

derived more from study and research in the social sciences than from long practi

tioner experience. Andrew Halpin, Ronald Campbell and Dan Griffiths were

among those who called for a more rigorous theoretical approach in the study of

educational administration.

In his contribution to the Campbell and Gregg volume, Halpin (1957 p. 197)

vigorously rejected ‘naked empiricism’ and rebuked those scholars who spent

their time on practical problems rather than doing the research on theoretical

issues, which he regarded as much more important. The term ‘theory’ itself had

to be rescued: it would not be used by Halpin ‘as a euphemistic synonym for any

speculation about administrator behaviour—no matter how vaguely formu
lated—but in the restrictive sense employed by the social scientist’ (Halpin 1957, p. 156). He quoted with approval a rigorous definition of theory as ‘a set of assumptions from which can be derived by purely logico-mathematical procedures a larger set of empirical laws. The theory thereby furnishes an explanation of these empirical laws . . .’ (Feigl 1951, p. 182).

The ideal which Griffiths enthusiastically envisaged was the development of a general theory of human behaviour, within which the theory of administrative behaviour in education would be a sub-system. The natural sciences, and particularly physics, would provide the model, Kepler’s Laws of Planetary Motion being the prototype of the yet undiscovered laws of educational administration (Griffiths 1957, p. 388). He added later that he agreed with Halpin’s suggestion that Feigl’s definition of theory be adopted, and observed that this ‘would mean that theoretical work would be more narrowly limited than previously’ (1959a, p. 28).

A necessary consequence of the new determination to rely exclusively on a natural science methodology was that, in accordance with the philosophical tenets of logical positivism which Feigl advocated, the concepts used were to be
defined operationally, i.e. their meanings were to correspond, as Herbert Simon (1947, p. 37) had also insisted, ‘to empirically verifiable facts or situations’.

Value judgements as to the desirability of policies and behaviours were therefore to be firmly resisted in the new studies being initiated, which would concentrate on determining what is rather than what ought to be (Culbertson 1965, p. 4). Similarly, Gregg (1965, p. 46), writing approvingly of a National Society for the Study of Education Year-Book (1964) which was an outcome of the New Movement, supported its emphasis on validated operational concepts within a theoretical context: Such concepts help to illuminate the nature of administration. They do not prescribe rules for administrative action, but they may enable the administrator to analyse administrative problems more penetratingly and accurately, to view events in different perspectives, and to reflect in ways which would not be possible without such concepts . . . The current scientific approach to administration is directed to identifying and describing the variables of administration and their relationships, so that an administrator can have a better understanding of them and thus control them in terms of whatever goals and policies he chooses.

The new ideas gained international currency in the 1960s, the initial impetus for Commonwealth development coming largely from William Walker, who founded The Journal of Educational Administration in Australia in 1963, two years before the US-based Educational Administration Quarterly was established. The first major UK involvement was in 1966 in Canada.
and the USA, at

the first of what have become quadrennial International Intervisitation Pro

grammes (IIP) in educational administration (Baron, Cooper and Walker 1969).

The early writings of the leaders of the New Movement paradigm were crit

ical and perceptive papers which provided a welcome, astringent antidote to the

unsupported generalisations—often based on dated and untypical experience—

that had been customary in the educational administrative literature. What was

actually achieved through this new style of research is more problematic. Three

major areas of development will be briefly described: a framework for conceptu

alising organisations as social systems, some examples of role studies, and


The Getzels-Guba social systems model

An example from the early days of the New Movement of an abstract formula

intended to generate hypotheses as a basis for empirical study, is provided

by a model of educational administration as a social process, which was

developed jointly by two social psychologists, J. W. Getzels and E. G. Guba

(1957). Basically the model proposed that a social system

be conceived in terms

of two types of phenomena, involving respectively an organisational (or nomo
thetic) dimension and a personal (or ideographic) dimension. Observed behaviour is then regarded as the result of the interaction of elements located on each of the two axes.

The organisational dimension permits analysis successively in terms of the institution, its constituent roles, and the specific expectations attached to each role. Implicit is a structural view of organisation, such as Fayol or Weber might have proposed, with a clear division of tasks among official positions or roles. It is assumed that the obligations and responsibilities which these roles involve can be specified in terms of explicit expectations, which serve as an agreed prescription for the particular role. The various roles are interdependent and complementary, and it is to their interrelationship that the term ‘organisational structure’ applies.

The personal dimension takes account of the human aspect which the organisational dimension ignores, and thus accords with a human relations emphasis. It focuses on the individual members of the system, the analysis being successively in terms of the concepts of personality and need-disposition. Need-dispositions are described as a person’s ‘individual tendencies to orient and act with
respect to objects in certain manners and to expect certain consequences from these actions’.

Though the justification for the use of the term ‘dimension’ is somewhat obscure, it may be granted that the model neatly accommodates the two main strands in traditional management theory, the classical and the human relations, and suggests three levels at which interaction can be considered: institution and individual, role and personality, role expectation and need-disposition.

An extension to the model (Getzels and Thelen 1960) took account of the fact that every social system is embedded in a wider environment. This was conceptualised in terms of a further anthropological dimension, of which the constituent elements are: culture, ethos and values.

In its original two-dimensional form the model generated a number of research studies of the correlates of role-personality conflict and of conflict within the organisational and personal dimensions, some of which are described by Campbell, Corbally and Ramseyer (1966, pp. 189-216). Personal satisfaction was found to be positively related to the extent to which need-dispositions are congruent with role expectations. The extended model led to studies being undertaken of the influence of value conflicts on
relationships between school administrators and their school boards. The sensitive position of the administrator was thus highlighted, first as the mediator of intra-organisation conflict, and second as the organisational representative exposed to diverse external measures.

Commenting on the model, Trow (1959, p. 124) noted that Getzels used it to illuminate empirical problems. Trow saw it as being ‘likely to be useful to administrators both in their thinking and practice’, and suggested that its ‘simplicity and clarity’ derived from ‘its close connection with his (i.e. Getzels’) empirical research’. More recently it has been severely criticised for excessive simplicity, in that ‘it manages to reduce the puzzles, conflicts and pain of life in organisations to a few neatly-working regularities by applying some very special assumptions to the mysteries of existence’ (Greenfield 1979/80, p. 222). Such criticism is well-founded in terms of the perspectives now available, and can justifiably be extended to the methodological limitations of the associated research. Nevertheless, the Getzels-Guba model deserves to be recognised as a conceptual frame work which generated a succession of hypotheses which were subject to empirical test. Within the parameters of the New Movement paradigm it thus
contributed to developing a closer relationship between theory and practice. Role studies in educational management

Apart from role studies conducted within the Getzels-Guba framework, numerous studies of the roles of the US superintendent (responsible, for education territorially, to a school board) and of the principal (responsible, for an individual school, to the superintendent) were undertaken in the early 1960s from the standpoint of role theory, i.e. that social behaviour is to a significant extent socially determined.

The most comprehensive of the role studies were those in which Neal Gross and his associates at Harvard University were involved. These included a study of the superintendency role (Gross, Mason and McEachern 1958) which explored differences in the expectations of superintendents and their board members. It was found, as hypothesised, that in defining the division of responsibilities between the two positions, each group assigned greater responsibility to their own position (p. 141). The study also explored the incidence and resolution of role conflict.

A study by Carlson (1962) of a sample of recently appointed school superintendents introduced an overt sociological perspective into a field which had hitherto been dominated by psychologists. Carlson showed that
superintendents promoted from within the system (the ‘insiders’) and those brought in from other systems (the ‘outsiders’) tended to differ in their organisational behaviour.

The outsiders were more likely to introduce major innovations and to accept the possible risk of community disapproval; the insiders, wishing to stay in the community, were more cautious and adapted themselves to survive. Though Carlson concluded that ‘there is no reason to expect that one type is more capable than the other type’ (p. 14), the study has been recognised as having implications for achieving organisational change. THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

A large-scale research project may also be mentioned, which Halpin and Hayes (1977, p. 269) later singled out as ‘perhaps the most monumental single study ever conducted within the field of educational administration’. Using sophisticated simulation techniques and a formidable battery of psychological tests and assessment procedures, Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredericksen (1962) studied intensively the personality characteristics of a sample of 232 elementary school principals. The final conclusions, arrived at by elaborate statistical treat-ment, were ambiguous and obscure. From the viewpoint of practical application
the best that can be said is that the array of situational exercises developed in the
research were resourcefully converted by the University Council for Educational
Administration (1960) into the ‘Whitman School’ simulation, and used in the in
service training of thousands of US elementary school principals.

A general criticism which can be made of the educational role studies which
appeared in the 1960s is that they did not take heed of misgivings already
expressed concerning the basic assumptions of role theory. Levinson (1959) had
vigorously challenged the ‘unitary’ assumption that there is necessarily a close
correspondence between the expectations of ‘society’ for a given role and those
of the role incumbents, and between such expectations and actual behaviour,
these being assumptions which do not accord with empirical evidence. Likewise
Gross, Mason and McEachern (1958, pp. 21–47) had clearly rejected ‘the postu
late of role consensus’, i.e. the assumption that there is general agreement in
society regarding expectations for different roles. It is paradoxical that, in their
empirical studies, Gross and his colleagues seem not to have fully appreciated
the potency of the explosive device, with slow-burning fuse attached, which
they had unwittingly planted within the corpus of
management studies (cf Chapters 9 and 13).

With the benefit of hindsight and the alternative perspectives now available,

the host of meticulously undertaken role studies may be seen at best as provid

ing static, statistical composite snapshots, which ignore many of the subtle dif

ferences which really matter, and which afford little insight into the dynamics of

changing perceptions and relationships. Organisational climate studies

The organisational climate of schools is an imprecise notion which falls well

short of the rigorous conceptual standards to which Halpin and his colleagues

originally aspired. It has been loosely defined as that set of internal character

istics which distinguishes one school from another, and which influences the

 behaviour of people in each school (Hoy and Miskel 1978, p. 137); the idea has

received considerable attention from researchers in the USA and elsewhere

working within the New Movement paradigm.

Foremost was Halpin and Croft’s pioneering study (1963) of 71 elementary

schools, which was based on a simple comparison. As Halpin later recalled

(1967, p. 6), ‘Croft and I began with the obvious analogy that personality is to T H E O R Y

the human individual as ‘organisational climate’ is to the organisation’. He
added that they might just as easily have chosen the term ‘organisational person’ for what they had in mind. Their approach was to develop a questionnaire to explore various aspects of teacher-teacher and teacher-principal relations. In its final form their definitive instrument, the ubiquitous Organisational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ), contained 64 items. Addressed specifically to teachers, it invited them to indicate for each item, on a four point scale from ‘rarely occurs’ to ‘very frequently occurs’, their answer to the question, ‘To what extent is this true of your school?’

Using factor analytic techniques Halpin and Croft were able to arrange the OCDQ items so as to provide eight sub-tests measuring particular variables. Four of these scales related to perceptions of the principal’s behaviour, namely, production emphasis, aloofness, consideration and thrust; the other four related to perceptions of staff behaviour, namely, hindrance, intimacy, disengagement and esprit. It was thus possible to provide an eight-dimensional profile of the organisational climate of each school in terms of the mean perceptions of its teaching staff. The researchers found that these profiles clustered in six groups, and consequently ‘invented’ (the term is that of Halpin himself, 1967, p. 6) a
typology of six climates, arranged along a continuum from an 'open climate' at one end to a 'closed climate' at the other. The open climate is characterised by 'authenticity' on the part of both principal and staff: the principal leading by example and the staff showing commitment and working well together, so that acts of leadership emerge naturally as needed. The closed climate is in stark contrast: the principal provides no effective leadership and is preoccupied with for malities and trivia, while the teachers are frustrated and apathetic, responding at a minimum level.

Later research has thrown doubt on the usefulness of the four intermediate categories which were identified, but the idea of assessing educational organisations on a climate continuum from open to closed has generated substantial research activity in many parts of the world. Such research should be treated with caution, however, for the OCDQ research instrument, originally developed and tested in a small sample of US elementary schools, has sometimes been used 'with greater zeal than wisdom', as Halpin (1977, p. 7) has sadly observed; i.e. in very different institutional and cultural contexts and without adaptation or further validation.
In spite of his caveats concerning misuse, Halpin (1977, p. 270) interestingly included the OCDQ research in his selection of the five studies which, in his view, best characterise research within the New Movement in its first decade. (It may be added in parentheses that his other nominations included the Getzels Guba study, the Carlson insider/outsider study, and the large-scale Hemphill, Griffiths and Fredericksen study of elementary school heads, each of which has been noted above. His fifth nomination was his own earlier study of leadership styles, to which reference is made in Chapter 10).

The inclusion of the OCDQ in the top five may not be surprising in view of its wide currency and obvious appeal, especially to those favourably disposed to greater staff participation. Matched against the initial claims of the New Movement, however, the theoretical basis of the study is slight, relying on the simple analogy of personality, which is presumably a reflection of the fact that Halpin’s specialist field was psychology. One may speculate that if Halpin’s training had been in sociology, he would have linked the climate concept firmly to the literature on ‘culture’, allowing for the identification and inter-relating of the equivalents of sub-cultures, rather than submerging all differences in a single
holistic concept of one organisational climate.

The post facto specification of six discrete organisational climates was soon challenged on empirical grounds by Brown (1965) whose computer printout, using a sample of schools in Minnesota, identified eight climates. Replication by Andrews (1965), using Canadian schools, also raised fundamental questions about the concept operationally defined by the OCDQ. He observed that an instrument completed only by teachers, and concerned essentially with the interaction of teachers and principal, does not effectively recognise the contribution to the distinctive culture of the school of relationships which involve the pupils and the parents. It is of interest that a subsequent National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) study of school climate in the UK (Finlayson, Banks and Loughrans 1971) included the perceptions of pupils as well as of teachers.

This has been replicated in Australia (Deer 1980).

A further point, which relates to the shallow theoretical underpinning of organisational climate research, is that it provides no insight as to how a particular organisational climate comes into existence or how a closed climate can be made more open. As Halpin (1967, p. 11) himself frankly admitted, 'The blunt
truth is that we do not yet know very much as to how to change a climate’. It is

thus tantalising that, though organisational climate can be seen by practitioners

as a useful rough and ready means of generalising about their organisations, it is

not a concept which theorists have been able to define with any precision.

Because of its lack of clarity it has failed to generate powerful hypotheses and

has done little to increase understanding. It appears that it is the inadequacy of

organisational climate as theory which has lessened its usefulness for practice. A paradigm partly accepted, variously challenged

While a cursory reading of the literature might suggest that the rigorous, theo

retical epistemology of the New Movement writers had quickly been accepted as

the new orthodoxy of the field, a survey by Jean Hills (1965), later confirmed by

a more extensive study (Campbell and Newell 1973), showed that even among

US academics the commitment was less than total. Professional associations of

administrators were supportive, but in somewhat general terms (American

Association of School Administrators (AASA) 1963).

Substantial discrepancy between theoretical aspirations and research achieve

ment made the original optimistic forecast, that a comprehensive general theory T H E O R Y

was about to emerge, less convincing. At the same time it could be argued that the
large-scale, statistically sophisticated research projects, and the more modest doc
toral dissertations which were copiously produced, shared a hidden paradigmatic
assumption to which the New Movement implicitly subscribed. This was the
belief that social science research is essentially concerned with random samples
(the larger the better) with mean responses and standard deviations, and with the
statistical significance of differences. The varying perceptions and qualified
answers of particular respondents tended to be disregarded, scientific methodology
having no means readily available to handle unique individual cases.

A tendency to advocate, and to make some use of, general systems theory was
perhaps the nearest that the New Movement got to the adoption of a universal con
ceptual framework. An extensive theoretical treatment, drawing on the work of
Talcott Parsons, was provided by Hills (1968), and made evident the underlying
reliance on the analogy of a living organism in the discussion of pattern mainte
nance, integration, goal attainment and adaptation. Practical applications of consid
erable sophistication were developed, notably at the University of Oregon. These
involved the adaptation to educational planning of system analytic techniques such
as planning, programming and budgeting systems (Piele,
Eidell and Smith 1970;

Eidell and Nagle 1970), but they were not always successful in enlisting whole

hearted practitioner co-operation, as Wolcott’s evaluative study (1977) makes clear.

The ideal of a science of educational administration, based on a single grand

theory, appeared to become less compelling by the mid-1960s. Schwab (1964, p.

47) cogently argued that ‘contrary to the burden of recent literature on adminis

tration, the pursuit of one sufficing theory of administration is a manifest impos

sibility in the foreseeable future, and an uncritical aping of the wrong model’

(emphasis added). He further observed that ‘a sophisticated and cynical grasp of

about a dozen separate and distinct bodies of “theory” are indispensable to delib

erately good, intelligent administration’, a sentiment broadly in harmony with

the viewpoint adopted in the latter part of this chapter, though the epithet

‘cynical’ would not necessarily be endorsed.

At the 1966 International Intervisitation Programme, Griffiths counselled that

‘the search for one encompassing theory (if anyone is searching) should be

abandoned . . . We have learned that a modest approach to theory pays off’

(Baron, Cooper and Walker 1969, p. 166). Similarly Erickson (1967, p. 376)

reported that ‘the field is very much in flux. The erstwhile
search for “administrative theory”, for example, seems virtually abandoned today...’.

Robin Farquhar (1977, p. 356), referring to ‘some disarray’ in administrator preparatory programmes in the mid-1970s, called for more attention to be given to ‘grounded’ theory, and ended his survey ‘on a note of cautious optimism’. Donald Willower (1975, p. 3), who continued to be a consistent upholder of the broad principles of the New Movement paradigm when others were expressing doubts and reservations, argued that highly abstract, large-scale theory had not been an issue and that ‘in spite of its use as a straw man by some writers, there has been no real effort to construct a “grand theory” of educational administration’. His own THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT cautious defence of theory prudently excluded Feigl’s rigorous definition, previously mentioned, which ‘sets a standard that would exclude virtually everything done in educational administration to date’ (p. 3). He commended Merton’s more modest view that a large part of what is called theory ‘consists of general orientations toward data, suggesting types of variables which theories must somehow take into account rather than clearly formulated, verifiable statements of relationships between specified variables’ (Merton 1957, p. 52). The notion of
theory as a general orientation towards data was, of course, a significant retreat

from the position boldly proclaimed in the heyday of the New Movement (Griffiths 1959a), but it enabled Willower to maintain some optimism concerning future development.

In stark contrast was the bleak disillusion expressed by Halpin (1969, 1970, 1977) in papers drawing variously on the imagery of a foggy view from Olympus, a fumbled torch and a broken icon. The papers were, regrettably, less convincing in their suggestions for the future.

More constructively Jean Hills (1980), while recognising that the field was in disarray, called for an appreciation that educational administration is an applied science which draws on many disciplines. ‘Any concrete, common sense object or event’, he observed, ‘is of such infinite diversity that its full richness cannot be grasped in terms of any system of abstract concepts’ (p. 226). He proposed arrangements to facilitate socialisation with regard to clinical values in administrator preparation, an emphasis at variance with the positivist separation of facts and values characteristic of the New Movement. Similarly Culbertson (1980), who — like Hills — was addressing the 1978 IIP in Canada, called for the devel
opment of a new 'Theory for Practice'.

In concluding this section it is appropriate to recall Kuhn’s differentiation between a period of normal science, when the assumptions of the accepted para
digm of a scientific community are not questioned, and a transitional period
when the paradigm itself is under attack. By the mid-1970s two US scholars,
Oliver Gibson (1975; 1977) and Donald Erickson (1977), were, in fact, writing
about the need for a 'paradigm shift' in educational administration. In neither
case was the kind of change desired clearly indicated, while the basic assump
tions of the prevailing paradigm were not fundamentally questioned.

At the 1974 IIP, held in the UK, Tom Greenfield (1975) made an assault on
the accepted tenets of the New Movement in a paper which has come to be
recognised by supporters and opponents as a landmark in theory development.

He rejected 'the apparent assumption that organisations are not only real but also
distinct from the actions, feelings and purposes of people' (p. 71), and that
organisational structures are invariate while 'people occupy organisations in
somewhat the same way that they inhabit houses' (p. 72). Organisations are not,
he suggested, real entities with a life of their own or governed by a generally
accepted set of values; they are invented social reality reflecting the values of
people with access to power. The emphasis should therefore be on ‘discovering
how different people interpret the world in which they live’ rather than on ‘disT H E O R Y
covering the universal laws of society and human conduct within it’ which had
been the ideal of the New Movement academics (p. 77).

The underlying assumptions of the pervasive social science paradigm associ-
ated with ‘structural-functionalism’ and ‘natural systems theory’, which Green
field was directly challenging in his repudiation of the New Movement
orthodoxy, will be considered further in Chapter 9, together with the various
alternative viewpoints which have been proposed, and which are still emerging.

The new perspectives debate, conducted in the USA in Educational Adminis-
tration Quarterly and in the UK in Educational Administration, in the wake of
Greenfield’s paper, has been lively and generally constructive. The result to
date, as well illustrated by Griffiths’ analysis (1979) of the intellectual turmoil
within educational administration, has been a sharpened appreciation of the
strengths and weaknesses of competing perspectives and paradigms. For the
student of educational management the current situation is as stimulating as it is
demanding. As compared with the undisputed emergence and wide acceptance of a single new orthodoxy—which Kuhn appeared to envisage when a period of normal science is replaced by a transitional phase—a diverse, less predictable prospect is revealed, which may well presage a more productive, interactive and critical relationship between theory and practice.

The account, given in some detail, of the achievements and disappointments of what have been called ‘the developing decades’ (Cunningham, Hack and Nystrand 1977) in the study of educational management and administration, provides both an instructive case study in theory-practice relationships in an emerging field and some of the necessary background for appreciating the significance of more recent developments. The contemporary applied science, field of application, perspective A variety of potentially relevant modes and areas of knowledge is today available to all who are concerned to improve educational management through better understanding of its concepts, processes and structures. In the UK a cautiously pragmatic, multidisciplinary approach has characteristically been generally adopted. It is, incidentally, also an approach which is currently more widely favoured internationally, as the monodisciplinary aspirations of the North American New Movement appear
less attainable (Griffiths 1982). In this section the implications of a multidisciplinary approach will be considered, followed by an inevitably selective survey of some of the models and constructs of possible relevance for application to educational systems and institutions. The multidisciplinary approach

An important early landmark in the development of educational management and administration as a field of study in the United Kingdom was the publication Theory and Practice in Educational Administration and the Social Sciences, edited by George Baron and William Taylor (1969). The editors acknowledged ‘the influence of recent American, Canadian and Australian thinking’, but claimed that ‘the dominant note is that of English pragmatism; this is perhaps as it should be in a book emanating from a country in which the practice of administration has long been held in high esteem and in which its theory is only now receiving serious attention’ (p. vii).

Several chapters of the book drew substantially on the US literature, familiar names such as Halpin, Getzels and Guba and Griffiths being frequently cited.

The theoretical bias of the New Movement, however, was not endorsed, Baron noting that ‘to the practitioner in England . . . writing of this kind can appear
highly remote from his concerns’ (p. 12). Hoyle, in a chapter on organisational theory and the sociology of organisations, referred to shortcomings of the New Movement due to its ‘over-ambitious approaches to theory construction’ (p. 38), and was sceptical about the use of general systems theory as a source of hypotheses. He concluded that ‘a more limited approach to theory construction would enable us to handle the problems arising from the unique or limited characteristics of educational administration’ (p. 45).

The approach adopted in the Baron and Taylor volume was that educational management is a field of application and that its study should draw widely, but with discrimination, on the social science disciplines and on already recognised applied fields such as organisational theory. Multidisciplinary study, rather than interdisciplinary study, was the preferred descriptor, since the latter ‘could suggest an approach which, in its generality, falls between the interstices of the disciplines and adds nothing solid’ (Hoyle p. 47).

The multidisciplinary standpoint was further developed by Ron Glatter (1972) in a survey of approaches to management development in education, which endorsed Snyder’s warning to the 1966 IIP concerning the art of ‘squeez
ing disciplines': 'Only on the basis of rigorous specification of need and an equally rigorous grasp of how a particular discipline organises its knowledge can one establish relevance and borrow safely and productively' (Snyder 1969, p. 297).

Both the priority given to substantive practical issues and the multidisciplinary emphasis in theoretical analysis have been much in evidence in the expansion of UK provision in educational management (Hughes, Carter and Fidler 1981), in the parallel growth of the British Educational Management and Administration Society as an association bringing together the practitioners and the academics, and in the increasing availability of relevant books and journals. A field of application as Hills (1980, p. 225) reminded his US colleagues at IIP 1978, an applied science is required to pay close attention to the special characteristics of its field of practice, which need to be thoroughly and sympathetically understood. One T H E O R Y cannot automatically assume, without further testing, that intellectual currency minted for other economies will be acceptable in the educational market place.

Research and analysis has to be done in an educational context, which may reveal the need for substantial modification of concepts and methodologies.
developed elsewhere. The need for awareness and sensitivity in relation to the problems and concerns of practice as defined by practitioners makes it particu
larly appropriate that most of the contributors to this book regard themselves primarily as practitioners rather than as academics. A multidisciplinary study

In the past, organisational studies in education have drawn mainly on social psychology, sociology and economics. The range of borrowings has broadened to include philosophy, political science, anthropology, a diversity of micro-social sciences, and the methods of qualitative, as well as quantitative, research. Also recognised as of interest are the many-sided contemporary studies of organisational structures and change processes, in schools of management studies which have long superseded the simplicities of the traditional management writers.

Indiscriminate borrowing, however, resulting in the accumulation of an undigested aggregation of discrete bits of incompatible theory, is likely to be unproductive in achieving understanding. In choosing an eclectic mode of proceeding, Snyder recognised that it is essential to be aware of the strengths and limitations of the concepts and methodologies of the particular discipline or sub-discipline one is using, and also of the underlying assumptions of the perspective adopted.
Given such understanding, a pragmatic approach which is prepared, circumspectly and critically, to make use of more than one perspective, is likely to provide greater insight into the complexities of an educational system than a methodology which confines attention to one kind of problem or one mode of inquiry. In similar vein Gareth Morgan (1980) has advocated 'a theoretical and methodological pluralism which allows the development of new perspectives for organisational analysis' (p. 605). He called for uncontested assumptions to be exposed to the challenge of alternative ways of seeing. A cosmopolitan outlook would enable the practitioner and the theorist to avoid being imprisoned by a single set of metaphors.

In the present volume various aspects of current interest in the management of educational systems and institutions will be described and considered using a variety of models and approaches, the models providing a framework for coherent analysis. In some cases alternative models might also be appropriate, and it would be a rewarding exercise for the reader to test out such possibilities. To give some indication of the vitality and rich diversity of the ideas available, selected areas of recent and continuing theory development, which may be of
use as sources of concepts and models applicable to educational management,

will now be briefly described. THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT A diversity of structural models

A considerable body of empirical research and theory development on organisational structure may be interpreted as a vigorous rejection by later structuralists of the classical doctrine, equally upheld by Fayol and Weber, that there is one right model of organisation. The universal acceptance of the ideal of a tight hierarchical structure has given way to the concept of structural relativism, which permits alternative, more differentiated, and more flexible structures.

Burns and Stalker (1961), on the basis of their pioneering study of innovation in Scottish electrical companies, had come to the conclusion that 'the beginning of administrative wisdom is that there is no optimum type of management system' (p. 125). They identified a pair of contrasting ideal-type management structures, a mechanistic form appropriate to stable conditions and an organic or organismic form to handle less predictable problems more flexibly. Litwak (1961) showed that different types of structure may be appropriate even within the same organisation, a human relations model being applicable in handling
work of a non-uniform nature and a Weberian model in dealing with uniform work of a routine nature.

A comparative study by Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) of ten varied industrial organisations led to the construction of a ‘contingency model’, which developed further the implications of the view that structures are contingent upon the problems with which they have to deal. They identified and produced measures of distinct organisational sub-environments, matching each sub-environment to an appropriate sub-unit structure. ‘Goodness of fit’ became the important issue. The more turbulent and uncertain the environment, the greater the tendency for a high level of performance to be associated with high differentiation among sub-units, coupled with effective integration achieved by means of shared information, flexible procedures and open decision-making.

Another approach also challenged the unitary concept of bureaucracy by seeking to identify and measure a number of independent dimensions of organisational structure. Work by Hall (1963) in the USA was followed by an impressive array of systematic empirical studies by the Aston group in England, which have been brought together in a series of volumes (Pugh and Hickson 1976; Pugh and Hinings 1976; Pugh and Payne 1977). The dimensions
identified in these studies were: specialisation of activities, standardisation of procedure, for malisation of documentation, centralisation of authority, and configuration of role structure. They also developed measures of contextual and performance variables, and explored relationships between variables, using factor analysis and correlational induction. The studies originally used heterogeneous samples of commercial and governmental organisations to develop general propositions connecting structure and context, and the group’s exclusive preoccupation in such studies with variables involving objective quantifiable data at the expense of political and ideological factors has been severely criticised (Burrell and Morgan 1979; Clegg and Dunkerley 1980). T H E O R Y

Interestingly, some later but loosely related cross-institutional studies of local authorities (Greenwood, Hinings and Ransom 1975) and of churches (Hinings 1979), using a contingency theory approach, have led to the conclusion that belief systems and ideologies, which had previously been regarded as irrelevant, deserved detailed study. A theoretical model has been proposed which includes the conceptual categories of provinces of meaning and power dependencies, as well as contextual constraints (Ransom, Hinings and
Greenwood 1980). Whereas

the more technical aspects of the research produced as a result of the original Aston studies may not be directly relevant to educational management, the

methodological flexibility which their dimensional approach entailed is certainly of interest, as is the recent move to develop a framework to incorporate 'ostensibly disparate perspectives' with a view to 'searching for the relations between cause and meaning, between what is determinant and what voluntary in the relation of structure and action' (Ransom, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980, p. 14).

In selectively reviewing structural models, it is appropriate finally to refer to two theoretical contributions which substantially widen the meaning of the term 'structural relativism'. The metaphor of a rigid invariant structure is fundamentally challenged both by Karl Weick's (1976) perception of organisations as 'loosely coupled systems' and by the closely related 'organised anarchies' of Cohen, March and Olsen (1972), which appear to provide the ultimate antithesis to Weberian bureaucracy.

Loose coupling, a term previously used by March and Olsen (1975), is intended to signify that the parts of an organisation are in some relationship to each other, but that the linkage is limited, uncertain and
weak, and certainly
much looser than the tight hierarchical control of bureaucratic theory. Weick
added that loose coupling also ‘carries connotations of impermanence, dissolv
ability and tacitness all of which are potentially crucial properties of the “glue”
that holds organisations together’ (1976, p. 3). He argued specifically that educa
tional organisations can be viewed as loosely coupled systems. In Chapter 4 of
the present volume the applicability of the model is tested in relation to policy
making for the school curriculum.
Meyer and Rowan (1977), who used the concept in an empirical study of
school structures, concluded that loose coupling helps to maintain the facade
that formal structures are really working when they are not. In a later paper
Weick (1980) accepted that loose coupling can be seen as having a stabilising
function, in that the connection points of sub-systems act as shock absorbers
which internalise pressures rather than transmitting them to other parts of the
system. A further factor is that feedback is neutralised as a result of incomplete
information being available concerning the effects of previous action. Because
of such considerations Foster (1983) has argued that the flexibility claimed for
loosely coupled systems is illusory, and that the concept
is not essentially differ
ent from the ‘exception principle’ of Frederick Taylor’s Scientific Management,
which allows for attention to be focused on exceptions to the smooth flow of
Writing from an educational management viewpoint, Willower (1980, p. 6)
repeated the suggestion in Weick’s original paper that the extent of coupling
should be investigated as a dependent variable, subject to the influences of
organisational and environmental factors. As Weick further observed, ‘If an
organisation faces a scarcity of resources its pattern of couplings should differ
from when it faces an expansion of resources . . .’ (1976, pp. 13–14). It may be
noted that scarcity in the resources currently available to the maintained school
system in the UK is likely to be one factor, among others, contributing to the
tightening of curriculum control at national level which is noted by James
Waddington in Chapter 4.
The term ‘organised anarchy’ is intended to signify structural looseness in an
extreme form. It is a fair description of the ‘Garbage Can Model of Organisational
Choice’ described by Cohen, March and Olsen (1972), and further developed by
Cohen and March (1974), and by March and Olsen (1976). In
such an organisation

the goals are inconsistent and ill-defined, the technology
for achieving them is

unclear to the members, and those involved in
decision-making vary unpredictably. Thus problems, solutions and decision-makers are
not systematically related to each other. Problems may be created in order to
provide opportunities

for applying previously discovered solutions, and
decision-making serves purposes other than the production of decisions.
Organisational choice may be viewed

as being achieved by various participants unpredictably
throwing various kinds of
problems and solutions into a ‘garbage can’. Such an
organisation, in brief, is

characterised by severe ambiguity and irrationality.

The creators of the model applied it in a university
context. Colin Turner

(1977, p. 8) has argued that it also applies to further
education colleges and

polytechnics operating within turbulent, unpredictable
environments. The model

has attracted wide interest because of its vivid portrayal of the fact that the com
plete rational organisation is no more likely to exist in real life than its antithesis

Padgett (1980) operationalised the theory to show how variable ambiguity

impinges on decision-making at different levels in a traditional Weberian

bureaucracy, and showed that the model is potentially
applicable even when the

system is not highly decoupled. Lutz (1982) argued that universities are differ-

entially coupled, ‘tightly coupled in some aspects and uncoupled in others’. It is

the informal system, he suggested, which can best be described as an organised

anarchy. ‘Academe is not so fragile’, he concluded, ‘that it could not survive


In this section a diversity of approaches to organisational structure have been

described which may be regarded as portraying different ways of bringing the

ideal rational structures of traditional management theory into closer touch with

the ‘brute facts’ of real life. The different models can each provide significant

insight in particular circumstances. Even the most sophisticated model, however,

can only provide partial enlightenment. Structural approaches of themselves, as

Ransom, Hinings and Greenwood (1980) came to appreciate, do not take account

of the values, motivations and power relationships of organisational participants. T H E O R Y Policy-making models

Grant Harman (1980), in his study of the policy process in education, found it

necessary to take account of twelve different models taken from political science

and other disciplines. Here brief reference will be made to three different frame
works: Easton’s political systems model, Simon’s modified rational model, and Lindblom’s incremental model.

A political systems model was proposed by David Easton (1965) as a framework for political analysis. It was developed as a means of considering the process of policy-making at national level, Easton’s distinctive insight being that the political system can be conceptualised as the means for the authoritative allocation within society of valued things. The output of the system is thus the allocation of benefits and resources made through the enunciation of government policies, consequent decisions and the implementation of actions.

The system’s inputs are of two kinds. First, there are the demands which finally reach the political agenda as items for political decision. A sophisticated and often protracted process is involved, by which general wants are crystallised into specific demands, which are then progressively modified, combined, and reduced in the interest of ‘realism’ by interest groups, political parties and officials. The second type of input consists of the general support which the political system requires in order to function effectively. This involves the concept of a political community which is supportive of the political system generally, of the
regime of rules and regulations by which decisions are made, and of those in authority who make the decisions. Feedback mechanisms, providing information concerning reactions within society to allocations made or proposed, enable the system in normal circumstances to adapt and regulate its processes as necessary to cope with disturbance and potential conflict. There is thus an assumption, which is a basic feature of the systems viewpoint, that there is sufficient stability and consensual agreement on values in the society for the allocative decisions of the authorities to be generally accepted.

Though developed in a national context, the model clearly has potential for more general application, such as to policy-making in the local education service (cf Chapter 5). In this context it is of interest that Easton himself has recently referred appreciatively, in a foreword to Howell and Brown’s (1983) twin studies of policy-making in education, to the conceptual novelty, daring, and genuine promise of regarding educational organisations as parapolitical systems, the scope of the term ‘political’ being thereby broadened.

While Easton’s model thus provides an appropriate framework for appreciating the essentially political nature of policy-making, it does not provide an analysis of the different stages involved in the
A number of approaches to the process of decision-making are possible, ranging from the comprehensively rational to the modestly incremental.

The classical or rational approach, as described by March and Simon (1958), may be regarded as the ideal if time and resources are plentiful. Three phases are involved, the first being that of problem recognition. This may be no simple matter in a complex situation, as Vickers (1967) has noted; it would require judgement based on experience and an alertness of mind. The second phase is the search for solutions, which may be a routine matter if the problem can be computer-programmed. If the problem is novel and unusual, creative solutions along completely new lines may have to be sought. The third and final phase is that of choosing a particular solution, having regard to the costs and benefits of alternative solutions. This requires not only a technical appraisal of feasibility but also a judgement of what is practical and politically expedient in the given circumstances, having regard to demands and supports.

A modification to the rational model, first proposed by Simon (1947), has been named the ‘satisficing’ model. This takes account of the constraints and pressures.
on those involved in decision-making by limiting the search for solutions to those considered most promising and ending the search as soon as a solution is found which is regarded as reasonably satisfactory in the circumstances. ‘Satisficing’ is the term introduced to indicate that the policy-maker accepts the first alternative regarded as satisfactory rather than continuing the search for an optimum solution.

In this way Simon conceded that the splendid rationality of ‘economic man’ assumed in the classical theory has to give way in practice to the more modest notion of the bounded rationality of ‘administrative man’.

A hard-headed appreciation of what actually happens in many real life situations is even more evident in the ‘disjointed incrementalism’ model of Lindblom (1959; 1979). This accepts the idea that in practice it is often only a small step, rather than a radical change, which is likely to be acceptable to the diverse groups that the policy-maker has to satisfy. The policies considered are therefore only slightly, or incrementally, different from those previously followed, but a small move in the desired direction may be possible. As external conditions permit or internal changes take place, it becomes possible to make further small advances, so that improvement is achieved not by a continuous process but by a
patient strategy of ‘disjointed incrementalism’. The process is also ‘exploratory

in that goals of policy-making continue to change as new experience with policy throws new light on what is possible or desirable’ (Braybrooke and Lindblom 1963, p. 71).

Such a mode of proceeding, well known to experienced educational managers, has been dubbed 'the science of muddling through'. It involves cultivating a political awareness of what can be achieved in the short term, but without necessarily compromising commitment to long-term objectives. In this respect it differs markedly from the random separation of problems and solutions which is a characteristic of Cohen, March and Olsen’s organisational anarchy.

The examples of policy-making models that have been given serve to illustrate some of the ways that theories are structured or are modified to take account of the specifics of practice. They also suggest that different approaches are not necessarily to be treated as exclusive alternatives, but may complement each other by illuminating different facets of complex reality. Though educational finances have always been a concern of educational administrators at the system level, it may be claimed that sustained academic study of eco
nomic aspects of education both in the UK and in the USA began in the late 1950s.

An early UK outcome was John Vaizey’s (1958) The Costs of Education, while in the USA ‘Investment in Man’ was the significant title of Theodore Shultz’s presidential address to the American Economic Association in 1960. The rapid development of empirical studies which then took place in the USA, involving the analysis by computer of elaborate census returns, also inspired more modest studies in the UK (Woodhall, 1972).

That the new subject had implications for educational policy-making and educational management was soon appreciated. Mark Blaug (1983, p. 7) recently referred to the decade of the 1960s as the golden years ‘when no self-respecting Minister of Education would have dreamed of making educational decisions without an economist sitting at his right hand’. By the middle of the decade Innes, Jacobson and Pellegrin (1965) were already reporting to US educational administrators the human capital and economic growth findings of Schultz, Becker, Denison and others, which were endorsed as ‘highly significant research on the economic benefits accruing to the individual and to society from investment in education’ (p. v). Similarly Peston (1969, p. 63), in a chapter
linking economics with the administration of education in the Baron and Taylor volume, argued that the economics of education is of value to the administrator in the way it formulates problems and in its methods of research, and because of its substantive empirical contributions.

The rapid worldwide growth of the subject owed much to the interest of international agencies and of governments in both developed and developing countries in the part played by education in economic growth. Interest was particularly focused on the key concept of human capital, the invention of which, according to Blaug (1976), could be regarded as a very significant paradigm change in the Kuhnian sense. Reviewing the field, Williams (1982, p. 98) concluded that to most authors ‘human capital theory is at the heart of the economics of education’.

According to human capital theory, education enhances productivity so that educational expenditure is as much a form of investment, for both the individual and the society, as capital investment in industrial installation and equipment.

From this perspective the resource requirements of education and training (i.e. the capital outlay) are viewed exclusively in terms of the increased income to be derived from that outlay. The propositions underlying the theory were amenable
to empirical investigation, which was undertaken on a massive scale in the United States. Some work was also done in the UK, mainly by special surveys to compare the average earnings of persons with different levels of education.

Peston (1969), while admitting that research in Britain was 'still in a most primitive condition' (p. 62), provided a summary of substantive findings as follows: T H E O R Y A N D P R A C T I C E I N E D U C A T I O N A L M A N A G E M E N T That having allowed for all the other variables which are likely to influence the distribution of income and having attributed the remaining income difference to education, the value of education in producing income differences may be calculated as a rate of return. This return is typically in the range 6-12 per cent per annum and compares favourably with returns to investment in the public and private sectors. From the point of view of the individual this formulation is adequate. From the national standpoint an additional assumption has to be made, namely, that incomes measure productivities (more strictly, that income differences measure differences in marginal productivities). (p. 63)

Peston himself was prepared to make such an assumption, as is evident from a later passage: Using work of this kind it is possible to calculate what share of a country's growth is attributable to improvements in human capital as opposed simply to the quantity of labour, physical capital and technical progress. As much as fifty per cent of growth is attributable to human capital. (p. 63)

Reviewing the situation over a decade later, Williams (1982, p. 99) was distinctly more cautious. He warned that, since relative earnings are to some extent dependent on supply and demand, which change with time, past experience was
an unreliable guide to future development. He conceded, however, that 'expen
diture on education has in the past been, and is seen to be, a worthwhile private
investment' (p. 99). Whether it is also a worthwhile social investment was in his
view a more debatable proposition.

Similar doubts have been expressed by Blaug (1983) in his exposition of
what he called a second-generation economics of education, which developed
the subject in new directions in the 1970s but did not 'perhaps deliver the same
firm pronouncements on matters of educational policy as did the first generation'
(p. 9). He singled out two new directions of particular relevance to human
capital theory: first the recognition, stimulated by the neo-Marxian critique of
Bowles and Gintis (1976), that schools have a significant socialising function,
i.e. the transmitting of specific values and attitudes, which is overlooked by
teachers and orthodox economists whose emphasis is on the imparting of cogni
tive knowledge; and second the challenge to human capital theory, as formulated
in 1960s, which is presented by the so-called 'screening hypothesis'. Each
requires some elaboration.

If the second-generation view is accepted—that socialisation, rather than the
acquisition of skills and knowledge, is the primary
economic function of education—there are implications to be drawn for practice which differ significantly from the standpoint traditionally expected of economists. First, it would appear that attempts, in the presumed interest of the labour market, to make secondary education more specifically vocational at the expense of general education may be misguided and irrelevant. Second, doubts are raised about the wisdom of educational planning, whether in developed or developing countries, which relies on precise forecasts of manpower requirements for different kinds of educational attainment.

The screening hypothesis adds another dimension to the conceptual framework, by proposing a further economic function for education. Education appears to assist employment agencies by separating out, at different stages, those regarded as less suitable for positions of responsibility and higher salary.

A strong version of the hypothesis therefore claims that education is no more than a filtering device, conveniently regarded by all concerned as fair and appropriate, which identifies those with the attributes required in different positions but which does nothing to create or develop those attributes. Blaug concluded, after reviewing the empirical evidence, that this strong
version of the hypothesis

is untenable. If education were simply a screening mechanism, it would obvi-
ously be cheaper and simpler, as Blaug observed (1983, p. 15), to replace it by a
battery of personality tests.

A weaker interpretation of the hypothesis, which recognises that educational
qualifications (whatever their other functions and merits) are in fact used as pre-
dictors of future job performance, can hardly be disputed, as Blaug also admit-
ted. He further suggested that, because promotions usually involve the operation
of an ‘internal labour market’ rather than external competition, advantages at
initial appointment tend to be perpetuated throughout working life.

The extent to which a modified human capital theory can accommodate the
new insights of Blaug’s second-generation economists of education is a matter
of continuing debate, which clearly has direct relevance for government policy
and for the management of education. If, as advocates of stronger versions of the
screening hypothesis claim, increased educational expenditure for further and
higher education simply gives salary and employment advantages to the better
qualified, it is difficult to justify continued total dependence on public funding

which, as Williams (1982, p. 101) notes, ‘provides able
individuals with additional lifetime benefits at the expense of their contemporaries”. On the other hand, if educational expenditure can be shown to be a significant factor in increasing national productivity, the case for relying in the main on public finance for the provision of further and higher education will continue to be strong.

Educational costs, resource utilisation and manpower forecasting and planning can be cited as further areas of theory development and research of relevance to both the study and the practice of educational management, the economist’s constant concern being to analyse the implications and explore the consequences of alternative uses of resources. The concepts and methodologies of economics are thus likely to have a contribution to make to the professional development of educational managers. It may be instructive for the reader to consider, in view of the previous discussion, whether this would be as human capital investment or as part of a sophisticated occupational screening device. Micropolitics and other micro-perspectives of significance for educational management practice, have in common a concern
with individual persons and their perceptions of the events in which they are involved, rather than a primary emphasis on collectivities and institutions. Such studies, which may collectively be called the micro-social sciences, vary in theoretical background, basic assumptions and areas of specific interest. Their methodologies differ to some extent, but broadly rely on ethnographic research methods, i.e. on qualitative research, including participant observation (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983).

In particular, the significance for educational management of micropolitics has been recognised in the UK (Pratt 1982), the term being used to embrace ‘those strategies by which individuals and groups in organisational contexts seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests’ (Hoyle 1982, p. 88). In responding to Hoyle’s paper, Bailey (1982 p. 101) suggested that ‘degree of legitimacy’ is a useful concept in considering the propriety of political strategies, while Glatter (1982 p. 162) warned against regarding micropolitical analysis as prescriptive as well as descriptive.

The concepts of micropolitics, significantly gaining currency in a period of worldwide resource constraint, throw into relief the limitations of theories which
virtually ignore the issue of power, through their reliance on rational choice and bureaucratic models of organisation (Pfeffer 1978; Bacharach and Lawler 1980; Pfeffer 1981). It was proposed that more attention should be given to the micro events of organisational politics, defined by Pfeffer (1981, p. 7) as ‘those activ ities taken within organisations to acquire, develop and use power and other resources to obtain one’s preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissensus about choices’. A similar suggestion had been made by Zaleznik (1970), as noted by Handy (1976), and by Baldridge (1971).

The micropolitical model begins by recognising the diversity of perspectives and goals within organisations, which are pluralistic in terms of values and beliefs and are divided into various interests, sub-units and sub-cultures (Baldridge 1971, p. 25). In contrast to classical and human relations management models—which rely respectively on structural control devices and on normative influences to achieve consensus on organisational objectives and models of implementation—the political model accepts that, in practice, general agreement on goals and technology cannot be taken for granted. In this respect it is similar to the garbage can model previously discussed,
but does not accept the anarchic view that decisions are the adventitious result of the interplay of opportunities, problems, persons and solutions. The randomness implied in the \textit{garbage can} model, according to Pfeffer (1981, p. 30), ‘is inconsistent with the observation that in organisational decision-making, some actors seem usually to get the garbage, while others manage to get the can’. At least some organisational participants, it appears, know what they want and have the power to get it.

The key themes, as identified by Bacharach and Lawler (1980), are power, coalitions and bargaining. Shifting coalitions promote the opposing interests of different organisational sub-groups. Decisions are the result of bargaining and power and influence. Attention has thus been given to the measurement of intra-organisational power within organisations, considered as bargaining and influence systems (Abell 1975).

Whereas power is, in part, structurally related, it is claimed that structures are themselves to some extent politically determined. ‘To understand organisational in the organisation’s dominant coalition’ (Pfeffer 1981, p. 271). Similarly Child (1984) recommends a ‘political contingency approach’ to organisational design.

Among the political skills which are then helpful in
operating within the structure are an ability to assess the issues which can be won and those which are hopeless, and an ability, taking account of changes in power distribution, to form new coalitions and structures.

Several writers (Peters 1978; Mangham 1979; Pfeffer 1981) have given attention to the crucial role of political language and symbolic action, involving ceremonies, symbols and settings. This applies both in mobilising support and quieting opposition, and, as in Mangham’s action research, in encouraging, guiding and sustaining organisational change. Mangham draws on the symbolic interactionist viewpoint of Blumer (1969) to illuminate the self-reflective character of human relationships in organisations, involving interpretive interaction and tentative definitions of situations, in which non-verbal language may be as significant as what is actually said.

Blumer’s symbolic interactionism is one of a number of micro-sociologies which may now be briefly noted. Its relevance to Mangham’s work may be surmised from the following quotation: Symbolic interaction involves interpretation, or ascertaining the meaning of the actions or remarks of the other person, and definition, or conveying indications to another person as to how he is to act. Human association consists of a process of such interpretation and definition. Through this process the participants fit their own acts to the ongoing acts of one another and guide others in doing so. (Blumer 1966, p. 538)
In its more subjective form symbolic interactionism claims that it is through the process of interacting, and only so, that participants create for themselves a meaningful social world. The resulting research task is to discover how participants come to agree upon certain meanings and definitions for co-ordinated action (Denzin 1970).

Ethnomethodology switches the focus of enquiry from the interactive situation to the methods by which everyday life situations are organised, perceived and understood. It has sought, ‘by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded extraordinary events . . . to learn about them as phenomena in their own right’ (Garfinkel 1967, p. 1). The use of language has been studied, as has the fact that conversations convey meanings beyond what is actually said (Cicourel 1972). The way in which social contexts are negotiated has been examined, and organisational concepts such as structure and efficiency are taken as problematic, i.e. as topics to be investigated rather than terms to be taken for granted (Bittner 1965).

Other micro-social approaches of potential relevance include: ethogenics (Harré 1977) which analyses social episodes through the verbal accounts which
people give to explain their actions; hermeneutics (Gadamer 1975), which seeks
to understand situations by an iterative process—the
hermeneutic circle—such
as is used cumulatively in the interpretation of literary
texts; and critical theory,
which—as developed by Habermas (1974)—might be described as a radical
version of hermeneutics. The relevance of critical theory
for educational admin
istration practice has been strongly advocated by Bates (1982) and challenged
by Lane (1983).
There are thus a number of different approaches which
overlap in their areas
of interest, but differ in theoretical background and
ideological assumptions. A
common feature is that they seek to come to terms, as has
happened in modern
physics in the wake of Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle,
with the inescapable
fact that the investigators themselves and their
methodologies are in integral part
of the situation being investigated (Hammersley and
Atkinson 1983). Though
the philosophical debate will long continue, it appears
that the customary sharp
differentiation, between the assumed objectivity of a
positivism based on an out
moded view of natural science and the admitted subjectivity
of the micro-social
sciences (some of which have been described above), may
prove to have been an
over-simplification.

An early integration of micro- and macro-perspectives does not seem to be at hand, in spite of Cicourel’s recent optimism and his injunction that ‘we must study the way human decision-making in complex micro-settings contributes to the creation of macro-structures by routine problem solving activities necessary for the simulation or realisation of basic organisational goals’ (1981, p. 67). It may be, however, that those involved in educational organisations, whether primarily as practitioners or as students, will be disposed to accept the validity of the seeming paradox enunciated in the same volume by Knorr-Cetina. She suggests that ‘it is through micro-social approaches that we will learn most about the macro-order, for it is these approaches which through their unashamed empiricism afford us a glimpse of the reality about which we speak’ (1981, pp. 41–2).

For Thomas Kuhn (1977) the essential tension was between tradition and innovation in scientific research—the tension that leads in time to paradigm change within a scientific community. There is a sense, however, in which Kuhn’s tension is subsumed within that more basic tension between theory and practice which has been the underlying theme of this chapter.
It has been customary for practitioners to state the
dichotomy in robust terms:

airy-fairy theory versus down-to-earth practice. Sir Edward
Bridges (1956, p. 23), when he was Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, put
his emphasis

squarely on the value of ‘working with or working under
people who have far

more experience, far more wisdom in handling affairs and
dealing with people

than I had’. Similarly it has been suggested that
understanding the pupils, having

commonsense, and being able to profit by experience are the
only essential

requirements for school headship (Thomas 1927).

Lest it be thought that such views would be exceptional
today, it is salutary to

note, from a Birmingham University dissertation (Turner
1981), the results of a

survey of 66 recently appointed first-time secondary school
heads. Placing little

reliance on ‘concepts, techniques, theories, perspectives’,
the new head teachers stress operational problems and their
practical solution strictly in terms of the educational
context. Moreover they prefer to rely upon personal
qualities and wide experience rather than the findings of
observation and research to inform the decision-making
process. (p. 75)

Such a viewpoint would presumably not preclude learning
from the experience

of others, as suggested by Bridges, or from common sense,
as recommended by

Thomas. It thus involves an acceptance of the distilled
wisdom of past
experience as concentrated in the precepts of common sense. Commonsense knowledge, however, inevitably carries with it unspoken assumptions and unrecognised limitations. Theorising is taking place without it being acknowledged as such.

In contrast, the theorising about management of Taylor, Fayol, Gulick and the rest, the engineers and captains of industry who produced the pioneer management texts, was quite explicit. It was essentially a commonsense extension of their own considerable and relevant practical experience. Generalisations were then often made with unwarranted assurance, and there was little appreciation, even by proponents of scientific management, that attention needs to be given to the critical conditions which have to be satisfied for propositions found to be tenable in one context to be relevant also in an entirely different situation. This last observation is particularly applicable, as Fielding (1984) has noted, when attempts are made to apply general principles of management developed in an industrial context to other areas, such as education. Theory and Practice in Educational Management

Such strictures are less applicable to the human relations tradition, which drew on a number of carefully conducted research projects. Though these may
be criticised with hindsight for methodological and conceptual defects, they were successful in drawing attention to human variables inadequately recognised in traditional management theory. As applied to education, human relations ideas found a ready response, as has been noted, because of the support they provided for more participative and democratic forms of management.

For both the classical and the human relations management writers, the immediacy of the claimed connection with practice was paramount. Theory consisted essentially of generalisations from past experience and field observation, whether by scientific management efficiency experts or human relations industrial psychologists.

The New Movement in educational administration and comparable developments in other management areas, such as those which resulted in the founding of the journal, Administrative Science Quarterly, in 1956, provided a very different kind of justification for theory and for its relationship to practice. Henceforth, as with the laws of motion of Newtonian dynamics, theory was to consist of assumed relationships between operationally defined concepts, from which empirical laws would be defined and tested. From this viewpoint it is theory which gives meaning.
to facts, rather than the reverse. The point was clearly
made by Griffiths: Facts, to be of value, must bear a
relationship to one another. The use of theory in the
gathering of facts provides this relationship . . . But
over and above the search for new facts is the concept that
theory gives meaning to the facts which are uncovered.
(1959a, p. 26)

It does this by providing practitioners with sets of
concepts which enable them to

organise the facts with which they have to deal in a
systematic and orderly

manner. According to Goldhammer (1963), social science
concepts provide the
tools ‘through which the administrator finds the meaning and
the significance of
events which confront him’ (p. 15), and hence provide the
means necessary ‘for
the development of an independent science of educational
administration’ (p. 21).

Even in the early days of the New Movement, misgivings were
expressed

concerning the dangers of excessive abstraction. ‘There are
scientists, and

administrators too’, stated Halpin (1958), ‘who
consistently soar in the clouds.

They forget that theory must be rooted in the actual world
of experience’. He

later complained (Halpin 1960) that ‘the theoretical models
are too rational, too
tidy, too aseptic’ and that the school superintendent feels
that they omit ‘much

of the palpable stuff which quickens his pulse in his daily
job’.

What the practitioners were in fact saying was that the
theories they were
being offered, far from providing new perspectives for ordering their experience,

were ignoring aspects of that experience which they regarded as important. The

rather modest success achieved within the New Movement paradigm has already been described, research findings relying more on statistical techniques than on insightful conceptualisation. As Iannaccone (1973) observed, 'We have rigorously tested a lot of poor ideas in educational administration'.

The latter part of the chapter has sought to show how the recognition of educational management as a field of application, rather than a unitary science, has enabled more productive relationships to be developed with the world of practice. This has taken place partly because of the diversity of perspectives in the social sciences and other disciplines, such as philosophy (Hodgkinson 1978), on which an applied field may nowadays draw, and partly because the theories and models currently available make it possible to come closer to the irreducible ‘brute facts’ of real life of which Whitehead (1926) wrote.

The trend to take closer account of the reality of practice has been demonstrated in a number of areas. Whereas the high abstraction of Weber’s ideal-type conceptualisation of bureaucracy contributed immensely to clarifying the
concept of organisation as a structure, the various models introduced under the heading of structural relativism, from the binary construct of Burns and Stalker to the organised anarchy of March, Cohen and Olsen, provide examples of ways in which different aspects and assumptions of the classical model can be challenged from the viewpoint of practice. Contrasting models of policy-making for different kinds of situations have been similarly described. Human capital theory in the economics of education provides an example of the modification of a powerful concept of relevance in educational policy-making to take account of perspectives and mechanisms identified by second generation economists of education. Micropolitics has been shown to illuminate an aspect of organisational life, very familiar to practitioners, which is inadequately handled in mainstream theories mainly concerned with the rational achievement of agreed objectives. The related micro-social sciences, by careful analysis of events, language and behaviour, provide insights into how individuals perceive and create their own organisational life and contribute to that of others. The intensely human nature of organisational involvement is highlighted, its implications for understanding and for practice being matters of continuing
debate. A further

matter for debate is the extent to which reconciliation is possible between

macro- and micro-approaches to educational management.

The tension between theory and practice in educational management and in

cognate areas of applied social science shows little sign of abating. Such tension

can be dissipated and wasted in uncomprehending, sterile debate, but this is not

inevitable. Tension can also be dynamic and creative, leading to deeper under

standing and to a consequent improvement in the practice of educational man


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This paper attempts to apply the techniques of discourse analysis to some of the key concepts in educational management. It employs a conceptual framework which is informed by management theory and policy studies as well as by the literature on discourse. The central part of the paper considers examples of discursive forms which serve to disguise or conceal the power dimension in educational institutions: these include appeals to 'learning communities', 'transformational leadership' and 'participation'. It also examines the significance of discursive shifts from 'rational' to 'emotional' language in education, drawing on the work of James (2000) and Hartley (1999). The dominant vocabulary of educational management is then related to wider issues of political power. Finally, the paper summarises the value of discourse analysis at three levels of critical interpretation – text, voice and narrative – and suggests that, despite the pervasiveness of managerial discourse, there remains scope for interrogation and challenge. Starting points for much that has been written about the origins of discourse analysis in the work of Baudrillard, Derrida, Lyotard and, above all, Foucault, and its analytical and critical techniques are now widely employed in the humanities and social sciences. The present paper draws on this background but it does not attempt to enter the highly complex theoretical debates about
competing definitions of dis
course or to take sides amongst the various postmodernist
schools of thought. Its

aims are much more modest in scope and focus on the use of
rhetorical devices

by managers in educational settings and the purposes which
they serve. One

point of departure is a belief in ‘the significance of
language in the production,
maintenance, and change of social relations of power’
(Fairclough, 1989, p. 1).

It will be argued that the management of meaning is an
important instrument of

professional, institutional and ideological control. Peter
Cookson states: Decoding the power discourse requires a
series of understandings about the nature of language as a
verbal expression of social relations. Words do not exist
in a disembodied form; they have meaning within a social
context that is class bound, conflictual and power driven.
Those who control this symbolic world are able to shape and
manipulate the market-place of educational ideas.
(Cookson, 1994, p. 116)

The ‘social context’ that frames the prevailing rhetoric
requires that attention

is paid not just to verbal expressions but also to
organisational structures and

processes, social relations and taken-for-granted
assumptions about institutional

‘reality’. Commenting on Foucault’s account of the
relationship between know

ledge, rhetoric and power, Harvey (1990) observes: Close
scrutiny of the micro-politics of power relations in
different localities, contexts and social situations leads
him to conclude that there is an intimate relation between
the systems of knowledge (‘discourses’) which codify
techniques and practices for the exercise of social control
and domination within particular contexts. (p.45)
Schools, colleges and universities are examples of particular sites where these micro-political processes can be seen at work (see Blase and Anderson, 1995).

In these institutional settings the prevailing discourses (promoted by those who ‘manipulate the marketplace of educational ideas’) provide the concepts and assumptions which shape the ‘common sense’ view of the world held by teachers and students. The deconstruction of some examples of these prevailing discourses forms the central part of this paper.

In respect of methodology, discourses ‘can be analysed at various levels, from their basic constituents, statements, to accumulated discursive formations’: they are ‘associated with ‘games of truth’ working within fields such as science and government to authorise what can be judged as true or untrue’ (Dannaher, Schirato, & Webb, 2000, p. 45). In the case of education, the task is to examine educational ‘texts’ of various kinds produced by those seeking to promote or explain policy initiatives and management practices. These ‘texts’ invite scrutiny not just in terms of their surface meaning but also in terms of their underlying purposes.

Sensitivity to the nuances of language, to the relationship between speaker or writer and audience(s), and to the social and cultural dynamics of the institutions
which generate and receive ‘texts’, is at the heart of the process.

Discourse analysis has been employed very effectively by Stephen Ball (1990; 1994) in the relation to UK (particularly English) educational policy and THEORY. Its influence can be seen in policy studies in other countries (see, for example, Hargreaves, 1994; Smyth, 1995). Its application to management has been less fully developed though Anderson and Ginsberg (1998) have offered a subtle theoretical account of how Foucault’s ideas on power can illuminate the field of educational administration. The deployment of a range of discursive techniques has been an essential element in the legitimation of educational policies and management practices in a period of rapid change. The policy context within which this process has occurred will be sketched in the next section. First, however, it is necessary to comment briefly on the changing character of management as a discipline.

Pollitt (1997) has drawn attention to different stages in the evolution of management theory and has identified the 1980s as a period when ‘culture management’ became fashionable. This was a reaction against over-rational mechanistic and ‘systems’ approaches to the management of organisations. By contrast,
‘culture management’ emphasised the importance of metaphor, symbolism and ritual in organisational life. The task of shaping the organisational culture was seen as the responsibility of senior management who were expected to motivate staff, not through traditional techniques of regulation but through a positive climate which encouraged the internalization of constructive attitudes among the workforce. Metaphorical and symbolic representations of the values of the organisation were a crucial part of this process. The place of metaphor in educational contexts will feature in later discussion.

There is usually a time lapse between the development of management ideas in the private sector and their appropriation by the public sector and recent debate within the field of educational management reflects this. A special edition of the journal Educational Management and Administration appeared in the summer of 1999 and sought to redefine the conceptual map of the field. Bush (1999) argued that while educational management was not in a state of ‘crisis’ it was at a ‘cross roads’ and needed to avoid the charge of merely serving to justify the agendas of bureaucratic bodies such as the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in England. Like wise, Ribbins (1999) drew attention to the danger of the field of educational man
agement becoming ‘overly technicist and managerialist in its orientation’ and suggested that ‘one set of possible correctives is to refocus on policy, context and environment’ (p. 235). This leads back to particular institutional settings and the discursive strategies that are used to maintain their structural and managerial ‘integrity’. It also requires some understanding of the wider policy framework which sets limits to the way individual institutions can function. The policy context

All advanced educational systems have experienced major reforms in the last two decades. Although the specific policy configurations have varied in different countries, certain general trends are identifiable. These include an emphasis on market forces and consumerism, choice and the rights of parents, school effectiveness and school improvement, teacher competence and accountability, and raising standards of achievement. The role of central governments in promoting these policies has invited contrasting interpretations. From one perspective, government intervention can be viewed as a necessary step aimed at challenging the conservatism and self-interest of professionals and the inefficiency of intermediate layers of government (at state, district and local authority levels). From another perspective, it can be seen as a
confused attempt to
develop responsibility to individual schools and colleges,
leaving them without
the collective support structures they need and,
ironically, leading to an increase
rather than a decrease in bureaucracy (as each institution
has to deal with admin
istrative matters formerly handled elsewhere in the system).
The effect of these trends on teachers and other education professionals has
received a great deal of attention from commentators: for example, the reforms
of the 1980s, particularly in England but also in other parts of the UK, have been
subject to extended analysis by Knight (1990), Lawton
(1992, 1994), Barber
(1996), and Hartley (1997). More generally, the literature on the management of
change has become increasingly international in character
(Hargreaves 1994,
1997; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992). One reading of these developments is that
they have created educational systems that are so caught up
in the implementa
tion of reform that most teacher energies are directed
towards ensuring that new
systems, structures and processes are in place. There is
little or no time to reflect
on aims and principles. As far as teachers are concerned, it is permitted to ask
‘How?’ questions but not ‘Why?’ questions. Indeed, some politicians and
bureaucrats would argue that it is not the business of
teachers to spend time on
these ‘first order’ questions: their job is to concentrate on operational matters
within a framework that is ‘given’. Chris Woodhead, HM Chief Inspector of Schools in England and Wales, has been disarmingly frank on the subject. With reference to the training of headteachers, he has posed the question: ‘. . . should a headteacher qualification involve participants in ‘scrutinising’ (a weasel word if ever there was one) government policy?’ His answer is unambiguous: ‘Train ing for headteachers ought to be practical . . . To suggest that they should waste precious time sitting around pontificating on the rights and wrongs of the latest political announcement simply reveals how ludicrously out of touch and self-indulgent some academics, on occasion, can be’ (Woodhead, 1998, p. 55). The message is clear. Would-be headteachers who value questioning, reflection and critical thinking, and who believe that these skills can lead to better-informed practice, need not apply for a place in Woodhead’s Brave New World.

Another way of describing these trends would be to say that they can be interpreted as an attempt to decouple policy and management. A few years ago the present writer published an article reflecting on this in the Scottish context
and argued that the effect of some of the reforms that were taking place was de-skilling and de-professionalising, not just for teachers but also for managers.

Staff were encouraged ‘to focus on the ‘efficient’ performance of the immediate task in hand, and to refrain from thinking too deeply about the constraints within THEORIES which they work, far less about the social function of institutionalised schooling’ (Humes, 1994, p. 182). The article called for greater courage on the part of managers and suggested that they have a moral obligation to challenge policy makers to live up to the ideals contained in policy documents – by, for example, providing adequate resources to ensure effective implementation (see also Fairley & Paterson, 1995).

The somewhat optimistic title of that paper was ‘Policy and management: mending the fracture’. In fact, the fracture has, if anything, got worse. New Labour’s reform programme continues the momentum of the New Right and ensures that a chronically tired and largely demoralised teaching force lacks the strength and the will to engage in any kind of sustained critical interrogation, let alone develop an effective strategy of resistance (see Docking, 2000). Their position is not eased by the fact that many of those who occupy leadership roles
within the education service – and this includes some academics – have succumbed to the pressure to concentrate narrowly on matters of implementation,

without any serious reflection on the justification for official policies. They simply wait for the directives from above and pass them down the line. They have found, in some cases from bitter experience, that compliance and conformity are rewarded while resistance is penalised. In England, Ofsted and the Teacher Training Agency can claim much of the credit for this compliance culture. In Scotland, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate has moved in a similar direction, though less crudely and with greater teacher resistance.

Sooner or later, however, a counter-movement to the regime of surveillance, policing and control will begin. On present policies there are likely to be more failing schools, more demoralised teachers seeking a way out, greater problems of recruitment, more ‘super-heads’ deciding to quit. The counter-movement is likely to have a number of origins, some of which cannot be predicted. An important element in preparing the ground for a counter-movement – in terms of increasing understanding of what has been happening – is the use of discourse analysis to deconstruct the rhetorical deceptions that have been an essential part
of educational policy-making and management practice since the 1980s. As Fairclough (1989) remarks in his study of language and power, ‘consciousness is the first step towards emancipation’ (p. 1). Metaphor and the discourse of community There are Idols which we call Idols of the Market. For Men associate by Discourse, and a false and improper Imposition of Words strangely possesses the Understanding, for Words absolutely force the Understanding, and put all Things into Confusion. (Francis Bacon, Novum Organum, 1620)

It was noted above that the application of discourse analysis to educational management (as distinct from policy) is somewhat under-developed. However, THE DISCOURSES OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT the territory is not completely uncharted. Some writers in the field of educational management have been very aware of the importance of language. Davies (1994) has written that ‘Educational management is not a discipline, but a collection of languages, a collection of different ways of seeing . . . Before managing schools in particular directions, one has to manage meaning’. He adds that most schools are the scene of ‘a series of competing [management] discourses’ (pp. 4–5). Again, writers such as Beare, Caldwell and Milliken (1989), and Clark (1996) have drawn attention to the importance of metaphor in expressing the core beliefs and values of an institution (see also Bacharach & Mundell, 1995). Clark (1996) suggests that most schools ‘are
governed by mixed metaphors’ (p. 118) and that such governing metaphors are largely taken for

granted. A recent writer on Catholic education, Sullivan (2000), structures his

analysis in terms of the competition between various metaphors for dominance

in thinking and practical decision-making. He discusses five in particular -

school as family, as business, as church, as political community, as academy.

The general point is that metaphorical comparisons represent one attempt to

‘manage meaning’ and shape the perceptions of those who work in an institu

tion. Such attempts can be perfectly well-intentioned and can be motivated by a

desire to give unity of purpose to staff and a sense of belonging to pupils.

However, they can also serve less benign purposes and can operate as barriers to

thinking about ‘first order’ questions of aims and values. Morgan (1997), who

has written extensively about the use of metaphor in organisations in general

(not specifically educational organisations) has observed that ‘any given

metaphor can be incredibly persuasive but it can also be blinding and block our

ability to gain an overall view’ (p. 347). When this happens, the restriction

serves to limit the parameters of legitimate debate about policy and manage
ment. In other words, discourse itself can be subject to management.

An emphasis on ethos, climate and culture is usually associated with a symbolic or metaphorical representation of the organisation. Such representations are invariably positive in character – David Hargreaves’s comparisons of schools with factories, prisons and asylums (in Mulgan, 1997) do not feature in official discourse. Beare, et al. (1989) suggest that one way of enhancing school culture is for principals or headteachers to ‘select deliberately a metaphor which affirms the way they image the school and repeatedly to use it . . . Keep it simple: one simple picture, constantly repeated which affirms ‘This is what our school is like’ (pp. 189–90).

Consider the concept of community, which has become a popular metaphorical representation – more especially the school as a learning community, one embodiment of the learning society which politicians are so fond of invoking. (‘Learning society’ is perhaps the soft, reassuring version of ‘knowledge economy’.) Community is clearly intended to be a praiseworthy concept.

Communities are regarded as places which give identity and self-esteem to individuals and provide them with a network of support: they have rules and con
ventions which express a value system and which are intended to protect rights and freedoms that serve the interests of the members. The achievements of educational communities are sometimes given formal public recognition in the shape of Investors in People status or Health at Work awards. However, it is not unknown for staff to express scepticism about the real value of such awards which they regard as designed for external consumption rather than as indicative of a genuine concern by management for the health and welfare of employees.

Communities are not invariably or inevitably positive. Some communities are negative and destructive in their effects. Any major city – and increasingly some rural areas – has communities that are rife with crime, vandalism, drugs and intimidation, where the quality of life is poor. For some pupils and some teachers, the school ‘communities’ which they inhabit will be rather like that – for example, pupils who are bullied or who experience repeated failure, teachers who are suffering from stress and overwork. Furthermore, in such institutions all kinds of negative learning will be taking place: how to suppress fears and emotions, how to conceal feelings of worthlessness, how to remain silent in the face of unfair treatment. In such circumstances, the positive concept of community is
at best a myth, at worst a sham. Even Clark, who (in his 1996 book, Schools as Learning Communities) holds up the concept largely for approval, acknowledges that the power of community can be 'corrupting' and that a 'vague and unctuous version of community [can be] used to cover a multitude of sins (and conflicts).'

(p. 164). The discourse of leadership

The same kind of analysis can be applied to other areas of fashionable discourse.

'Leadership' is an example of a concept that is widely invoked but subject to very little in the way of critical scrutiny. Hargreaves and Goodson have written that the literature on leadership 'is often strong on rhetoric but weak on evidence' (in Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999, p. viii) and West-Burnham (1997) observes: 'Leadership . . . is subject to normative writing where exhortation replaces research and where ethical stances are seen as overriding any empirical base' (p. 4). Politicians find educational leadership an attractive concept because it places responsibility for success or failure largely in the hands of professionals: thus 'failing' schools are presented as the victims of poor leadership (rather than ill-conceived policies) and the belief that a new leader should be able to turn them round gains currency. The school effectiveness and
school improvement movements have (no doubt unconsciously) helped to reinforce this attitude by attaching considerable weight to ‘in school’ factors in explaining differential results by apparently ‘similar’ schools and perhaps underestimating the extent to which external social factors influence pupil achievement. Add to this the current focus on the management of change in educational institutions and the scene is set for the elevation of leadership to revered status.

Fullan (1993), for example, states that ‘. . . educational leaders must learn to influence and coordinate non-linear, dynamically complex, change processes’ THE DISCOURSES OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT (pp. 74–5). One exception to this pattern is MacBeath (1999) whose study of the ways in which schools can, through a process of self-evaluation, manage their own strategies of improvement, does not include leadership as one of its key categories.

Those writers who do give prominence to leadership recognise that it can take a variety of forms. Leithwood, et al., (1999) offer a classification of different types based on an extensive survey of the literature: instructional leadership; moral leadership; participative leadership; managerial leadership; contingent leadership; and transformative leadership. The last
category is particularly inter

esting because of its compatibility with the emphasis on
the management of

change. Included under the term transformational leadership
'are writings about

charismatic, visionary, cultural and empowering concepts of
leadership'. It

should be noted here that all of the adjectives linked with
the word 'leadership'

serve to soften any authoritarian associations it might
have on its own. 'Charis

matic' and 'visionary' convey the sense of an inspirational
quality which will

energise colleagues. 'Cultural' and 'empowering' draw
attention to the value

system of the organisation as a whole and suggest that
agency is distributed

democratically. 'Transformational' implies that staff are
engaged in the shared

enterprise of initiating and responding to change, in which
everyone has a stake

in meeting the challenge successfully. Qualifying
'leadership' in these ways

may serve to make it more palatable and deflect attention
from its directive

aspects. Similarly, writing on 'leadership as spirituality,
as artistry, as the cre

ation of meaning' (West-Burnham, 1997, p. 4) shifts the
focus from the author

ity of the leader to the supposed benefits for the led. Such
linguistic softening

cannot, however, entirely conceal the realities of
educational hierarchies. In the
final analysis, ‘Leadership is realized in the process whereby one or more indi
viduals succeed in attempting to frame and define the reality of others’ (Smir

Some teachers are not unaware of the control purposes of the rhetoric of
leadership and learning communities, though most teachers are simply too busy
to have time to reflect on the implications. Career-minded staff may pay lip
service to the prevailing management culture without being committed to it at a
personal level. Others are capable of thinking and acting ‘subversively’ with the
new forms of discourse and using them to challenge perceived management fail
ures. Over time this can lead to the discrediting and displacement of once fash
ionable terms. What may not change is the day-to-day reality of teachers’ lives
as they struggle to cope with competing and sometimes conflicting demands for
increased accountability, higher standards and curriculum reform. In these cir
cumstances, is it any wonder that staffroom cynicism is widespread? The discourse of participation
One of the paradoxes of the education policy agendas pursued by governments
in advanced democracies is that the regulatory mechanisms which serve to T H E D Y
reduce teachers’ autonomy and increase their accountability are often accompan
ied by a discourse of participation (Hargreaves, 1994).
Teachers are ‘consulted’

about curricular reform programmes and are encouraged to
become involved in
research studies, community projects and development
groups. Writing in an
American context, Anderson (1998) argues that ‘the current
discourse of participa-

tion is part of a historical concern of school
administrators with public rela-
tions and – particularly when schools are viewed as in
crisis – the creation of
greater institutional legitimacy’ (p. 573). He cites
studies which suggest that
teachers increasingly complain that participation is often
bogus and, far from
increasing job satisfaction, adds to their workload and
reduces the amount of
time they can devote to what they see as their primary
task, namely interactions

with students. Anderson refers to ‘the linguistic slippage
that occurs with regard
to the meaning of participation and the diverse agendas
that are promoted within
its discursive umbrella’ (p. 574). In effect, he suggests
that most appeals to par-
ticipation should be regarded as strategies of containment
designed to disguise
the power nexus within educational systems.

Presented more positively, the manager who encourages
participation might
be seen as a ‘human resource developer’ (see Usher &
Edwards, 1994, 111–116)
allowing junior colleagues to enjoy staff development opportunities. However,

those selected to participate are often more appropriately regarded as beneficiaries of senior management patronage: they are being identified as people who will operate constructively within existing conventions and who may merit further advancement. Where a more open form of participation is allowed, the process is usually carefully managed. In Scotland, the discourse of participation is closely allied to notions of consultation, partnership and consensus (see Humes, 1986, 1997; McPherson & Raab, 1988). It is part of the received wisdom about how the Scottish educational system functions that it is open and democratic in character, inviting widespread consultation on policy initiatives, involving all the major stakeholders and seeking a consensus wherever possible.

In practice, the consultation process is skilfully orchestrated by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate, the ‘partners’ are certainly not equal and the consensus is often more apparent than real (see Humes 1999). The preferred outcome is invariably a single cost-effective ‘solution’ to complex educational problems.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that participation offers no scope for what Anderson (1998) calls ‘authentic’ involvement. He asks a series of...
important questions which open up the territory for debate:

- Participation toward what end?
- Who participates?
- What are the relevant spheres of participation?
- What conditions and processes need to be present locally for participation to be authentic?
- What conditions and processes must be present at broader institutional and societal levels to make participation authentic? (586-594)

It is by responding to these questions that educators may find some discursive space in which to challenge the limited participation that officially-managed processes normally allow. Rational and emotional management Managerial language is typically upbeat, even evangelical, in character, express ing a ‘can do’ philosophy of positive action and achievement. Managers like to hear and spread the ‘good news’ and celebrate achievement. Their discourse speaks of ‘challenges’ and ‘opportunities’ rather than ‘problems’ and ‘obstacles’. They define their own role in terms of providing ‘vision’ and articulating the ‘mission’ of the institution and projecting its public ‘image’.

Within this basic framework there are variations of tone and emphasis. Some times the continuing potency of hard-edged managerialism is in evidence. This is apparent in the invocation of terms like ‘objectives’
and ‘targets’, ‘competences’ and ‘standards’, ‘achievement’ and ‘effectiveness’, ‘quality’ and ‘accountability’. The emphasis is on rational strategic and operational planning, usually with a focus on ‘delivery’ within a clearly defined time-scale. School development planning is an example of this.

At other times, a gentler form of discourse can be found. This is sensitive to the ‘morale’ of staff and the ‘ethos’ of the institution. It speaks of ‘empowering’ individuals and giving them ‘ownership’ of policies. ‘Communication’ and ‘consultation’ and ‘collegiality’ are essential elements of this approach. Managers have to adopt a ‘listening’ mode and be ‘responsive’ to the representations of colleagues. They seek to create an atmosphere of ‘trust’ and ‘loyalty’ and ‘openness’ in which the ‘dignity’ of staff is respected, in the hope that they will achieve personal and professional ‘fulfilment’. The inclusion of these terms in the lexicon of educational management suggests that the appeal is more to emotion than to reason, though it would be wrong to present the two forms of discourse as dichotomous. As will be shown, there are important points of convergence.

In an unpublished paper, James (2000) has offered an interesting perspective
on these discursive modulations. He states that schools are ‘complex emotional mazes’ which require headteachers to ‘consider more than the rational and functional aspects of their leadership’. Moreover, ‘emotions are powerful and intrinsic within organising and because educational institutions are arenas for particularly high levels of emotion, especially during radical change, managing this emotional dimension is significant’. James draws a distinction between emotional containment, which he presents as a legitimate process involving the creation of ‘structures and processes in organising within which emotions can be experienced’ and emotional control, which involves illegitimate attempts ‘to limit and restrict the experience of emotion’. He concludes that since there is no escape from the emotional dimension ‘it must in some sense be managed’. He adds, however, that ‘emotions cannot be managed in the way that other objects can be during the management of radical change in schools’. Among other things – though this is a point that James himself does not make explicitly – the management of emotions requires a different form of discourse from the management of, for example, curriculum, resources or finance. Addressing similar issues, Hartley (1999) offers a more critical account of the
shift from ‘rational’ to ‘emotional’ management. Whereas the former attends mainly to structures and bureaucratic processes, and the strategic objectives of the organisation, the latter attends to social processes and the human (not just the professional) qualities of staff. Hartley goes on to suggest that ‘emotional’ management ‘may serve as the new legitimatory rhetoric in the management of teachers’ (p. 317). He cites the discourse employed in a 1998 publication on the training of headteachers in Scotland. This document describes the preferred interpersonal qualities which might be required of headteachers. These are:

- demonstrates confidence and courage
- creates and maintains a positive atmosphere
- inspires and motivates others
- communicates effectively
- empathises with others

The discursive shift represented by this terminology can be explained as a recognition that schools are increasingly seen as complex, ambiguous, messy institutions which cannot be managed solely on the basis of rational planning.

Attitudinal and dispositional qualities are at least as important: thus the manage
ment of those attitudinal and dispositional qualities becomes an issue and the
eexample set by the headteacher is crucial. The headteacher is expected to display

and demonstrate a range of permitted emotions which, unsurprisingly, are to be

positive and optimistic in character. Hartley coins the term 'contrived emotion

ality' (p. 320) to describe this attitudinal and dispositional repertoire. In a sense,

what is happening is the rationalisation of the emotions, a process that helps to

explain why the two styles can co-exist without obvious conflict. The sociologist

Mestrovic, whom Hartley quotes, describes the process as the 'manipulation of

emotions by self and others into a bland, mechanical, mass-produced yet oppres


Blase and Anderson (1995) show how a culture of 'niceness' leads to the

'institutional silencing' (p. 138) of criticism. Norms of propriety, courtesy and
civility discourage the voicing of concerns which might be construed as a chal

lenge to authority. Furthermore, if meaning is managed effectively, the majority

of staff internalize the professional and organizational vocabulary through which

work is defined by officialdom. Dissent is silenced by representing it as straying

beyond the boundaries of acceptable professional discourse. Descriptions such
as ‘troublemaker’, ‘negative’, ‘not a team player’ and
‘over the top’ are used to T H E D I S C O U R S E S O F
E D U C A T I O N A L M A N A G E M E N T

label those who refuse to play by the (linguistic) rules of the game. ‘The indi
vidual is marginalised and pathologised through labelling in order to protect the

The business of management, however carefully presented and softened by
emotional terminology, is at one level concerned with control. It is designed to
defuse those aspects of institutional life which are potentially disruptive – the
rivalries and ambitions of staff, the personal resentments and disappointments,
the anger, frustration and cynicism that simmer in staffrooms, the sense of injus
tice which management decisions sometimes provoke. These are real emotions,
not the sanitised variety that so often features in official documents about ethos
and school culture. But they are also negative emotions and so are not ‘permit
ted’, however justified they may be by circumstances. The functioning of the
organisation requires that they are controlled, not least in the interests of pupils.

Professional socialisation at the training and induction stages of a teacher’s
career provides the basis for self-imposed emotional control. But with a teaching
force increasingly affected by low morale, overwork and surveillance regimes of various kinds, other influences are required. It is against this background that emotional management from above becomes important.

There is some evidence of an emerging professional debate involving administrators, policy makers and school leaders, not just academic researchers, about the importance of emotion in educational settings. A recent online conference organised by the Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPDC) had, as one of its key themes, ‘Healthy School Communities’ and a number of the contributors made reference to the importance of understanding the emotional dimension of school dynamics affecting students, teachers and parents as well as principals (headteachers). A Canadian contributor (Beatty, 2000) in a paper entitled ‘Pursuing the Paradox of Emotion and Educational Leadership’ (http://www.apapdc.edu.au/) offers a particularly interesting report of empirical studies investigating the positive and negative emotional experiences of, first, teachers in their interactions with educational administrators and, secondly, principals (headteachers) in their roles as leaders.

Beatty’s aim is to begin ‘to create a collection of voices pertaining to emotion
and educational leadership’ (see also McCrea & Erlich, 1999). Her approach complements (and in certain respects challenges) the perspective on leadership offered earlier in this paper. Power Underlying all of this is the question of power. Whose interests do the various strategies of ‘discursive containment’ serve? Who is advantaged by the strategic capture of the marketplace of educational ideas? Ball (1994) says: ‘Discourses are about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority’ (p. 21). To gain discursive control enables a ‘regime of truth’ to be established – ie, a ‘common sense’ version of events that comes to be seen as self-evident and serves to marginalise or exclude other representations. Thus persuading teachers that they work in a ‘learning community’ in which they are ‘empowered’ and allowed to develop ‘ownership’ of the policies which they are expected to implement is a sound managerial strategy which serves to disguise the power dimension of the organisation. It strengthens the legitimacy of the leadership by representing policy and manage- ment in terms of democratic consultation, partnership and consensus. Against this background, it is very hard for teachers to find their own voice, far less to
have it listened to, in an arena that will enable it to have any impact. Leaders who present themselves as benign change-agents using a rhetoric that makes great play of ‘participation’ are likely to be much more successful than those who simply invoke the authority of their formal status.

Whether this is, in the words of Bacon, a ‘false and improper imposition of words’ or a legitimate way of trying to cope with the uncertainties and confusions of the post-modern world, might be a matter for debate. But, however it is interpreted, it is important to note the wider political context within which all this is happening. This is an age of public relations experts, spin doctors whose function is to present ‘reality’ in a particular way, an exercise that involves the skilful manipulation of language and media images, the leaking of information and mis-information, the promotion, destruction and rehabilitation of political and professional reputations. Witness the rise, stumble and rise of Chris Wood head.

Presentation becomes all-important. ‘Reality’ becomes malleable, another commodity that can be packaged and marketed. What emerges is an Orwellian world in which words mean something other than that which they ostensibly denote. Thus ‘guidelines’ are, in fact, mandatory;
'empowerment' involves taking on additional responsibilities without additional power; 'ownership' requires unreflective acquiescence in the face of central directives; and 'consultation' is a process to be managed rather than a source of insight. In all of this the notion that education has something to do with knowledge, truth and understanding becomes a naive anachronism. It will be apparent by now that the present writer subscribes to the sceptical school of management represented by writers such as Furnham (author of The Psychology of Managerial Incompetence) and Burrell (author of Pandemonium: Towards a Retro-Organization Theory). The value of certain forms of management thinking for educational institutions has been oversold and, fortunately, there is a growing awareness of some of its weaknesses. For example, the jargon associated with Human Resource Management (HRM) and Total Quality Management (TQM) is increasingly subject to criticism (see, Fitz 1999). The mantra of so-called management gurus - terms like commitment, flexibility, excellence, integration, transformation, continuous improvement - is recognised as offering a simplistic solution to highly complex problems. It is no accident that people speak of the 'cult' of managerialism - implying a naive
faith, gullible followers

and charismatic leaders concerned as much with their own power as with the THE DISCOURSES OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

enlightenment of their audience. Certain forms of managerial discourse have

outlived their usefulness – the ‘masoch’ variety of the 1980s and its ‘spiv Del boy’ successor which offered to credit-rate and certificate students with an ease that rested uncomfortably with claims of quality. More subtle forms are now in evidence – thus the emergence of emotional management and the appeal of learning communities, the latter implying a collegiality of approach to counter act the less attractive aspects of private corporate culture invading the educational world.

Discourses are constantly developing in response to internal and external pressures coming from ideological, economic, political, professional and institutional forces. This means that the language in which educational policies are expressed is subject to constant adjustment and refinement – examples would be the successive formulations of the National Curriculum in England and Wales and higher still in Scotland. In higher education, staff in the UK are currently having to come to terms with the notion of ‘benchmarking’ as a way of trying to ensure comparabil
ity of standards across institutions teaching similar subjects for the same level of award. This exercise, at one level, is a sensible attempt to respond to the move towards a mass system of higher education taught within a highly diversified range of institutions. At another level, it represents a victory for the educational bureaucrats of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and a dangerous move towards a centrally-directed national curriculum in higher education. There is considerable scope for the use of discourse analysis in deconstructing the documentation of QAA and the Funding Councils. For most senior managers in universities, the massive task of simply assimilating the contents of the daily directives which issue from these bodies ensures that critical interrogation is rarely possible. This may help to explain why someone like Sir Stewart Sutherland, Principal of Edinburgh University, has suggested that in recent years universities have failed to ask the right questions and, to that extent, have been complicit in their own containment (Sutherland, 1999). These examples reinforce the point made in the opening section about the need to locate the language/power configurations of particular institutions within the wider political/ideological context which frames them. The final section will attempt to summarise the ways in which the study of discourse
can inform both micro and macro levels of analysis. Text, voice and narrative

Both policy and management discourses can be considered at the simple level of ‘text’. This involves looking at what is said, the central concepts and recurring metaphors that are employed, their clarity and consistency, their meaning for the audience or audiences to which they are directed, and the extent to which they relate to the stated purposes of the organisation. Text can be read ‘on the lines’ and ‘between the lines’: discursive threads can be elucidated and subjected to analysis. It is not enough, however, to confine the exercise to internal linguistic deconstruction. Gale (1999) points out that ‘discourses produce texts as well as T H E O R Y interpret them and they appeal to ideologies while also being informed by them’ (p. 397). Attempting to explain the ideological context within which discourses are developed and come to dominance is an essential part of the process.

Management discourses can also be considered at the level of voice. Here the questions are: ‘Whose account is being heard?’ ‘Is it an authentic voice based on real experience or an unconvincing application of half-understood management jargon to the world of education?’ ‘Is there scope for alternative voices, includ ing minorities?’ A comparison with feminist readings of
history is instructive

here. The dominance of male voices has been challenged and illuminating femi

nist readings of many fields of human endeavour are now available. Similar

techniques need to be applied to the world of educational management in which

the dominant voices remain those who exercise authority and have access to

privileged knowledge (see Blackmore, 1996). Creating discursive space for the

voices of classroom teachers to be heard is not easy, particularly in a climate

where they are discouraged from straying from the tightly-defined territory

mapped out for them by officialdom. But it is not impossible. There is major

work to be done, both in initial teacher education and in continuing professional

development, to counteract the negative effects of recent and current policies on

teachers’ perceptions of their potential contribution to policy development and

management practice.

The voices which control the text are able to construct a ‘narrative’, a prefer

ential account of what happens in organisations. It is usually a story of manager

ial success and organisational achievement which is hard to challenge, as the

experience of ‘whistleblowers’ testifies. Failures are consigned to footnotes or

explained as the result of circumstances beyond managerial
control. The

‘integrity’ of the organisation and the ‘credibility’ of
the management requires

that counter-narratives are discredited - by, for example,
being presented as the

the misrepresentations or fabrications of disaffected
employees. The highly con
testable nature of many of the official narratives that are
presented for public and

professional consumption is disguised by the form in which
they are written.

‘Public policy documents ... almost always conform to a
generic structure that

is ‘written in such a way as to deny the politics of
discourse” (Gale, 1999, p. 400, quoting Yeatman, 1990, p. 160). Thus certain
narratives become dominant

and serve as the received wisdom of educational
institutions and systems. Dis

course analysis can help to expose the political character
of official accounts of

policy and challenge the ostensibly ‘neutral’ stance
adopted by bureaucrats.

The interrogation of managerial discourse along the lines
suggested takes the

researcher beyond the particular institutional context in
which the language

appears. It opens up questions about the origins of
dominant discourses, the way

in which they have been promoted, the ideological climate
which has enabled

them to gain currency, and the groups which benefit from
them. It re-instates the
importance of theory in educational debate and lifts the head (and the spirit)

above the mind-numbing routine and bureaucratic regulation that afflicts so

many educational institutions. Finally, it challenges the claims to knowledge which managers and decision-makers assume and requires them to explain,

justify and defend both their own position and the demands they make on others.

To the extent that these opportunities for discursive interrogation and the occupation of discursive space are seized, the possibility of beginning the counter-movement to the oppressive regimes of control, which have become a feature of educational systems in advanced societies, will be strengthened. Acknowledgements

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In the light of the current promotion of evidence-informed policy and practice (EIPP), we examine its potential in relation to educational leadership and management. We begin by considering what may be meant by the term and some of the issues to which it gives rise. We then look at some factors promoting and inhibiting the development of EIPP. Finally, and most importantly, we suggest a way forward for developing EIPP in educational leadership and management, including some ideas about the possible role of BEMAS in supporting an EIPP agenda.

Our general stance is that we see considerable potential in this approach, which is why in this article we go beyond a conceptual discussion to develop a set of pro
posals. EIPP is concerned among other things with the
culture of the research

community and the relationships of its members with policy
makers and practi
tioners (matters which have been central to BEMAS in the
almost 30 years of its
existence). It requires the creation of structures and
practices that promote effect
ive interaction between the three communities. This is not
a simple task. Hence we
seek in what follows to be realistic and to take account of
the context within which
each community operates and the pressures to which it is
subject. EIPP in context

In order to assess the problems and possibilities of EIPP
we need to be clearer as
to what the term might mean. The word ‘evidence’ defines the
term more narrowly
than if ‘knowledge’ or ‘research’ were used instead. However, in public debate
these three words tend to be used interchangeably. For
instance, David Blunkett
(DfEE, 2000a) in a lecture to an ESRC seminar affirmed his
belief ‘that having
ready access to the lessons learnt from high quality
research [our italics] can and
must vastly improve the quality and sensitivity of the
complex and often con
strained decisions we, as politicians, have to make’. He
stated that ‘good, well
founded evidence [our italics] for key issues is needed’ and proclaimed that the

‘new Centre for Management and Policy Studies in the
Cabinet Office is promoting practical strategies for knowledge-based policy making’ (our italics). At the same time, he endeavoured to appeal to the whole research community by also calling for ‘blue-skies research which thinks the unthinkable’. This speech indicates well why we need to disentangle the term ‘evidence-informed policy and practice’ from the broader but clearly related issue of the value of research—in all its variety—to society. EIPP cannot be the only justification for social research nor can all social research fit into an EIPP framework.

EIPP presents the challenging aim that ‘decision-making at every level can be done in the knowledge of the best possible evidence’ (Sebba, 1999: 6). This contrasts with alternative sources of ‘knowledge’ upon which policy making can be based. Davies (1999), for example, lists these as political ideology, conventional wisdom, folklore, wishful thinking and public opinion formers using selective, unsystematic and biased research. Thus what counts as ‘evidence’ is crucial in defining EIPP and in staking it out as a terrain for particular researchers and their associated research methodologies. EIPP is bound to be contested territory.

Defined too narrowly it will have very little currency among educational researchers; defined too broadly it will collapse under the
inability to agree on what counts as ‘evidence’.

The recent shift in terminology from ‘evidence-based’ to ‘evidence-informed policy and practice’ seems important, for at least two reasons. The first relates to the conjectural and changing nature of knowledge (and hence evidence) and the fact that ‘the relationship between knowledge production and knowledge use is problematical’ (Pratt and Swann, 1999: 5). Recognizing this, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is preparing a major research programme on ‘The Evolution of Knowledge: Interaction of Research and Practice’ (ESRC, 2000), covering several fields of professional activity, aimed at developing a better understanding of the complex processes involved. As Boyd (1998) argues, it may be simplistic to assume that the main contribution of research to policy is problem solving, by straightforwardly providing ‘data for decisions’ or clear evidence on ‘what works’. Its more significant functions may be to illuminate problems and define alternatives.

The second reason for the importance of the shift concerns the nature of professionalism and policy making. Central to both is the exercise of judgement and this requires appropriate ‘space’: ‘The judgements that shape professional work
involve applying the knowledge base to unique and particular circumstances’ (Luntley, 2000: 8). In the same way, ‘Policy-makers translate evidence in the context of the policy process taking into account resource and political implications’ (Sebba, 1999: 4).

EIPP thus consists of a set of interrelated processes involving various stakeholders by which research issues are selected, evidence on these collected, validated and communicated and then used or ignored in decision making by two key players: policy makers and practitioners, though lay and client audiences may also have roles. EIPP corresponds closely to the ‘knowledge chain’ that consists of: knowledge systems, knowledge creation, dissemination, absorption and application in decision-making and practice. Actual ‘knowledge chains’ involve the interaction of experts, intermediaries, managers and decision makers, using data, information, and knowledge exchanged through a variety of media. (ESRC, 2000: 4)

A model of EIPP may help in distinguishing the key processes, their relationship to each other and the main stakeholders. This enables us to focus on the major components of EIPP and to locate problems and possibilities in relation to these.

A model of EIPP applicable to education or other areas of social policy is depicted in Figure 1. Since EIPP is seen as an interconnected sequence of processes, where one breaks into the cycle is not particularly significant. ‘REALLY GOOD IDEAS
Research is all the activities that generate research findings and conclusions. We need to distinguish two types of research that can inform practice: ‘public domain’ research and ‘private-domain’ research.

• Public-domain research consists of investigations that aim to contribute to the accumulation of openly accessible knowledge. It is mainly undertaken by ‘professional’ researchers in universities and research institutes, although practitioners also contribute through part-time postgraduate study and subsequent active research.

• Private-domain research refers to institutionally based research undertaken mainly by practitioners into their own practice or that of groups of colleagues or their educational institution. It is intended for informing practice. Clearly action research is included within this category, though it also embraces other forms of research, for example institutional research into student and parental perceptions, such as the Scottish Office Education Department’s School Ethos Indicators (SOED, 1992a, b) and value-added analysis of student level test and examination data. The research is undertaken by practitioners or alternatively by consultants employed by them, such as providers of statistical analysis of institutional value-added pupil performance data.

There is a tendency in the current debate on EIPP to associate it with public domain research, as for example in recent discussions on forming a Campbell Collaboration for organizing and disseminating peer reviews of public-domain research in education (Boruch et al., 1999). An important issue is whether the
promotion of EIPP as referring to public-domain research will further promote the professionalization of research, with the attendant marginalization of practitioner research (Anderson and Herr, 1999). Validation is a key process in EIPP and is the validation of research, this is the determination of what is good-quality research and hence what findings and conclusions count as evidence. The different research paradigms are distinguished by the kinds of criteria they use to determine good-quality research, an important element of which is what counts as valid evidence. A crucial issue for EIPP in educational management is which research paradigms to include. Currently the most influential model of EIPP comes from health care, in particular the Cochrane Collaboration (www.cochrane.org) which organizes, conducts and disseminates systematic reviews of research on health care interventions (Chalmers et al., 1997). Here the criteria for validating evidence are those required for valid evidence of causality derived from randomized controlled trials (RCT). Clearly, the issue for educational leadership and management is how to develop and implement agreed criteria for validated evidence not only for non-RCT research using statistical analysis of observational data but also for
Validation criteria affect what research is undertaken and how it is conducted, as well as the peer evaluation of published research findings. One of the main planks of EIPP is improved validation through systematic reviews of the literature on given issues and the dissemination of syntheses of validated findings in ways appropriate for the particular stakeholders. The work of the DfEE funded Centre for EIPP in education will be particularly important in this respect. The EIPP model in action means that some research findings do not get validated by the criteria employed by the EIPP community: the research is in effect designated as not of sufficiently high quality. Figure 1 depicts unvalidated research as being discarded. Such non-validation is clearly controversial, so ‘unvalidated’ research gets diffused outside the EIPP system by members of the research community or the media who are sympathetic to the ‘unvalidated’ research. Hence ‘unvalidated’ research can influence policy and practice.

The validation process for private-domain research is much less public. However, its validation criteria are normally derived from public-domain research methods, even though they may be less formal and rigorous. Greater
exposure of practitioners to EIPP relating to public-domain research is likely to

feed back into the criteria used for judging the quality of institutional evidence

that is used to inform practice. Dissemination

The dissemination of validated research findings within and beyond the

research community is the next crucial stage of EIPP. An important element of

EIPP is the advocacy of far more replicatory research and of research that is

cumulative as it builds on previous work. Peer organization of systematic liter

ature reviews enables evidence to be efficiently accumulated and dissemi

nated, so that it can more readily be built upon. In education (as in other social

sciences) placing greater emphasis on replicatory research and systematic

review requires a change in what is valued by the research community (Apple,

1999). Funding bodies and academic journals tend to place much more value

on ‘original’ research: research replicating previous studies is rare and that

which reanalyses data from previous studies even rarer, particularly in

qualitative research.

If evidence is to influence policy and practice it must be effectively dissemi

nated to these audiences. This requires communicating findings at different

levels of sophistication depending on the users’ prior
knowledge and available time. To influence these audiences findings need to be communicated briefly in non-technical language, but still retaining the correct interpretation of the evidence. This can be particularly difficult when evidence is equivocal or applies to ‘REALLY GOOD IDEAS’? particular circumstances but not others. At the dissemination stage of EIPP some evidence is lost through poor communication and only part of it is actually received by policy makers and practitioners. This is depicted in Figure 1 as a leakage of validated evidence into the discarded category.

Policy making and practice

The next stage in the EIPP cycle is the influence of validated evidence on policy making and practice. It is safe to assume that only a fraction of the validated evidence disseminated actually succeeds in influencing policy and practice. The EIPP model treats policy making and practice as distinct spheres of activity.

Policy makers and practitioners seek to influence each other and both communities may use recourse to ‘evidence’ as part of these efforts. There is a substantial research literature on how policy is made and implemented (e.g. Ham and Hill, 1993; Weiss, 1991) and on professional practice which can help us to understand how evidence may or may not influence policy and practice (Eraut, 1994).
Recent reports from the USA (National Research Council, 1999) and Australia (Selby Smith, 1999), concerned with the influence of education research on policy and practice, both reinforce the view discussed above, that it is more appropriate to aspire to evidence-informed rather than evidence-based policy and practice. It is seldom the case that a specific social problem is solved by a decision to use the results of a research study. Knowledge use is more likely to be a process of ‘enlightenment’ that is gradual, indirect and interactive, characterised by incremental changes that aggregate over time to become significant structural and substantive changes. (National Research Council, 1999: 44)

Selby Smith (1999) in a study of the impact of vocational education and training research on decision making makes a similar point, noting that the influence mainly occurs via affecting the climate of opinion. Both these reports stress the importance of building and maintaining linkages between the research community and policy makers and practitioners, if policy and practice in education are to have a more secure research base.

The EIPP model categorizes policy making as either evidence-informed or non-evidence-informed, though as the discussion above indicates, there is no rigid divide between the two. For the purposes of the EIPP model, successfully disseminated validated evidence influences policy making and hence practice.
via the effects of evidence-informed policies on practice.

The EIPP model also divides educational practice by teachers and educa

tional managers into evidence-informed and non-evidence-informed, recogniz

ing the opaque boundary between the two. As with policy making, the mission

of EIPP is to increase the proportion of practice that is evidence-informed. The T H E O R Y

distinction between public- and private-domain research and the relatively low

profile of practitioners in public-domain research have important implications

for the respective power of researcher and practitioner communities.

In the top–down public-domain version of the EIPP model (the more

common one) ‘validated evidence’ is produced by the research community,

using practitioners (and their clients) as the subjects of research. The issue then

is how to get practitioners to take on board evidence so that it influences their

practice. Eraut distinguishes between public propositional knowledge and per

sonal knowledge: In general, many differences can be found between the personal knowledge of working professionals which informs their judgement or becomes embedded in their performance and the public knowledge base of their professions as represented by publications and training courses. (1994: 17)

Eraut subdivides personal knowledge into personal propositional knowledge—

that which the individual can articulate—and tacit personal knowledge, which
individuals use in their practice without being fully conscious of it or being able to articulate it. He claims that 'a significant proportion of the learning associated with any change in practice takes place in the context of its use' (p. 33). Practitioners can only utilize public propositional knowledge in their work when they have internalized it so that it becomes part of their personal knowledge. It follows from this that if researcher generated and validated evidence is to influence practice, making it accessible to practitioners is not sufficient. They must be motivated to use it in their practice and be able to learn how to utilize it in their work contexts.

The practitioner-as-researcher has two potential roles in EIPP. One is undertaking public-domain research, for which practitioners do not generally have the time and resources that are available to professional researchers. The practitioner is much more dominant in the other role, that of generating and utilizing private domain research in order to inform practice. The problem is for practitioners to have sufficient incentives, resources and capacity to inform practice with private domain research evidence.

Practitioners are, like policy makers, influenced by 'non-validated evidence', due often to the absence of validated evidence. For example, in making resource
allocation decisions headteachers and governors (as well as the current govern

tment) are predisposed to believe in the effectiveness of smaller class sizes and,

in primary schools, the use of learning support assistant (LSA) hours. However,

we currently have hardly any UK evidence that either smaller class sizes within

the normal range experienced or more LSA hours produce measurable increases

in student learning (Blatchford and Mortimore, 1994; Crowther et al., 1990).

Non-validated findings are depicted in EIPP model in Figure 1 as influences on

policy and practice that lie outside the EIPP system. ‘R E A L L Y G O O D I D E A S ’? Selection of research

issues

The determination of issues selected for research is the outcome of competition

for scarce research resources. EIPP is embedded in what for want of a better

label we term 'plural society'—that amalgam of interests and ideologies that

vies for influence over the structures for and forms of political decision making

in society. The goals that EIPP addresses are, of course, determined politically

and reflect particular interests and values that have been successful in influen-

cing these goals. What issues are currently dominating policy and practice

agendas will influence not only what existing research is validated and dissemi-
nated to policy makers and practitioners but also what new research is under taken. An attempt is made in Figure 30.1 to depict the pervasive influence of interests and ideologies on all stages of the EIPP cycle.

In the current UK policy context, primacy is famously accorded to the pragmatic, rather than the ideological or idealistic, through the dictum 'what works is what counts'. Yet any assessment of 'what works' must be informed by some criteria, with particular relative weights attached to them, and these criteria and their weightings will inevitably be derived from a set of values. So the extent of pragmatism may be smaller than is claimed, and the values underpinning 'pragmatic' policy are a legitimate and important subject for research.

Another feature of contemporary governance, at least in England, is its centralized character: 'Increasingly, the direction of change in educational thinking and practice is top–down' (Davies, 1999: 108; see also Glatter, 1999). Policy making is also accorded an aura of certainty and finality. As the Secretary of State for Education and Employment perceives the position. 'We know what works and how to spread it' (Blunkett, 2000). In a television interview, Tony Blair expressed his frustration that, 'when I'm sitting as Prime Minister trying to
get something done . . . you can have a really good idea and drive it through from the top’ (Blair, 1999), but its journey could be blighted on the way down by layers of bureaucracy and the risk-averse nature of the public sector. The Prime Minister’s views on the shortcomings of the public sector have been much debated. Of greater interest to the present discussion is the notion of the ‘really good idea’ originating from the centre. How do central policies arise? One view,

which may or may not be an accurate account, is that: National policy-making is inevitably a process of bricolage: a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried and tested approaches, cannibalising theories, research, trends and fashions and not infrequently flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work. (Ball, 1998: 126)

A government which promotes EIPP, by putting new funding into research to support it and diverting existing research funding towards EIPP, is exerting more control over research than a government which maintains policy making as a ‘knowledge-free zone’. Hence, one of the important criticisms of EIPP is that it promotes government control of research to the detriment of the longer term benefits of society from research (Hammersley, 2000), which are broader and more intangible than the instrumental goals which are given priority by EIPP.

Since policy goals are contested in a plural society, educational research is not a
purely instrumental activity, and the intellectual
foundations of policy makers’
goals should come under scrutiny (White, 2000). Such
analysis can be an

important engine of social advance: ‘Criticism (specifically
that which is con
structive) is crucial to any endeavour designed to develop
knowledge and
improve practice’ (Pratt and Swann, 1999: 8).

A crucial issue for EIPP is whether it is founded on the
values of research
objectivity and rationality, in conformity with which
researchers strive to ensure
that their validation of evidence is not affected by
personal political beliefs or
interests. An alternative value perspective is that the
purpose of social research
is to form part of the ammunition in the competition of
ideas through which dif
fering political interests vie for influence and power
(Lindblom (1987) makes
this distinction). From this perspective researchers
interpret evidence through
their political values and justify this as serving higher
ends.

The fundamental argument for EIPP is that it leads to
better achievement of
the intended goals of practice and policy, through the use
by policy makers and
implementers of ‘validated’ research evidence in their
decision making. If the
research evidence used to inform policy and practice is
biased, then research
will lose its claim to assist in determining the best means for achieving particu
lar social goals and instead will function only as material for legitimating pol
icies and practices based solely on interests and ideologies. In this event its
currency will diminish further over time. An interesting example of the misuse
of research evidence in order to legitimate policy is given by Allington and
Woodside-Jiron (1999). They argue (with evidence) that certain educational
researchers provided a misleading review of '30 years of research: what we
know about how children learn to read' which was highly influential in Texas
and California in mandating a literacy curriculum that placed great emphasis on
phonics. In this example both researchers and policy makers were in alliance,
the former to further careers and the latter to legitimate policies founded on
opinion and tradition concerning 'back-to-basics' in teaching.

It is our view that researchers should not become polemicists and that EIPP
should strive for 'political unbiasedness' in the validation of evidence. This
seems to be the consensus view among those advocating EIPP, a stance which
separates it from those who see social research as inherently non-objective and
necessarily linked to an ideology. Nevertheless, in
advocating a ‘disinterested’ stance, one must still recognize that EIPP serves the interests of those researchers whose methods it utilizes.

When policies have widespread effects, as is likely in a relatively centralized governance structure, it is important that they are well founded and are indeed ‘REALLY GOOD IDEAS’? based on ‘really good ideas’. This suggests that EIPP is at least as necessary to the stage of policy development as it is to that of policy implementation, evaluation and practitioner use. The contribution of research to problem formulation and the definition of alternatives, mentioned above, is relevant here. Factors promoting and inhibiting EIPP

The current policy climate in the UK appears more supportive to research than in the recent past. The so-called ‘Third Way’ to policy making emphasizes a pragmatic approach to improving learning outcomes, founded on applying evidence of ‘what works’ rather than on ideology. The DfEE claims to be almost doubling its own spending on research over a three-year period and to be taking steps to ensure that policy makers are well-informed about the current state of knowledge in their areas (DfEE, 1999a). It is also establishing a number of research centres (Wicks, 2000).

In addition, recent policy statements on research (DfEE,
1999a, 2000a) have indicated support for a breadth of research activity, including not just the evaluation of policy initiatives and systematic reviews on the one hand and ‘blue skies’ research on the other, but also research which ‘gives a coherent picture of how society works: the main forces at work, and those which can be influenced by government’ (DfEE, 2000a: 1). This suggests a view of EIPP which goes beyond a technicist approach, and which is not restricted to a current policy agenda. While attacking some research for being too inward-looking and piecemeal, Blunkett’s speech to the ESRC also conceded that government needed to eschew anti-intellectualism and learn to interpret and apply evidence. Two examples related to leadership and management.

Achieving these aspirations may take some time. The explicit use of evidence in policy formation still appears rare. For example, in relation to the far-reaching and controversial proposals on the performance management of teachers, the claim was made that, ‘In designing our proposals, we have taken account of experience in private and public sectors, and of research findings’ (DfEE, 1999b: para 54). There was no discussion of which findings were drawn on or how these related to the specific proposals. This was a noteworthy omission in
an area in which the research findings are equivocal to say the least (for example, IFOD, 1999; Marsden and French, 1998). Perhaps in an age in which, as Scott (1999: 322) argues, ‘electoral politics seem to be more dominant than ever’, it is naive to expect that high-profile policies mandated from the centre will always be founded on a thorough review of all the evidence or subject to independently evaluated pilots. A researcher respondent to the DfEE-commis-
sioned review of educational research relating to schools considered that ‘Policy-makers introduce initiatives which are not allowed to fail’ (Hillage et al., 1998: 42).

**THEORY**

The use of research evidence needs to be extended in another area even closer to leadership and management—that of the definition of standards for assessing individuals’ fitness for leadership positions and for recruitment to them. The development of professional standards in education has been a feature of recent years, deriving from the competency movement in vocational education and training in the UK (Raggatt and Williams, 1999) and it appears likely to become more widespread (DfEE, 2000b). Standards were developed by the Teacher Training Agency for headteachers (TTA, 1997) as well as for other categories of
school staff, but despite the wealth of research into headteachers over the past 20 years (Hall and Southworth, 1997) there is no evidence that it had any influence on the construction of the standards. The standards formed the basis for the assessment of candidates for the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) during its first three years of operation (1997-2000).

More recently, a different approach to the specification of headship has begun to be taken. As part of the development of the national Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers, the management consultancy Hay McBer conducted ‘behavioural event interviews’ (BEIs) with 40 headteachers in which the subjects described their actions and feelings in specific school improvement situations. The data were subjected to thematic and statistical analysis to produce 15 characteristics of headship which were considered to be related to ‘superior performance’: the resulting framework was termed ‘Models of Excellence’ and underlay the design and delivery of the programme, which has been running since 1998 and has been taken by many hundreds of headteachers. The research has now been extended to cover more headteachers and some deputy heads in order to inform the development of the new version of NPQH,
which the
government intends should shortly become a mandatory
qualification for head
ship. The government also commissioned Hay McBer to conduct
research into
effective teaching in connection with their plans for
teacher performance man
agement referred to earlier (Hay McBer, 2000).
The development of the ‘Models of Excellence’ was therefore
ostensibly a
research-based approach, by contrast with the process which
underlay the con
struction of the National Standards for Headship. However,
the research has not to
our knowledge been published and we are not aware of any
plans to publish it.
This is highly relevant to the issue of validation, which
we raised in our discussion
of Figure 1. We would suggest that an EIPP approach
requires such models and
the research on which they are based to be subjected to
rigorous processes of vali
dation, particularly where the models are intended to
underpin large-scale pro
grammes of professional development or the implementation
of national staff
management policies.
A further issue arises from both of these examples (on
teacher performance
management and models of headship). It may reasonably be
argued that embed
ding an EIPP approach will inevitably take time, and that
both the examples
include indications of increasing attention being given to evidence and research.

However, the increasingly centralist and political nature of educational policy ‘REALLY GOOD IDEAS’?
making discussed earlier may well be a significant inhibiting factor. The political imperative, determined by the electoral cycle, for quick results means there is often inadequate time for piloting interventions and responding to evaluations of pilots before full-scale implementation takes place. As well as the National Standards for Headship, the original formulation of the National Curriculum in 1988 and the National Literacy Strategy of recent years might be considered examples of this. Even in the case of literacy, where there is a considerable evidence base, Hannon (2000) notes that the Labour Government scrapped the idea of an experimental evaluation of the National Literacy Strategy, and embarked on a nationwide implementation, with ‘still no research-based rationale, although one was commissioned later [namely] Beard, 1999’.

Thus ministers can subsequently find themselves defending positions they have taken up without an adequate evidential base. Politicians may consider themselves unable to admit to an error because of the political consequences of loss of legitimacy and credibility: they have a ‘sunk
investment’ in what looked originally like ‘really good ideas’ but in fact turn out on investigation to be poor ones. The equivalent phenomenon in the business world has been termed ‘strategic entrapment’ (Proctor, 1993) in which decision makers persist with an ineffective course of action to justify the resources they previously invested in that strategy. The research assessment exercise Both promoting and inhibiting factors are also to be found in a key aspect of the framework surrounding educational research, the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). The criteria for assessment to be used by the Education Panel for the 2001 Exercise refer to ‘the educational significance of the research and its relevance for the academic community, policy makers and practitioners’ (HEFC(E), 1999: para 3.59.15). Such significance can be included in claims by institutions relating to the two key criteria, the quality of published output and the vitality of a department’s research culture. The new recognition given to ‘educational significance’ can be seen as a response (arguably a limited and provisional one in the context of the exercise as a whole) to the criticisms of the RAE as a significant restraining influence on the development of more policy and practitioner focused research in education (Hillage et al., 1998;
Tooley with Derby, 1998). The new emphasis on ‘users’ may also in part be a reaction to the growing professionalization of research which, Scott (1999: 318) has argued, ‘has tended to exclude “amateur” researchers whose main involvement is as policy-makers or practitioners’.

On the other hand, the criteria still give prominence to originality as a characteristic of quality and they do not provide explicit encouragement for researchers to engage in replicatory studies or to devote energy to disseminating the results of their work to practitioners and policy makers and developing long-term linkages with them.

Other inhibiting factors are intrinsic to the process of research, even when the research is designed to yield evidence for policy or practice. We have already suggested that research may not be able to provide ‘data for decisions’ in a straightforward, problem-solving sense. In addition, it may take a considerable time for studies to yield validated findings. This was the case in relation to studies of the impact of competition and parental choice in which the authors were engaged during the 1990s. In (hopefully rare) cases, the evidence may not arrive until the topic of the research has ceased to be of interest or relevance to user groups. The
growing rapidity of change within both society and the educational process exacerbates this tension while at the same time reinforcing the need for EIPP to offer guidance in a turbulent world. Researchers and other stakeholders should address how the problem may at least be mitigated. Finally, the research process, even when conceived of (as we conceive of it here) in terms of disinterested inquiry, is likely to have a sceptical character (Bridges, 1999; Merton, 1973) since it is founded on questioning. This can often present an uncomfortable and unwelcome challenge to practitioners or policy makers who are understandably committed to initiatives in which they have a personal investment.

It is important that this account does not leave the impression that all the constraints upon the development of EIPP lie outside the research community: with politicians, officials, practitioners, the RAE and the research process. As the Institute of Employment Studies report persuasively argued, there are many ways in which researchers can and should adapt their methods and practices to speak more convincingly and helpfully to user audiences, not least in the area of accessibility: ‘The burgeoning forest of academic research and papers appears to be increasingly impenetrable to an academic audience, let alone the wider edu
cation community’ (Hillage et al., 1998: 52). The development and maintenance of long-term research-policy-practice partnerships is a key element in the Strategic Education Research Programme proposed by the US National Research Council (1999) and also fostered by the ESRC’s Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The community of scholars and researchers in educational leadership and management in the UK has from its origins been strongly committed to a close linkage between theory, research and practice for improving education, a commitment that is reflected in the membership mix of BEMAS. In the next section, we will outline some ways in which an EIPP approach might sustain and enhance this linkage. A way forward

In this section we focus on how EIPP could be taken forward with respect to educational leadership and management, under the aegis of BEMAS as an organization dedicated to promoting the symbiosis of research and practice.

Hence we focus more on practice than on policy. ‘R E A L L Y G O O D I D E A S ’?

There are four main processes within the EIPP cycle depicted in Figure 1 which need to be addressed in thinking about a way forward:

- practitioner interaction with research
- the validation process
• the dissemination of validated research
• the selection and conduct of research

These processes are interrelated. We need to be clear about what kinds of evidence practitioners need to inform their practice before we proceed to organizing better validation and dissemination processes. In turn the availability of accessible and validated evidence will stimulate practitioners’ use of it to inform their practice. Practitioner interaction with research evidence

A first step is to develop a clear idea of the needs of practitioners with respect to informing their practice with ‘validated’ evidence from the public domain. A key question is which aspects of educational research supporting EIPP are appropriate for educational leadership and management as a ‘field of inquiry’? Is it to be limited to research which is about leadership and management or widened to include research evidence on educational practices which headteachers and other leaders/managers of student learning, as well as policy makers, need to know in order to make evidence-informed decisions? We would argue for the latter interpretation because this is the evidence base educational leaders need to have at their finger tips in order to take informed decisions about what educational practices to adopt or modify in their own
contexts.

How broadly the topics are defined clearly determines how wide the net is cast for research which is to be included in the validation process. In particular, are the topics to be confined to those which come within the classification of ‘interventions’—that is, concern the manipulation of particular variables or processes which have intended and unintended educational consequences? The discussions about a proposed Campbell Collaboration to undertake and disseminate reviews of educational research have been couched in terms of educational interventions (Boruch et al., 1999; Oakley, 1999). Limiting the research evidence included to educational interventions would make the enterprise more manageable but would exclude more wide-ranging research that is concerned with educational practices in natural settings which do not involve ‘interventions’. In the light of evidence that social science research currently influences policy and practice mainly indirectly by creating a climate of opinion, we need to include within EIPP for educational management and leadership research which goes beyond the technical ‘what works’ variety, provided that it is evidentially based.

Topics and practices that are currently at a stage where
systematic reviews THEORY for practitioners could be extended or developed include the effects on student learning and other outcomes of:

- class size
- setting, banding and grouping by ability or gender
- peer group tutoring
- gender differences
- specific strategies/programmes for teaching literacy and numeracy
- organization of the school day/year
- using target-setting for improving students’ educational outcomes
- use of homework at different ages
- specific uses of ICT to enhance learning

Important topics in the field of leadership and management practices are:

- teacher performance management and performance-related pay
- models of excellence for headship
- teacher appraisal
- monitoring teaching and learning
- involving parents in pupils’/students’ learning.

A crucial issue for BEMAS is its role in promoting a culture in which educational leaders and managers use validated research evidence, from both public and private domains, to inform their practice. According to Davies (1999: 111): The problem is not so much that teachers do not undertake research or that they are often excluded from determining the research agenda (both of
which may be true), but that there is often not a culture of teachers using research to inform their everyday school practice.

The problematic nature of the research–practice interface has long been recognized: it is also contentious because it concerns power relations between practitioners and academic researchers, as experts and gatekeepers of public-domain research. The relationship is made more complex and contentious when politicians impose on teachers educational practices/interventions which the former claim are founded on research evidence, even though this evidence is still highly disputed among the research community.

BEMAS members who work in higher education can assist in the development of a practitioner culture of EIPP in a number of ways. A key role is as providers of postgraduate courses in educational management and leadership. To evaluate evidence teachers need to know about relevant research methodologies. Such knowledge is better developed conducting research relevant to their own practice. Most postgraduate courses include research methods and research projects. However, the research is usually conducted in relative isolation, is inevitably small-scale ‘REALLYGOODIDEAS’

and lacks an integrative framework within which research evidence can build cumulatively. We need a way of linking academic-researcher...
peer group efforts to review and disseminate research on key topics with practitioner research undertaken under the auspices of different HE institutions and in many different educational settings. If validated evidence were more easily available to practitioners and if they could relatively easily check summary evidence in reviews against original studies, practitioners would be in a better position to select projects for their own research which are relevant to their practice and/or can add cumulatively to public-domain evidence. The validation process

The specialist role for academic researchers is in the validation process for public-domain research. We should start by setting up peer panels to conduct a few systematic focused syntheses of research on specific 'practices' relevant for educational leadership and management for which there is a body of existing research evidence. In order to create these research surveys the research community needs to be mobilized. Peer groups would organize surveys of specific 'practices', using agreed criteria for (a) what qualifies as a research study to be included in a survey and (b) the criteria for judging the evidence (the effect of the practice on learning or other specified outcomes). The peer group needs to be
committed to keeping its database of research surveys up to date. A focus on reviewing existing research requires a change in what the research community values as ‘good research practice’. Much greater value needs to be given to research synthesis, conducting a thorough survey of existing research before embarking on a new study, and doing replicatory and cumulative studies, as well as to dissemination to professional audiences.

In considering areas suitable for review and meta-analysis, we need to recognize and build upon previous attempts to provide syntheses of existing research.

For example, in the field of educational leadership and management several noteworthy reviews have been published in recent years. The ESRC commissioned Wallace and Weindling to produce an analytical review of research that had been funded by the Council relating to reforms in school management. The result was a booklet highlighting key findings and messages for practitioners (Wallace and Weindling, 1997) as well as a discussion of the exercise and its implications for future research aimed at an academic audience (Wallace and Weindling, 1999). Hall and Southworth (1997) published a valuable review and synthesis of research on school headship in Britain since the 1970s. Taking a
more international (and quantitative) perspective, Hallinger and Heck (1998, 1999) systematically reviewed a wide range of studies in addressing the key question ‘can leadership enhance school effectiveness?’ Such existing overviews and the methods underpinning them should provide useful benchmarks for developing reviews and syntheses of the research literature, both for practitioners and researchers, in the future. T H E O R Y

BEMAS and EMA can encourage the setting up of peer group research evaluation and dissemination panels, but additional government funding is required for peer groups to develop a common methodology for systematic review, undertake research surveys, keep them up to date and disseminate them.

The creation of the Standing Conference on Educational Leadership and Management (SCRELM) is a very promising step in this direction. At the time of writing, SCRELM is engaging in discussions with the DfEE-funded Centre for Evidence Informed Policy and Practice, about undertaking a systematic review in the field of educational leadership and management. Research review groups in educational management will need to agree validation criteria and implement these agreements. A crucial and contentious issue, already raised in the discussion of the EIPP model, is what
is to count as valid
dated evidence and hence which kinds of research evidence
can be diffused
within the EIPP cycle. Not all forms of educational
research are appropriate for
EIPP: for a start, only empirical research is relevant for
‘what works in practice’,
though such research needs to be theoretically informed. A
further restriction is
that not all empirical research produces data, findings and
conclusions that can
be validated using peer-agreed conventions. Another
criterion that would impose
a further restriction is that the research selected for
validation for EIPP, and the
validation process itself, should be ‘disinterested’—that
is, not deliberately
biased by the social beliefs and personal interests of the
researcher.

In attempting to delineate the types of educational
research that could be vali
dated for EIPP, the typology of educational inquiry
proposed by Constas (1998)
is helpful. He distinguishes three dimensions that
characterize a method of social
inquiry. These are the methodological, political and
representational dimensions.
The methodological dimension is the criteria by which
evidence to support
propositions is amassed. The methodological domain is
‘normative’ if there are
agreed rules for assessing evidence, in particular the
criteria of internal and
external validity and reliability/replicability. The alternative methodological domain is ‘idiosyncratic’, when evidence is personal and situational: each

The political dimension is subdivided into ‘centred’ and ‘decentred’. A research approach is centred when it eliminates or ignores power relations that affect the investigation or treats them as variables to be analysed in a detached way. In contrast, decentred research sets out to challenge established power relations.

The representational dimension concerns the ways in which research findings are presented. The traditional academic stance, which Constas calls bounded, is described as depersonalized, distanced and objective. Forms of presentation which break these rules, for example, evocative narratives, are termed unbounded. Constas then distinguishes seven research typologies, according to which combination of centred/decentred, normative/idiosyncratic, bounded/unbounded they involve.

EIPP falls into the centred-normative category. We have previously argued ‘R E A L L Y G O O D I D E A S ’ that it should be disinterested and not polemical (hence centred) and that it should have agreed rules for validation (normative). This restriction would exclude research which promotes specific ideological
perspectives, whatever

their political orientation. Whether or not the presentation of evidence for educational management should have agreed rules and conventions is problematic. If peer groups are set up to review research topics and disseminate reviews, they are likely to develop rules for presentation. Different forms of presentation, in particular different forms of language and pictorial representation, will be deemed appropriate for different purposes and audiences, as is now the case in journals aimed at academic, mixed or professional audiences.

An important challenge for implementing the validation process for EIPP in educational leadership and management is reaching widespread agreement on normative rules for the methodological dimension and implementing these. This will need to be done by review groups set up to prepare reviews of evidence on specific topics, such as, for example: does educational leadership affect organizational performance or what are the qualities of ‘effective’/‘excellent’ educational leadership?

Because of the nature of the issues of importance in educational leadership and management, the research included in validation for EIPP cannot be restricted to random controlled trials of educational interventions. Nor should they be excluded.
It will be distracting to devote energies to debating the superiority or otherwise of random controlled experiments in educational research. Instead, we should accept and value the continuum of research designs relevant for investigating educational practices, rather than pigeonholing them as discrete and separate. This continuum of research designs is depicted in Figure 2. First, educational practices can be subdivided into those that can be regarded as ‘interventions’—deliberate manipulation of structures, systems, financial rewards or other variables, which are intended to bring about a discrete change in practice. This could be undertaken as a random controlled experiment, where subjects are randomly assigned to intervention and non-intervention states. Alternatively, the intervention may take the form of a natural experiment (no random assignment), where a particular change takes place in some natural settings and not in others. This enables researchers to gather data on settings where the intervention does and does not take place. By gathering a wide range of data from the selected intervention and non-intervention settings and applying statistical techniques used in observational studies, the threats to internal validity from non-random assignment can be considerably reduced (Meyer, 1995).

Moving further along the continuum, there are interventions
that are universally applied to an education system (such as local management of schools, national curricular changes, performance management of teachers) so that there are no control groups, which are not experiencing the intervention. Unfortunately for EIPP research, much educational intervention has been of this type.

Much empirical educational research is not concerned with assessing the impact of educational interventions. This is classified in Figure 2 as non-intervention research: this collects observational data from natural settings. In THEORY some research designs settings can be deliberately selected to exhibit contrasts or similarities (e.g. research on different leadership styles or on differential school effectiveness). Or the settings may be selected to be representative so as to enhance generalizability. Alternatively, there may be no particular pattern or intent in the selection of settings for research.

Whether the data collected are quantitative or qualitative is not necessarily determined by the type of research design. Although random controlled trials generate quantitative data in order to investigate effects sizes, the research design can be enhanced by collecting qualitative data to assist in understanding reasons for differences in effects sizes between settings.
and participants.

Although qualitative research designs are usually associated with research in natural settings, quantitative data are also gathered from non-intervention natural settings (e.g. data on pupil attainment and pupil background and school variables in school effectiveness research designs).

The normative criteria for the methodological domain are essentially the same for quantitative and qualitative data, so long as the qualitative research designs are normative and not idiosyncratic. These are shown in Table 1. For ‘REALLY GOOD IDEAS’?

Figure 2 The continuum of research designs for educational settings. Educational Practice Intervention Random controlled experiment Natural experiment (with controls) Natural experiment (without controls) Natural settings: no intervention Selection of setting: to show contrast or similarity Selection of setting: unpatterned

instance, Guba and Lincoln (1981) proposed a set of rules for ‘meeting tests of rigour’ to ensure that the trustworthiness of the information and interpretations drawn from naturalistic inquiry match those of scientific inquiry. The scientific criteria (used for evaluating evidence from random controlled trials as well as from statistical tests of observational quantitative data) for validity are matched by corresponding naturalistic criteria.

Miles and Huberman (1984) proposed twelve tactics for testing or confirming findings in qualitative research. Patton (1990) in the last chapter of his book on
Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods, also addressed the issue of enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis, listing three major considerations:

- the rigour of the techniques for gathering and analysing data, attending to issues of validity, reliability and triangulation;

- the credibility of the researcher: since the researcher is the research instrument, information on researcher qualifications, experience and perspective should be provided;

- the philosophical beliefs of the researchers in relation to naturalist inquiry.

Reviews of evidence in educational leadership, developed by peer reviewing groups, should be explicit about the criteria of research validity used to select research for inclusion in a review and to judge the quality of evidence presented in the subsequent review. The development of agreed and commonly applied criteria in the validation process for EIPP should have spillover benefits in improving the quality of research undertaken, in the research methods learnt in educational management courses and in the consequent ability of practitioners to evaluate research evidence critically and undertake their own research contributions. Dissemination

The visible outcome of successful establishment of a structure for EIPP would
be easy access for practitioners to evidence on the effects of specific educational practices. One of the major constraints on practitioners informing their practice is lack of time to become informed. Hence quick, cheap and ready access is required, which accommodates differences in the extent to which users wish to become acquainted with the breadth and depth of the evidence. The Internet is particularly suited to providing access to evidence for informing practice which meets these criteria. Practitioners should be able to access a website on which they would find high-quality research surveys of the evidence on the effects of specified educational practices. The surveys should be accessible at three levels:

- a bullet point summary
- a survey article
- original high-quality studies included in the survey.

### Table 1: Mapping of scientific and naturalist criteria for research validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific criteria</th>
<th>Naturalist criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal validity</td>
<td>Credibility (e.g. triangulation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External validity</td>
<td>Fittingness for context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>Auditability: leaving an audit trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity</td>
<td>Data: factual and confirmable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Too often texts making evidence-based claims of ‘what works’ are insufficiently referenced to the sources of evidence, and even if these are provided, it takes time and effort to acquire the sources. Busy professionals do not have the time to pursue original sources, so that it is too easy to proselytize for a particular practice on the grounds that there is evidence that it works when the evidence may well be equivocal or context-specific. It also useful if the methodological perspective of the review is classified as, for example, in the Review of Review Report to the ESRC’s Teaching and Learning Steering Committee (ESRC, 1999), which classifies listed reviews as ‘technical’, ‘interpretative’ and ‘mixed’. Selection of research studies: evaluation of pilots

The earlier discussion noted the problem from a policy-making perspective that research evidence is not sufficiently relevant or timely with respect to current policy interventions. In particular, the timeframe of policy makers and practitioners is shorter term than that of researchers. In contrast, from a research perspective valid evidence on the impact of educational interventions on learning and other outcomes takes time to emerge, collect, analyse fully and present.

Overcoming this dichotomy requires the building up and sustaining of long-term
linkages between researchers, policy makers and practitioners, so that the EIPP

cycle can be made more effective through continual interaction between

research and policy/practice. It also requires accommodation by both parties.

Policy makers would need to acknowledge the dangers of mandating large-scale

national implementation of major policy innovations which have not had inde

pendently evaluated trials. The research community would need to recognize the

time-pressures involved in policy change, develop better and faster methods for

the evaluation of pilots, value this form of research activity more highly and

accept that all the requirements of rigorous research may not be achievable

within the timeframes available. Indicative results may need to be regarded as

acceptable when the alternative is no evaluation at all.

A change in the culture of both parties would be needed. Researchers would 'REALLY GOOD IDEAS'?

need to be prepared to risk producing findings and conclusions which are liable

to later revision, while politicians would need to be more open about the tenta

tive nature of proposed policy solutions and less prone to entrapment in sunk

policy investments. Other features of such a learning culture would be open,

unhindered publication and a preparedness by policy makers and practitioners to
change course in the light of the results. Conclusions

If we look to other models of EIPP, such as the Cochrane
Collaboration and the

proposed Campbell Collaboration for education, we can see
that they are very

focused in organizing the validation stage of the EIPP
cycle. Clearly this is an

essential part of EIPP and without it we cannot expect
practitioners and policy

makers to base decisions on ‘the best available evidence’.
It is also the part of

the EIPP cycle for which ‘professional’ researchers have
particular respons

ibility. However, it is only part of EIPP and its
development has to link in
closely to the interests and aspirations of the other
stakeholders, in particular,

practitioners and policy makers. More broadly, the ‘new
model for educational

research’ proposed by the National Research Council (1999)
emphasizes inter

actions among researchers, practitioners and policy makers
in a programme of

research, synthesis and implementation which concentrates
on a limited number

of important topics.

EIPP will only fulfil its potential in education if it is
not misused by its stake

holders. Researchers may be tempted to progress their
careers by promoting

insufficiently validated research (which can happen with
well-intentioned media

efforts to disseminate research), while policy makers in
search of legitimation
for their policies may be too ready to seize selectively on insufficiently validated evidence.

To develop EIPP in educational leadership and management we need to work towards the creation of a web-site on which users can find high-quality reviews of evidence on the effects of specific educational practices and interventions which are accessible at different levels. To achieve this we need to organize peer reviewing teams and secure resources for review and dissemination.

The cultures of academic researchers and HE teachers, practitioner and policy-making communities need to promote EIPP as the professional norm.

This can be encouraged though professional development programmes, organized in HE and elsewhere, and placing greater emphasis on teachers undertaking research which provides evidence for informing decision making and evaluating practice. Notes

1 The ESRC’s Review of Review classifies Beard (1999) as an interpretative, not a technical review. Theory

2 Checking for representativeness. Checking for researcher effects. Triangulation.

Weighting the evidence. Examining contrasts and comparisons. Checking the meaning


411-28.


Proposal for a Systematic, Multi-national, and Continuous Reviews of Evidence’, presented at meeting on research synthesis and public policy, University College London, July.


DfEE (1999b) Teachers—Meeting the Challenge of Change: Technical Consultation


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DfEE.


Patton, M.Q. (1990) Qualitative Evaluation and Research


Emergence of management

Management has become one of the most pervasive phenomena of our times. A number of organizations, in public as well as private
sectors, are trying to acquire and apply this body of knowledge and skills in an effort to improve their performance. There is widespread acknowledgement that organizational performance is not optimal and that modern management concepts and techniques have a great deal of promise for improving their effectiveness.

Several indicators of the growing interest in management can be cited. First, the number of institutions that offer management courses has increased manifold. Thirty years ago, there were only two or three institutions that offered the MBA programme. These were prestigious institutions designed to attract the brightest students and train them for high-level managerial positions. Today, there is hardly a university or college that does not offer a management course.

This growth is indicative of the demand for management education. With the possible exception of computer science, management is the fastest growing area in higher education. Second, most major organizations have instituted some form of training programmes for their employees. Generally referred to as staff development, most of these programmes focus on management concepts and techniques. Particularly striking is the acceptance on the part of government
organizations that their administrators need to be oriented to management. This is evidenced by the establishment of management and training institutes by central and state governments alike. Finally, management is gaining recognition as a profession: a number of individuals and firms have come into existence to offer their services as management consultants. Why this ‘love affair’ with management?

It seems reasonable to ask what has brought about this obsession with management in recent years. Our organizations were being run prior to the emergence of management. Were they not managed? We did not use the word ‘management’ then: ‘administration’ was more commonly used. Is management different from administration?

Let me cite four factors that seem to explain the ascendance of management in India as elsewhere:

1 Organizations have become large and complex. They have grown not only in size but also in the diversity of their objectives. The diversification of functions has resulted in multiple roles being created for employees.

2 It is recognized that human resources are more important than physical and financial resources. It is the people that spell the difference between successful and unsuccessful, productive and unproductive, organizations. While physical and financial resources are necessary, they can become productive only in conjunction with people.

3 Today’s workforce is more aware, more self-conscious, more aspiring. It has a much wider exposure to outside environment and influences. The traditional ‘command and control’ approach to managing people in organizations is no
longer valid. A whole new philosophy is needed to motivate people to higher levels of performance.

4 The discovery of new knowledge and techniques makes it necessary to educate and train people to apply it effectively.

As Bennis points out, management has been particularly receptive to the behavioural sciences, which gathered momentum because conventional wisdom and practice failed to work. A fundamental change in the basic philosophy which underlies managerial behaviour is reflected in the following three areas:

• a new concept of man, based on increased knowledge of his complex and shifting needs, which replaces the oversimplified, innocent, push-button or inert idea of man;

• a new concept of power, based on collaboration and reason, which replaces a model of power based on coercion and fear;

• a new concept of organizational values, based on a humanistic orientation, which replaces the depersonalized, mechanistic, value system (1993: 219). The essence of management

Let us now see what management is all about. What does it mean? How would one define or describe it? Simply stated: management is a set of activities directed towards efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in order to achieve organizational goals.

The key words in this definition are goals (translated as results or output), resources (which constitute the means to achieving the goals), efficiency (trans
lated as economy in the use of resources) and effectiveness (which is measured
in terms of results, not inputs). Management literature typically lists planning,
organizing, coordinating, delegating, controlling, evaluating as management
functions. The term ‘activities’ in the definition, however, is comprehensive
enough to include almost anything that a manager may do. It is intent and direc
tion that determine if an activity is managerial or not. This is an important point
in understanding the difference between administration and management. Sources of management concepts
The three major sources of management concepts and techniques are behav
ioural sciences, quantitative sciences and computer
technology. Psychology,
sociology and organizational theory and behaviour provide
many of the concepts
around which the practice of management has been developed. Motivation, com
munication, interpersonal relationships, authority and accountability, and leader
ship are among the frequently discussed concepts in
management parlours.
Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs, McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y, and
Herzberg’s Theory of Job Satisfaction are among the contributions of behav
ioural scientists to management thought and practice. The
notion that organi
zations have their own identity, apart from that of its members, has led to the
study of organizational behaviour and the development of organizational theory.

The concept of organizational culture has evolved to help management understand the dynamics of organizational life.

The reliance of modern management on rational, objective and quantitative methods has given it the flavour of a science. Mathematical models and sophisticated statistical techniques are widely used in data analysis and decision making. The information explosion has become a major challenge for management. Since accurate and reliable information is the basis for sound managerial decisions, managers need a systematic way of collecting, sorting out and storing meaningful information. The emergence of computer technology has made all this feasible. Management Information Systems (MIS) has now become a highly specialized field of study. Administration versus management

A great deal of ambiguity surrounds the use of the terms ‘administration’ and ‘management’. While some see them as synonymous and use them interchangeably, others see them as different and use both, along with the conjunction ‘and’.

The pre-eminent degree in management studies is called Master of Business Administration. The Commonwealth Council of Educational Administration T H E O R Y
(CCEA), a prestigious professional organization, was renamed Commonwealth Council of Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM) in 1994.

Management literature does not help either; in fact, it seems to confirm that words have no meaning; people give meanings to words. Educational administrators in different countries have their own definitions; for most, this is not an issue at all. In India, most professional educators have had to take a course in educational administration where they have learned the values, assumptions and procedures found in the departments and agencies of the government. The first question they ask in a management training programme is: how does management differ from administration?

There are various responses that might be given to this question. In summing my thinking I sometimes resort to the idea of presenting the two terms as an overview of two models A and B in Table 1.

One way to resolve the dilemma is to trace the roots of the two words. Since language is a reflection of culture, the root of a word generally provides a clue to its cultural association. Administration, a much older term, owes its origin to the institution of state. It reflects, therefore, the dominant culture of a government organization. Management, a relatively newer term, has come
Table 1 Administration (A) and Management (B): an overview of the two models

Model A  Model B
Reactive; isolated, single issue/ Proactive; integrated;
systems approach;  problem approach inter-relatedness of inputs, process, and output
Focus on inputs/resources Focus on results (Results are always outside the organization; inside, there are only costs)
Accountability for maintenance and Accountability for results; to outside
control; to the higher authority within constituents—students, clients,
the hierarchy customers, patients
Interpersonal relationships determined Relationships based on expertise and
by authority and jurisdiction autonomy
Rigidity; rules and regulations often seen as means to
seen as ends in themselves achieving organizational goals
Reward system based on seniority Reward system based on performance
(a measure of input) (measure of output)
Command and control; individual and Recognize and empower; individual
organizational goals seen as goals blended with organizational goals
conflicting, not complementary
Responsibility for initiating change Change initiatives
often originate at

rests with top administration; individual and group levels;
emphasis on

emphasis on restructuring, changing reculturing people

formal structures

industry. In fact, for most people in India, and even in
the West, management

means business management. Drucker (1999) argues that this
is an unfortunate

to Management is not business management—any more
than, say, Medicine

is Obstetrics.’ The reason for associating management with
business is that most

management literature is focused on business and industry
and that business is

the pre-eminent institution where management concepts and
techniques have

been most effectively applied. The term, therefore, reflects
the dominant culture

of business organizations. Once this is understood, it is
easy to compare the

assumptions, values and modes of operations that define the
two cultures:

government and business. The
administrative-hierarchical-bureaucratic model

The administrative model that was introduced in India
primarily for the gover

nance of the country made its way into most other
organizations, including educa

tion. It was very effective during the pre-Independence
period when government

was the only institution that really mattered;
institutional infrastructure in the non
government sector was minimal and enjoyed little autonomy to recognize the need for alternative models. Rules, regulations and operating procedures in educational institutions were the same as in government departments. There was unquestioning adherence to the assumptions of bureaucracy, which are:

- Efficiency is achieved when jobs are broken down in segments and routinised so workers need limited knowledge to carry out assigned tasks.
- Organizations are effective when managed from the top down, divorcing both frontline workers and clients from major decisions.
- Knowledge residing at the top of the bureaucracy can be codified in procedures so workers need little skill except in following orders (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

A critical study of selected educational institutions resulted in the identification of the following characteristics that define their organization culture (Sapre, 2000).

First, being essentially reactive in their response to issues and problems, educational administrators tend to develop reform proposals on a one-at-a-time basis, unmindful of the consequential changes necessary for their effective implementation. This isolated, single-issue approach is reflected in such recent initiatives as internal assessment of students, performance appraisal of teachers, autonomous colleges and more recently, accreditation. For any of these to succeed, significant other changes must occur. In a system where pay scales and annual increments are predetermined and
automatic, performance appraisal is either seen as irrelevant or not taken seriously.

This is precisely what happened when the University Grants Commission first intro
duced the reform. Today, hardly anyone even talks about it.

Second, administrators appear to be overly concerned with resources. An
increase in resources is often considered synonymous with progress. Annual T H E O R Y
reports of heads of institutions typically highlight additions to inputs made
during the year: library books and journals, equipment and technology, space
product dimensions are minimal.

Third, administrators’ accountability follows the chain of command within the
hierarchy. Maintenance and control being the twin responsibilities of administra
tors, they are answerable to their immediate superiors for the proper deployment
of financial and physical resources and the execution of all policies and directives.
Lines of authority and jurisdiction are sharply drawn and rigidly observed. There
is no audit of performance and little accountability for results produced.

Fourth, inefficiency in the maintenance and control of resources is considered
a more serious breach of duty than poor performance and ineffectiveness. Inac
tion is safer than initiative or judgement, taking risks and committing an error.
Fifth, interpersonal relationships are determined strictly by hierarchical status, authority and jurisdiction. Except perhaps among people at the same rank, relationships are typically impersonal, cold and passive. Dissent is scrupulously avoided in dealing with higher authority.

Sixth, rules, regulations and precedent are the determinants of major decisions. They are viewed, not as means, but as ends in themselves. A rigid, rule-based mode of governance is used more to limit employee freedom than to encourage action.

Seventh, seniority is the principal, often the exclusive, basis of the reward system. Promotions and other privileges are earned in proportion to the length of service. Open, data-based and participatory performance appraisal systems have not yet replaced the ‘confidential report’ which plays a major role in shaping one’s career. This is a subjective evaluation of an individual’s performance and conduct written by the boss and filed in the individual’s service record without requiring any feedback. The formative dimension of evaluation is absent.

Eighth, efforts to bring about change and improvement in efficiency are centred on structure and form, rather than on content and people. It is assumed that when an organization is restructured, reorganized or
given a new name, it
results in increased efficiency.

Ninth, ‘reculturing’ people in the organization does not
find a place in the
reform agenda.

Tenth, since the structure is highly centralized, changes
occur only when per
ceived as necessary by, and initiated at, the highest level
of administration. Sub
ordinates are encouraged neither to identify needed changes
nor to propose
improvements. Education management and the reform movement
in India

Education reform is a consistent theme in almost all
countries. Educational
journals report change initiatives and relevant research on
a regular basis. In the EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
in India
developed countries, many proposals for change emanate from
professional
organizations and school districts. In India, by contrast,
all initiatives for educa
tional change come from state agencies—the Ministry of
Education, the Uni
versity Grants Commission, the National Council for Teacher
Education and
the like. In the absence of a professional culture,
educators see themselves at
the receiving end of change proposals that often take the
form of mandates
which they have to carry out, with or without understanding
and commitment.

The half-hearted implementation, even resistance, explains
why the reform

movement in Indian education is a story of lost opportunities. In education, as

in many other fields, it is easier to change structure than to change process or

product. A few examples help us understand this. The 10+2 pattern of sec

ondary education was adopted and has been sustained. The four-year integrated

programmes of teacher education, though not abandoned, have not been repli

cated. Examination reforms, including internal assessment, performance

appraisal of teachers, autonomous colleges, and accreditation are in various

stages of implementation, if not abandoned already.

One of the major trends in Indian education is the infusion of management

concepts in teacher preparation and staff development programmes. This trend

owes its origin to two significant and parallel developments. The first is the New

Education Policy and Programme of Action, which recommended some form of

management training, not only for educational administrators but also for

teachers. The second is the phenomenal growth of management education and

training in the country. A few universities have introduced formal courses of

study in education management. Programmes of in-service education for school

administrators, teacher educators and teachers now include
such management concepts as the systems approach; performance appraisal; total quality management, and even leadership.

Despite the proliferation of such programmes, there is little indication of any significant changes in the way educational institutions operate. The mind-set of those who have both the authority and the responsibility to initiate reform has yet to change. In a critical review of education reform movements, Pogrow (1996) analysed the dynamics of educational change and explained why top-down reforms almost always end up making things worse: ‘The history of education reform is one of consistent failure of major reforms to survive and become institutionalised’ (p. 9). The analysis is pertinent to India as well.

Reformers typically feel that their solutions would work if only people would get on board. When this does not happen, the practitioners are blamed for not supporting the change. It is unreasonable to expect practitioners to develop their own methodology and techniques for implementing a complex reform idea. To support and implement a reform proposal, they need to understand the proposal in its entirety, the rationale behind it, its possible effects on the institution and the people who work there, the step-by-step process of
implementation and its
subsequent monitoring. When these elements are ignored or
dealt with superfi-
cially, the reform is doomed to fail. Repeated failure of
reform initiatives is unT H E O R Y
setting for practitioners and students. Reformers need a
deeper understanding of
the dynamics of change, what sustains a reform and what
does not.
Disillusionment with top-down reforms, like those coming as
state mandates
and concentrating more on structure than on content, is
growing. Scholars are
discovering other approaches to lasting and continuous
improvement in educa-
tion. Pogrow concludes his analysis of the reform movement
as follows: ‘The
only way to improve education is by the use of more
powerful forms of curricula
in the hands of very good teachers who are trained to teach
better. All three of
these conditions must exist.’ Realizing the potential of
management in India
What then are the prospects of realizing the potential of
education management
in India? A few suggestions for moving in the right
direction seem warranted:
1 Adaptation is wiser than adoption. Not all concepts or
models provided by management literature fit into education
in their entirety. The systems approach, with its
input-process-output model, was devised for industry.
Nothing would be more dangerous than to look at education
in terms of the assembly line. The usefulness of the model
lies in redirecting the focus of educational administrators
from resources to results, in sensitizing them to the need
for thinking, first, about their goals—the expected outcomes
of the educational experience for the students—and then make decisions about appropriate processes and the resources needed to put the processes in place.

2 Since the primary condition for any organizational change to take place is collective will, administrators must become effective change agents. This calls for leadership, which is both collaborative and authoritative. School leaders need to have a vision as well as the ability to communicate that vision to all stakeholders.

3 All change involves resistance. Resistance comes from both the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’. The haves are people in authority who have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo; the have-nots are those for whose benefit the change is designed but who are ignorant about its nature, its rationale and its precise consequences. In the context of Indian education, a shift to a managerial-professional model poses a threat to those who have the ultimate power to make decisions.

4 Staff development programmes have to be site-based, carefully designed to achieve identified purposes and conducted and led by people whose credentials and motives are impeccable.

5 Perhaps the greatest challenge in education is to usher in a professional culture in which educators see themselves not only as employees, supposed to carry out other people’s mandates, willingly or unwillingly, but as professionals whose locus of control is internal, who are committed to continued educational management in India. A personal and professional growth, who set their own agenda and consider themselves accountable to those they serve. We have a vicious cycle in India: government justifies its authority and responsibility for educational reforms on the grounds that educators are a passive lot, unwilling to be involved in any change process. Educators lament the fact that the system is too centralized, gives them neither autonomy nor opportunity to be heard, treats performers and non-performers alike (there is no reward for performance and no punishment for non-performance) and holds them accountable for carrying out policies in whose shaping they had no part.

These tasks are not easy by any means. The deep-rooted administrative model has created its own vested interests. The management model has not been
understood even by those who are supposed to train others. The only hope lies in
the possibility that teachers will become more professional, through individual
and collective efforts, feel empowered through professional growth and begin to
see the need and the benefits of changing the organizational structure and

PA: Addison-Wesley.


Harper Collins.


Synthesis of Western and Indigenous Perspectives in the Modernisation of Non

PART 5 School effectiveness and school improvement


tion, Peppardine University, Los Angeles.


tions and attributed responsibility as predictors of student achievement: A causal mod


tional Administration Quarterly, 31, 449-472.


Source: School Effectiveness and School Improvement 4(1) (1993): pp. 37-58. A survey is undertaken of the ‘paradigms’ of the academic communities of school effectiveness and school improvement researchers, practitioners and scholars. It is argued that the two ‘paradigms’ are very different, and that this has hindered the improvement of educational practice. Examples are given of programmes which are a ‘blend’ of the two different approaches, and detail is given as to how the school effectiveness and school improvement communities can meet the knowledge needs necessary for improving the quality of schooling. Introduction

If a Martian, that value free creature so beloved of social scientists, were to visit the planet to take a look at its educational arrangements, one of the most remarkable things that would probably strike him or her about our educational research and
practice would be the lack of mesh between the enterprises of 'school effectiveness' and 'school improvement'. With the exception of North America which now exhibits the beginnings of links between these two disciplines or sub disciplines, in virtually all other societies around the world there are few points of intellectual or practical contact between scholars in the two fields. In addition, the take up of school effectiveness knowledge not just directly into the mechanics of school improvement programmes, but indirectly into school practice through influence upon the practitioner and policymaker communities is comparatively rare.

In this paper we outline the reasons for this overall lack of synchronisation between school effectiveness knowledge and school improvement research and practice. We survey the two communities internationally, and attempt to understand the origins and distinctiveness of the different paradigms that inform and guide the two communities. Examples of fruitful intellectual and practical interrelationships between the two bodies of knowledge, which represent in fact a distinctively new paradigm built on the foundations of the existing two, are then given. It is hypothesized that the further linking of these hitherto separate disciplines would advance our knowledge of how to generate high
quality schools for
our children. Crucially, we conclude by outlining what
changed practice within
each of the effectiveness or improvement communities could
hope to contribute
to satisfaction of the knowledge needs of the other. An
international survey
We should start by further examining the nature of the inter-relationships
between school effectiveness research and school improvement practice interna
tionally.
In North America, particularly within the United States, there exists perhaps the
closest of the international relationships between school effectiveness and school
improvement. Over half of all American school districts are currently running
improvement programmes based upon, or linked to, the effective schools know
ledge base (General Accounting Office, 1989; Taylor, 1990). It must be noted
however that the knowledge base within the improvement programmes is likely to
be of the earlier simplistic variety of ‘five factor’ theories developed by Edmonds
(1979) and popularised by Lezotte (1989), rather than that more recently
developed from a considerably more advanced research base by researchers like
Stringfield and Teddlie (Wimpelberg et al, 1989). In addition, there are in the
United States the well known demonstration projects which
have involved the
direct, controlled transfer of research knowledge into
school improvement pro
grams with built-in evaluation of outcomes, which have
demonstrated
enhanced school effectiveness (e.g. McCormack-Larkin,
1985). In Canada like
wise there are programmes which involve the utilisation of
school effectiveness
knowledge within school improvement programmes (Stoll and
Fink, 1989, 1992),
and the school effectiveness knowledge base has also
penetrated many other
ongoing improvement projects (see reviews in Sackney, 1985,
1989).
In spite of this evident relationship between the two
bodies of knowledge at
the level of practice, at the intellectual level there is
less of a relationship or
communality of perspective between the scholars who
contribute to their respec
tive knowledge bases. In part this may be because school
improvement scholars
have reacted against the simplistic nature of much North
American school effec
tiveness literature. The emphasis has been on the
generation of effective acade
mic outcomes and on simple lists of 5, 7 or 9 ‘factors’
which were said to cause
schools to be effective. There has also been the advocacy
of certain school
processes as being effective within the existing range of
school practice, rather
than the development of ideas in terms of what might be effective within a dif

erently structured system (see Holly, 1990, for a range of American views). KNOWLEDGE AND IMPROVEMENT PRACTICE

Whatever the precise reasons, school improvement scholars such as Fullan,

Hall, Miles, Louis and Joyce rarely base their school improvement strategies

upon the work of school effectiveness researchers. Fullan (1991) for example

refers to only half a dozen school effectiveness studies from the United States,

only two from United Kingdom and to none from any of the other societies like

Australia, the Netherlands or New Zealand in which major school effectiveness

projects have been carried out. Indeed, in earlier work (e.g., Fullan, 1985) he

makes explicit his emphasis on more ‘process’ orientated approaches to under

standing schools as organisations. Were we to take Fullan and the other

improvement writers noted above, a survey of their bibliographies suggests that

regarded as writing within the school effectiveness research paradigm.

Were we also to take the American school effectiveness research community

school improvement.

The situation of two separate, discrete bodies of knowledge and two separate

research communities that exists in North America is in evidence in most other
parts of the world; indeed in certain parts of the world the separation is even more in evidence. In the United Kingdom, there has, until recently, been little collaboration between those working within the school effectiveness and school improvement paradigms, little practitioner take up of the knowledge base of school effectiveness (Mortimore, 1991; Reynolds, 1991), little use of the research in school improvement or school development programmes (Reid et al, 1987), and little appreciation or referencing of school effectiveness material in the works of ‘school improvers’ (and vice versa).

In other parts of the world the situation is similar to that in Britain. New Zealand, for example, was the site of pioneering school effectiveness research (Ramsay et al, 1982), but there are no current signs of engagement of this knowledge base by those working within the ‘school improvement through decentralisation’ paradigm that has existed since the Picot Report in the late 1980s. The Netherlands now has perhaps the world’s most extensive research base within the field of school effectiveness (see Creemers and Scheerens, 1989), but there is no evidence of school effectiveness based school improvement programmes, nor of any penetration of school effectiveness research knowledge into schools.
through the development planning which is now mandatory within Dutch schools. Australia too has a small school effectiveness research base (see Chapman and Stevens, 1989), and indeed some of this knowledge has been linked to school improvement through the school self-management approach of Caldwell and Spinks (1988). But again, more developmentally-orientated material from Australia shows only limited take up of, or reliance on, school effectiveness literature. Indeed, the Australian school improvement tradition relates primarily to the literature on educational management and administration, itself notable for the absence of linkages with the school effectiveness research base.

Only in Israel internationally do we see any systematic application of school effectiveness findings in school improvement programmes (Bashi et al. 1990).

This analysis suggests that underlying these two distinctive bodies of scholarship, and the separation of the two groups of scholars, are two very distinctive intellectual traditions and histories. In the following two sections of the paper, we examine more closely the values, research and practice implicit in both approaches. The school improvement paradigm approaches to school improvement have, over the past thirty years, been charac
terised by two very different sets of assumptions, as seen in Figure 1.

In the 1960s and 1970s school improvement in the United States, the United Kingdom and internationally displayed a number of paradigmatic characteristics associated with the empirical - analytic tradition. It was linked as an enterprise to a technological view of school improvement, in which innovations were brought to schools from outside of them and then introduced ‘top down’. The innovations were based upon knowledge produced by persons outside the school, the focus was on the school’s formal organisation and curriculum, the outcomes were taken as given, and the innovation was targeted at the school more than the individual practitioner. The whole improvement edifice was based upon a positivistic, quantitive evaluation of effects. The worldwide failures of this model of school improvement to generate more than very partial take up by schools of the curricula or organisational innovations became an established finding within the educational discourse of the 1970s, explained widely as due to a lack of teacher ‘ownership’.

Knowledge and Improvement Practice 1960s 1980s

Orientation ‘top down’ ‘bottom up’

Knowledge Base elite knowledge practitioner knowledge

Target organisation or process based curriculum based
Out of the recognition of this failure came the new improvement paradigm of the 1980s, which is still reflected in much of the writing on school improvement that is current and in evidence today. This new movement celebrated a ‘bottom up’ approach to school improvement, in which the improvement attempts are ‘owned’ by those at the school level, although outside school consultants or experts can put their knowledge forward for possible utilisation. This new approach tended to celebrate the ‘folk-lore’ or practical knowledge of practitioners rather than the knowledge base of researchers, and focussed on changes to educational processes rather than to school management, or organisational features which were regarded as reified constructs. It wanted the outcomes or goals of school improvement programmes to be debated and discussed, rather than
accepted as given. Those working within this paradigm also tended to operate at the level of the practitioner rather than at the level of the school, with a qualitative and naturalistically orientated evaluation of the enterprise being preferred to quantitative measurement. The improvement attempt was ‘whole school’ orientated and school based, rather than outside school or course based (see Reynolds, 1988).

There is little doubt that the reactive nature of the new school improvement paradigm outlined above was deficient in terms of actually generating school improvement, as some of its proponents began to realise. The process orientated ‘journey’ of school improvement was still stressed, but by the late 1980s the journey was also undertaken in order to enable schools to evaluate their processes and outcomes. This attitude was exemplified in the work of the OECD sponsored International School Improvement Project (ISIP) and the knowledge that emanated from it. School improvement was defined in the ISIP as (van Velzen et al, 1985, p.48): a systematic, sustained effort aimed at change in learning conditions and other related internal conditions in one or more schools, with the ultimate aim of accomplishing educational goals more effectively.

In this reformulation, school improvement is about developing strategies for
educational change that strengthen the school’s organisation, as well as imple
menting curriculum reforms in the pursuit of student achievement. This obvi
ously implies a very different way of thinking about change than previous
approaches to school improvement. The ISIP served to popularise a revised
school improvement approach to educational change, and we have summarised
the characteristics of so-called ISIP knowledge in Figure 2. The school effectiveness paradigm
The school effectiveness research paradigm has, of course, a very different intel
lectual history and has exhibited a very different set of core beliefs concerning
operationalisation, conceptualisation and measurement by comparison with the SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS
AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
changing approaches of the school improvers. It has been strongly committed to
the use of quantitative methods, since many researchers were concerned to
refute the ‘schools make no difference’ hypothesis advanced by Coleman et al
(1966) and Jencks et al (1971) by utilising the same conventional methods of
empirical research as their perceived opponents had utilised. Many researchers
have also believed that teachers, especially North American ones, would pay
more attention to work conducted within the quantitative paradigm.
KNOWLEDGE AND IMPROVEMENT PRACTICE
The approach to school improvement taken by the ISIP rests on a number of assumptions:

- the school as the centre of change. This means that external reforms need to be sensitive to the situation in individual schools, rather than assuming that all schools are the same. It also implies that school improvement efforts need to adopt a ‘classroom-exceeding’ perspective, without ignoring the classroom.

- a systematic approach to change. School improvement is a carefully planned and managed process that takes place over a period of several years.

- a key focus for change are the ‘internal conditions’ of schools. These include not only the teaching-learning activities used in the school, but also the school’s procedures, role allocation, and resource use that support the teaching-learning process (in our words the school’s management arrangements).

- accomplishing educational goals more effectively. Generally speaking, educational goals are what a school is supposed to be doing for its students and society. This suggests a broader definition of outcome than student scores on achievement tests, even though for some schools these may be pre-eminent. Schools also serve the more general developmental needs of students, the professional development of teachers and the needs of its community.

- a multi-level perspective. Although the school is the
centre of change it does not act alone. The school is embedded in an educational system that has to work collaboratively or symbiotically if the highest degrees of quality are to be achieved.

This means that the roles of teachers, heads, governors, parents, support people (advisers, higher education consultants etc.), and local authorities should be defined, harnessed and committed to the process of school improvement.

- integrative implementation strategies. This implies a linkage between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up'; remembering of course that both approaches can apply at a number of different levels in the system. Ideally 'top-down' provides policy aims, an overall strategy, and operational plans; this is complemented by a 'bottom-up' response involving diagnosis, priority goal setting, and implementation. The former provides the framework, resources, and a menu of alternatives; the latter, energy and school based implementation.

- the drive towards institutionalisation. Change is only successful when it has become part of the natural behaviour of all those in the school. Implementation by itself is not enough.

Figure 2 A summary of ISIP knowledge (adapted from van Velzen et al, 1985, and Hopkins, 1987).

School effectiveness researchers have also been primarily concerned with
pupil academic and social outcomes, which is not surprising given the political history of school effectiveness research in the United States, where it has grown and built on the beliefs of Ron Edmonds and his associates that ‘all children can learn’. Processes within schools only have an importance within the school effectiveness paradigm to the extent that they affect outcomes – indeed, one ‘back maps’ with the paradigm from outcomes to process. The school effectiveness paradigm furthermore regards pupil and school outcomes as fundamentally unproblematic and as given. Indeed, in much of the North American effectiveness research, only a limited range of outcomes are used, reflecting the acceptance of ‘official’ educational definitions of the school as an academic institution. School effectiveness researchers indeed often talk of a ‘good’ or ‘excellent’ school as if that were unproblematic. Lastly, the school effectiveness paradigm is organisationally rather than process based in terms of its analytic and descriptive orientation, preferring to restrict itself to the more easily quantifiable or measurable. As an example, Fullan’s (1985) process factors such as ‘a feel for the process of leadership’ or ‘a guiding value system’, or ‘intense interaction and communication’ are largely
eschewed in favour of organisationally and behaviourally orientated process

variables such as ‘clear goals and high expectations’ and/or ‘parental involve

ment and support’. Additionally, the focus within the school improvement para
digm on the attitudinal, and on personal and group ‘inner
states’, is replaced

within school effectiveness research by a focus on the more easily measured

behaviour of persons. Towards a synthesis

From the outline of the history of the two paradigms above, it can be seen that

the disciplines of school effectiveness and school improvement are ‘coming

from’ very different places intellectually, methodologically and theoretically. A

crude characterisation that contrasts both approaches is as seen in Figure 3.

As noted above, the school improvement paradigm from the early 1980s
tended to react against the top down imposition of elite defined knowledge in

school towards a celebration of practitioner lore. In this reactive phase, school

improvement has been very different in its orientations to the school effective

ness paradigm which began to emerge in the early to mid 1980s, with the latter’s

outcome focus, its quantitative methodology, its concern to generate truthful

knowledge about schools (whether practitioners agreed with it or not!) and its
concerns with the reified school organisation and easily measured behaviours,

rather than with the attitudes, of teachers and pupils.

There is recent evidence, as we noted above, that some of those appreciative
of aspects of the school improvement tradition have realised the necessity for
‘paradigmatic change’ within that paradigm and a new, more rigorous approach
to school improvement is becoming increasingly common. The Department of SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
Education and Science project on ‘School Development Plans’ (SDPs) in
England and Wales, for example, was an attempt to develop a strategy that
would, among other things, help governors, heads and teachers to take control of
the process of change (see Hargreaves et al, 1989; Hargreaves and Hopkins,
1991). Development planning provides a paradigmatic illustration of new type
of school improvement strategy, combining as it does curriculum innovation
with modifications to the school’s management arrangements, both with the
overarching aim of enhancing student achievement and modifying the culture of
the school (Hopkins, 1991). The work of Bruce Joyce and his colleagues (see
Joyce et al, 1983, 1988, 1992) has also for some time transcended both para
digms. Although located within the school improvement
tradition, Joyce argues strongly for the raising of student achievement through the utilisation of specific models of teaching and staff development designs.

Some scholars within the school effectiveness community have also argued for the interpenetration and synthesis of both bodies of knowledge in the interests of improving pupil performance and school quality. Mortimore (1991, p.223) argues for transferring ‘the energy, knowledge and skills of school effectiveness research to the study of school improvement’. Stoll and Fink (1992, p.104) maintain that ‘it is only when school effectiveness research is merged with what is known about school improvement, planned change and staff development, that schools and teachers can be empowered and supported in their knowledge and improvement practice.’

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT IN THE 1980s

Focus on schools Focus on individual teachers or groups of teachers
Focus on school organisation Focus on school processes
Data driven, with emphasis Rare empirical evaluation on outcomes of effects of changes
Quantitative in orientation Qualitative in orientation
Lack of knowledge Concerned with change about how to implement in schools exclusively
change strategies
More concerned with change in pupil outcomes of school improvement than its destination.

More concerned with schools at a point in time schools as changing.

Based on research on practitioner knowledge.

Figure 3 The separate traditions of school effectiveness and school improvement.

growth towards effectiveness’. Murphy (1992), himself a researcher who has in his own empirical work existed within the effectiveness paradigm outlined earlier, now also wants to move in directions that celebrate the potential not just of conventional school improvement programmes, but of a more radical ‘restructuring’ of the educational system, its power relations, and the teaching - learning process in schools.

In addition, elsewhere one of us has argued that school improvement attempts need to understand the complex psychological abnormality that is exhibited within ineffective schools (Reynolds, 1992), evidence of which should be taken from the effective schools literature. The mission statement of the journal School Effectiveness and School Improvement (Creemers and Reynolds, 1990) also argued for the still, small voice of empirical rationality being utilised to jointly
assess the validity both of existing models of school improvement and the valid
ity of our existing, simplistic, factor based theories of school effectiveness.

In all these respects, the historical divisions between school effectiveness and
school improvement may be diminishing in importance, and there are currently a
number of projects in their embryonic stages which show what a more integrated
enterprise might look like. In the following three sections of this paper we give
brief examples from our own work of possible lines of development. All three
eamples below represent a blend of what have hitherto been regarded as mutually
exclusive orientations, theories and methodologies. All three approaches suspend
existing commitments to present disciplinary purity and to the historically con
structed bodies of so called ‘normal science’ and accepted practice, in favour of
the adoption of an approach which is problem, pupil and school centred. All three
approaches adopt not an ‘either’ ‘or’ orientation but are concerned to ensure ‘both’
school effectiveness ‘and’ school improvement are joined together in an intellectu
ally creative and practically productive new wave of educational studies. Improving the Quality of Education for All

Our first example is the ‘Improving the Quality of Education for All’ (IQEA)
project at the Cambridge Institute of Education (Ainscow and Hopkins, 1992; Hopkins et al., 1993), which represents a useful blend of approaches and methods which have until now only been used exclusively in either effectiveness or improvement initiatives. It is pupil outcome orientated, involves measurement of programme success or failure at outcome level but is also concerned with the within-school study of school processes from a qualitative orientation. Although the school improvement knowledge base is used to generate and inform change strategies and professional development, there is also space for both the ‘elite’, research determined knowledge concerning school effectiveness and instructional effectiveness, and for the results of professional collaboration, reflection and education. In short, the chosen improvement strategies exhibit a blend of research and practitioner knowledge.

The project currently involves a group of twenty-five schools in a variety of English Local Education Authorities. The aim is to produce and evaluate a model of school development, and a programme of support, that strengthens a school’s ability to provide quality schooling for all its students.

The key finding, from the research undertaken to date, is that school improve
ment works best when a clear and practical focus for
development is linked to

simultaneous work on the internal conditions within the
school. Such school

improvement efforts appear to include three elements:

* reconstructing externally imposed educational change in
  the form of school priorities;

* creating internal conditions that will sustain and manage
  change in schools;

* embedding these priorities and conditions with an overall
  strategy.

What is happening in these schools is that they are taking
the opportunity of cen

trally imposed change to enhance student outcomes. They do
this by strengthening

the school’s organisational ability to support the work of
teachers. This is done intu

itively in many cases, by using a series of strategies that
link classroom practice to

whole school purpose. These strategies focus on the primacy
of teaching and create

opportunities for teachers to feel more powerful and
confident about their work.

These strategies are concerned with staff development,
inquiry and reflection,

leadership, co-ordination and planning. Although they are
summarised in Figure 4 KNOWLEDGE AND IMPRO

VEMENT PRACTICE

Staff Development:

* staff development processes are used to support
  individual teacher and school

  development

* teachers are involved in each others teaching
• where appropriate, external consultants are used to support teacher development

Inquiry and Reflection:

• there is a search for increased clarity and shared meanings

• reflection and review activities are used to monitor progress and enhance the professional judgement of teachers

Leadership:

• staff throughout the school are encouraged to adopt leadership roles

• temporary systems or working groups are created

• individuals take on key roles in initiating change and supporting development work

Co-ordination:

• efforts are made to maintain momentum

• links are made between formal and informal structures

• images of success are created

Planning:

• planning processes are used to legitimise and co-ordinate action

• resources for school improvement are specifically allocated.

Figure 4 Some strategies employed by schools in the IQEA Project.

linear fashion, in reality they coalesce. On a day-to-day basis, the curriculum

focus, the work on the internal conditions of the school, the various combinations of strategy, and their impact on student achievement,
combine in the minds

and work of teachers to present a uniform whole. It is through this holistic

approach to school improvement that the schools are managing to ‘move’, to

achieve quality within the context of a national reform agenda and to blend

effectiveness and improvement approaches together. Halton’s Effective Schools Project

A second example of fruitful cross-paradigm work is the Halton Board of Edu

cation’s Effective Schools Project in Canada (Stoll and Fink, 1992) noted earlier. This began as an attempt to bring the results of school effectiveness

work done within one culture (Mortimore et al, 1988) into the schooling prac
tices of another, but it soon became clear to the programme developers that

potential difficulties involved in the implementation of the project could only be

resolved by the adoption at school and system level of organisational and plan

ning arrangements from the school improvement literature. Essentially, ‘top
down’ mandates to schools to address the characteristics of effectiveness were

not working because they did not engender ownership or commitment among

the very people who were responsible for the day-to-day implementation and

ultimate success of their improvement attempts. Furthermore, such mandates
rarely paid attention to the process of change and its impact on those who were working through it.

After having conducted a thorough search of the international effectiveness literature, a task force originally came up with a model of the characteristics of school effectiveness. Through visits to school districts where change was known to have occurred successfully, and through familiarisation with the current school improvement literature, task force members became firmly convinced that improvement was more likely to occur when the school was seen as the focal point or unit of change (Fullan, 1991). A School Growth Planning Process was developed, to incorporate four stages: assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Schools were to work through these stages over at least a three-year period, rather than by means of the yearly goal-setting that tradition ally occurred.

Where do the characteristics of school effectiveness fit in? Within the assessment phase, when the school is trying to get a picture of its current successes and areas for improvement, it examines Halton’s model of school effectiveness as it relates to its own context. Surveys for teachers, students and parents focus on where the respondents think the school is in relation to
a set of indicators, and

on how important each indicator is in order to create a
more effective school.

Through analysing the gap between where the school is and
where it should be,

the school can identify areas of need. Clearly, this is not
the only information

schools examine during the assessment phase; they also look
at current curricula and instructional practices, initiatives coming out of the
Ontario Ministry of Education, and also a variety of
information related to their
students’ progress and development. In line with the
emphasis on equity in
school effectiveness research, schools are encouraged to
disaggregate student
data; that is, to look for any differences in achievement, progress or develop
ment between subsets of the population (e.g. females versus
males).

It quickly became apparent to pilot schools engaged in
trials of the growth
planning process that this was a very different experience
from traditional forms
of planning. Increased staff involvement in decision-making
necessitated greater
understanding on the part of principals of the processes
involved in working
with groups. The more successful principals paid attention
early on to the de
velopment of clear decision-making structures and
organisational processes that
would reduce later problems. In short, they built a climate within which a more
dynamic and ongoing planning process could occur. More important, they spent
time building a collaborative culture within the school, in which teachers felt
valued, and where risk-taking was encouraged. Finally, the successful principals
had a vision of where they saw their school and were able to build support for
this vision without ‘blinding’ their teachers through their own charisma or zeal
(Fullan, 1992). In essence, the growth planning process showed that the creation
of an effective school depends on much more than the knowledge of what has
been successful and effective elsewhere. Each school is unique, and as such
must vary the process slightly to fit its own culture.

Further novel characteristics of this project have been the importance of the
role of the school district in the process. Halton created a strategic plan that
emphasises three key directions. One of these is the school growth planning
process itself. The second is a focus on instruction, in recognition of the central
role in the determination of school outcomes of what actually goes on in the
classroom. The third direction supports the other two; that is an emphasis on
staff development. Thus, the system provides a framework within which growth
planning can occur, and offers support for the process. This support comes in the form of workshops for school teams on all aspects of growth planning, and for entire staffs on their chosen instructional goals (Stoll, 1992). Support is also offered through regional consultants who work with individual teachers or whole staffs, and area consultants assigned to particular schools. Thus, the school is not seen as an isolated ‘unit’ of change, but as the ‘centre’ of change (Sirotnik, 1987; Fullan, 1991).

Institutionalisation of school growth planning in Halton has resulted from the weaving together of a variety of initiatives; the development of a shared language around school effectiveness and improvement; incorporation of existing aspects of Halton’s culture, such as the teacher evaluation process, and a strong commitment to collaboration; strategic directions that acknowledge the importance of the process; and an emphasis on well co-ordinated leadership and staff development.

The result of Halton’s project has been a combination of the effectiveness knowledge base about effective practices, and the improvement generated knowledge and process planning and change. Simply, there has been a commitment to make the Halton schools more effective for
all students through
the blended application of school effectiveness and school
improvement research. The Cardiff change agent study

Our final example of a fruitful blending or synthesis of
perspectives from what
have hitherto been regarded as the traditions of school
‘effectiveness’ and school
‘improvement’ are the school improvement programmes at the
University of
Wales, Cardiff, in which senior personnel from schools work
with university
staff, engaged on the process of changing their schools.
The systematic education of school personnel within this
novel school
improvement programme was based upon the following
principles:

• the knowledge base was both the effective schools
literature and the practitioner conceptions about what
makes for effective practice;

• the programme relied upon individual teachers’ motivation
for professional education and upon group activity based in
the schools of the participating teachers to ensure
permeation within the organisation;

• the programme was located outside the school within the
university, although the course was school focussed;

• the programme was ‘top down’ in its relationship to
school processes (since most participants were senior
managers in their schools), but was also ‘bottom up’ in
that attention was given to group based techniques at
school level to ensure ‘ownership’;

• the approach was ‘empirical-rational’ in the sense that
the course aimed to generate rational, problem solving
change agents, but also involved giving participants
information about group work techniques, the social
psychology of organisational life and the related
psychological and psychiatric insights necessary to
confront the school cultures of ineffective schools;
• the orientation was both behavioural in the sense of being concerned to change programme participants' behaviour and the behaviour of others within schools, and was at the same time concerned with ensuring attitudinal change in the 'deep structure' of values and relationship in schools;

• the programme was outcome orientated but involved concern with school processes.

The results of these programmes were impressive. Over three-quarters of programme participants changed aspects of their school's organisation, with an average of four major organisational changes per person. Over 85 per cent of these changes had survived in a six year follow-up study, and the schools that had exhibited organisational change had improved in terms of their academic and social outcomes by comparison with a group of 'control' schools who were not included in the programme (fuller details are available in Reynolds, Davie and Phillips, 1989).

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT What can school effectiveness and school improvement do to help each other? Our suggestion, based on the above three experiences, is that school effectiveness and improvement persons should consider suspending their commitment to distinct paradigms and investigate further the utility of putting together coalitions of what have been all too often seen as mutually exclusive approaches derived from the knowledge base of both paradigms. If the two specialties were to form closer relationships, as we have seen above, there is much evidence for
believing that both can contribute greatly to the academic and practical needs of the other. To take school improvement first, school improvers need to have knowledge about those factors within schools and within classrooms that may be manipulated or changed to produce higher quality schooling: school effectiveness researchers can provide that knowledge. Correspondingly, at their simplest level, school improvement strategies provide the ultimate test for many of the theories posited within the school effectiveness research enterprise, since the potential changes in school outcomes identified by research as being linked to school processes is the way of testing whether there is a causal link between school processes and student outcomes. School improvement plans, and the strategies based upon the school effectiveness research communities’ identified characteristics, are therefore of crucial potential importance to the future health and development of school effectiveness research. At the moment, school effectiveness researchers are failing to generate knowledge useful for, and relevant to, the school improvement enterprise. Similarly, there are a number of ways in which changed school improvement practice could facilitate the further development of school effectiveness research. In this
section we make a series of suggestions about how this confluence of perspectives can be achieved.

1 There are very few studies at the level of ‘case studies’ of effective or for that matter ineffective, schools that would show the inter-relationships between school process variables and which would paint a picture for improvement practitioners of the fine-grained reality of school and classroom processes. The American study of Rosenholtz (1989) and some of the recent ‘mixed methodology’ work from the Louisiana School Effectiveness Study of Stringfield and Teddlie (1990) are exceptions to this trend internationally, but even they do not get that ‘close to the action’. In Britain for example we still have no in-depth, qualitative portrait of the effective school equivalent to Louis and Miles’ (1990) Improving the Urban High School, which provides excellent case studies of process variables. The absence of rich case study data reduces the practitioner relevance of the effectiveness research and makes the transfer of knowledge to the improvement community (with its qualitative orientation) more difficult.

2 School effectiveness studies are very deficient at the level of ‘processes’ KNOWLEDGE AND IMPROVEMENT PRACTICE rather than factors, since effectiveness researchers have considerably more experience at the level of school organisational factors. School processes defined in terms of attitudes, values, relationships and climate have been largely neglected therefore, even though school improvement needs information on these factors within schools, given their centrality to the process of improvement and development.

3 School effectiveness studies customarily show a ‘snapshot’ of a school at a point in time, not an evolutionary and moving picture of a school over time, a neglect which hinders the usefulness of the knowledge for purposes of school development. School improvement needs to have ideas about how schools came to be effective (or for that matter ineffective) in order to replicate (or for that matter eradicate) the processes. This necessitates a dynamic, evolutionary, evolving and ‘change over time’ orientation within school effectiveness research.

4 Most school effectiveness studies from outside North America, particularly those from the secondary sector in
Britain (e.g. Reynolds et al, 1987; Rutter et al, 1979), neglect the detailed study of the crucial variable of the principal or headteacher. Both the early British studies of school effectiveness, for example, have few ‘headteacher variables’ because the researchers had to promise their sponsoring educational authorities that they would not concentrate in detail on this area, which in the context of the professional headteacher autonomy prevailing in the 1970s and 1980s was hardly surprising. When the Rutter team later sought to translate their findings about effective school factors into their schools, it is not surprising therefore that their knowledge deficient improvement programmes failed to generate much overall improvement in educational processes or pupil outcomes (Maughan et al, 1990).

5 School effectiveness studies have tended, with perhaps the exception of work by Coleman and Larocque (1991), to neglect the importance and potential impact of other educational institutions, arrangements and layers above the level of the school. As Hopkins (1990, p.188) notes when discussing school improvement conducted within the ISIP ‘... much thought ... was given to the way in which improvement policies are established at various levels ... to the structured factors related to support, e.g. external support ...’. Much of the effective schools literature appears to take such ‘meso level’ issues as unproblematic, yet the ISIP case studies suggest that this is just not so. School improvement needs to be informed by knowledge as to what conditions outside the level of the school are necessary to generate process and outcome improvement. School effectiveness can currently only generate knowledge about school level variables.

6 School effectiveness research, whether of North American, British or Dutch origin, tends towards the generation of lists of organisational process factors within schools that are associated with pupil outcomes, yet of course what school improvers need to know is not what ten, twenty or thirty factors may be useful enhancers of outcomes if changed but which one or two factors should be changed. The need for change strategies that relate to a small and discrete number of factors is magnified by the need to alter those variables within schools which are the key determinants of other process variables. No school effectiveness study so far has attempted to isolate the direction and strength of the influences that link school process variables together.
School effectiveness research, to compound the difficulties noted above, cannot even prove conclusively which process variables are causes of school effectiveness and which effects. If we take as an example the well-established link between teachers' high academic expectations of their pupils and their students' good results in examinations or tests of attainment, it may be that the direction of the relationship is a positive one, or academic success may by contrast generate high expectations, since the experience of high examination passes at school level may lead to an expectation of them continuing. Alternatively, there may be interactive influences. The directionality of the relationship – crucial for the decision concerning what to target for improvement – is not established from the research base for this variable and for many other groups or pairs of variables within the school effectiveness knowledge base.

School effectiveness knowledge also misses the chance of satisfaction of the needs for school improvement by being thoroughly dated. Improvement schemes in the 1990s need to be based on knowledge that is generated from schools that reflects the characteristics of schools in the 1990s, not the schools of the 1970s and 1980s. At the level of what makes for effective schooling, process factors such as the assertive principal and instructional leadership which was associated with school effectiveness in the 1980s may not be associated in the same way in the 1990s, when demands for 'ownership' by teachers may have changed the educational cultural context. Outcomes appropriate for measurement in the 1980s, such as academic achievement or examination attainment, may not be the only outcomes appropriate to the 1990s, where new goals concerning knowledge of 'how to learn' or knowledge in mastering information technology may be necessary.

School effectiveness research has rarely been 'fine grained' enough to provide information that is needed for school improvement, since the variation in 'what works' by contexts has been a focus only of a very limited amount of recent North American work (Hallinger and Murphy, 1986; Wimpelberg et al, 1989). School improvement needs more than the notion of what works across context in the average school, and needs more than data upon the relationships between school processes and outcomes for all schools. It needs knowledge of the factors that will generate improvement in particular schools in particular socio-economic and cultural contexts. Since only a small amount of our school effectiveness data base is analysed by context, the delineation of the precise variables that
School improvement knowledge and improvement practice needs to target to affect outcomes is clearly impossible at present. The needed disaggregation of samples of schools to permit the analysis of contextual variation needs, of course, to also focus on the precise organisational and process variables that may be responsible for the differential effectiveness of schools with different groups of pupils within them (Nuttall et al., 1989). Findings of differential school effects also necessitate investigations oriented towards differentiated analyses of within school factors, rather than the present concentration upon ‘common’ school process factors.

10 Many educationists often find themselves working in historically ineffective educational settings, yet the knowledge base within school effectiveness may not be necessarily easily applicable to those settings. It is probable that the ineffective school may possess variables at the level of interpersonal problems, projections, defences and the like which do not exist in the effective school. Yet the possible existence of these ‘ghosts’ or ‘shadows’ on the change process seems to be rarely considered by researchers. The knowledge required by improvers of ineffective schools is simply not found in school effectiveness research, where the good practice of effective schools is simply ‘back mapped’ onto ineffective schools, and then assumed to be sufficient to make them improve.

11 School improvement practice/research all too rarely measures the impact of changes in improvement programmes upon the outcomes of pupils or students. Part of the explanation for this may be the historical tendency of school improvement to celebrate certain styles of professional practice, because of its association with the training needs and desires of the teaching profession within schools. Another part of the explanation may be the reluctance of many within the school improvement paradigm to be explicit about what the nature of school outcomes, or the educational goals of their programmes, really are. However, the absence of data on programme effects restricts the ability of those within the school improvement tradition to help the school effectiveness research base expand, in terms of further understanding the possible causal relationships between school processes and school outcomes.

12 Those engaged on school improvement need urgently to pay attention to the implications of multi level modelling procedures for their programmes. As noted earlier, the
evidence from effectiveness research that schools can have differential effects upon their pupils (Nuttall et al., 1989) and that schools effective for some groups of pupils may actually be ineffective for others, has wide ranging implications for school improvement. These results imply that improvement attempts need urgently to move away from the much vaunted ‘whole-school’ strategies towards more finely targeted programmes that may vary within the school in terms of their content, their focus and their target group. Above all, schools need to examine assessment data, whether these are academic results, attendance patterns, attitudes or any other measures of students’ progress and development, and look for variations between different subsets of the population. By taking these differences into account, and by focussing improvement at the level of boys/girls, high ability/low ability pupils, and pupils from ethnic minorities/pupils from ‘host’ cultures, it would be possible to generate more appropriate school change strategies. This would in turn allow researchers to generate evidence about differentially effective school processes, as the effects of the change attempts were targeted within schools.

13 Besides focussing more on outcomes, school improvement researchers also need to ‘polish their independent variables’. Knowing that student achievement has increased is not much use for policy making, if we do not know why the change has occurred. Although this point is linked to the three previous ones, it specifically demands more theoretical precision from school improvers in clarifying the links in the school improvement chain, their anticipated impact, and in developing ways of measuring them.

14 School improvement research needs to refocus its activities, from an emphasis only on the school level to include the level of the classroom. A considerable volume of research now exists which suggests that teachers’ focal concerns are with the content of their curricula and the nature of their instructional practices, rather than with the wider ambit of the school. Yet many school improvement efforts neglect the primacy of instruction. By not focussing on instruction, school improvement runs the risk of manipulating variables only at the level of the school, which in most recent research explains much less of the variation in student outcomes than do those variables at the instructional or classroom level (see, for a review, Creemers, 1992).
Finally, in the spirit of collaboration that pervades this paper, we feel that practitioners should extend an invitation to school effectiveness researchers to come into their schools and jointly plan an evaluation of their improvement efforts.

Greater teacher involvement in research would lead to increased credibility of the findings and to commitment to their future implementation. A breaking down of the barriers between practitioners and researchers, the transcending of boundaries between effectiveness and improvement, more accessibility in the writing and presentation of research findings and change strategies, and the creation of a mutual process of enquiry into school development will, we believe, result in a more robust knowledge base and more specific strategies for affecting practice and enhancing outcomes in our schools. Coda – towards a synergy

We have described in this paper wide divergencies in the orientation, methodology and theoretical approaches of the specialisms historically known as 'school effectiveness' and 'school improvement'. These differences are the result of the historical development of each group of 'scholars' and 'practitioners'; with knowledge and improvement school effectiveness researchers wishing to research within an exclusively quantitative framework and with school improvement
practitioners and
researchers adopting the qualitative, appreciative,
developmental stance of
school development. We have noted, however, some movement
by members of
both groups towards a blending of what had been seen as
oppositional
approaches. Three examples have been given of programmes
which, in fact, are
based upon the insights, findings and recommendations of
both groups. We
have continued by arguing, though, that there is much that
school effectiveness
researchers can do to develop the knowledge base which
practitioners and
school improvement programmes need to effect change in
schools. We con
cluded that there is much that school improvement attempts
can do to improve
the validity and reliability (and in fact the
transferability) of the school effec
tiveness knowledge base, by means of testing the findings of
school effectiveness
research, and their associated propositions, within
schools in improvement
programmes. We have then given 14 examples of ways in which
effectiveness
research and improvement practice could, if it were in each
case changed, meet
the needs of the ‘other’ more adequately.

Underlying all these discussions has been the implicit
assumption that the intel
lectual and practical enterprises of ‘school improvement’
and ‘school effective ness’ remain separate. Yet, as is evident, we feel strongly that this separation is undesirable, especially when compared with the potential benefits for knowledge and practice of an integrated, coherent and synergistic intellectual and practical enterprise concerned jointly with research and practice on school effectiveness and school improvement. It is in this spirit that we, one school effectiveness researcher and practitioner, and a school effectiveness and school improvement researcher and practitioner, have collaborated on this paper. Note Parts of the section entitled ‘What Can School Effectiveness and School Improvement Do To Help Each Other?’ are also to appear in the chapter by David Reynolds entitled ‘Linking School Effectiveness Knowledge and School Improvement Practice,’ in C. Dimmock (ed.) (1993) Leadership, School Based Decision Making and School Effective Ainscow, M. and Hopkins, D. (1992). ‘Aboard the moving school’, in Educational Leadership, Vol. 50, No. 3, pp. 79-81.


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ment, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 139-161.


In the last few years the steady drip feed of change has been overtaken by a tidal wave of new initiatives: demands for higher standards, pressure for greater accountability and, in some countries, increasing prescription on what and how to teach. All of this has been advocated in the interest of improving schooling and preparing pupils for the future. The imperative of change cannot be denied and pupils at schools today are already living in a very different world from the one which their teachers and parents inhabited - experiencing changes to the working day and week, changes in the nature of access to information, changes in the structure of families and in their communities. Yet, despite the turbulence around them, schools have remained remarkably unchanged over the years.

As we know from more than 20 years of school effectiveness research, schools can make an important difference to pupil
attainment and, consequently, to their continued formal education beyond school. We also know from studies of school improvement that some schools have been extremely successful in their attempts at improvement. However, as we discuss in Chapter 1, few studies have looked at schools that were less successful. This is, perhaps, underpinned by the belief that ‘good practice’ is the source of better practice, and we can learn more from other people’s success stories than from their failures. In the mid- and late 1990s, however, two particularly striking phenomena have become apparent. The first is the increase in the number of ‘designer’ programmes for improvement (for example, the New American Schools designs; Stringfield et al. 1996). Schools in many areas are strongly encouraged to ‘sign up’, and in some places virtually instructed, to participate in a preferred programme. Given that many of the well-known design programmes have been piloted and evaluated, it may seem like carping to question whether schools should become involved in them, but the problem is that even when a programme has been evaluated and has ‘passed the test’, there are always schools for whom ‘the pill didn’t work’. When it comes to wider dissemination, less successful pilot
schools are usually forgotten and insufficient attention is paid to determining whether the right programme has been selected by, or for, a school. Indeed, schools do not always know their needs, nor how to choose the most appropriate design (Datnow 1998). This is where the second phenomenon comes in—contextual differences between schools and their implications for school improvement.

In the 1980s and early 1990s a small number of school effectiveness studies examined contextual differences between schools. They found, for example, that leadership strategies in effective schools serving areas of greater advantage are different from those in effective schools serving disadvantaged areas (Hallinger and Murphy 1986; Teddlie and Stringfield 1993). Yet, in some countries, we still appear to be doing what House warned against more than a quarter of a century ago: Avoid the primary pursuit of transferable innovations. Distributed problems cannot be solved by a single innovation that will work in all local settings, for those settings are not only different and unpredictable in specifics, but they are also constantly changing . . . Different innovations will be more or less useful under widely different specific circumstances of their application. There is no Golden Fleece. (1973: 245)

House concluded that behaviour is determined more by the ‘complex nature of the school as a social system’ (p. 235) than by staff development in which
new teaching strategies are demonstrated. While there has been increasing disquiet about a one-size-fits-all school improvement strategy, it is only recently that researchers have looked at different types of schools and tried to follow through the implications of different school improvement strategies. It appears that different change strategies, leadership styles and communication networks may be required to effect change (Stoll and Fink 1996; Hopkins and Harris 1997; Gray et al. 1999). Furthermore, it seems that while some schools seem to embrace opportunities offered by change, whether it is externally prescribed or internally inspired, others do not even appear able to get off the starting-block. Others still get started then run out of steam shortly afterwards. In revisiting the Rand Change Agent Study of the 1970s in the United States, McLaughlin concluded that ‘the net return to the general investment was the adoption of many innovations, the successful implementation of a few, and the long-run continuation of still fewer’ (1990: 12). Internal capacity and its influences While most would agree that the ultimate goal of school improvement is preparing pupils to deal with the changing world, Fullan (1993) adds a sharper edge to the claim that ‘the secret of growth and development is learning how to
contend with the forces of change’ (p.vii). Our own work leads us to a similar conclusion: that the learning opportunities for generations of pupils are determined by the extent to which their schools are themselves able to learn and grow. Successful schools are, therefore, those which provide conditions for their pupils to learn more successfully, and our explorations have led us to conclude that vital clues lie in the school’s internal capacity.

While other writers have described sets of improvement-related capacities, we see it as a more generic concept. ‘Internal capacity is the power to engage in and sustain continuous learning of teachers and the school itself for the purpose of enhancing pupil learning’ (Stoll 1999). Determining internal capacity and readiness for change is therefore vitally important for internal and external change agents (Fullan 1993).

Our involvement in ISEP from 1995 to 1997 (Stoll and MacBeath 1997; Robertson 1998a) provided us with an opportunity to investigate schools’ initial capacity for change and its relationship with later capacity and links with pupil outcome data. Two schools

In this chapter we focus our attention on two primary schools and what they can tell us about internal capacity and its relationship to
school improvement and
effectiveness. In these two schools interviews were carried
out in 1995 with the
headteacher, a teacher with responsibility for staff
development, an experienced
and an inexperienced teacher, as well as with groups of
pupils in P2 and P6. The
headteacher was also interviewed in 1995 and 1997, together
with a colleague,
about the strategy and process of a specific development in
the last few years.
Teacher questionnaires were distributed to all staff at the
start and end of the
project. In addition, a group of staff were taken through a
‘change profile’ (see
Chapter 9) in which they individually rated their school
against 10 items and then
came together to agree on a joint rating. This formed the
basis of a discussion with
the critical friend and researcher, both of whom also
completed the change profile.
An ‘ethos observation’ form was completed by the researcher
and critical friend at
the end of data collection periods; the critical friend
completed notes on each visit;
and a ‘support review’ form was completed at the end of the
project, eliciting
schools’ perceptions of support provided by critical
friends. 1
The two schools, in different parts of Scotland, serve
similar deprived areas.
Both performed poorly in terms of their raw score results
in the English and
mathematics tests in the baseline project assessments in 1995 (see Table 1). Glendale primary school

Located in a ‘battleship grey’ concrete building, likened by the headteacher to ‘a fortress’ and by the pupils to ‘a prison’, this 330-pupil primary school was once a secondary school. Project team members found it hard to get into the school because of locked doors and, once inside, found it hard to see out of windows.

Long corridors made it difficult to move from one part of the school to another.

While the school was clean and well kept, there was a feeling of sterility, and wall displays were hard to maintain because of vandalism. The infant (P1-P3) and junior (P4-P7) departments were separated physically, with two different staffrooms, echoed in the way staff in the two departments spoke about the school. The school served an area of extreme disadvantage, with 61 per cent of its pupils eligible for free school meals. Drug problems and violence were also rife in the locality.

The headteacher had been in post for nine years at the start of the project. Her senior management team (SMT) consisted of a new depute head (DHT) and an assistant headteacher (AHT), a dominant force in the school for the last 17 years. There were 17 teachers on the staff at the start of the project, but by 1997
this number had dropped to 15. The school's chosen focus for the project was increasing parental involvement in learning.

Interviews at this school were difficult. The assistant head would not consent to the interview being recorded, and asked, 'Why are you doing this project?'

Another staff member, a smoker, blew smoke in the interviewer’s face. It seemed that every visit from the critical friend coincided with an emergency.

Meetings were cut short and the critical friend was left waiting for long periods while crises were being averted or sorted out. On one visit a fire engine was called because a boy’s head was stuck in the railings outside the school. With constant disruption as a backdrop, it was hard to get staff to focus on sustained development activities. They were on the defence and both critical friend and researcher found it difficult to create a positive climate for discussion of the issues the school was facing.

By contrast, pupil interviews were open and friendly. However, much of their discussion accepted the inevitability of violence in the playground and pupils saw shouting by teachers as a natural response to disruptive pupils’ behaviour.

Pupils appreciated their teachers and saw them as there to help them. Neverthe
less, despite generally positive pupil feedback in this first round of data collection, staff were unwilling to accept the negatives, some even claiming that pupils were ‘liars’. Teachers’ own responses to the questionnaire showed that Glendale was one of the four lowest scoring schools on the items that made up Factor 3: THE CHANGE EQUATION.

Table 1 Schools’ mean baseline scores on cognitive assessments in 1995 Maths Reading %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maths</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glendale</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>38.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Aubrey’s</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All ISEP primaries</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>55.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

items related to pupils’ respect for teachers, pupil and parental clarity about behaviour standards, and prompt action to deal with disruption in classes. 2

At the end of the project, Glendale pupils’ raw scores were still very low: contextualized value-added analysis showed some positive growth (not significant) in the area of maths but negative movement (not significant) in the English assessments. In terms of attitudes, the value-added analyses showed positive, although not significant, progress on self-rated perceptions of behaviour, engagement and pupil culture, and negative (not significant) ratings on self-efficacy. It was, therefore, a school that performed poorly at the start and the finish of the project. St Aubrey’s

This school is situated in the east end of a large city in one of the most disadvantaged areas.
taged parts of Scotland and, indeed, Europe. The housing is mainly from the immediate pre- and postwar period and the local area is renowned for its drug and alcohol problems. Many children came from broken homes, with many young mothers and fourth generation unemployment. With 80 per cent of its pupils eligible for free school meals, St Aubrey’s was the most deprived of the 24 case study schools.

The school is a one-storey building at the end of a long road, butting on to derelict land. Despite its bleak exterior, the entrance and reception area are welcoming, as are interior decorations for the most part, giving it a ‘homely’ and ‘well cared-for’ feel, noted by a member of the research team as ‘a quality indicator in this school’. Litter monitors keep the playground tidy and ‘the school is spotless and a credit to the cleaning staff’. Six years ago, the school was burnt down in a suspected arson attack. While the plant was being rebuilt, the school moved in to the local secondary school. From all accounts, the fire proved a defining moment for the school, with everyone – staff, the local community and the local authority – pulling together to help the school through the crisis.

The school’s denomination is Roman Catholic, and a strong consciousness of
its pastoral, moral and spiritual role was shared by all staff. At the start of the project the headteacher had been at the school for 16 years, six of them as AHT and 10 as headteacher. She was an imposing physical and emotional presence, and appeared deeply conscious of her role as an educational leader.

The baseline data-gathering experience was very positive, with researcher and critical friend being welcomed into the school. While pupil attainment levels were low and the school was ranked seventh out of 12 case study primary schools in terms of pupil questionnaire results, it was ranked first on both teacher and parent survey results. Indeed, on all three teacher questionnaire factors, the school scored in the top six or seven of all 44 primary schools, with 85 per cent or more of the teachers agreeing with 40 of the 54 items (for the primary teacher sample as a whole this was only true of 10 items). The school was welcoming of the feedback from the baseline data-gathering exercise. Its chosen project was language development and, in particular, functional writing. SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Over the period of the project, the school became increasingly critical of tests being used to determine school effectiveness because of the perceived irrelev
ance of these assessments, although the concept of value-added continued to appeal to and intrigue the staff. They were disappointed when, due to a change in critical friend, the support they received was oriented more towards the process of change rather than specific help with functional writing. They maintained their involvement throughout, however, and the head, while critical of the tests being used, nonetheless expressed herself as ‘really looking forward to the results’.

At the end of the project, St Aubrey’s pupils’ raw scores were still very low:

contextualized value-added analysis showed some positive growth (not significant) in the area of maths but negative movement (not significant) in the English assessments. In terms of attitudes, the value-added analyses showed significantly positive progress on self-ratings of self-efficacy and positive, although not significant, progress on self-rated perceptions of behaviour, engagement and pupil culture. Comparing outcomes and improvement

At the end of the project, when the pupil assessments and attitude questionnaires were repeated, neither of these two schools made significant gains in pupil attainment, but in relation to pupil attitudes St Aubrey’s showed a significant boost in pupils’ self-esteem. This result is particularly
interesting, because only

two of 44 primary schools added value to their pupils’
attitudes in this area.

Given that as pupils grow older their attitudes tend to
become less favourable

(MacBeath et al. 1998), this is an important result. In
addition, the headteacher

had argued passionately at the start of the project that
the most important thing

the school was trying to achieve was 'to make children feel
valued; to build their

self-esteem'. Another teacher at the school said, 'When
ISEP tries to take a

snapshot of a class at a certain time there is no magic
wand we can wave to

make these children’s lives better which in turn would
affect their learning.

Firstly we have to boost their self-esteem.' It appeared
that what they had set out
to do had been achieved. The results in these two very
different schools, both

starting from such adversity, raise the question ‘capacity
for what?’ Are the out

comes selected by many school effectiveness projects, and
by governments and

state departments, the appropriate outcomes for all
schools? If so, should pupils

in all schools be expected to achieve them over the same
time period?

Given that the project had dual foci - to look at
effectiveness and improve

ment - the research team decided from the outset to analyse
the qualitative data
and teacher questionnaire data separately from the pupil outcome data, so that improvement could be viewed from different perspectives. After the initial data collection, a variety of techniques were used to examine separate pieces of qualitative evidence, together with survey data, in order to inform predictions about possibilities and directions of improvement (Robertson and Sammons THE CHANGE QUESTION 1997a). Schools were rated on a five-point scale based on their perceived potential for improvement, as well as their approach to school development planning (Reeves and MacGilchrist 1997):

1 = no likelihood of improvement
2 = little likelihood of improvement
3 = on present evidence it is very difficult to tell whether there will be any improvements in this school
4 = considerable likelihood of improvement
5 = every likelihood of improvement

On the basis of available evidence, Glendale was assigned a score of 1 and St Aubrey’s a score of 4.

Thirty-five subthemes had been revealed in the analysis of the initial teacher interviews. Each subtheme was associated with one or more of the main project themes - ethos; learning and teaching; and development planning. At this stage, the evidence spoke so strongly about the importance of leadership that this
became a new central theme of the project.

In 1997, each fragment of evidence from the data gathering at the end of the project was coded against each of these subthemes and rated on three scales in terms of what it revealed about the current quality of the school and about its potential for improvement. A five-point scale was used (from -2 to +2) to take account of the negative or positive contribution of each cluster of evidence. Ratings were cross-checked. A database was created to hold this categorical information (Robertson 1998a). Each school could therefore have a report based on the main themes and subthemes of the project, with associated scores for current quality, potential for improvement and improvement perceived by the respondents.

Across the 12 case study primary schools, the range of ‘ethos’ values derived from teacher interviews was from -23 to +32. In Glendale, it was possible to see from database reporting that the major negative components of the score were:

- pupil behaviour and discipline;
- teacher responses to challenges in the socio-economic circumstances of pupils;
- pupil-pupil relationships;
- pupil self-esteem and self-efficacy;
• parent liaison and involvement.

In contrast, in St Aubrey’s, the major components of the relatively high ‘ethos score’ were:

• perceptions of teacher expectations of pupils;

• teacher morale and engagement with the school;

• teacher responses to challenges in the socio-economic circumstances of pupils;

• the influence of historical events on present activity;

• pupil relationships with teachers.

Tables 2, 3 and 4 show an example of categorization and scoring of the teacher interviews on the three scales.

Table 2 Current quality (1997) Glendale St Aubrey’s

Ethos -39 44
Development planning 3 10
Learning and teaching -2 53
Leadership -10 19
Total -48 134

Note

See Chapter 6 for an explanation of current quality score.

Table 3 Potential for improvement (1997) Glendale St Aubrey’s

Ethos -23 32
Development planning 3 10
Learning and teaching -3 46
Leadership -10 17
Total -33 113

Note
See Chapter 6 for an explanation of current quality score.

Table 4 Perceived improvement (1997) Glendale St Aubrey’s
Ethos 0 14
Development planning 12 9
Learning and teaching 5 34
Leadership -13 3
Total 4 60

Note
See Chapter 6 for an explanation of current quality score.

Figures in these tables suggest that while initial indications of potential for improvement may not differentiate between the two schools in terms of their final pupil attainments as measured by mathematics and English tests, strong differences exist in relation to processes and themes of improvement. Not only is St Aubrey’s rated as far exceeding Glendale in terms of its current quality (Table 2) and its own teachers’ perceptions of their school’s improvement (Table 4) but the research team anticipates further potential for improvement (Table 3). One question this raises is whether, with a little more time, gains in pupil outcomes might be observed. It has also led us to consider how we
might further explore

schools’ internal capacity for improvement. A model of influences on internal capacity

Many of the contrasting features analysed in these two schools are illustrative of

features of a model of influences on schools’ internal capacity (Stoll 1999).

Internal capacity is influenced by the individual teachers within the school, the school’s social and structural learning context, and the external context (see Figure 1). In Figure 1, the school is depicted by an amoeba-like shape. This emphasizes the dynamic and adaptive nature of schools; in many ways they could be seen as organisms (Morgan 1996). The breaks in the lines indicate that S C H O O L E F F E C T I V E N E S S A N D S C H O O L I M P R O V E M E N T

Figure 1 The influences on internal capacity (source: Stoll (1999)).

External context History

Local community S(u<kn^> context B rv a d e r couamjuuly Morale JViiit*»il m ul ³Urns* f UIC 4flki I caior  slashes
influences at each level (individual, school and external context) are not discrete and self-contained: rather, they blend in complex ways to create different patterns of relationships.

The nature of ISEP did not permit detailed analysis at the level of the individual teacher. For the purposes of this chapter, therefore, we have restricted ourselves to examining the school and external levels, although we acknowledge, as the model does, that individual teachers as learners influence the school’s learning context, and are given their place right at the centre of school change. Eight interacting influences are particularly important to the teacher’s capacity to engage in and sustain continuous learning: life and career experience; beliefs; emotional well-being; knowledge; skills; motivation to learn; confidence that (s)he can make a real difference; and sense of interdependence (Stoll 1999). From these schools’ accounts, it is clear that if significant change was going to occur it would have to have an impact on people’s belief systems, their sense of interdependence, and the confidence that working together they really could make a difference to the lives of these children, however deprived their community. The particular focus of the interviews,
however, generally emphasized school-level and external influences, rather than individual teacher influences, and the remainder of this chapter will focus on those two levels, although the following example is worthy of comment at teacher level.

'Can do' beliefs at St Aubrey's came through clearly from everyone interviewed. In one teacher's criticism of the Quality Assurance inspection of her school recently, she commented: 'We want the best, but we have to give children tasks they can achieve, an appropriate curriculum. One of our problems with QA was that they came in to the school and saw well-mannered children, speaking politely and they thought we weren't pushing them enough. They didn't realize that our children can't take a lot of pressure. They are vulnerable and they have to be able to cope with what they are doing so you can praise them. It doesn't mean that you don't push them further the next time.'

She added emphatically: 'If they are going to learn ... they will learn here'.

Another colleague displayed the same firm beliefs: 'Everyone wants the children to achieve great things', and 86 per cent of the teachers at St Aubrey's felt that 'teachers in school believe all pupils can be successful' (in comparison with 60 per cent for the whole primary teacher sample). The school learning context

Teachers as learners do not operate in isolation. Their experiences, emotions, knowledge, skills, motivation, confidence and interdependence interact with the T H E C H A N G E Q U A T I O N
learning context in which they are located (as the spaces in the model outline denote). This context, the other fundamental part of a school’s internal capacity, is influenced by a set of social forces: The particular mix of pupils.

Size and age of the pupil body; their ethnic, social class or cultural background;

whether they are all girls, all boys or a mixed group;

whether they are of a particular religious denomination; and the number with special educational needs all play a role. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) note: Contemporary pupils bring different cultures and languages to school, different attitudes and support to the classroom and learning. They themselves are required to navigate difficult and competing pressures of family, peers, and community at the same time that they are expected to function as pupils. (1993: 6)

The social mix of the school influences a school’s functioning, largely because of the cumulative effect of the peer group processes: how pupils relate and act as a group (Thrupp 1999). Thus, the very pupils who attend a school flavour it in a particular way through their own pupil culture.

In St Aubrey’s one teacher described pupils as: ‘friendly, loveable. They can be difficult. They take a lot of teaching but they respond well. They are well behaved in the classroom.’ Another explained: ‘On the whole they are very caring. They are streetwise; they possess knowledge outwith that of the teacher,'
but lack maturity. They behave well in the classroom, less well in the play ground.’ She also noted they ‘can’t take pressure. If you “push on” and “up” the pace, then they complain of illness.’ One respondent described some of the child’s home lives as ‘emotional turmoil’, saying they were often exhausted when they arrived or ‘have so many things on their mind that reading and number work is very hard’. Researchers’ field notes and teacher interviews confirmed that pupils’ language outside the classroom was different from that inside. A researcher also commented that sometimes there was a feeling that aggression was being kept in check, and could explode if supervision was withdrawn. In contrast, however, she observed an unattended class of pupils working quietly.

Glendale staff appeared to view their pupils very differently. In the staff survey, no teacher agreed with the statement ‘pupils in this school are enthusiastic about learning’ (compared with 65 per cent for primary teachers in all project schools), and only 30 per cent thought that ‘pupils respect teachers’ (compared with 68 per cent for all project teachers). The headteacher felt most children were reasonably well behaved and motivated but noted that higher than average numbers of slow,
poor learners and more children with social and behavioural problems affected the SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT peer group as well as themselves: ‘Much time is given to the aggressive, disruptive children.’ The assistant head felt there were split priorities in the school: ‘You are not able to do your job because of the concentration on discipline and the amount of time you have to spend on it.’ She also believed: ‘The children are out of control.’ This contrasts with the view of a new teacher who found the pupils ‘manly and courteous’. This split of opinion was characteristic of many responses to interview questions and tells us that the situations teachers describe are ones which they may also be creating. Relationships Working together productively in schools depends on positive relationships. When teachers come together as a whole staff or in departments, a dynamic of relationships is created. In some ways, successful schools share many attributes of caring families (Stoll and Fink 1996), but in some relationships are dysfunctional (Reynolds and Farrell 1996), severely inhibiting capacity for improvement. Such difficulties are picked up quickly, for example, by this new teacher in Glendale: ‘I was aware straight away about ripples between the staff.’ The relationship between the headteacher and assistant head in Glendale could be
described as strained. An outside observer noted: ‘The assistant head is an obstacle to every good thing happening in the school’, while the head merely commented, ‘We agree to differ.’

At St Aubrey’s, relationships between teachers were described in researchers’ ethos observation forms as supportive: ‘A good team spirit is a feature. Staff talk about the school as a family . . . staff also respect each other’s strengths.’ Communications and relationships were viewed by staff interviewed as a strength:

‘People are willing to share and discuss problems’; ‘Staff are very caring.’

Researchers also commented on the apparent high staff morale, displaying ‘a positive attitude towards work and helping the pupils. All staff appear to work beyond normal school hours’ and were ‘united by care for their pupils’. Morale

While morale is often associated with external conditions, it can vary from school to school (Evans 1998). Satisfaction and morale is higher in some schools than in others. Stark contrasts were seen between the two schools, when we compared teachers’ reactions to the questionnaire item ‘Teachers like working in this school.’ In St Aubrey’s, 100 per cent agreed with the statement, while in Glendale, only 13 per cent agreed (with an agreement rate
of 76 per cent across the total primary teacher sample).
Moreover, in 1997

almost a third of Glendale teachers (30 per cent) felt that
the school had got

worse ‘as a place to be’ over the previous two years, in
comparison with none

of the St Aubrey’s teachers (and 11 per cent across the
entire primary teacher

sample). T H E C H A N G E Q U A T I O N History

Schools, like other organizations, go through life cycles
(Schein 1985). During

some periods they are ‘ripe for improvement’. At other
times there may be insti

tutional ‘inertia’, often dependent on the staff at the
time, the leadership, and

whether previous efforts at innovation have been successful
or otherwise. Some

schools may have experienced a significant event – an
amalgamation, threatened
closure, or a fire. In others, teacher mobility is high or
they have a history of

appointing large numbers of recently qualified teachers.
Over the years, certain

schools also build particular traditions and reputations.
All these can influence

internal capacity.

History appears to have been significant for St Aubrey’s,
the fire exerting

both positive and negative effects but, on balance, the
positive outweighed the

negative. While there was clearly devastation at the loss
of resources built up by
teachers over the years, there was an immediate marshalling of significant support from the local authority, new resources, and ‘rallying around’ of staff as a single unit in the aftermath of the event. This was achieved in the face of loss of pupils’ work into which they had put much effort, upheaval involved in relocation into temporary accommodation, and immediate effect on staff morale.

Relocation in part of the local high school also helped to build new connections. Perhaps something symbolic in the fire marked the end of the old and the beginning of the new. Added to this, the following year the school received a Curriculum Award in London. It had promoted great pride among teachers and parents, and had provided an important boost after the fire tragedy. Threat of closure prior to the fire had also seen mobilization of parental support, and closure was happily averted.

Specific historical events did not appear to have played a major role at Glen, although staff changes seemed significant, with some new teachers attempting to introduce changes and bring together a split staff. Notably, the depute head, new just before the start of the project, tried to bring in team teaching, although by the end of the project, researchers noted that she seemed to
have given up, and was looking to move to another school.

Culture

Improvement attempts that do not address school culture can be seen as ‘doomed to tinkering’ (Fullan 1993) because school culture influences readiness for change. The essence of a school’s culture is the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs shared by members, operating unconsciously, and defining the organization’s view of itself and its environment (Schein 1995). Each school has a different reality of school life, how to go about its work, and its orientation to learning. The views of teachers in the two schools highlight differences in expectations. In Glendale, when asked about the most significant factors affecting pupils’ ability to learn, replies included: ‘Home background, Sch O O L E F F E C T I V E N E S S A N D S C H O O L I M P R O V E M E N T deprivation, parental views on education. Often survival is more important than taking on board educational opportunities’, and: ‘Some children are never going to achieve very much.’ An aura of powerlessness was emitted, a feeling that it was impossible to overcome the forces ranged against the school, most notably social factors and deprivation. Feedback of data was resisted and the increased accountability that the school was facing was viewed as creating ‘quite a burden’. While each person interviewed offered a broadly
similar vision of what
the school was trying to achieve (‘a good, wide
education’), their perceptions of
how this might be achieved, and barriers to achieving it,
varied.

In contrast, in St Aubrey’s, a teacher commented: ‘. . .
there are no limita
tions. You can come in this door and the world is your
oyster . . . the children
will be encouraged. Nothing is holding us back’, while
another told of how ‘the
school is always trying to better itself’. The headteacher
was clear: ‘Children
come first . . . Pupils expect to be taught and taught
appropriately and stretched.’

This was reinforced by all teachers interviewed, including
a new member of
staff, who felt the most important thing she was trying to
achieve was: ‘To take
the child from where they were when I got them and to take
them forward . . . I
try to build confidence.’ And when she was asked what she
expected from teach
ing, she replied: ‘A feeling that I am doing something for
every child in my
class. Not only knowledge, but standards.’

St Aubrey’s also displayed norms of continuous improvement
and collegial
ity (Rosenholtz 1989; Stoll and Fink 1996). The headteacher
remarked: ‘Learn
ing and teaching is part and parcel of the conversation of
this school’, confirmed
by 100 per cent agreement to the teacher survey item
'teachers regularly discuss ways of improving pupils’ learning’ (compared with 74 per cent for the primary teacher sample as a whole), 93 per cent agreement to ‘teachers regularly collaborate to plan their teaching’ (57 per cent for the primary sample), and 100 per cent agreement to ‘staff have a commitment to the whole school and not just their class or department’ (72 per cent for the primary sample). Teachers told interviewers people were willing to share and discuss problems; a new teacher found teachers planned in pairs: ‘You bounce things off each other... I find that excellent.’ The school had also chosen to participate in the project for feedback on how it was progressing and a ‘fresh’ perspective on the school. Micro politics Schools are full of internal politics (Ball 1987); they are places in which control is a key issue. Teachers make strategic decisions daily as to what is ideal and possible in their context. Some are ambitious, some want to influence school decisions, others want to be left alone. Some schools, however, promote positive politics (Blase 1988), such that natural political activities of staff contribute to school goals. The two staffrooms at Glendale symbolized the rift between the staff. In the assistant head’s opinion: ‘The smokers were thrown out, and
this has caused a \textsc{the change equation}

split in the staff.' Teacher responses to the survey highlighted disagreements.

Only 36 per cent thought ‘decision-making processes are fair’ (in comparison

with 62 per cent for the whole sample), and even fewer (29 per cent) that ‘staff

participate in important decision making’ (compared with 59 per cent for the

whole sample). The staff development coordinator, new to the school, mused,

‘Where there has been consultation with staff, I do not know how deep it has
gone.’

In contrast, at St Aubrey’s teachers felt their opinions mattered and they were

encouraged to give their views on school policies. The headteacher commented

there was so much ongoing talk in the staffroom about issues that, once a

decision had to be made in a meeting, there was seldom disagreement and if

there was, ‘we disagree without falling out’. She reflected back on what the

school had been like when she arrived. The previous headteacher ‘did divide and

rule. One set would be cast up to the other. There has been a major shift, but it

took a long time. Everyone is now treated with mutual respect and we can talk to

each other. The community now knows that this is what the school stands for.’

Indeed, all teachers agreed with the survey item ‘there is
mutual respect between
the staff and the senior management team’, while 87 per
cent agreed that
‘decision-making processes are fair’ and ‘staff participate
in important decision
making’ (the remaining 13 per cent were uncertain). The
several new staff at St
Aubrey’s were viewed as bringing a counterbalancing
influence, as exemplified
in a comment by a teacher at the school for 16 years: ‘New
outlooks, yet we have stability with the head and deputy
head.’ Support staff
Support staff can play a significant role in the lives of a
school. Many live in the
local area and are connected to the local community. Their
involvement and
interest in the school as a whole, and the ways in which
they facilitate learning,
are all potential influences on a school’s internal capacity
(Mortimore et al.
1992). Support staff in both schools were viewed as
friendly by the research
team on their initial visit. Those at St Aubrey’s were also
perceived as particu
larly helpful. In this school, all of the teachers agreed
that ‘non-teaching staff
feel involved in the life of the school’ (compared with 76
per cent for the entire
primary teacher sample). The head, reflecting on what she
described as a partici
pative management style, observed: ‘The buck does stop
here, but I do not see
myself being separate in any way from any of the staff.
From the cleaner right

up we are all in this together and everybody’s role is
important.’

In Glendale, only half of the teachers thought
‘non-teaching staff feel

involved in the life of the school’; the other half were
unsure, and the role and

participation of support staff was not discussed by any
teachers interviewed.

Schools are bounded by structures that can shape their
capacity to learn and

respond to change. For example, traditional egg carton,
 compartmentalized

school designs inhibit collaboration, whereas more flexible
architectural designs

are more likely to support collaborative cultures. The size
of the school and

classes within it, the physical plant, and how the school
day is divided are other

examples of structural aspects of a school’s capacity.
These types of structure

could be viewed as ‘givens’, over which staff members may
have limited if any

control (Mortimore et al. 1988), but even within such
structures decisions can be

made concerning location of different departments or
classes. While structural

conditions appear to be less powerful influences on
developing school-based

professional communities than social conditions (Louis et
al. 1995), they can

influence internal capacity.
Glendale staff’s descriptions of their school building were stark: ‘The outside

... was horrific looking’; ‘One of the things that struck me to begin with was

that there was not that welcoming atmosphere about the school. It is badly sign

posted and I think the building has lost its humph: when you enter a department

it should meet you and I don’t think ours does.’ Glendale parents, while gener

ally positive about the school in survey responses, were less impressed than

other parents that ‘school buildings are kept clean and in good order’ (37 per

cent disagreed, versus 7 per cent for the total primary parent sample).

In St Aubrey’s, by contrast, bright and interesting displays of pupils’ work

adorned the walls. The rebuilding after the fire enabled minor adaptations: ‘This

improved the educational environment of the school, for example resource areas

and storage facilities’, and gave ‘a facelift’ providing ‘a welcoming atmo

sphere’. The school is open plan and, in the headteacher’s words, this ‘forces

cooperation. It can be threatening, but it also provides support. Teachers watch

and learn from each other.’ A new teacher agreed: ‘I was glad to have come in to

an open plan school. I like people being able to move in and out of my class.’ It

had also been arranged for everyone to get together each
morning from 8.30
until 9.00 for consultation and planning sessions.

Leadership

Countless studies have found positive leadership to be a powerful force for
school effectiveness, school improvement and organizational learning (for
example, Hallinger and Heck 1996; MacBeath 1998; Mortimore 1998;
Leithwood et al. 1999). St Aubrey’s leaders appeared to present a picture of
clarity about their vision and focus. In both 1995 and 1997, all teachers agreed
that ‘the SMT communicates a clear vision of where the school is going’, and 93
per cent and 100 per cent respectively (in 1995 and 1997) agreed that ‘the
primary concern of everyone in the school is pupil learning’. There was also a
high level of satisfaction with what one teacher described as the school’s ‘open
management’. When asked about her headteacher’s leadership and management,
a teacher responded: ‘Superb. She knows everything that goes on. She knows
the curriculum, the children, the staff inside out, she picks up on your attributes.

She brings out the best in everybody. She knows how her school wants to be.’

The head was extremely clear about her role: ‘I know what I want and I will get
it.’ She acknowledged she was occasionally manipulative or devious but this
was done ‘with good humour and also with respect for teachers’, whom she believed often knew much more than she did about classroom practice. She, therefore, viewed criticism as inappropriate. Others saw her as leading by example, and some explained how in the previous two years a larger senior management team (SMT) had evolved as she had brought in new people to work with her. While the SMT was seen as making a lot of the decisions, everyone felt they were consulted. Hiring decisions were also viewed by the head as critical, so the school could ‘capitalize on what they brought with them’. In contrast, a teacher in Glendale commented: ‘I would describe the management style as autocratic to a certain extent and not approachable enough.’ Results of the teacher questionnaires in both 1995 and 1997 showed teachers responding negatively to many items within the leadership and management factor. In 1995 the school was one of the four lowest scoring primary schools on this factor, and one of the six lowest scoring schools in 1997. Furthermore, when asked about change in leadership and management in the school over the previous two years, 30 per cent of the teachers felt it had become worse (compared with 9 per cent for the total primary teacher sample). External contextual influences on internal capacity
While the school’s capacity and its readiness or orientation for change is internally driven, the external contextual influences on a school’s internal capacity cannot be ignored. Central among these are the following. The local community

Schools are located in and serve very different communities. School effectiveness researchers have consistently demonstrated the impact of pupils’ background characteristics on their school achievement. Parental expectations and aspirations may also vary according to location and type of school. The demography of a school’s community can not only affect attainment outcomes but a school’s internal capacity for improvement. Disadvantage, however, does not automatically inhibit its internal capacity. Schools in disadvantaged areas can boost their pupils’ progress more than those in advantaged areas as our own study and previous research (Mortimore et al. 1988) has shown.

Both in Glendale and in St Aubrey’s, pupils brought with them into the school their experience of multiple disadvantage - a key factor affecting school ethos, pedagogy, management style, pupil-teacher relationships and school effectiveness and school improvement.

ships between home and school. While social background factors are key con
straining influences on overall school attainment, they do not diminish the
school’s internal capacity nor need they necessarily inhibit the process of sus
tainable improvement. It need not imply that the teachers cannot prepare their
pupils for challenges they will face in the changing world beyond the school
gate. Comments of teachers in the two different schools, however, reveal
significant differences in how they viewed their local communities and their
impact. At Glendale, the community’s influence was described as the main limi
tation of the school: ‘The community influence anything we try to do.’ More
than a third of the parents responding to the survey (37 per cent) disagreed that
‘the school has a good reputation in the community’, significantly more critical
than ISEP primary parents as a whole (6 per cent).
Although the St Aubrey’s catchment area was similar to Glendale’s, and the
academic starting point of its pupil intake generally 18 months below the
average (‘colours, number, recognition of shape cannot be taken for granted’),
parents were seen as a strength: ‘They are loyal and supportive’, and teachers
commented that the headteacher ‘knows them as a friend’. The head explained
how it was necessary to offer a very safe and caring environment, for parents as
well as pupils: ‘A lot of the parents, if it is a first child coming to the school,
come to us with the baggage of their own experiences of school and they do not
always have pleasant experiences.’ The broader community
The broader community can include many different groups. Universities’ and
businesses’ requirements of those leaving schools influence curricula and
assessments. Similarly, unions’ policy and practices influence how at least
some of their members respond to changes in school. Attitudes of the broader
community to schooling, particularly the media, can also affect teachers’ moti
vation and belief that what they are doing is worthwhile. Other key stake
holders include local authorities. In Scotland these have not faced the same
threat as their counterparts in England. ‘Devolved School Management’ has
given more autonomy to schools but authorities, nonetheless, continue to play a
significant role.
For St Aubrey’s, local authority support was high at the time of the school
fire, both in terms of people and finance. As one staff member commented in
1995, ‘I have nothing but praise for the local authority.’ Concerns were being
noted, however, that ‘support is now crumbling’, and by 1997 staff talked of a
lack of support for an increasing number of children with
emotional, behavioural

and learning problems: ‘and there is no one there to answer your cry for help’. In

Glendale, the picture was somewhat reversed. In 1997, the headteacher felt the

school and local authority had moved closer together since 1995, and described

various authority initiatives. A new teacher commented however, in a somewhat

strained interview, that learning support had been lost. T

H E C H A N G E E Q U A T I O N Political action and ‘tone’

Policies and beliefs about the purpose of education that underpin them are crit

ical influences on schools. The sheer amount of policy-oriented change is

particularly significant. Overload is a dilemma and, with the best will in the

world, teachers bombarded by unrelenting changes over a short time period tend

to be exhausted. They find it hard to maintain energy, enthusiasm and, ulti

mately, willingness for change (Helsby and McCulloch 1996). It is not necessar

ily teachers’ characteristics that cause resistance, but pressures on them and

limitations to their involvement in making change happen (Fink and Stoll 1998).

With increasing demands on them, they face intensification of their work

leading, in many cases, to feelings of guilt (Hargreaves 1994). While, for some,

these present fairly easy-to-resolve dilemmas, for others there are uncomfortable
tensions or constraints that can lead to stress (Woods et al. 1997). The very lan

guage and labelling of schools as ‘failing’ contributes to low teacher morale and

feelings of impotence, and encourages the general public to believe that stand

ards are low and that a significant minority of schools are in a state of perpetual

crisis (Stoll and Myers 1998).

Glendale teachers described an increase in paperwork (‘it tends to take up so

much of your time that you really can’t think straight with specific ideas that you

want to teach . . . it’s way over the top’). In 1995 the headteacher commented

that the Scottish Office supported schools ‘through the volume of manuals and

guidelines received. The 5-14 documents are leading the way with the curricu

lum’, and their ethos documents were ‘fine, if you concentrated on that alone’.

By 1997 she concluded: ‘Information is sent to be read, but it doesn’t really

affect teachers or classrooms’, while another teacher’s view was ‘This 5-14 with

its 10,000 strands. There’s too much curriculum change, too much jargon . . .

5-14 has affected terminology rather than practice . . . the burdens of 5-14 are

too great.’ In contrast, one teacher at St Aubrey’s felt the 5-14 changes were

‘for the better, but it involves a lot of work and you need to be organized’, while
another thought the 5-14 documents had ‘made us more aware’, although she, and other colleagues, had specific concerns about one subject document which ‘made us feel deskilled’. By 1997, however, the headteacher found the documents ‘much better than before . . . clearer, and quite helpful’.

Professional learning infrastructure

Some schools are located in areas or regions where the professional learning infrastructure is better developed than in other areas. Fullan and Watson (1997) argue that systems that sustain high-quality professional development have frameworks of support including elements such as appropriate policy, shared and agreed-upon priorities, time to engage in learning, access to best practice and recent research, and appropriate rewards and incentives.

Both schools were in areas where they could draw on a variety of external sources, although neither was entirely happy with the externally available support. The head of St Aubrey’s described the school’s experience of external staff development as ‘not very positive’, with some described as ‘totally inadequate, staff returning frustrated, feeling time was wasted’. She believed: ‘The focus should be on what staff feel they need in relation to the school development plan and individual professional needs. Our career
reviews are helpful in determining this. Staff have an informal chat with the head or depute head –

where do you want to go? How can we help you get there?

The school’s staff development coordinator added that staff development mainly takes place in the school: ‘where the most important staff development takes place . . . courses can be valuable, but staff development is not just going on courses’. Other teachers thought within-school staff development was ‘continuous’ and that if they wanted anything else, it was available. Indeed, when asked how the College of Education supports the school, one teacher replied: ‘It’s the other way around. We help the college.’ This school, therefore, appeared to have built its own infrastructure.

Although Glendale’s headteacher felt that staff development was suited to the school’s needs, and ‘the senior management team can give greater direction from an overview of the development plan and perceived staff needs, plus being able to send several staff on the same course’, she also commented on variable quality of outside courses, and problems in devising time for feedback by teachers who had attended courses. In response to a question about staff development, however, an inexperienced teacher
appeared more concerned ‘that staff should feel that they are not on their own; that the management should be there to back them, as part of a team’. Teacher survey responses also showed that only 32 per cent of respondents agreed ‘staff development time is used effectively in the school’ (compared with 100 per cent agreement at St Aubrey’s and 59 per cent agreement in the total primary school sample). Global change forces

Social, economic, technological, political and ecological forces, among others, shape our daily existence. Institutions, political, economic and social structures and, indeed, value systems worldwide appear to be changing or under pressure to do so. Such forces have major ramifications for all schools, including Glen dale and St Aubrey’s, making it increasingly imperative that schools have the internal capacity to respond to such forces. Issues Preliminary analysis of the data for two Scottish schools suggests that the model of influences on school capacity may offer possibilities in helping identify schools with the internal capacity for change, but it also raises some issues: THE CHANGE EQUATION

- The capacity model needs further testing in a range of contexts, and in relation to what is already known about improvement in different types of schools.
- The model is not a model of increasing pupil outcomes per
It is an attempt to take a closer look at a school’s internal dynamics and potential: what can help or hinder it from starting and sustaining the learning process. It is based on the premise that pupils will learn best when their teachers and schools learn. This may not always have appeal in a time of increased accountability and emphasis on standards, but it raises serious issues about the meaning of school quality, as well as potential for quality.

- The various influences at the three levels can be positive, neutral or negative, and are a complex braid, many of which are interconnected. This needs further investigation to try to understand the way the influences connect. It also suggests that designers of improvement or restructuring programmes are likely to find it hard to identify particular actions to be taken in relation to each specific influence. There are no simple solutions.

- The model highlights that schools can significantly differ from each other in a subtle range of ways. This means that ongoing auditing of the influences that affect each school is essential. Furthermore, for some schools, capacity building may need to focus on helping teachers develop the motivation and confidence to be able to get started in a change process, never mind becoming experts in a particular new teaching strategy.

- In emphasizing social dynamics and social systems, the model tries to reach a more fundamental level about human relationships and philosophies of life. The differences in language of teachers in these two Scottish schools in areas of equal deprivation suggest a great deal more needs to be understood about differences between schools as human and dynamic systems before governments, in particular, advocate tightly controlled and regulated designs. The sharp contrasts of the two schools seem to suggest that the schools’ learning context is of more significance to their internal capacity than the external context. However, these are two schools serving very similar catchment areas. If one had been located in an area of affluence the picture might have been different, although ‘cruising’ schools (Stoll and Fink 1998) possess powerful norms that inhibit development. Research challenges

We believe it is necessary to continue working with and studying schools to develop greater understanding of their internal capacity in the following areas:
• How the different influences work together - How do the range of combinations interact within and between levels? How important is each in the model? For example, if a school focuses considerable energy on external SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT forces, dealing with extended negative media attention or implementing a state or national government curriculum that does not take into account its local circumstances, needs or interests, to what extent might the learning context suffer or atrophy (Fink 1999)?

• Are the influences the same in schools in different phases? If not, how do they differ? Which ones are more important in secondary schools, for example, and why? What is missing?

• Differential internal capacity of different schools - For example, are individual teachers in a school like Glendale actually different from those in one like St Aubrey’s, two schools in very comparable social areas? Are they generally less confident as individuals that they can really make a difference to the lives of pupils in disadvantaged areas? Alternatively, are the leadership, relationships, culture and within-school internal learning context holding them back?

• How to build capacity in different types of schools - For example, if schools like Glendale are characterized by dysfunctional staff relationships, micro politics, and underpinning beliefs that some children will never learn, are the most important actions to be taken (a) developing a continuing focus on people, (b) promoting positive politics, (c) combating low expectations? Is it even possible or appropriate to determine a time sequence for capacitybuilding strategies?

• How schools with variations in their initial change capacity use different change strategies (Stoll and Fink 1996; Hopkins and Harris 1997; Earl and Lee 1998) and how they use external support - for example, did St Aubrey’s really need a process consultant or would specific help in their chosen area of writing have been more valuable? When does a school know what help it needs, and is there any school, no matter how successful, that would not benefit from a critical, external eye?

Some of these questions can be answered through statistical modelling.

Many, however, depend on drawing on detailed case studies
of schools and their improvement efforts (for example, Louis and Miles 1990; Mortimore et al. 2000) and by producing further case studies whose value as freestanding narratives should not be underestimated. As Robertson (1998b) argues, they show the way teachers understand the schools in which they work; and how they see the wider Scottish educational context. She continues: ‘These studies contribute towards our understanding of schools as organisations and also to the debate about the meaning of the “good school” ’ (1998: 4). Certainly, this cannot be teased out in infrequent regulatory inspections. This is because the nuances of people’s belief systems, interpersonal dynamics and subtle interconnections among influences are more likely to be seen over time. Only through ongoing involvement with the school and use of qualitative instruments over time could the project team see that a positive interview from the headteacher of Glendale at the start of the project was merely ‘putting a front on it’. In contrast, the interview with the assistant head at the same time, while unpleasant, and difficult to carry out, was honest. This highlights the need for further carefully controlled longitudinal studies. Until more is known, through detailed case studies...
and specifically focused and evaluated capacity-building programmes, it is all
too easy for blanket policy solutions to be advocated.

Greater attention also needs to be devoted by researchers to exploring how
schools use research findings and how they could be used more beneficially.

Without specific support, practitioners appear to view dissemination of research as
imposed change (Wikeley 1998). The role of researchers in supporting and pro-
moting the development of schools’ internal capacity could offer great potential. Conclusion

Bringing about change in schools is extremely complex. School improvement
and other reform strategies thrust on, or even offered to, teachers without taking
account of unique differences between schools in their internal capacity are
likely to lead to loss of the energy and creativity needed to take schools forward
in the future. While support for real improvement involves challenge and
accountability, more fundamentally, this study emphasizes it is about helping
schools understand and develop their own capacity. This means focusing on
individuals, their internal learning context and the external context. Without this,
the chances of deep and lasting changes that can lead to improved pupil learning
are slim. Notes

1 See Chapter 3 for further details of project design.
2 See Chapter 6 for teacher questionnaire factors.


Hopkins, D. and Harris, A. (1997) Understanding the school’s capacity for development:


PART 6 Financial management and local management of schools

Journal of Econometrics, 3, 123-150.


York: Longman.


This paper sets out to understand local management of schools (LMS) in terms of the theory of organizational form. It is argued that the 1988 Education Reform Act was designed to change the LEA from a unitary form of organizational structure to a multidivisional (M-form), though the regulatory role of the LEA required in an M-form organization was left underdeveloped. Without a quality assurance function for a regulatory body decentralized management structures approximate more closely to a holding company or H-form organization. This interpretation of LMS is then applied to a case-study LEA. The theory of organizational form provides an analytical framework for understanding the restructuring the education sector is undergoing, while the case study yields data for assessing the applicability to current organizational changes in
education of the multidivisional form model and its claimed efficiency advantages. The M-form model is offered as a resolution of the apparent paradox in the Education Reform Act between the centralization of the curriculum and the decentralization of management responsibilities. It is also argued that the M-form model for the LEA is more likely than a holding company structure to promote higher educational standards because of its stronger element of quality assurance. However, subsequent government policy changes have prevented LEAs developing as M-form organizations and are set to fragment and centralize LEAs' previous strategic functions. Introduction

This paper sets out to understand local management of schools (LMS) in terms of the theory of organizational form developed by, among others, institutional economists. The fundamental premise, therefore, is that the theory of organizational form applied to firms and public sector organizations is also relevant to education. I argue that the 1988 Education Reform Act was designed to change the LEA from a unitary form of organizational structure to a multidivisional (M-form), though the regulatory role of the LEA required in an M-form organization was left underdeveloped. This interpretation of LMS is then applied to a case study LEA. The theory of organizational form provides an analytical framework for understanding the restructuring the education sector is undergoing, while the case study yields data for assessing the applicability to current organizational changes in education of the multidivisional form model and its claimed efficiency advantages.
I have two major reasons for proposing the M-form model. First it is offered as a resolution of the apparent paradox in the Education Reform Act between the centralization of the curriculum and the decentralization of management responsibilities. Some see this as an evident contradiction (Campbell et al. 1987, Coulby 1991, Busher and Saran 1992). Coulby argues that ‘the Act contains a particularly high level of contradiction’, citing this particular example (Coulby 1991). Others, however, spot the crucial connection between LMS and the national curriculum (Whitty 1989, Ball 1990). Ball comes close to recognizing the M-form structure when he writes: The introduction of national tests alongside the provisions of the education market provides parents with a simple and crude but direct point of comparison between schools. Given that schools are also required to provide a fixed National Curriculum it is tempting to refine the business model slightly and see the education market as a system of franchises. (Ball 1990: 68)

The second purpose is to put forward the M-form model for the LEA as more likely than a holding company structure (i.e., one with no central strategic management function) to promote higher educational standards. However, the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the legislation foreshadowed in the White Paper, Choice and Diversity (Great Britain 1992) have removed the possibility of a fully developed M-form structure for LEAs. Instead the strategic functions of the
M-form headquarters’ management are set to be increasingly taken over by central government.

Section 1 sets out briefly the theory of organizational form, sections 2 and 3 apply the theory to LMS, and the remaining sections apply and evaluate LMS as a M- or H-form organizational structure using the case-study data. LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

The theory of organizational form

If we take the basic element of social life to be an ‘activity’ (i.e., using resources of human time and materials to some end) then once an activity involves more than one person ‘transactions’ take place and co-ordination is required. The social science literature has coalesced around three basic modes of co-ordination – market, hierarchy and network (Thompson et al. 1991). The modes of co-ordination are briefly characterized as follows:

• Market co-ordination occurs between economic agents (either individuals or firms/organizations) who voluntarily exchange the ownership of goods and services in return for money. The price at which exchange takes place (the rate of exchange) is the key instrument of market co-ordination and is determined by the interaction of demand and supply. Self-interest is the prime motivation of the transactors. However, for the market to function agreements to exchange contracts must be enforceable. This is done both through a social culture whereby transactors are trusted to honour agreements to exchange and, failing this, through state legal enforcement.

• Hierarchy is co-ordination by means of rules and commands set within a pyramidal structure of superordinates and subordinates. Authority is concentrated at the peak of the hierarchy and distributed downwards through tightly
specified rules. The transactors are thus vertically related in contrast to the horizontal linkages between market transactors. Hierarchical co-ordination occurs both within an organization and between organizations that are hierarchically related (e.g., the central government, local education authority and school). Individuals within hierarchies are motivated through rules specifying rewards and sanctions.

- Network is a lattice of interlinking individuals or organizational units which exchange information and favours. Since agreements to such exchanges are generally informal, relations depend largely on trust and are conducted within specific group cultures. Different kinds of networks can be distinguished, such as professional, social, interest group and policy networks. Networks coexist with market and hierarchical modes of co-ordination and lubricate their functioning. Networks operate within hierarchically arranged organizations and often underpin business and market relationships.

The key question is why some activities are co-ordinated mainly by one of the modes while other kinds of transaction are co-ordinated by another of the modes. Institutional economics (arising originally out of the work of Coase [1937] and developed by Williamson [1975]) has sought to find a rational explanation for this – namely that a particular mode of co-ordination is the most efficient in certain types of circumstances and will therefore emerge as the dominant mode – at least in sectors where competition prevails. The issue of which is the efficient mode of co-ordination in specific circumstances arises because transactions are not costless. Transactions are costly because information is not perfect and freely available. This is due in part to uncer
tainty about the future and to the fact that even if information were certain it would still have to be collected and interpreted. Also contractual arrangements are costly to agree, monitor and enforce. It follows that an efficient organizational design is that which minimizes transactions costs. However, the valuation of transactions costs is not independent of individuals’ preferences, so what constitutes an efficient organizational design depends on the purposes of the organization and whose interests it is supposed to serve. This is a much more complex issue in public sector organizations than in the private sector where it is assumed that firms should aim to maximize shareholders’ wealth. Shareholders have a common interest in maximizing share value whereas citizens have conflicting interests and beliefs as well as a common interest in the provision of public and merit goods.

In examining the characteristics of an efficient organizational form for a particular set of activities being undertaken for some specific purpose, institutional economics has focused on three key sources of transactions costs - bounded rationality, opportunism and asset specificity (see Williamson 1975, Levacic 1992a):
• Bounded rationality is the limited capacity of the human mind to possess and process all the information that in principle is needed in order to make optimal decisions.

• Opportunism is the guileful pursuit of self-interest, not only on the part of those operating in markets but also of those working in organizations.

• Asset specificity exists when a capital asset acquired in order to produce specific goods or services would have much less value if it were transferred to some other use. When such assets are acquired in order to fulfil a contract then the asset’s owners will suffer losses if the contract is reneged upon by the other party. When assets are highly specific contractual arrangements which cannot be easily broken are much less risky and so less costly.

Initially institutional economics focused on the central question of why some economic activities are undertaken by separate firms and co-ordinated by the market while other activities are combined within a single firm. The academic analysis was stimulated by the observed growth of firms through vertical and horizontal integration. The original approach (Williamson) categorized co-ordination within a firm as hierarchy, arguing that bounded rationality, opportunism and, in particular, asset specificity mean that co-ordination by hierarchy within a firm results in lower transactions costs than market co-ordination. Subsequently much greater attention has been given to different organizational structures within firms which are assessed for their relative efficiency in resolving the problems posed by bounded rationality and opportunism.

Three distinct organizational forms are distinguished — the
unitary or U-form LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF HOLS

firm, the multidivisional or M-form firm and the holding company (conglomerate) or H-form firm. Standard definitions of these organizational forms are:

- U-form firms are functionally specialized, hierarchically arranged organizations. There is a single peak co-ordinator (a person or board of directors to whom are responsible the heads of specialist departments dealing with production, marketing, purchasing, finance, etc.). Within each functional area there may be several further horizontal layers of responsibility and vertical demarcations of more finely specialized tasks.

- In the M-form firm, production activities are broken down into a number of quasi-autonomous operating divisions (typically based on products, brands or geographical area). The activities are co-ordinated via a general office, assisted by an elite staff, which undertakes strategic planning and resource allocation among the divisions, and exercises a characteristic form of monitoring and control over them (Cable 1988: 13).

- The holding company (H-form). 1 This is the divisionalized enterprise for which the requisite internal control apparatus has not been provided (Williamson 1975: 152).

The U-form firm was the original structure adopted in the 19th century. Its particular advantage is that specialist functional departments can achieve lower costs through the division of labour and economies of scale. However, it is generally argued (Chandler 1966) that as the U-form firm grows in size and complexity, it can no longer enjoy the benefits of U-form since top management lose the capacity to direct the entire enterprise so as to fulfil organization-wide
goals. The inherent weakness in the centralized, functionally departmentalized operating company . . . became critical only when . . . the operations of the enterprise became too complex and the problems of coordination, appraisal, and policy formulation too intricate for a small number of top officers to handle. (Chandler 1966: 382–383)

Williamson (1975) attributes the loss of organizational control in U-form firms

The multidivisional firm is seen as the solution to these problems because it releases top management from day-to-day operational matters and frees them to devote time to strategic oversight of the organization. A few instances of M form developed in the 1920s and 1930s but it was only in the post-war period that it spread widely among large corporations. By the 1980s it came to be advocated for public service organizations. LMS as multidivisional and holding company organizational forms

The summary characteristics of the M-form structure as summarized by Williamson (1970) are set out in Table 1. They mirror quite closely the original schema for the post-ERA education authority set out in the Education Reform Act and its supporting circulars (DES 1988, Welsh Office 1988) by the Audit Com mission (1989a, b) and Coopers and Lybrand (1988) and latterly by the Society of Education Officers (1991).

As can be seen from the last row of Table 1, a key function of the top man age ment and the general office of an M-form organization is
to audit and evaluate the operational divisions in order to ensure good performance. The national curriculum is essential to the M-form model in providing the targets for schools to aim for and against which their performance is evaluated. Initially quality assurance was envisaged as an LEA function which would be enhanced under post-ERA restructuring. Subsequently this function has been taken from LEA’s by the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the related proposals of the White Paper (Great Britain 1992) and is to be given to privatized inspection teams regulated by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Schools. When in place the M-form headquarters’ quality control function will be performed by central government. With the withering away of the LEA all other headquarters functions would be performed by central government agencies. While these functions remain attenuated the schools system approximates to the holding company model. The main function of the business holding company is to act as an internal capital market which allocates resources to its divisions in accordance with performance signals received from the market. The U-form LEA prior to LMS The typical U-form structure of the pre-ERA local authority is depicted in Figure 1. Its design owes much to the adoption of corporate
management structures in the 1970s. The authority is organized into operational departments (such as education, social services, transport, housing) and functional departments (such as finance, property and planning, personnel, legal). The functional departments provide services to all the operational departments. The finance department, for example, does the accounting for the education department. Teachers’ salaries are recorded in a single account, regardless of the school at which they are employed. Similarly utility invoices are dealt with in another account, and not attributed to the building which incurred the heating or water costs. By paying utility bills in large batches discounts are obtained from suppliers. In like manner the property department services and maintains all the authority's buildings.

Table 1 The characteristics of the M-form organization applied to LEAs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The M-form organization as specified</th>
<th>The restructured LEA as specified by the Williamson Education Reform Act</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The responsibility for operations is assigned to (essentially self-contained) LEAs.</td>
<td>Schools turned into operating divisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operating divisions. management responsibilities over resources to school governing bodies.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
The separation of the general office Formula funding to ensure a hands-off from operations enables general office approach by LEA officers.

executives to concentrate on the The principle of maximum delegation:

overall performance of the organization rather than become absorbed in the limitations on resources LEAs can retain

affairs of its operational divisions. centrally and on their ability to control school spending decisions through financial regulations. Open enrolment: LEAs cannot direct pupils to schools with surplus places. LEAs left with the functions of:

The general office is principally determining the education budget;

corrected with strategic decisions,

involving planning, appraisal and producing a DES-approved formula for control, including the allocation of allocating budgets to schools;

resources among the (competing) allocating capital expenditure as operational divisions. approved by central government; determining admissions criteria to schools; determining, with DES approval, the number and kinds of schools in its charge.

The elite staff attached to the general Provide support for budget and office perform both advisory and management planning, staff auditing functions. Both have the development, legal and technical effect of securing greater control matters.

over operating division behaviour. Hold schools financially
accountable. Regulate the quality of educational provision. It therefore deals directly with schools which it deems to require maintenance work.

The education department is itself organized along U-form lines with distinct functional and operational departments. An example of operational departments are schools and community education divisions. Typical functional departments are the advisory service, educational psychologists and special needs support, education welfare, peripatetic teachers and learning resources, such as school museums and libraries. Characteristic features of U-form are that the general office and/or the functional departments decide what services should be supplied to the operational units and are involved in determining detailed operational matters, such as the number of teachers to be employed at the school or what maintenance work will be carried out. A particular feature of the local authority U-form structure is that the education department does not control all the resources used in schools – this is shared with the central functional departments which pursue either their own internal or authority-wide objectives. The M-form LEA

An outline for a pure M-form model for an LEA is indicated in Figure 2. The roles of both the service department – education – and the
functional departments are radically changed. Managerial responsibility for operational matters is delegated to self-managing operational units, such as schools, colleges (leaving LEA control in 1993) and community education committees. The education department general office concentrates on strategic planning, resource allocation.

Figure 1 U-form local authority model. Service Departments Local Authority Functional Departments Finance Personnel Legal Property Education Department

Operational Divisions Functional Divisions Advisory Learning Resources Special Needs Schools

and evaluation functions. Responsibility for the various functions, determined in the U-form model by central functional departments, passes largely to the operational units. The operational unit, such as the school, typically has a U-form structure with specialist committees and associated senior managers for finance, curriculum, staffing and property which now take over these functional tasks.

In some M-form organizations all the functional specialisms pass to the operational units, leaving the general office with the specialist functions required for strategic control. In other M-form organizations functional departments still manage schools.

Figure 2 M-form local authority model. Local Authority Service Departments Functional Departments Finance Personnel Legal Property Education Department Strategic planning Resource allocation Monitoring & Evaluation
Functional Divisions Operational Divisions Continuing
Education School .3 Sell services Finance Advisory

Management training

Pupil Support Psychologists

Welfare officers Special Needs teachers

Learning resources Museum service

Library service

Teacher centres

Extra curricular Music tuition

Outdoor centres Committees Staffing Finance Property

Curriculum

exist but no longer have a hierarchical relationship with
the operational units.

Instead hierarchy as a means of co-ordination between
operational and func
tional departments is replaced by an internal market.
Operational units also

relate to each other via a market relationship. For
example, community educa
tion now has to rent premises and equipment from schools.

An internal market is a mode of co-ordination within an
organization which

is distinct from either hierarchy or network. The internal
market mimics the

external market in many respects but is ultimately
regulated by the organi

zation’s headquarters managers. In the case of education
the regulations within

which the LEA ’s internal market operates are set by both
the DES and the LEA,
given their respective powers. For an internal market to


exist within an organization it must be decentralized in structure so that there are a number of sub-units which act as buyers and sellers in exchanging goods and services with each other. Competition is an essential feature of the internal market. For this to exist the buying and selling units must have alternative independent parties with whom they can conduct exchange. For this reason exchange with agents external to the organization is usually a feature of internal markets.

In an M-form authority, schools and the LEA’s ‘general office’ relate to each other both as buyers and sellers. The LEA acts on behalf of parents in buying education for children from its schools. Through the formula the LEA sets the price and other conditions at which it will contract with schools for education provision. Parents then determine, given the available places, which schools' services are purchased. Thus in this part of the internal market the sellers (schools) are not free to set the price nor can they directly choose which pupils to admit. This can only be done indirectly through marketing activities and exclusion policies.

In the M-form model schools (and other operating divisions) are buyers of resource inputs, such as property maintenance work and
advisory services,
which under U-form were provided by the authority’s functional departments. A crucial aspect of the LMS legislation is the limitation placed on the proportion of the potential schools budget (PSB) that can be retained centrally. Further pressure to delegate central services was placed on LEAs by the DES when approving LMS scheme applications (Thomas and Levacic’ 1991). Central government squeeze on local government spending has had a similar effect. Once schools receive budget allocations for these items, the LEA functional departments need to sell their services to schools who may go elsewhere with their custom. Local authority property services departments have faced identical pressures. Although they have had to contract out to tender many of their services, direct labour organizations have been successful in winning contracts. As most of these contracts were entered into prior to schools receiving delegated budgets, schools were required to accept the local authority contract arrangements and were not able to negotiate their own until the existing contracts came up for renewal.

The ultimate justification for the M-form organization is that it leads to better performing organizations than U-form. In the private sector version of the model LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS
good organizational performance for customers depends on
the existence of

competitive markets which forces the organization to
perform well in order to

survive and flourish. Under a U-form structure top
management ensure good

performance through hierarchical control of subordinates to
whom they issue
detailed instructions about operational matters. According
to the theory of

organizational form, top managers’ bounded rationality
combined with subordi
nates’ opportunism brings about increasingly ineffective
control systems as the
organization becomes larger and more complex in terms of
both its technology
and its environment. If the M-form organization is to
perform well, top man
agers must ensure that new mechanisms of control replace
hierarchical control.

Subordinates must be motivated so that they act to further
the organizations’
goals, not personal or purely sectional ones.
Thus the whole analysis revolves around the issues of
information and incen
tives. What kinds of information do top management and the
middle managers
in charge of operating and functional departments need and
how should they be
motivated in order to ensure organizational effectiveness?
According to the M
form model setting up the operating and functional units as
profit (or cost)
centres economizes on the amount of information top
management needs for
effective control of the organization. The internal market
is a crucial element in
this argument since the fundamental basis of the Austrian 3
school’s claim that
the market is a more efficient co-ordination mechanism than
hierarchy is that
market arrangements economize on information and provide
incentives for
seeking out and utilizing information in order to satisfy
consumer wants. To be
effective the M-form organization depends on top managers
motivating the
divisional managers by setting them appropriate goals,
measuring their attain
ment of these goals and rewarding them accordingly. This is
achieved through
the general office activities of strategic planning,
resource allocation and evalua
tion. The operational decisions of how the goals are best
achieved with the
available resources is left to the divisional managers who
are free to make their
own decisions but are then held accountable for the
results. The top managers
economize on information because they need have no
knowledge of operational
details in order for the operating divisions to be
effectively managed. The
opportunism of middle managers is exploited for the benefit
of the organization
by ensuring that personal and organizational goals
coincide. Another strategy is to reduce opportunism by inculcating an organizational culture which encourages employees to identify with the organization and its objectives. Problems in applying the M-form model to the school system

Although there are many convincing parallels between the M-form model and the post-ERA school system, there are a number of problems in applying the M-form model to the education system. M A N A G E M E N T O F S C H O O L S The dual role of LEA as customer and producer

The first problem relates to the dual role of the LEA as customer and supplier of educational services compared with the M-form firm’s single role as supplier. A firm, whatever its organizational form, is not run in the interests of its customers.

This is only ensured by means of the regulation provided by competitive product and capital markets, buttressed by legal safeguards. If these do not function adequately to protect customers’ interests, then the firm can earn monopoly profits for the benefit of the owners or instead be run by the managers in their and the employees’ interests as reflected in higher costs. In principle public service organizations exist for the benefit of the community and need to respond to the often conflicting interests of taxpayers and service users. In practice they are run by the provider professions and related workers. Without
market regulation,
good performance for clients (defined as users and taxpayers) is obtained
through hierarchical controls and professional values.

Compared with the U-form structure M-form makes a much sharper and
more transparent distinction between the provider and client roles of the LEA but
there still remains a tension between them. In its role acting on behalf of taxpayers and users, the LEA determines the size and allocation of the education budget (within constraints imposed by central government) and, with DES approval, determines the number, location, size and types of its maintained schools. These are the roles of ‘planner of facilities’ and ‘leader of the education service’ proposed by the Audit Commission (1989a). A crucial LMS activity for the LEA is devising and operating the funding formula. Another two of the Audit Commission’s roles for LEAs – ‘providing information to users of the education service’ and ‘regulator of quality – also fall within the remit of the LEA in acting on behalf of taxpayers and users. With the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and mass opting out, if it occurs, only the consumer-oriented functions of funding and information provision with respect to LEA schools remain.

The final two Audit Commission roles – ‘banker to schools’ and ‘partner’ –
cover the services which LEAs provide for schools. Most are due to disappear or
be traded on an internal market. The image of partnership between LEA and
schools is a long-standing one. Once used to soften the perception of hierarchi
cal control of schools by the LEA, it now implies that the LEA provides support
services which are valued by schools who can actively choose whether or not to
use them. By means of the internal market the functional departments of the
authority treat schools as their clients and solicit their custom. The regulatory role of the LEA
The M-form model applied to the LEA requires the LEA to act as regulator on
behalf of users and taxpayers. Although the monitoring and evaluation element
of LEAs’ control system has in many cases been rather weak (Audit Commission
1990b, Hargreaves 1990) the thrust of ERA until the Education (Schools) Act LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS 1992 was to strengthen this role. The government’s concern about the producer
domination of LEAs underpins its desire to ‘privatize’ inspection. Denying LEAs
the means to evaluate schools and apply rewards and sanctions removes from
them a crucial internal mechanism of control which characterizes an M-form
organization. Unless central government is able to perform the quality control
function the restructured school system will resemble an
H-form organization.

H-form firms rely much more on market signals than internal
control mechanisms for their main function of allocating resources.

Whether the M-form, with its strong internal control
mechanism, is more
effective than H-form depends on how far good performance
(from the client
perspective) can be secured from the two remaining and
highly contrasting control
devices - the professional culture of teachers, and the
exit and voice of parents and
pupils in the educational marketplace. In the theory of
organizational design,
internal monitoring, evaluation and reward mechanisms are
needed to combat the
opportunism of the organization’s employees. Such
opportunism does not exist if
members of the organization are motivated by professional
ideals and public service
in the education service is very much a matter of
ideological perspective, with
public choice theorists claiming a disjuncture in public
service monopolies between
placed on the market as a regulating mechanism for ensuring
that schools respond to
A major strength claimed for M- and H-form organizations is
that they economize on information. Top managers can be far more effective
because they need
less information to run an M/H-form structure and can
concentrate on the
information needed for strategic planning (in the M-form case), overall resource allocation and divisional monitoring. However, as the case-study evidence in the next section suggests, the informational demands of M/H-form in the public sector are likely to be greater than in the private sector precisely because the market is not allowed to function freely. The price system under LMS functions in a highly restricted way. Schools cannot vary the fees they receive except through collective political lobbying and cannot charge direct users except in a very limited way. The price is established by a complex formula which requires much gathering and analysis of information at the centre. This is in complete contrast to decentralized free market price setting which is not necessarily dependent on formal information-gathering activities. Deeply entrenched egalitarian values in society have prevented the government from permitting state schools to set their own prices, but at the same time it is recognized that schools need to incur different costs for pupils of the same age either because their plant operating costs differ or because pupils with learning problems are judged to need more resources applied to them. Consequently the LEA has to establish and maintain a complex formula funding mechanism. Accounting
for schools as cost

centres has also contributed to the informational demands of LMS. Organizational restructuring in an LEA

The rest of this paper is concerned with applying the theory of organizational

form to the restructuring undertaken by a county LEA in implementing LMS in the

period 1989–91. The LEA, Barsetshire, has experienced changes in party political

control. It has neither enthusiastically embraced the radical right restructuring of

local government from providers to enablers nor has it been predisposed to resist

the implementation of the LMS as much as possible.

First the LEA’s role as purchaser of education services through formula

funding is examined, then its changing role as service provider to schools, and

finally the much murkier area of performance assessment is discussed. LEA as purchaser: the funding formula

The funding formula is the chief means by which the internal market is regulated as it expresses the price and other terms on which the LEA contracts its

schools to provide education. As schools cannot change the age-groups of pupils

they admit or their admission limits or be closed or opened without DES

approval, schools’ and LEAs’ ability to influence exit from and entry into the

market is severely restricted.

The DES (1988) guidelines state that the formula should
a be simple, clear and predictable;

b be based on an assessment of schools’ objective needs, rather than on historic patterns of expenditure;

c allocate at least 75% of the aggregated schools budget according to the number of pupils in each school weighted for differences in their ages.

In practice Barset’s formula was relatively complex because of the large number of other factors to be taken into account – additional costs of small schools,
pupils with special educational need, size of school buildings and grounds,
energy costs, community use of premises and split sites. A further complication was the addition of a transitional element to protect schools with higher than average teacher salaries. Thus the informational demands of the formula are considerable.

Transition to an M-form structure was marked by tensions in the relationship between the education department and the authority’s functional departments.

For example, in devising a sub-formula for energy use the education department depended on information from the property services department on energy expenditure by school – data which had never previously been assembled. Reliable costs centre accounts were difficult to put together so the LEA had to allocate energy costs on a historic basis for the first two years. There were disagree
ments over devising a sub-formula for energy, with the property department wanting an easily maintained formula based only on pupil numbers, while the education department pressed for a fairer formula based also on premises area.

There were also problems with the accuracy of figures for compensating schools for the cost of community use of their premises.

Another element of informational complexity was Barset’s special needs index for the formula which was based on seven measures of social disadvantage. This was poorly understood by teachers and governors. Few liked the index but because Barset did not use authority-wide testing and DES rules did not permit judgemental indices there seemed little alternative. The problem of constructing a special needs index is a good example of the informational demands of the M-form structure adapted for the public sector. This information would not be required if the LEA could set one price for all children of a given age and not have to differentiate further. Neither would the information be needed at headquarters level if schools were free to charge their own prices or differentiate between pupils. Once additional social policy demands are made of the education service then the issue of information requirements surfaces as does that of
incentives. The market way to induce schools to cater for special needs is through cash incentives. This implies that an index which attaches extra money to individual pupils is more effective than one which does not do this explicitly.

Apart from extra funding for pupils with special needs, there is also the question of schools’ incentives to get rid of troublesome pupils. Barset’s formula discouraged such head teacher opportunism by requiring schools to pay for excluded pupils’ tuition.

As well as price, a vital element of the contract is specifying the units being bought. The Barset formula, like most, calculated the number of age-weighted pupils for funding purposes as a 50:50 split between the numbers on roll in the form 7 count in the January before the start of the financial year and the number forecast for the next January. If pupil numbers had been under-forecast schools did not receive additional money until the next financial year.

Secondary head teachers were dissatisfied that the forecasts did not take account of more up-to-date figures on actual admissions for the coming year, collected by the education office areas. The delay in information flows between authority departments had not mattered prior to LMS when pupil fore
casts were used for long-term planning purposes only. The LEA proposed to
make better use of admissions data in its forecasts. A further complicating
factor was the late decisions of Appeals Panels, in one case adding a form of
entry to a school. The LEA has responded to under-forecast pupil numbers by
allowing schools with significant under-forecasts to budget for a deficit in
anticipation of the additional funding due in the next financial year.
One of the benefits of formula funding is that it has made much more trans
parent what actual educational priorities are as revealed in the distribution of the
authority's education budget to different ages and characteristics of pupils and MANAGEMS
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types of school. This has stimulated debate about educational priorities which
focuses to a great extent on the formula.
As in other authorities, the primary sector was vociferous in pressing for an
increase in primary age weights. In response to a well-argued case by the Barset
shire primary head teachers association, the members increased the primary
budget by 5.5%. The real increases in primary and secondary funding are shown
in Table 2.
Within the secondary sector 11-16, schools complained of being unfairly
treated in comparison with schools with sixth forms which received a larger fixed cost element in the formula as well as a higher weighting for sixth formers.

In 1991/92 the fixed cost addition for sixth forms was removed as part of a budget-cutting exercise. But the authority’s attempts to rationalize sixth-form provision by setting up a new tertiary college were put on ice on hearing of the government’s intention to remove colleges from LEA control.

An important policy issue now reflected through the formula is the maintenance of small schools. Barset’s formula gave lump sums for schools depending on the age range of its pupils. These accounted for 8% of the ASB in 1990/91 and 7% in 1991/92. The formula itself in 1990/91 was not biased against small schools (Levacˇic´ 1992b) though the greatest losses and gains were among small primaries. In Barsetshire Conservative councillors supported village primaries while Labour members favoured urban schools through the special needs element of the formula. However, in 1991, faced with the need to cut expenditure, the members agreed to reduce the fixed cost allocations of primary schools by 25% and put more money into age-weighted pupil units for the primary years. The episode is interesting because it is a clear example of
members using the funding formula as a policy instrument. There were wide

spread complaints that the Council had no open policy on small schools: they

were being underhand in using the formula to bleed small schools slowly to

death rather than devising a rational plan for school closures and amalgamations.

In response the members asked officers for a review of primary school

provision. Meanwhile the district auditors started their own review. There had

already been some structural adjustments with a number of infants, junior and LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

Table 2 Increase in real ASB expenditure: Barset 1989/90 to 1991/92. 1990/91-1989/90 1991/92-1990/91 (%) (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary sector budget</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary sector budget</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total aggregated schools budget</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary: change in per pupil funding</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary: change in per pupil funding</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall change in per pupil funding</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

four middle schools being amalgamated and the governors of a school with 19

pupils requesting closure. So there is clear evidence that formula funding

coupled with financial stringency increased the pressures to rationalize primary

provision.

However there was no indication that the LEA encouraged
popular schools to expand. One popular school in our case study sample of 11 was unwilling to grow. There is therefore some emerging evidence that parents are increasingly indicating a preference for an out-of-catchment school and that the LEA will have to decide how to respond by closing uneconomic schools and expanding popular ones, as well as in its policy towards subsidizing transport costs. The LEA as client: selling in the internal market

As already indicated, Barset could not be classified as a radical decentralizing M-form authority. Its initial inclination was to retain under discretionary exceptions rather than to delegate. However, for 1991/92 the education committee had to cut £6.5 million or 2.5% from its planned budget in order to avoid community charge capping. School budgets were protected while the main brunt of the cuts was borne by central services and by peripheral school related activities - farms, outdoor centres, the library, museum and advisory services, curriculum projects, home-to-school links, music tuition, units for disruptive pupils and boarding places. Thirty to 40 central posts were shed and special needs advisory teachers reduced by 25%, a move particularly regretted by schools. The estimated real changes 4 in primary and secondary school budgets over the years 1989/90 to
1991/92 are shown in Table 2.

Property services also faced enforced restructuring on M-form lines. Under local government legislation cleaning, school meals, grounds and building main tenance have been contracted out by the authority and most schools had to accept authority contracts. Some of these were won by DSOs, others by ex council employees and yet others by independent private contractors. Other items, such as the property services department advice on building maintenance and energy, were to be charged for. With certain exceptions the schools’ level of satisfaction with authority-contracted services was rather low. One school in our sample, which was able to opt out of the county grounds maintenance contract and employ its own groundsman, was highly satisfied with the result. A number of schools wished to employ their own caretaker or handyman and ideas for joint school appointments surfaced. In the area of property services at least there is considerable evidence that M-form internal market arrangements have shown up the inefficiencies of the previous system. Private sector contractors, supply ing such services as refuse collection in competition with district councils, were entering the market. The internal market in which schools, seeking value for
money, are supplied both by the authority and private sector firms looks likely to flourish in the area of property services.

The Audit Commission (1989a) singled out ‘banker to the schools’ as one of MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS its six roles for post-ERA LEAs. Though budgets were delegated to schools, the actual unit of account remained largely a book-keeping entry in the LEA’s computers. In 1990/91, apart from a small amount paid into a bank account, schools did not get their budgets in cash. As the LEA openly acknowledged, reconciliation of the LEA’s and schools’ accounts proved a major headache, partly because of bugs in the software, inadequate training leading to operator errors and a lack of co-ordination between the three central departments involved. The lack of co-ordination stemmed from having to replace the previous U-form structure, whereby the finance department was a central functional department doing the accounts of all the other departments, by a system of cost-centre accounting. On the whole the schools were tolerant of the LEA’s problems in getting a complex system operating to the tight time-scale dictated by central government. Because of the lack of accurate and up-to-date budget monitoring data schools were largely navigating in the dark, relying heavily on their own
records. The lack of information on spending must account, at least in part, for

the extreme caution of schools which generated a large budget surplus of £6 million (7% of schools’ budgets).

Under impetus from members, the authority was already working on a

cheque book pilot scheme prior to Circular 7/91 requiring LEAs to introduce

chequeing facilities for non-staff payment for all secondary schools and offering

them to primary schools. From the school’s point of view the potential advan
tages of cheque book facilities are gains from interest payments and prompt

payment discounts and from cutting down the time spent querying the LEA’s

version of the school accounts. The costs are the loss of interest earned by the

LEA from managing large cash balances (deducted from the schools’ budgets)

and the systems needed to ensure that the authority can still discharge its duty to

account for public money.

To offset this loss of financial services provision, the LEA started a scheme of

loan and saving facilities for schools. Provided a school committed surplus

funds to the LEA for over a year it would earn interest at base rate. The LEA

would also loan money to schools for specific projects at base rate plus half a
per cent.

The provision of financial information for budget monitoring and planning is one of the major informational costs of LMS. The issue of how the financial recording and reporting function is best distributed between LEA and schools is not yet resolved but one can detect a distinct shift towards M/H-form structures, with the operating divisions taking on more of the functional activities and an internal market served by both the LEA and private sector banks developing. Accountability and regulation

A key distinguishing feature of M-form organization compared with H-form is that in the former head office operates a strong internal control system for holding the divisions accountable by monitoring, evaluating and rewarding their

LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

performance. In this aspect the M-form organization as applied to firms differs from the version in education. The top managers of a firm, whether or not it is M-form, are accountable to the firm’s shareholders via the market. The accountability of all other employees is channelled through the top managers: they hold the divisional managers accountable to them alone. In education accountability is diffused. Unlike middle managers, heads and governors are not in a clearly subordinate accountability relationship through the director of education to the
members. Responsibility for holding the school's professional managers account able is shared between governors and LEA. Governors have their own power base through direct elections and can oppose the LEA so long as they do not display such incompetence that the LEA can take over their role. Even then the governors can appeal to the Secretary of State for reinstatement of their responsibilities. The shared accountability between governors and LEA reflects the fact that LMS in Britain involves political as well as organizational decentralization. This is in contrast to North American examples of school-based management which involve organizational decentralization giving no real power to school governing councils of elected parents (Brown 1990, Levacic’ 1992a). Central government, the third body politically accountable for education, has increasingly sought to tighten the regulatory framework for schools through the national curriculum, testing and inspection.

In Circular 7/88 the DES clearly stated that LEAs are expected to monitor and evaluate schools’ performance and required a statement of their intentions in their LMS scheme document. This specification of the LEA’s regulatory role is an essential element of LMS as an M-form organizational structure for LEAs. It was
argued (e.g., Audit Commission 1989b) that most LEAs would have to strengthen their regulatory (i.e., inspectoral) function and separate it more clearly from the LEA’s advisory role. Others argued that the inspectoral and advisory roles needed to be fused (Hargreaves 1990). Whichever stance one adopts, evaluating value for money in the education service requires bringing together two previously entirely separate forms of monitoring - financial and educational.

Barset, like most if not all authorities, had separate processes for financial accountability and educational accountability. To account for themselves financially schools submitted their budget plans to the finance officers for approval.

The criteria were financial: does the budget balance without relying on risky assumptions about costs or income? There was no consideration of educational goals, which the finance officers could not professionally assess in any case.

Schools had few problems passing this test and the large surplus generated in 1990/91 was a testimony to their financial prudence. Barset’s educational culture favours professional not managerial accountability and a fusion of inspection and advice. Its preLMS educational accountability processes were based on ‘looking with schools not at schools’. Choosing their own
objectives, schools carried out

an extensive self-evaluation every five years assisted by divisional officers and
advisers. The review was then shared with a panel of members. In late 1988 a
working party on performance indicators identified around 200 performance indicators which were presented as a menu from which schools could select items. In March 1989 the Education Committee approved a set of principles for evaluation and monitoring. The main ones were that institutions should be responsible for their own evaluation using their own data and supported by central staff. The institutions should supply the LEA with summary data and present reports to members. Two years later this was extended to include an annual school plan to be shared with members every four years. Thus the tight externally directed accountability enforced by top management in the M-form model was not favoured in Barset, an LEA which then had no opted-out schools.

Interviews with heads confirmed the LEA’s soft approach to accountability which is at odds with the managerial accountability typical of the M-form model.

Barset’s tentative moves in the direction of more transparent accountability of schools illustrates well both the diffused, if not confused, nature of account
ability specified by the 1988 Education Reform Act. LEA’s attempts to improve accountability of schools to them and develop a system of support for schools has now been undermined by the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the legislation proposed in the 1992 White Paper (Great Britain 1992). It is now quite clear - which it was not in the 1988 Act – that the Department for Education, through Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Schools, is charged with the quality assurance role of headquarters management in the M-form model. Conclusion

This paper has developed a model of LMS as a restructuring of the education service from a U-form to an M/H-form organization. The discussion has highlighted the key concepts of information and incentives, their interrelationship and their significance for organizational design as applied to LMS. The conclusions are:

1 Interpreting LMS as a transformation from U-form to M/H-form is supported by empirical evidence from one LEA.

2 The claimed superiority of M/H-form in handling problems of bounded rationality and opportunism needs to be carefully reassessed when the model is applied to the education service, particularly in the form currently proposed.

The benefits of better incentives to generate and utilize information to improve efficiency and effectiveness have to be set against the extra costs of obtaining an
increased quantity of information. The volume of information problem arises in large part from the market’s natural efficiency in processing information being suppressed by regulating it for social policy objectives. The information required for drawing up the internal market contract is not just factual, such as the cost of heating a building, it is largely judgemental, as with special needs funding and assumptions about class size. This stems from the fact that there is **LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS** not a well-specified educational production function mirroring the technical specifications of manufacturing production lines. This, of course, is a major justification for LMS, namely that schools know better how to allocate their resources between different inputs and processes than the LEA. If the education production function were well specified then it would be easier to organize its effective provision from the centre.

Some of the potential benefits of the M/H-form organization in terms of efficiency and effectiveness can be discerned from the Barset data though no attempt to assess their magnitude was made. One benefit is the much more transparent information about resource allocation which is stimulating debate about educational expenditure priorities and informing policy changes, in particular
increased funding for primary schools. Greater efficiency in the allocation of resources is being promoted by moves to close or amalgamate higher cost schools. The tentative beginnings of an internal market in property services indicates that schools do not find existing LEA-provided services the most efficient and are looking for alternatives. The verdict on the most critical issue - whether schools make more effective use of the resources now delegated to them - is not addressed here. No methodology for directly establishing improved educational outcomes was deemed feasible given the lack of data in Barset on educational outcomes. Drawing on qualitative data from 11 case-study schools in Barset a very tentative conclusion is reached by Marren and Levacic (1992) that school managers by and large consider that they are now better able, even if in a limited way, to allocate resources according to their school’s priorities and that some schools have been actively developing processes for more effective resource management.

Another major issue is whether opportunism means that managerial modes of accountability have to be developed or whether opportunism is sufficiently limited in the education sector that professional modes of accountability are
better at motivating staff. The 1992 Education (Schools) Act together with the 1992 White Paper have stymied the original intentions of the 1988 Education Reform Act that LEAs should develop further as regulators using combinations of managerial and professional modes of accountability. Instead, considerable reliance is being placed on a market model of regulation, in which publicly available audit information informs consumers in their choice of school and lay governors in their policies towards their professional staff. Fearing that market regulation may prove inadequate, the 1992 White Paper has proposed compensating for the absence of an LEA quality assurance function by the creation of ad hoc Education Associations to turn round failing schools. Thus the White Paper belatedly recognized the absence of a well-specified schools’ regulator with a quality control function in the government’s earlier legislation. However, the government has fragmented the strategic functions of the M-form model’s head quarters management amongst a number of agencies, including residual and attenuated LEAs. Thus the postulated efficiency in information processing of the M-form organization is most unlikely to be fully achieved with the currently proposed organizational design for the education system as
it both fragments
and concentrates discrete planning, funding and quality
assurance functions in
different central government-controlled bureaucracies.

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comments. All errors
of fact and interpretation are my responsibility. Notes

1 Some writers treat the holding company as a sub-division
of the M-form.

2 For a further elaboration of internal markets applied to
education, see Levacˇic´ (1992a).

3 The Austrian school of economists is associated in
particular with von Hayek. In the
1980s it became much more influential politically. Its
advocacy of the market is much
less cautious than that of mainstream neoclassical
economists with its concept of
perfect competition and its static mathematical analysis.
In contrast Austrian eco
nomics is dynamic and non-mathematical.
4 The real change excludes inflation and budget changes which have a neutral effect on schools, for example because they are adjustments of funds between the ASB and other budgets.

5 See Thomas (1991) for a survey of this part of LMS schemes.


MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS 37 EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND THE LOCAL MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS Tim Simkins


This paper reviews selected parts of the recent empirical literature on the consequences of LMS with particular reference to the latter’s potential for influencing school efficiency and effectiveness. It explores three areas: the effects of formula funding, patterns of resource allocation within schools and changing patterns of influence in school decision making. It suggests that LMS may be efficiency enhancing, but the evidence primarily relates to input efficiency, which in some cases may represent little more than economy, while the implications of LMS for effectiveness have been little considered. The paper explores some of the issues involved in examining these concepts more rigorously and concludes that greater consideration needs to be given to the interrelationship between efficiency and effectiveness and considerations of equity.

Local management of schools (LMS) in the UK is one of the key elements of the Conservative Government’s education reforms of the past five years. It represents one strand in a strategy designed to pursue the ‘five great themes’ of ‘quality, diversity, increasing parental choice, greater autonomy for schools and greater accountability’ (DEF 1992: 2). Under LMS schools
are being given very wide powers over the management of resources: school budgets and most aspects of personnel and premises management are, or shortly will be, managed at the level of the individual school.

The powers granted to schools under LMS are delegated to governing bodies containing representatives of parents, teachers and the local education authority (LEA) as well as co-opted members; headteachers are responsible to these governing bodies. LMS, therefore, in Brown’s (1990) terms comprises both organizational and political decentralization of power. According to the Government: Effective schemes of local management will enable governing bodies and head teachers to plan their use of resources – including their most valuable resource, their staff – to maximum effect in accordance with their own needs and priorities, and to make schools more responsive to their clients – parents, pupils, the local community and employers. (DES 1988: para 9)

The reference to responsiveness alludes to the fact that the powers of LMS must be exercised within an environment which is itself undergoing a very significant transformation. There are two key elements here. First, schools are being made much more explicitly subject to market pressures, through a significant increase in parental choice of school and requirements that certain kinds of information about schools be published including performance of pupils in tests and exami
nations. Second, however, this market is being firmly controlled through the implementation of a National Curriculum and a tightly defined regime of testing associated with it. This paper focuses primarily on LMS, but it will be impossible to consider its effects in any depth without keeping in mind this broader context of increased parental choice and centralized curriculum control.

The radical nature of restructuring which LMS involves raises a whole range of research questions. It is possible to explore its consequences from accounting, economic, political, sociological and educational perspectives (Simkins 1990).

The focus taken here will be primarily an economic one: it will explore in particular how ideas about efficiency and effectiveness underpin, implicitly or explicitly, the reform, and how far research about the consequences of LMS can be related to these ideas. The paper will draw on a selected number of research studies which address the resourcing and resource management consequences of LMS. In interpreting these studies it is important to bear in mind that the reform is still in its early stages of implementation so any findings about its consequences can be no more than extremely tentative.

Efficiency and effectiveness

It is now a commonplace, following the work of the Audit
Commission (1985),

to refer to the ‘three E’s’: economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Economy is
defined as the purchase of a given standard of good or service at the lowest cost,
efficiency as the achievement of given outcomes at least cost, and effectiveness
as the matching of results with objectives. This distinction does not prevent con
fusion, however, especially when discussing educational programmes. This
paper will focus primarily on the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness.

I will distinguish between a number of concepts of efficiency. Production
efficiency concerns the relation between resource inputs and outputs: it com
prises technical efficiency - combining resources in ways which maximize
output per unit of input - and price efficiency - choosing that combination of
resources which makes best use of a budget given a particular pattern of relative MANAGE MENTS
prices. Particular educational objective might be achieved in a number of ways,
all of which are technically efficient, but only one of these is likely to be price
efficient for any particular pattern of prices. LMS is clearly and explicitly
intended to cause schools to become more efficient in these terms. Block
budgets, with almost complete virement within them, give managers the
opportunity to choose resource combinations which seem to them most likely to
provide the best value for money. The range of choices available is wide and
will be considered in more detail below.

Considerations of efficiency are insufficient, however. Questions about how
to produce have little meaning unless they are related to ideas about what to
produce. The issue here concerns effectiveness: the matching of outputs to some
objective function. The key problem for managers under LMS is that such an
objective function can be derived in a number of ways. The Government state
ment reproduced above implies two perspectives: ‘[governing bodies and head
teachers’] own needs and priorities’ and the demands of ‘their clients – parents,
pupils, the local community and employers’. To this must be added, of course,
both the overriding expectation that schools will teach and test the National Cur
riculum and also professionals’ own perceptions of what is in the best interests
of their pupils in relation to their educational and other needs. The implications
of these competing conceptions of effectiveness have been little discussed in the
empirical literature on LMS although they are clearly central to any attempt to
evaluate its impact.
We will return to these issues later. It is sufficient to note here the two key questions posed about LMS by the efficiency and effectiveness perspectives.

First, what assumptions about production efficiency guide choices in the allocation of resources to and within schools? And second, how do those within schools choose to deploy resources towards objectives which must balance the demands of the National Curriculum, of parents’ and other ‘clients’’ expectations, and of their own staff’s values and concerns?

Formula funding

School budgets under LMS must be determined on the basis of a formula which is dominated by pupil numbers – the ‘age-weighted pupil unit’ (AWPU). The operation of formula funding has been a major focus of research in the early stages of LMS. The importance given in the legislation to funding schools by formula gives both the Government and LEAs the opportunity to express key values and policies through the details of formula design. The majority of studies in this area have involved the examination of available documentation or large-scale surveys to explore how these values and policies are carried through in practice.

The Government’s values have been embodied in the requirement that a high proportion of funds (initially 75%, now 80%) are allocated on the basis of pupil
numbers and ages. LEAs, however, have the opportunity to exercise discretion – and hence pursue their own values – through the age weightings they use, the

EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND LOCAL MANAGEMENT

ways in which they define and protect small schools, and the ways in which pupils with special needs and/or those suffering from socio-economic disadvantage are supported (Thomas and Levacic 1991, Thomas and Bullock 1992).

There is not space here to review in any detail studies of the ways in which formulae have been designed, but a number of main findings need to be highlighted:

- LEAs vary considerably in the relative weightings which they give to pupils of various ages, but they follow a common pattern with older children more favourably resourced than younger ones (except for those in the very early years) with a noticeable step at around age 11 between primary and secondary school and smaller steps at age 13/14 and at the end of compulsory schooling (age 15/16). Absolute levels of funding per pupil at each age differ considerably between LEAs (Bullock and Thomas 1992, Levacic 1992a).

- The scale of gains and losses among schools as formula budgeting is implemented varies considerably among LEAs. However, there is a tendency, which is not uniform across authorities, for larger schools to gain, in both primary and secondary sectors, at the expense of smaller schools. Secondary schools with fewer than 700 pupils have the greatest chance of being losers (Levac 1992a, Thomas and Bullock 1992).

- LEAs protect small schools in a variety of ways: by lump sums given to all schools, by sliding scales of additional resources related to school size and/or salary protection,
or by a combination of these. Where lump sums are used the definition of smallness varies widely with sample LEAs ranging from 150 to 250 pupils in the primary sector and from 470 to 832 pupils in the secondary sector (Thomas and Bullock 1992).

- Pupils with special educational needs and those suffering from socio-economic disadvantage are supported through a variety of mechanisms which vary in the criteria used and do not distinguish consistently between these two kinds of need (Lee 1992, Thomas and Bullock 1992).

The idea of an 'objective' formula can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it might simply imply that the formula is specified so that its outcome can be predicted once the values of the independent variables are known. Alternatively, and more demandingly, it might mean that there is a clearly defined ratio for its components. Evidence suggests that the early days of formula funding have been dominated by the former interpretation. First, the constraints imposed by the Government in its search for simple formulae have precluded the design of formulae based on any complex assessment of need. Second, and probably more important, LEAs in designing their formulae have generally attempted to reflect earlier patterns of resource allocation. In part, no doubt, this has been because such patterns were deemed to reflect long established - albeit qualitative - assessments of relative need. More important, though, has been the MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS determination to minimize the difficulties of transition in
a situation where, for

most LEAs, few if any additional resources were available. Thus the reaffirmation

of earlier patterns of choice has been reinforced by the

pressures to minimize the

number of ‘losers’ and, therefore, the number of ‘winners’.

Comments made by Bullock and Thomas (1992) about

differences in age

weightings can be extended without too much difficulty to

differences in

funding more generally: The public and explicit nature of

these resource rules provides a means for asking questions

about the educational implications of resource distribution

and the rationale for these first formulae. All too often it

is likely that LEA’s have sought to replicate current

funding priorities rather than alter them . . . Yet the

introduction of the National Curriculum suggests a case for

examining the distribution of resources. Regardless of

local or historic explanations, can the lower levels of

funding at the junior level be justified given the demands

of the National Curriculum? Questions may also emerge about

the variations between LEAs in funding pupils of

comparable ages: on what basis are such differences to be

justified? (Bullock and Thomas 1992: 12)

Such arguments bring to the fore questions of effectiveness

and efficiency in a

powerful way. What kind of educational provision is the

formula expected to

fund? And how might such provisions be made in the most

cost-effective way?

Formula funding enables the answers to questions such as

these – which are

rarely made explicit in LEA resource allocation policies –

to be tested. Some

studies, however, have begun to explore them from first

principles. For example,

Kelly (1992) develops a model on the basis of assumptions
about curriculum provision, maximum group sizes, required contact time for teaching-related activities and for management, and provision for special educational needs. This generates an increased funding requirement for both primary and secondary sectors, but with a proportionately greater increase for primary schools. Other LEAs are now undertaking similar studies and reaching similar conclusions (e.g. Sheffield City Council 1992). The basis of such conclusions, of course, derives from professional judgement rather than any empirically established relationship between resource inputs and learning or other outcomes. It embodies, therefore, a particular conceptualization of how efficiency and effectiveness should be defined - in terms of 'need' - and of the kinds of evidence which are acceptable to demonstrate the resource requirements necessary to achieve them. The debate about need-based funding, especially in relation to the primary sector, will undoubtedly grow; but any resolution seems a long way off in a climate of tight public expenditure control.

EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND LOCAL MANAGEMENT Internal resource allocation

Compared with the 'macro' consequences of the implementation of formula funding, fewer studies of the responses of schools in terms
of their internal patterns of resource allocation have been reported so far. This issue, among others, is addressed by a national study of the effects of LMS as perceived by headteachers which is being undertaken by a team from Birmingham University (Arnott et al. 1992). An initial survey of 812 headteachers in the second half of 1991 produced a number of interesting, if tentative, findings:

- headteacher workload: an average of eight hours per week associated with LMS, with two-thirds of heads feeling 'unacceptable pressures' as a result;
- staff contracts: indications of an increasing use of temporary staff;
- secretarial and clerical staff: a tendency for schools to increase modestly the number of hours worked;
- the effect of salary level on appointments: 18% of heads reported that salary had been a factor in the appointment of candidates;
- discretionary authority over salary level: 16% reported they had used this.

These findings must be treated with caution: they date from 1991, they are based on limited longitudinal data, they represent self-reporting by headteachers and they are not related to schools' circumstances such as their size or whether they are winners or losers under formula funding. Some of these qualifications can be overcome by the use of detailed case studies; these, however, are relatively expensive and can take time to lead to conclusions. One such study, by Marren
and Levacˇi c´ (1992, Levacˇi c´ and Marren 1992b), examines the first year of LMS in 11 schools in one LEA. Despite the short time-scale covered, a number of the findings are indicative. Schools are classified by sector (secondary, middle, primary) and by whether they are ‘winners’ or ‘losers’. The main findings confirm the expectation that the approaches taken by schools will depend upon their position on the ‘winner-loser’ spectrum. . . . Some schools were clearly constrained by their formula allocation in their ability to plan their resource use in relation to identified priorities. Those schools not so constrained were either content to continue as before or . . . to use LMS actively to pursue the implementation of a number of stated objectives, [in one case] working closely with the school development plan. Other schools [mainly losers] had to be more selective and focused on particular priorities such as enhancing core curriculum areas . . . or of increasing the pay of secretarial support staff. This has meant that other priorities have had to be shelved, such as an agreed incentive allowance structure or curricular provision . . . Those on the edge of viability . . . were not even able to do this but had to use every means at their disposal to survive as they were. This MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS involved . . . detailed examination of how every part of the budget was spent to ensure that limited resources were used most efficiently. This meant that schools were economising in ways they would not have had to previously. This included considering the cost of new staff . . . Those schools . . . which did worse under formula funding have been forced to examine their existing structures to find savings. (Marren and Levacˇi c´ 1992: 146–147)

These findings have been quoted at length because they raise important issues. They suggest that losers are more likely to concentrate on ‘efficiency’ strategies than are winners, but the latter do not necessarily use the opportunity provided
by an increase of resources to pursue explicit 'effectiveness' strategies designed
to enhance the achievement of their key objectives. Much seems to depend on

the headteacher’s management style and the degree to which
development plan
ning is seen as a central element in school management: 'energy and capability

[in managing resources] did not depend on whether a school was a winner or a
loser’ (Levac´i c´ and Marren 1992a: 22).

Nevertheless, resourcing opportunities, and therefore choices, clearly do

depend on resourcing levels. Examples of choices made by ‘winning’ schools in

the study by Marren and Levac´i c´ include increases in staffing and in non

contact time, increasing the salaries of head and deputy, maximizing incentive

allowances, increasing secretarial support and salaries, additional funding on in

service training and increasing the resourcing of key curriculum areas. Losers, in

contrast, had to consider restructuring, not replacing staff when they left and tar

geting additional resources extremely carefully to areas of critical need. The
degree to which they could achieve the latter often depended on the ‘luck’ asso

ciated with such factors as staff retirements. Furthermore the, admittedly

limited, evidence in the paper suggests that as the scale of budget loss increases
(and as schools get smaller) efficiency strategies designed to pursue key priorities with fewer resources are increasingly replaced by ‘economy’ strategies whose main concern is to save money whatever the long-term costs. School decision making LMS has placed major new responsibilities on schools and has changed significantly the formal roles of headteachers and governing bodies. How are these changes being implemented in practice? A number of studies have explored this issue, mainly using a case study approach (Bowe and Ball 1992, Broadbent et al. 1992 and 1993, Levacic and Marren 1992b, Sheffield City Council 1992). One of the clearest findings from these studies is that resource and financial management are generally undertaken by one or two senior members of staff, some times, but not always, working with one or two active governors. The senior staff involved are normally the headteacher in primary schools and the head and/or a deputy in secondary schools, with an increasing tendency in the latter case to employ a bursar or finance officer. The potential paradox here is stated clearly by a study in Sheffield: In Sheffield, as elsewhere in the country, the growing practice of school development planning places great stress on a collaborative process of curriculum and resource planning led by governors and,
through them, the head, and involving all the staff . . . The case studies [of eight Sheffield schools] suggest that, for whatever reasons, we are still a long way from achieving this collaborative model . . . This prompts two questions. Is this a satisfactory state of affairs? If not, what ought to be done about it? (Sheffield City Council 1992: 6)

The reasons usually given for this centralization of resource management include both the level of knowledge about whole-school resource issues residing ‘at the top’ and the perceived need, in the words of one head, to ‘act as a buffer, a filter to protect the rest of the staff from the huge amount of issues, many of which are not important and would only upset them if they had to contend with them’ (Broadbent et al. 1992a: 59). Despite the rather patronizing assumptions embodied in this quote, the evidence from the case studies does seem to imply that teaching staff generally do not wish to be closely involved in decisions generated by LMS. For example, on the basis of interviews in their 11 schools Levacic and Marren commented on ‘the far higher rate of indifference to LMS [among classroom teachers] which a number of teachers attributed to the time demands upon them, particularly by the National Curriculum’ (1992b: 6). Their findings, however, place an interesting gloss on these issues.

Their interviews showed that the differences in orientation between senior staff
and classroom teachers seemed to hold whether the schools concerned were winners or losers: at all schools – including losers – senior staff were in favour of LMS while at almost all schools class teachers were indifferent, wary or hostile. The only exceptions to the general finding were large primary schools where teachers as well as heads seemed positively oriented towards LMS, because, it is argued, these schools represented an exception to the rule in drawing classroom teachers into LMS decision making through the development planning process.

Some of the research findings concerning middle managers in schools, especially heads of subject departments, raise similar issues. Both Levacic and Marren (1992b) and Bowe and Ball (1992) find that some heads of subject departments feel disempowered under LMS, in part because of the concentration of key decisions at senior management level, but also because formula funding has removed an important source of independent resource power – funds from LEA subject advisers. Bowe and Ball also suggest that there is an increasing tendency to delegate difficult resource decisions within schools rather than involve middle managers corporately in their solution.
constraints assumed more importance than discussing the principles on which costs might be balanced with benefits. (1992: 76)

Currently the evidence of the impact of LMS on decision-making patterns within schools is quite limited beyond the general finding about centralization.

However, given that any thorough analysis of effectiveness and efficiency must link resource considerations with curriculum delivery and the quality of learning, and teaching and learning depend primarily on classroom teachers and middle managers, research on LMS will have to probe more deeply before long. The search for efficiency and effectiveness: the emerging agenda

So far I have attempted to map some of the research findings concerning the very early stages of a major innovation. These findings are inevitably tentative,

but they do raise issues about the implications of LMS for the pursuit of efficiency and effectiveness. What can we say in general about these questions?

The Birmingham survey (Arnott et al. 1992) asked headteachers about their views in this area: 83% agreed that LMS ‘allows the school to make more effective use of its resources’, while only 68% agreed that LMS ‘means resources are being used more efficiently’. The difference is an interesting one; the problem, however, is that effectiveness and efficiency are not defined. Indeed, the research on LMS is often
not precise in its use of these terms. For example, Bowe and Ball (1992: 112-113) write about ‘budgetary responsibilities [being] set over and against educational ones’ as ‘decisions about the best and most appropriate form of delivery for the National Curriculum were subordinated to budget setting and vocabularies of institutional survival’. On the other hand, Broadbent et al. (1992a) found that in all four of their case study schools, winners and losers alike, ‘educational values of the school remain intact. Nowhere has been heard the argument that any of the school’s activities should be stopped or reduced because of the economic or financial reasons only’ (1992a: 65). It is not clear here how far such conclusions represent contradictory evidence, which may or may not be explained by the differing circumstances of the schools studied, how far they arise from different conceptualizations of ‘educational values’ (and hence of effectiveness), or indeed how far the data-gathering processes are such as to elicit different responses from respondents. The rest of this paper will explore the efficiency and effectiveness consequences of LMS in more detail. Efficiency I will begin by considering the issue of efficiency as this is more consistently explored in the studies being examined and lends itself to less ambiguous conclusions. It can be addressed at two levels: the macro and the micro.
At the macro level issues arise about the distribution of resources between schools, especially in relation to school size. As we have seen, virtually all LEAs have built an element into their formulae to 'protect' smaller schools. There is no doubt that small schools have higher unit costs than large ones. For example, the Audit Commission (1991) estimated that primary schools with less than 80 pupils on roll cost between £2000 and £3800 per pupil against £1000 for schools with more than 120 pupils. The limitations imposed on funding formulae by the Government, together with the political consequences of making this cost information more openly available at a time of severely constrained budgets, is likely to lead to pressures for rationalization over the next few years, at least in urban areas, and hence to the achievement of greater efficiency in unit cost terms. At least. For example, Levacic (1992b: 6) found in a study of one LEA that: . . . the formula is efficiency promoting in the sense that schools with low unit costs (which are related to size pupil-teacher ratios and occupancy rates) systematically benefit.

Further studies are likely to repeat this finding. However, it begs a number of questions about optimal school size which will be addressed shortly.

At the micro level of the individual school, an issue which
has received less attention than formula construction has been the dynamic effects of the formula funding process itself. The requirement that formulae should be 'objective’ means that the consequences of changes in independent variables - such as the number and age distribution of pupils, the relative weighting given to pupils of different ages or the number of pupils with special needs - on the dependent variable of the school budget can be predicted largely unambiguously. This should enable us to explore the consequences of such changes for provision within the school. What is the impact on the school’s budget, for example, of a given change in roll or of a changed proportion of pupils with special needs?

What choices do schools make about resource allocation at the margin in response to such budget changes, and what does this tell us about their values in relation to ideas of effectiveness and efficiency? And how far are school strategies influenced by their perceived consequences for future funding?

The issue of school size is particularly interesting in this context. As indicated earlier, there is certainly evidence from case studies that small schools find LMS more difficult to manage than large ones, especially if they are budget
losers. However, as LMS develops, two further issues are likely to come to the fore. These are the consequences of changes in school size and, related to this, the concept of ‘optimum size’. As formula funding responds to changing patterns of parental choice as well as to population changes, schools will discover that ‘becoming smaller’ involves a rather different set of problems from those associated with ‘being small’. Arnott et al. (1992: 16) found that: . . . a substantial number of primary schools may be experiencing annual changes in pupil numbers equal to a roll change of 4%. Many secondary schools may be experiencing roll changes of 2.5%. These are changes that have a significant impact on their budgets and do not appear to be a consequence of competition. The requirement that, from April 1993, 80% of the Aggregated Schools Budget (ASB) be allocated on the basis of pupil numbers is likely to heighten this effect.

These changes, of course, may involve increases as well as decreases in roll, and in fact seem to be distributed approximately equally between them. Roll falls, however, are likely to cause the most problems, although the exact nature of these problems will be directly related to the design of the formula under which any particular school is resourced. Whether small schools are protected through a sliding scale of additional resources or through a flat rate allocation of resources to all schools will be critical in determining the possibilities available to schools in responding to falling rolls. Decisions made at the margin and from year to year will
need to consider carefully the balance between efficiency and effectiveness. How far, for example, and for how long, will a school be able to provide a particular curriculum package before diseconomies of scale force it to modify its objectives?

Conversely, how will growing schools strike a balance between resourcing a given curriculum more intensively and broadening the range of activities available to pupils? It is common to discuss matters of size primarily in terms of efficiency, with educational objectives taken as given. Yet school size clearly has an effectiveness dimension too. Many would argue that when a school’s size goes beyond a given range it is no longer the same school. For example, Bowe and Ball found that ‘In fact all of our case study schools actually developed and operated with a fairly well worked out sense of “optimum” or “preferred” size’ (1992: 46), and they go on to argue that ‘the rhetoric of the market has failed to address the issues involved in the impact of growth on quality in complex “people-processing” institutions like schools’ (1992: 49).

Whatever a school’s size, a major consequence of LMS is the extension of choice about the ways in which it can deploy its resources. At present evidence is patchy about the ways in which schools choose to exercise this increased
freedom. More case studies over a longer period will be necessary before any clear patterns emerge. However, two themes can be identified which suggest that both technical and price efficiency considerations are increasingly likely to influence schools’ decision-making processes.

The first relates to the overall balance between the major areas of expenditure: teaching staff, support staff, materials and premises-related expenditure.

Prior to the implementation of delegated budgets, most LEAs determined the number of teaching and support staff allocated to schools on the basis of different formulae with no virement allowed between them or into or out of other areas of budget expenditure. It is difficult to generalize but two trends do seem apparent: schools are thinking more creatively about the number and types of support staff they need (Mortimore and Mortimore 1992), and increasing attention is being given to efficiency savings in areas of expenditure related to premises and grounds.

Second, the role of resource pricing is likely to change, particularly with respect to teaching staff salaries. It is Government policy that this should be so: schools are funded on the basis of average not actual
salary costs, and there are
increasing possibilities for schools to be flexible in their
patterns of staff reward.

We have already noted a trend for some schools to use
discretionary authority
over salary levels and to be influenced in their
appointments by salary costs. The
evidence suggests that these opportunities are only being
used in a minority of
cases at present, but this is likely to change over time.
The research on LMS to date, then, is most illuminating in
relation to effi
ciency. There is some evidence that larger (and hence more
efficient?) schools
are being favoured at the expense of smaller ones. And it
also seems that schools
are increasingly choosing to deploy resources in new ways
which imply some –
albeit crude – sense of technical and price efficiency in
their decision making.

As Levacic argues: The evidence ... shows that
delegated budgeting and the development of quasi-markets
has improved efficiency on the input side of the education
production function. School managers are seeking and finding
new ways of using and combining resource inputs. (1993:
25)

What is not clear, however, is how these changes relate to
educational outcomes.

Indeed, it is not always clear that the choices being made
are concerned with
efficiency rather then with economy: how for example, are we
to interpret the
appointment of a probationary rather than an experienced
teacher because of
budgetary pressures? There is little evidence about the ‘mental production func
tions’ which underpin managers’ choices about the allocation of resources, nor
is there any clear evidence about the impact of these choices on pupil learning or
other outcomes. This leads us to a consideration of effectiveness. Effectiveness

As the foregoing suggests, a good deal of the research on the implementation
of LMS can be explored in terms of its consequences for efficiency. Attempts to
apply an effectiveness perspective, however, are fraught with difficulties both
conceptual and empirical, and little of the research to date attempts to deal
with the issue, at least explicitly, within an LMS context.

The most obvious way to explore effectiveness in education is to address the
issue of pupil learning. The Birmingham study asked heads directly whether chil
dren’s learning was benefiting from LMS: 35% said it was while 31% said that it
was not. Similarly 35% agreed that LMS ‘reduced staff time for the direct support
of children’s learning’ while 40% disagreed. The authors comment as follows: M A N A G E M E N T O F S C H O O L S

The paradox in our survey data is a matter of concern. How is it that heads are claiming that LM allows more ‘effective’ use of resources whilst reporting uncertainty about its effects on learning? This raises many questions. Might it be the case, for example, that whilst head teachers welcome the ‘flexibility’ of LM it is at a cost - in some schools - of an additional workload upon the head which affects their familiarity with the pupils’ learning? Or does the paradox arise where head teachers welcome the opportunities to make decisions without having to obtain
LEA approval, recognise this as enabling a better use of resources but are not clear as to its effects on learning? Is the paradox a short term phenomenon, as the change becomes embedded, or does it relate to long term difficulties which may be associated with schools size and levels of resourcing. Are there explanations to be found in terms of the head teacher’s role as manager? (Arnott et al. 1992: 6)

Of course, these points address only part of the problem. They beg the question of whether heads were equating effectiveness with children’s learning and, even if they were, whether they shared a conception of what ‘benefits’ in learning means.

The issue of how effectiveness is to be defined, let alone who is to define it, is therefore not addressed. This is the case for most of the studies reported here.

Bowe and Ball, however, give one interpretation of this issue: [Tensions] surround the definition of purpose, and these arise mainly from the constraints, requirements and opportunities created from the provisions of ERA. For example . . . educational decision-making may be set against budget-led planning, professional judgement against the expediencies of market image and professional autonomy against managerial fiat. Thus the development of ‘new management’ is not simply or primarily a structural or administrative change (although new roles and relationships are created): it is also a profound change in organisational culture. (Bowe and Ball 1992: 145–146)

The point here is that, through LMS and its associated developments in relation to parental choice, schools are increasingly being expected to act as if they are enterprises in a ‘quasi-market’. However, ‘precisely what such enterprises max imise, or could be expected to maximise, is unclear, as is their ownership struc
ture’ (Le Grand 1990: 5). The truth is that educational
organizations must respond to a variety of competing claims on them from groups whose conceptions of effectiveness may differ considerably, as does the nature of their influence on school-level decisions (Kouzes and Mico 1979). The result of the reforms of which LMS is a part has been to establish at least three perspectives from which effectiveness can be viewed.

EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND LOCAL MANAGEMENT

The first is that of national policy emanating from the Department for Education and embodied in legislation and regulations. The key elements here are the establishment of National Curriculum requirements and associated tests and examinations, and - no less important - the requirement that certain kinds of information, for example on examination and test results and on truancy, should be published. At this level, therefore, it could be claimed that a very clear definition of effectiveness is being mandated by Government.

Simultaneously, however, schools are expected to become more responsive to parental choice. It is possible, of course, that parental conceptions of school effectiveness are consistent with the Government’s emphasis on examination and test results and attendance. However, in so far as this is not the case, schools
must attempt to ascertain parental expectations, perhaps try to influence them,
and consider how their own strategies - including those of resource management
- should take account of parental concerns.
Finally, those working within schools will have their own concerns and
values. These may give rise to professional judgements about what is in the best
interests of the particular set of pupils in their care which may or may not
entirely match the expectations of the Government or of parents. They may also,
of course, be expressed in particular professional interests which they wish to
advance or protect.
It is difficult to discuss school effectiveness in the context of LMS without
considering these complexities. We can do little more than pose some relevant
questions:

- How far will the Government’s emphasis on test and examination performance backed up by the comparative publication of results lead schools to shift their balance of priorities towards academic achievement (especially that defined by test and exam scores) above other objectives?

- How far will parental expectations, or schools’ perceptions of these, (especially if they are not adequately encompassed by examination and test results) modify schools’ objectives?

- How far, as schools expand or contract, will schools of different sizes be seen, or claim, to be qualitatively different in the kinds of experience they offer pupils?

- How far will schools modify their professional definitions
of the needs of individual pupils and groups – such as those with special needs – and their priorities amongst them if these are felt to be inconsistent with other externally imposed demands?

• How far will schools’ freedom to make choices about the allocation of resources be used to protect or to weaken teachers’ employment and working conditions?

• Will the various changes taking place in the school system lead to schools becoming more diverse or more alike in terms of the objectives they pursue?

These are complex questions not easily answered. What they do imply, however, is that, with changing demands on schools arising from the various threads within the legislation, the concept of effectiveness must be considered as both dynamic and contested: dynamic because definitions – whether explicit or implicit – will, for many schools, change over time as governors, managers and classroom teachers attempt to respond to pressures for change arising inside and outside the school; and contested because, for many schools, the various ways in which effectiveness might be defined may not prove easily reconcilable.

Economic analysis, therefore, cannot easily be separated from micro-political considerations.

The latter can be explored at two interrelated levels. One concerns the relationship of the school with its environment. This includes the school’s response to Government demands, to parental behaviour and to the responses of other
schools in the locality. Considerable research is taking place on these issues which suggests that environmental changes are indeed influencing schools in new ways but that both the changes themselves and the responses are more complex and differentiated than might perhaps be expected. There is a growing body of research on parental choice but rather less on school responses to such choice (Glatter et al. 1993). A research study at the Open University is exploring the interactions which occur in the 'competitive arenas' which are developing as a result of recent reforms (Glatter and Woods 1993, Woods 1992). The issues emerging from this and related research can only be touched on here. Two differentiated, among other things, by social factors. [Our] analysis . . . suggest that working class parents display significant differences (compared with middle class parents) in their pattern of priorities: in particular . . . they attach importance to their child’s preference for the school and his or her friends being there. The factor most important to professional and middle class parents was the school’s standard of academic education . . . The question is whether the differing priorities are the result of social inequalities (manifested for working class families in transport difficulties and a belief that certain schools are ‘not for them’) or whether they represent variations in values that stem from dissimilar (and equally valid) cultural perspectives. (Glatter and Woods 1993).

should receive priority (assuming, of course, that certain types of preference are incompatible in terms of their policy and resource allocation implications), and, indeed, which groups of parents they particularly wish to attract.
The second point concerns school responses to parental choice. Here a distinction is made between changes which are ‘substantive (to do with policies, efficiency, effectiveness and local management)’ and those which are ‘concerned only with image and activities aimed at promoting the school’ (Woods 1992: 207). The Open University study is finding responses of both kinds. Changes of the former kind, drawn from a variety of schools, . . . include alterations to homework policy, the introduction of banding, emphasis on the caring and pastoral aspects of schooling, encouragement of staff to gain more qualifications, increased stress on extra-curricular activities and greater community access to school facilities . . . Whether such changes are in line with what parents want is another matter. Our data do not yet allow us to draw conclusions. However, it is apparent . . . that in general enthusiasm for finding out what parents want is considerably less than for promoting the school to parents and the wider community. (Glatter and Woods 1993: 15)

The ways in which schools choose how to respond to parental and other expectations in formulating resource allocation and other policies leads us to a consideration of the second key micro-political arena – that of the school itself.

Where there are inconsistencies and potential contradictions between different interpretations of a school’s purposes and priorities attention is inevitably focused on the processes through which decisions are made. Of particular
significance here is the evidence presented earlier about the growing ‘gap’

between senior managers and classroom teachers under LMS. From an economic perspective this can be viewed as a form of task specialization which may be potentially efficient. In the vast majority of organisations the financial function is a specialism. Financial management is a task for senior management and should only impinge on teachers to the extent that it affects their immediate job. This division of labour implies an increasing differentiation between class teacher and senior manager and the need for the latter to acquire a range of competencies and understanding that extends beyond curriculum leadership. (Levacˇi´c and Marren 1992b: 9)

The question which then arises is: To what extent is class teacher involvement in financial decision making required in order for local management to result in improvements in teaching and learning expected of it by its proponents? (1992b: 10)

For Bowe and Ball, however, the evidence can be interpreted in another way: MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS The ‘gap’ between the new managers and teachers is not simply a division produced by role specialization. It also represents a division of values and purposes. Establishing a balance between the marketing of the school and its income on the one hand, and making the right choices for individual students on the other. (1992: 159)

A similar view is expressed by Broadbent et al. (1992a). For them, organi

zational responses to LMS may cause the ‘lifeworlds’ of the school to become fragmented with a small group of senior staff, working with governors, increas

ing the market-oriented and managerial values associated with LMS while the rest of the staff maintain traditional, pupil-oriented professional values. They do not think this inevitable, but where it
does occur schools could
become 'schizoid . . . having different lifeworlds within different groups of organisational members. This may then lead to conflict within the organisation'

(Broadbent et al., 1992a: 67).

The argument here is that there is a contest within the school through which senior managers increasingly mediate the concepts of effectiveness arising from the demands of Government regulations and the 'market' while classroom teachers attempt to defend traditional, professional values deriving from the individual assessment of pupil needs. The implication is that these two sets of concerns are inevitably in conflict, or at least in tension. Clearly this does not necessarily follow: the degree of consistency between the values and expecta
tions of different groups is an empirical question. The debate does, however, raise important issues about patterns of coupling within schools. What LMS does do is to emphasize 'a corporatist' conception of a school's purposes - which is inevitably reflected in the concerns of senior managers - in contrast to a more 'individualist' one which is the prime concern of classroom teachers. In the corporatist conception, effectiveness is an aggregative concept relating to the achievement of broad objectives demonstrated through such
indicators as aggregated measures of examination success expressed in league tables and trends in parental choice of school. In the individualist conception, effectiveness lies in the degree to which the complex needs of each child are identified and met and his or her learning maximized. In the days before the reforms it was possible – indeed common – for school managers to share with teachers an individualist conception of effectiveness; as the implementation of the reforms unfolds this is becoming more difficult.

What are the implications of this discussion for a consideration of school effectiveness in the context of LMS? The key point, surely, is to accept the tested and dynamic nature of the concept and to explore how its interpretation is reflected both in the choices which are made at school level and in resulting outcomes. It has always been the case that those within schools have had the task of reconciling as far as possible the demands of internal and external stakeholders and making choices about the use of resources in relation to these. The major change arising from the legislation is that the balance of power has been redistributed among the stakeholders and the framework of
constraints surrounding

resource choices has been changed. In this context, it is
highly relevant to ask

what it is that those within schools now seek to achieve
and how they use the

new powers granted under LMS to enable them to do it. There
are at least three

ways into this issue.

The first would be through careful longitudinal analysis of
expenditure pat
terns in an attempt to explore the concept of effectiveness
through examining

schools' values-in-use as opposed to their espoused values
(Argyris and Schon

1974). The kinds of questions which might be addressed by
such an approach

include:

• How far do schools use their increased discretion over
resource use to channel resources of various kinds
(including staff time) to the direct support of teaching
and learning?

• Where resources do support teaching and learning, what
aspects of the curriculum and which groups of pupils
benefit? For example, is the emphasis on maximizing
test/examination achievement or on targeting pupils with
special needs?

• What resources are devoted to the management of LMS,
including the management of the ‘marketing’ function?

• What resources are devoted to the enhancement of the
school’s image?

• Are teaching technologies modified, through resource
substitution (such as employing more support staff and
fewer teachers) or through deploying existing resources
differently (such as streaming or setting)? If so do such
changes occur in response to professional judgement or to
parental influence?
• Are resources used in ways which improve or protect teachers’ conditions of service (for example, through protecting permanent posts, providing free meals for teachers, or maximizing supply cover)?

Information relating to questions such as these would help to illuminate discussion about the kinds of changes which are taking place in schools’ implicit objective functions as they wrestle with the consequences of LMS and its related reforms. Interpreting such evidence would not be unproblematic, however.

Information about patterns of resource allocation is notoriously capable of multiple interpretations: for example, decisions to protect full-time teaching posts might be interpreted in terms of the technological assumption that small group sizes and teacher stability are the prime determinants of teaching quality or in terms of the protection of teacher interests. Such alternative interpretations cannot easily be tested, however, because so little is known about the production function in education. Furthermore, and partly because of this, choices of technology may be as subject to micro-political negotiation as choices of objectives. An excellent example of this is the case quoted by Bowe and Ball (1992: 50-52) of a school under pressure to change its pattern of pupil organization in English in response to parental pressure and despite strong teacher
A second way to approach the effectiveness question is to consider whether the ways in which schools manage themselves under LMS embody specific attempts to use the flexibilities which LMS gives to focus on key outcomes, especially that of improving pupil learning. It might be asked, for example, whether LMS increases or reduces the likelihood of schools developing the characteristics associated in the literature with ‘effective schools’ (Rutter et al. 1979, Mortimore et al. 1988, Riddell and Brown 1991). The evidence available at present only addresses this issue in a fairly limited way. It might be argued, for example, that: [i]f, as seems evident . . . principals become primarily concerned with financial management and public relations within the education marketplace, then the educational leadership which researchers find to be strongly associated with effective schooling, will be minimal, if not totally compromised. (Ball 1993: 7)

On the other hand, there is some evidence to suggest that there is an increasing concern in schools to clarify objectives and priorities, to plan to achieve these and to monitor success. Certainly LMS has been accompanied by strong regulatory and other pressures for schools to engage in systematic ‘school development’ (Hargreaves et al. 1989, Hargreaves and Hopkins 1991). The Birmingham study found, for example, that: Development
Plans (DP) are prepared in almost all schools, although it is a very recent innovation. The adoption of a DP had led more than half of schools to review their statement of aims. . . [O]ver half of heads [reported] that DPS help in planning, prioritising and evaluating. Only 9% (63) reported that its preparation had not been helpful. (Arnott et al. 1992: 13)

Such managerial approaches may be seen as an attempt to resolve, or at least reduce, the tension between the corporatist and individualist perspectives described earlier, although the evidence suggests that the turbulence of the policy environment makes such planning particularly difficult in present circumstances (Hutchinson 1993, Wallace 1991a, b). Furthermore, it is dangerous to generalize about concepts such as development planning which can mean very different things in different school contexts. This is undoubtedly an area where we need to know more and where a conclusion about British research to date would mirror that of Wohlstetter and Odden in relation to US research on school-based management (SBM):

EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND LOCAL MANAGEMENT There also is scant research on the intervening variables that have been shown to be related to student learning. How does SBM change the enacted curriculum? . . . How does SBM help to build a collegial or professional teacher culture at the school? . . . How does SBM build a powerful change process? (1992: 536)

The linking of school effectiveness research and research on LMS is clearly an area for possible development in the future.
Finally, the issue of effectiveness might be addressed by considering the impact of LMS on school outputs directly. The problems associated with such an approach are clear, not least that of separating out the effects of LMS from those arising from other changes. As our earlier discussions have suggested, much of the work to date, for example in relation to formula-based resourcing and to school size, is primarily concerned with unit costs of provision and the definition of need in terms of expenditure levels. In this respect it mirrors most of the work on economies of scale in education. It does not attempt to relate costs to any measures of output such as learning achieved or examination success. Conversely, British literature on school effectiveness, referred to earlier, gives relatively little attention to questions of resources and costs. There is, however, a large and growing body of literature on the measurement of school performance with a particularly active debate on the measurement of value added. Little of this has been related directly to LMS but here again there is clear potential for future developments. A fourth ‘E’: equity

Before concluding, it is important to recognize that the educational reforms have major equity implications. Indeed, it could be argued that, despite the Govern
ment’s strong emphasis on the objectives of increasing effectiveness, efficiency

and choice in the school system, it will be equity considerations which are likely
to dominate the debate as the consequences of the reforms begin to work

through. However, the issue of equity has received only limited systematic

attention in the research on LMS. Like effectiveness and efficiency, it can be con

sidered in a number of ways.

First, a distinction clearly needs to be made between procedural and distribu
tional equity. With respect to the former, it can be argued that the distribution of

resources by formula is now ‘more equitable in that it is based on objective cri

teria (in the sense that the criteria are set out as common rules and not deter

mined by administrative discretion)’ (Levacˇi´c 1992a: 27). The implications for
distributional equity, however, are both more complex and less clear.

Wildavsky (1979) distinguishes between ‘market equity’ under which ser

vices are distributed equally among users, and ‘equal results’ under which

resources are distributed in ways which attempt to ensure that all benefit equally M A N A G E M E N T O F S C H O O

L S

and that inequalities in starting points are compensated for. Certainly the design

of formulae generally addresses equity questions more
explicitly than it does those of efficiency and effectiveness. Since at least 80% of the budget must be allocated on the basis of the number and ages of pupils with the remainder available for use to compensate for pupils’ special needs and circumstances and for the diseconomies associated with small schools, the implicit rationale for the funding of schools appears to be one of equal opportunity qualified by some gestures towards equal results. However, clearly the issue is deeper than this. The requirement that the basic age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) should be the same for all children of the same age in any LMS scheme introduces an element of equity, but only on the assumption that age is the prime determinant of need. Since this is only partially the case, much then depends on how allocations to small schools and to meet the needs of socially disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs actually work out. LEA’s differ considerably in the ways they treat these factors, as indeed they do in their age-weightings and in the amount spent per pupil unit. Furthermore, the ability to meet differential need adequately is limited by the requirements to allocate the bulk of the budget on the basis of AWPU’s and to make the formula simple and objective (Lee 1992).
The issue is further complicated by the impact of parental choice on pupil opportunity. Many writers argue that, where such choice exists, situations will soon arise where popular schools will be able to select their pupils rather than the other way around, and this issue is made even more sensitive by the Government’s creation of a new class of schools – grant-maintained schools (GMS) – which can, on the basis of a parental ballot, ‘opt out’ of LEA control and be directly funded by central government.

It is not possible in this paper to review the substantial literature on the consequences of the creation of a more competitive education market in the UK. However, some points should be noted, particularly in relation to the level of the individual school, where the interrelationship between effectiveness, efficiency and equity needs to be better understood. In other words, we need to supplement our earlier discussion about decision makers’ conceptions of what is to be achieved through their resource choices and how with a consideration of whom they wish to benefit.

Here again the consequences of LMS need to be related to the wider package of educational reforms. Increasing competition accompanied by the publication of particular performance indicators, notably examination
results and attendance

rates, is likely to affect not only schools’ definitions of their purposes and their allocation of resources in pursuit of these purposes, but also their perception of pupils as ‘raw materials’ rather than ‘clients’. It can be hypothesized that an incentive system which emphasizes test and examination success will encourage schools, first, to become more selective in their admissions policies and, second, to exclude pupils who exhibit behavioural or other problems which affect the school’s image or place particularly heavy demands on resources, especially teachers’ time (Ball 1993). This is clearly an important area for research. At present systematic evidence is limited, although there are some indications that both of these hypotheses are being validated in some cases (Stirling 1992).

A second issue relating to equity at school level concerns the ways in which resources are distributed internally among groups of pupils with differing educational needs. We need to explore decision makers’ assumptions about the contribution which particular patterns of resource allocation make to the achievements of particular groups of pupils. Relevant here is Brown and Saks’s (1975) distinction

E F F I C I E N C Y , E F F E C T I V E N E S S A N D L O C A L M A N A G E M E N T
tion between 'levellers' who prefer smaller dispersions of pupil performance and 'elitists' who are willing to accept wider dispersions for the sake of higher mean levels of performance. Very little has been written about this so far; it is an area where much more research is needed. Conclusion

This review of selected parts of the research literature on LMS suggests a number of findings which, given their tentative nature, might best be considered as hypotheses in need of further research. At a macro level, formula funding is tending to favour larger schools at the expense of smaller ones and is making assumptions upon which schools are funded more transparent. It is leading to a developing debate about the relationship between resources and needs. At the level of the individual school, LMS seems to be encouraging resource decision making which is consciously efficiency enhancing. However, the conception of efficiency used here is strongly input oriented, and it is not clear how choices made by schools about their patterns of resource acquisition and deployment relate to intended or actual learning outcomes or to other conceptions of effectiveness. Indeed, there is little evidence concerning the impact of LMS on school effectiveness, beyond examples of schools responding to parental choice.
through both ‘image-enhancing’ and ‘substantive’ changes in curriculum and organization. Furthermore, it is too early to draw firm conclusions about the consequences for efficiency and effectiveness of changes in school size which will occur as a result of increased parental choice as well as of demographic changes.

The nature of school responses to LMS seems to depend both on their circumstances (especially whether they are ‘winners’ or ‘losers’ under LMS formulae) and on the managerial approaches of their leaders. These leaders are finding themselves increasingly functionally separated from their staffs as they address issues of ‘corporate’ effectiveness in relation to the demands of external stakeholders while classroom teachers continue to concern themselves with the more individual needs of pupils within a context increasingly defined by the demands of the National Curriculum and testing. This separation is reflected in differences in orientation to LMS itself – headteachers overwhelmingly in favour, classroom teachers less so – whatever the resourcing experience of the schools in which they work.

More generally the paper suggests that, while the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness provide a useful and important framework for examining the management of schools...
sequences of LMS, and much of the research can be related to these ideas and

leads to interesting, if tentative, conclusions, much would be gained by a more

rigorous and consistent use of the concepts. In particular, fundamental

consideration needs to be given to how efficiency and effectiveness are to be

interpreted and measured in a situation where schools’ objective functions are

both dynamic and contested, and greater consideration needs to be given to the

interrelationship between efficiency and effectiveness and ideas of equity. Acknowledgements

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In his classic textbook on the economics of education, published a quarter of a century ago, Mark Blaug (1970) commented: . . . the surprising thing about the economics of education is the extent to which the subject invariably draws upon the most basic concepts of economics. . . . We do not need to know a great deal of economics to apply it to education, but the little we do know we must have in our bones. (p. xv)

There remains a great deal of force and validity in that statement and part of my purpose is to show how the application of basic concepts continues to illuminate policy choices. However, it is also my intention to argue that national and inter

national changes in education—notably the emergence of market forms—require economists to contribute to a clarifying analysis about the organizational contexts through which educational provision is made. This
article begins, there
fore, by outlining the main features of such an analysis and leads to the proposi
tion that the challenge to policy-makers is how best to manage a mixed economy
of provision. Such a proposition places a great deal of emphasis on an empiri
cism which tries to describe and explain the impact of different 'mixes' of
market and non-market forms. It is at this stage, therefore, that I draw upon the
concepts of efficiency and equity—as key social and economic criteria for eval
uating policy change—and apply them to some of the field research I have
undertaken in recent years. Finally, I intend to consider the status of research
evidence in contributing to 'objective' judgements on the performance of educa
tion systems in meeting their goals. The article ends with a brief conclusion. Exchange relations as mixed economies

There is a good deal of confusion in some contemporary usage of the language
of markets in education. For example, in a book which 'attempts to explain the
philosophical underpinnings of the educational uses of terms which share a
“family resemblance” with “markets” and “managers”' (Halliday, 1990: vii), it
is evident that much of the text is concerned with the increased orientation of
education to the ‘needs of the economy’ (p. vii) through vocational training and
responding to employers as consumers of education. Indeed, the author is sup
portive of an increasing role for ‘free markets’ in determining the curriculum (p.
156). McMurty (1992) provides a second example of the elision of ‘markets’
with the needs of the economy, whereas what is described is a hierarchic model
of government control. Such problems of definition and usage are not confined
to education. In a collection of historical essays on The Culture of the Market
(Haskell and Teichgraeber III, 1993), none of the contributors provides a defini
tion of a ‘market’. Much closer to conventional definitions are the usage of
Bowe and Ball with Gold (1992: Ch. 2, passim) where the underlying assump
tions of an ideal-type market are given and their limitations addressed. There is
also a recognition—following Le Grand—that what exist in education are quasi
markets. However, the identification of the quasi-market appears to lapse and
the chapter contains the following usage: markets; ‘markets’; quasi-markets;
micro-markets; psuedo-markets (p. 45, no definition); social markets (p. 46, no
definition) and untrammelled market (p. 56, no definition). In their definition, Le
Grand et al. describe markets as . . . a form of economic organisation in which the majority of allocation decisions are made through the ostensibly uncoordinated actions of large numbers of individuals and private firms. The coordination of activities . . . comes about because each
factor of production (land, labour and capital) and each commodity has a price to which diverse groups respond in a way that reconciles their separate actions . . . (1992: 21)

Yet, the maintained-school system is almost wholly funded by general taxation and, for parents and pupils, is free at the point of consumption. The overall level of spending is determined by government (central and local), and the means of production are largely owned or employed by government, which also deter mines the rules for allocating funds to schools. More important still, the curricu

lum and assessment of pupils is largely determined by the Secretary of State. 1

Indeed, in many ways, the maintained-school system is the counterpart of the

‘market’ system: By ‘market’ is usually meant an allocative and distributive mechanism, the counterpart of which is not the state but ‘hierarchy’ and ‘planning’. E F F I C I E N C Y, E Q U I T Y A N D E X C H A N G E I N E D U C A T I O N Where the ‘unit act’ of markets is voluntary exchange, the ‘unit act’ of hierarchies is ‘command’. (Berger, 1990: 104)

It might be argued, of course, that I am missing the point and, indeed, there is undoubted force in characterizing the form of decentralization in England and Wales as a pupils-as-vouchers scheme with many market-like features (Thomas, 1988: 23). There are, nonetheless, strong arguments for a careful analysis of markets and their alternatives, not to classify usage as ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ but to provide a sounder basis for the analysis of education policies. I have set out such
an analysis elsewhere and outlined a framework for clarifying the exchange relationships in the school system; the advantages and disadvantages associated with each form of exchange are considered and it is argued that no one form alone is either realistic or desirable (Thomas, 1994). It is not my purpose, therefore, to set out that argument here, but, in order to advance the wider analysis, it is necessary to summarize the framework.

In the 1994 article I argued that two concepts—interest and decision—provide the means of defining and discussing the mechanisms by which a society decides upon how much education it requires, what is to be provided, who is to provide it and to whom. The dimensions of Figure 1 represent each of these concepts.

The market, for example, represents those circumstances where decision making is decentralized and self-interest is assumed to be the motive force of human action. By retaining the assumption of self-interest and introducing centralization as the locus of decision, we move to an allocative system characterized by ‘hierarchies’. This can be taken to represent the command view of the state and is the conventional opposite of the ‘market’. The distinction of
‘markets’ with ‘hierarchies’, presented by Berger and others is, however, more illuminating. It is a distinction which rests upon the concept of the ‘unit act’ which, in ‘markets is voluntary exchange [and in] hierarchies is “command”’ (Berger, 1990: 104).

The third form of organization I label the college. This ideal type identifies those contexts where altruism is assumed to be the motive force of human behaviour.

I take altruism to be . . . behaviour that benefits another (unrelated) actor and which imposes some cost on its originator . . .; it excludes behaviour to benefit a close relative someone with whose interests the actor may be presumed to identify, and altruism is defined here in behavioural terms and has not been related . . . to the motives of the actor involved. (Ware, 1990: 187)

The choice of the word ‘college’ to represent this ideal type has the merit of creating an image of relatively small groups, the consequences of whose actions for others within the group can be anticipated. The self-images of professional groups, for example, would lay claim to modes of behaviour which place the interests of clients ahead of those of the service provider. We do not need to accept that image uncritically in order to recognize the place of some forms of altruistic behaviour as an important component of the commitment of some working groups, and relevant, therefore, to our understanding of how societies
produce and distribute goods and services.

The final ideal type allocative mechanism is the collective. Here, decisions are taken by altruists but the locus of decision is centralized. The social order is one where its members draw satisfaction from an increase in the goods available to others and where there is general agreement that the efficient production of these goods and services requires complex organizations and centralized decision making. Decision-makers would also make decisions on which goods and services should be produced, which breaks the personal connection between the provider and the recipient which would occur in the ‘college’, so that utility is derived impersonally from the act of giving.

The work of Titmuss (1970) on blood donation in the UK illustrates a real world example of the production of goods and services and also argues that altruism draws forth acts of reciprocity. If this is so, it might equally be asserted that recent emphasis on self-interest will also draw forth reciprocity in kind, clearly an issue that needs to be taken into account when we consider the effect of changes in the mix of allocative mechanisms. That the choice lies in the emphases in our mixed models, however, is central to my argument. There is no
choice between market and non-market provision in education but a world where these forms of provision necessarily coexist: It has been the purpose of this paper to argue that a debate which juxtaposes ‘markets’ against some alternative(s) can be over-simplistic as, indeed, would be an argument as to whether people are motivated by self-interest or by altruism... what is required is the much more complex resolution of the balance(s) to be struck between the variety of EFFICIENCY, EQUITY AND EXCHANGE means by which education services are produced and allocated in our society—the mixed economies to be found within the matrix bounded by decision and interest. (Thomas, 1994: 52-3)

This view places a premium upon empiricism, as the choices required on the best mix of allocative/exchange mechanisms depend upon evidence on the nature and consequence of the mix and should not be guided by a value-based predisposition for or against markets, command, college or collective. Let me turn, therefore, to consider some data on the nature and consequence of the mixed economy of exchange relations in our school system. In doing so I intend, inter alia, both to illustrate the importance of the concepts of efficiency and equity to our analysis and to illuminate the paradoxes and ironies of some contemporary assumptions about markets. I will do so through two 'vignettes' from research projects in which I have participated. Efficiency and equity in mixed economies

Efficiency is one of the more abused words in the lexicon of economics, having been used by the government over the last decade and more as a code for cheap
ness. As it is not my usage, let me begin with a definition of economic efficiency.

This . . . refers to the use of the budget in such a way that, given relative prices, the most productive combination of resources is used. That is, no alternative combination of resources, given the budgetary constraint, would enable the organization to produce a higher output. (Levin, 1976: 153)

This definition makes some demanding assumptions about production possibilities, which are: . . . governed by certain technical relationships, and the production function simply describes the maximum output feasible with different sets of inputs . . . it represents the maximum achievable output for given inputs. (Hanushek, 1979: 353)

On this criterion, we can be confident that schools are not efficient. That this should be so turns primarily on the absence of a convincing or wholly adequate theory of learning—a prerequisite for specifying clear technical relationships as a predictive basis for the relationship between inputs and educational outcomes. 2 However, it is also a consequence of imperfections in the labour market, in which prices do not represent marginal productivity and labour and other factors are not easily substituted for each other. There is the added difficulty that schools are multi-purpose organizations and the achievement of some goals are not always compatible with others. For these reasons, therefore, it would be more accurate to refer to schools as seeking to become more cost-effective, an efficiency-related concept which is not
predicated upon the same demanding conditions as production function studies.

Cost-effectiveness analysis compares alternative ways of achieving the same objective: the most cost-effective will be the least costly of alternatives being compared, which is not necessarily the cheapest possible method of attaining the objective. In practice, however, since the word ‘efficiency’ is used to describe these least cost conditions, it is a usage I will follow in this article.

Information on efficiency also contributes to an analysis of equity, which I take to be a concern with who gets what. Secada (1989) argues that, as a position, disparities between social groups in society is ‘an injustice in the educational system’s distribution of its goods and that affirmative steps should be taken to remedy those injustices’ (p. 3). He later develops an argument around the principle that equity ‘refers to our judgements about whether or not a given state of affairs is just’ (p. 68). As this is a theme that I examine more fully in the last main section of this article, I do not develop the argument further here and proceed to examples which raise issues of efficiency and equity in the context of changes in exchange mechanisms. Vignette one: is funding by age of pupil efficient and equitable?

Changes in the funding of schools was one of the major elements of recent
reforms in England and Wales. Using its newly acquired powers of ‘command’,

the national ministry set out detailed guidelines on how schools were to be

funded, which transformed conditions at the local level where, previously, most

Local Education Authorities (LEAs) had not known how much was spent on

individual schools. The old system was replaced by a published formula by

which all schools were funded on the same rules, so that comparable schools

would receive the same level of funding. Whilst the change led to some schools

gaining additional funds and others losing, there can be little doubt that the new

arrangements are, in principle, more equitable; conditions where levels of

funding were a mystery can, in Secada’s terms, scarcely be just.

When the new patterns of resource allocations are examined, however, the

basis for deciding the relative requirements of different age groups is not readily

apparent. Certainly, there is no consensus on their comparative requirements, so

that it is impossible to discern a common view on the resources needed to

provide an education, based upon the national curriculum, to pupils of different

ages. Table 1 shows the value in 1990 of the age-weighted pupil units (AWPUs)

in 10 LEAs, selected from a set of 71 because their AWPU
for 8-year-olds (Year 4) are close to the mean for the 71 LEAs. The data raise questions about efficiency and equity. Why do the LEAs in Table 38.1 differ in their assessment of the relative needs of pupils of different ages and why are the junior years cheapest? The step in funding from age 10 to age 11 has a mean of 38 percent, although it ranges from zero to 64 percent. Are these tenable in terms of differences in the requirement of the national curriculum? Following its own inquiry into this issue, the Education Committee of the House of Commons (1994) concluded: . . . that concentrating on the change in funding between Year 6 and Year 7 can obscure the more important issue: the enormous importance of primary education (which has traditionally not been recognised in the resources it receives) and the continuous nature of the education process. The current funding profile does not recognise this educational continuum . . .

The greatest relative differences in Table 1 are between the AWPU-1s for 8-year-olds as against 16–19-year-olds. In the Isle of Wight, for example, AWPU16 (£2325) is 2.9 times greater than the weighting of AWPU8 (£801). This compares with Sunderland, where the value of AWPU16 (£1664) is 2.08 times that of AWPU8 (£799). In some respects these age differences do no more than reflect the tradition of higher levels of resourcing for older students, but the different relative
judgements among LEAs suggest an area for further examination in order to inform efficiency judgements about the most appropriate way of matching finance to curriculum requirements. Adoption of new powers of ‘command’ in the funding of education has opened these issues to public scrutiny for the first time.

The impact of LEA formulae on the funding level of individual schools was examined in a study which tried to select comparable schools from different LEAs (Bullock and Thomas, 1992). The selected example in Figure 2 is for schools with 221 and 222 pupils on roll. In this set the greatest difference in the level of funding through AWPU occurs within an LEA. School 12 is the least well-placed school and requires 22.8 pupils to attract the funds for an additional teacher and School E7 needs only 18.9 pupils. The difference is equivalent to an extra 21 percent of funding through the AWPU. Schools in other LEAs are close to both these levels of funding.

School E5 is almost the least well-funded school on the formula per-pupil criterion, receiving £995, but School B15 has £962, £33 per pupil less.

The best-placed school on this criterion is School G3 with £1323, 27 percent more than is received by School B15. The data on the primary sector as whole
show a wide range in the funding of schools through the AWPU factor. The greatest difference within one size range is 25 percent in the value of an AWPU between the lowest and highest figure, which occurs for schools in the size range 122–3. The smallest range is 6 percent and is for the largest primary schools. All other ranges are greater than 10 percent. These data raise questions about efficiency and equity: Is it necessary, for example, for comparable schools to be funded at such different levels in order to provide the same national curriculum?
Are the schools with comparatively high levels of funding providing a superior experience and achieving more than the less well-funded schools? It is only as a result of the new system of funding schools that there is evidence which enables these questions to be considered—a clear benefit from introducing a greater emphasis on ‘command’ in the funding of schools. Vignette two: funding additional educational needs

The quasi-markets of locally managed schools do not necessarily have negative effects upon disadvantaged communities. For example, the requirement that schools meet the actual costs of teachers means that those schools that attract more expensive staff must now meet the additional costs—and vice versa. By contrast, under previous arrangements schools were allowed to employ an agreed complement of staff, as a result of which a hidden subsidy was made to those schools attracting the more costly staff. In practice, and on the basis of studies of the distribution of teachers, this meant a subsidy for schools in more privileged communities (Zabalza et al., 1979; Smithers and Robinson, 1991).

There is also evidence that, in some LEAs, schools serving more disadvan
tagged communities systematically benefited from the change to formula funding introduced as part of local management of schools (Bullock and Thomas, 1994).

The same study also shows, however, that in other LEAs it was schools serving more disadvantaged communities who systematically suffered from the change to formula funding.

The ‘Funding’ study examined the individual formula allocations to 2792 primary and secondary schools in 13 LEAs. A detailed analysis compared each school’s historic budget with its formula budget, dividing schools into two groups: ‘winning’ schools, in the sense that a school’s formula budget is more than its historic budget; and ‘losing’ schools in the sense that the formula budget is less than the historic budget. The size of the loss or gain was also calculated, as a percentage of the formula budget, and an analysis undertaken of the relationship between the size of the loss or gain and the size of the AEN (Additional Educational Needs) allocation. Is it the case, for instance, that schools with comparatively large AEN allocations are more highly represented in the ‘losing’
group? Or is it the case that as the percentage of formula allocated on the basis of AEN increases, so the size of the loss decreases?

For 10 of our 13 LEAs these hypotheses could be explored and what is apparent is the diversity of local circumstance. The national framework for LMS (Local Management of Schools) has been sufficiently flexible to allow some LEAs to direct resources in such a way that the greatest beneficiaries have been schools with the highest proportion of AEN pupils. Far from being a regressive change, in four LEAs LMS has led to an apparent initial redistribution of resources benefiting the least advantaged. In three LEAs, however, the effect of LMS has been in the opposite direction, those schools with a high proportion of AEN pupils being the losers in the change of funding; in the remaining three there was no systematic pattern of change. These findings emphasize the need for empirical work to assess the effects of restructuring allocative mechanisms.

In this case, the introduction of the pupil-based formula, a key component of the move to a market-based system, has effects which differ between LEAs. It is also apparent that a modification in the funding mechanism could increase the resources going to schools and pupils with additional educational needs.
The data reported in these ‘vignettes’ contribute to debates about the efficiency of schools and their performance on equity criteria; some also provide perspectives on the effects of changes in the mixed economy of the school system. This may be as much as can be expected—the data providing an episodic commentary on changes in the system. In other words, are the data part of an unresolvable debate about the ‘right’ level of funding, as in differences in the funding of primary as against secondary schools? Or are long-standing answers to these questions obtainable? In effect, is it possible to secure agreement on an assessment of educational needs that can underpin a more explicit and less subjective decision on funding education? Education and a theory of human need Obtaining welfare from education

In an earlier discussion of the problems of measuring ‘school effectiveness’, I offered a general welfare-based definition of education. Education was described as: . . . an activity which generates a mixture of present and future satisfactions and dissatisfactions, with its net balance over time representing the sense of benefit and well-being created for the individuals involved. (Thomas, 1990: 7) EFFICIENCY, EQUITY AND EXCHANGE IN EDUCATION

In specifying what contributes to that sense of benefit and well-being,

Hodgkinson wrote that education . . . seeks to establish and enhance the values of security, health, the common good, the interest of the state, the capacity for profit,
wealth of all sorts and the highest values of philosophy, ideology and religion. It is on this sense the most general human pursuit. If we were to seek a term for the basic educational value we might call it fulfilment. Education has been shown to be a general set of human behaviours and experiences organized about three categories of purpose: aesthetic, economic, and ideological. It can also be said to subserve all human values and to be a prerequisite to their fulfilment. It is this all-inclusive quality which makes education so special and, at the same time, so human. (1991: 27)

Hodgkinson’s recognition of the importance of fulfilment is resonant of ‘benefit and well-being’, and both definitions set a demanding test for measuring the achievements of education. On the basis of these definitions, most of the measures normally used for reporting on the achievement of education—examination results, length of participation, levels of expenditure—are, at best, only proxies for the changes that take place in an individual and which manifest themselves over a lifetime: ‘occurring, in the last analysis, only within an individual mind’ (1991: 62). Whilst we might accept the moral force of Glennerster’s proposition that The proclaimed objective of welfare provision in most societies is to ensure a basic standard of living for their citizens [and] will usually entail a minimum income and access to food, shelter, education, health care and support if they are sick or disabled. (1992: 3, emphasis added)

Hodgkinson’s and my own more general definitions challenge the ‘commodity fetishism’ implied by Glennerster’s focus upon the provision of goods and ser

vices. My own general definition is influenced by Sen’s (1980) discussion which
emphasizes the ‘relationship between persons and goods . . . income and wealth

are not valued under utilitarianism as physical units, but in terms of their capacity to
create human happiness or to satisfy human desires’ (p. 366). On this argument, the
level of access to education or the level of provision of education are not, in them
selves, ways of directly measuring welfare; welfare is the sum of the ‘satisfactions’
embodied in the experience of education by those individuals who gain access and
secure provision.

To insist that the measurement of welfare from education must be rooted in
individual welfare is not, however, to argue that individuals must necessarily be
given complete freedom to make their own welfare-seeking decisions. The more MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS
difficult challenge is to ask whether some socially determined framework can be
terms of their entitlements and the achievement of the system judged in meeting
the entitlements of all. Measuring human development

In developing my answer to that question, an early influence has been the work
of Sen (1987: Nussbaum and Sen, 1993) and, latterly, the work of Doyal and
Gough (1991); within educational administration, Evers and Lakomski’s (1991)
cannot be aggregated. The idea that social welfare can only be calculated by
assuming the ordinality of utility and the impossibility of interpersonal comparisons is replaced by the opposite assumptions of cardinality and the use of interpersonal comparisons through ‘meta-ranking’ based upon a moral code. The result is a framework which makes it possible ‘to “tell” effectively the rich from the poor’ (Sen, 1979: 336). Cardinal measures of utility alone are inadequate:

when utility information is the only legitimate information, two social states of equal utility may be equal because one allows torture to attain the utility level while another redistributes food (pp. 339-41). If we are to accommodate issues such as ‘telling’ the rich from the poor, exploitation and liberty—all of which are closely related to conceptions of welfare—an approach is required that is free not only from informational constraints but also neutrality (Sen, 1977: 258).

This involves the use of weighting procedures so that some forms of utility count more than others (1979: 343), such weighting being non-utility information based upon underlying principles, such as notions of discrimination, exploitation or entitlement to social security, a general system of rights. Elster and Roemer (1991) provide a useful and recent edited collection of essays on these themes.
A practical outcome of this approach is the annual Human Development Report of the United Nations (UNDP, 1990). This provides indices of human development that incorporate data including life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rates and GDP, thereby challenging traditional practice that assumed national income statistics convey all the essential information on standards of living.

Doyal and Gough (1991), in this tradition, set a wider agenda, tackling directly the nature of the relativist debate in social science and its impact upon ideas of human need. They begin by rejecting the view that 'only individuals can decide goals to which they are going to attach enough priority to deem them needs' (1991: 9). Integral to their thesis is the argument that implicit in the position of several schools in the social sciences is an appeal to some external and objective concept of human need. Doyal and Gough's proposition is argued through critiques of orthodox economics, the New Right, Marxism, critiques of cultural imperialism, radical democrats and phenomenological arguments—the EFFICIENCY, EQUITY AND EXCHANGE IN EDUCATION central thesis being that in different ways each makes some appeal to an external and objective conception of human need (Chs 1 and 2 passim). Parallels to their
critique are found in Wainwright’s (1994) challenge to the ‘free-market right’ in

which postmodernism’s apparent rejection of the ‘very possibility of objectivity’

is challenged: . . . some kind of objective reality, posited without any presumption that language or the present state of our knowledge can ever directly reflect it in the way that positivism imagined, is a necessary condition for any collective effort to resist the injustices and oppressions in which postmodernists have shown language and culture to be actively complicit. (1994: 9)

In their own challenge to relativism, Doyal and Gough argue: All of the examples of relativism which we have examined thus far have attempted both to denounce universal standards of evaluation with one hand only to employ them to endorse some favoured view of the world with the other. (1991: 33)

The consistent relativist . . . must not chop and change in this way. But the consistent relativist—one who regards the whole of social life as a ‘construction’, each aspect of which has no more or less veracity than any other—enters a moral wasteland into which few have feared to tread. (p. 33)

In such a wasteland, ‘Objectively, there is not much to choose between anti

Semitism and humanitarianism. Racism will appear vicious to a humanitarian

while humanitarianism will appear vapid to a racist’ (Feyerabend, 1978: 8-9).

Doyal and Gough argue that we are able objectively to choose between these

Writing in the context of educational policy and administration, Chapman

states this theoretical position: The position from which I am working might be called pragmatist and anti-essentialist. . . . Having rejected absolutism and eschewed relativism, I am seeking to arrive at some set of provisional theory-constructs, that will pro tem resist
falsification, and to work out and operate with a set of ad hoc agreements that will constitute a pragmatic consensus we can then apply to the solution of problems that are in principle amenable to treatment. (1993: 4)

Chapman recognizes the influence of Evers and Lakomski (1991) on her position. They argue that ‘moral reasoning is embedded in theory laden reasoning in general, and develops most readily along with our overall theory of the world (p. 189). In illustrating their argument, they suggest that the quality of the social rules in Rawls’s Theory of Justice owe something to the existence of a de facto model of society (p. 182): . . . the reasonableness of maximin depends on making assumptions about the distribution of probabilities for social positions. So the ‘veil of ignorance’ condition for generating impartiality imposes de facto a model of society for generating moral rules. They argue that if the model was sharply divergent from the circumstances in our own society, the theory of rationality upon which it depends ‘comes apart from the best theories we might use to describe our society’. (p. 182)

Sen’s analysis and that of Evers and Lakomski provide a basis for a more open and participatory process of value selection and administrative decision making. In Sen’s case this arises obliquely from the idea of ‘Basic capability equality’ (1980). A development of Rawls’s expression of equality in terms of an entitlement to certain ‘primary goods’, it shifts attention ‘from goods to what goods do to human beings’ (p. 368), but shares with Rawls the view that ‘primary goods’ include liberty and opportunity, an
emphasis on a more equal
distribution of income and wealth, and self-respect. These
rights point to notions
of participatory decision-making in organizations and not
elitism. Evers and
Lakomski, writing about educational administration, are
more direct; their argu
ment centres upon the contention that ‘maintaining the
social relations of inquiry
is as relevant to moral theory as it is to empirical
theory. . . . The common theo
retical virtues of problem-solving and promoting the growth
of knowledge are
used to adjudicate rules or principles of social and
administrative practice’ (p.
186). Preliminary work on its application to education
generally is developed by
Doyal and Gough. E F F I C I E N C Y , E Q U I T Y A N D
E X C H A N G E I N E D U C A T I O N Defining educational
need
Education has a key role in contributing to an individual’s
need for autonomy of
agency and critical autonomy. As a means for leading to
autonomy of agency it
implies . . . a core curriculum of subjects, more or less
the same for all cultures, including basic numeracy,
general social skills, physical and biological processes,
general and local history and vocational abilities which
are relevant to further employment. Ideally, learning of
this kind readies students for active participation in the
entire spectrum of practices/choices on which the
continuation and, hopefully, the improvement of their
well-being depend. (Doyal and Gough, 1991: 215)

If we are to monitor factors which contribute to these
outcomes, there is a
requirement to monitor access to inputs of teaching. Doyal
and Gough recognize

the limited quality of such information and suggest data on
access to formal

schooling: . . . number of years of completed study, the
school/higher education occupational qualification obtained,
the educational level reached (as indicated by the
International Standard Classification of Education), the
number of years at different levels of the education
system, age on completion of study, and participation in
adult education. (p. 216)

They acknowledge these as limited too, and also note the
absence of data on the

quality of teaching—an issue to which I will return. More
demanding conditions

are set when they move to the concept of critical autonomy:
To criticise and to make choices between the current rules
of one’s own culture and the rules of others requires a
broader transcultural knowledge. However proficient someone
is in knowledge of her own culture she will be unable to
subject it to searching scrutiny without a knowledge of
other social systems and an understanding of the rules of
comparative method . . . a curriculum . . . must include
the teaching of different cultural traditions and provide a
forum for these to be discussed and debated openly. (p.
216)

Further and higher education is seen as a means for
developing this wider con

sciousness, and access to higher education is suggested as
a proxy indicator of

critical autonomy. That critical autonomy must await
further and higher educaM A N A G E M E N T O S S C H O O

tion is, I would argue, remarkably cautious about the
capacities of younger

learners.

Setting aside the problems of international comparisons,
for which some
evidence is available (OECD, 1993), how might this approach
be made operational in England and Wales? It is a task with at least four distinct components:

first, the need to formulate more precise criteria by which we measure the level of attainment of personal autonomy and critical autonomy; second, issues about specifying the level at which data are collected, analysed and reported; third, the choice of agency for undertaking the task; and, fourth, issues about the role of government and governors, national, local and institutional, in responding to the reported data. Measuring educational need in England and Wales

A beginning has been made on devising a framework against which we can assess the extent by which English and Welsh schools are meeting educational needs. Whatever its weaknesses, the post-Dearing national curriculum does provide the foundation for a framework by which we can monitor performance against the core curriculum suggested by Doyal and Gough. However, to this I would add a comment from Learning to Succeed (National Commission on Edu-
cation, 1993): It is clear that children at school should learn about the society in which they live and how they can contribute to it. They should come to understand how decisions are made in a democratic society and how they can learn to take part in them through discussion and the ballot box. They need to know how Parliament and other democratic institutions work, and the place of the law in safeguarding our rights and freedoms. They need to understand how wealth is created. They need also to learn
how they themselves can become active members of society. They must know what rights they have, but also what responsibilities they must bear as good citizens. (p. 39)

These would seem to be essential characteristics in developing an individual’s

critical autonomy. Yet, unless a school in England and Wales is particularly

alert to non-statutory guidance on cross-curricular themes it could easily fail to

address several of them, despite a general statutory requirement upon them to do

so. Only with an explicit framework for defining educational need can we begin

to assess the extent to which we meet those needs. This example is cited as

indicative of the work required to specify the content of a framework and, pari

passu, the criteria by which achievement is measured.

The second part of the task is determining the level at which data are collected,

analysed and reported. National data are essential for some overall view of EFFICIENCY, EQUITY AND EXCHANGE IN EDUCATION

performance and much could be added to the existing league tables on examina

tions and attendance; for example, spending levels on comparable schools in dif

ferent LEAs could be added with relative ease. The Scottish Office has already

begun publishing these data and it is certainly within the administrative capacity of

the DfE (Department for Education) to do so (Scottish Office, 1994a). Within

LEAs, data on schools should be reported by LEAs, whose
potential role in a
decentralized system has yet to be clarified. Since they
already have a clear func
tion as purchasers in a system where schools are providers,
an obvious role is
performance monitoring and quality assurance, although few LEAs appear to have
developed this role. Is this because they are inhibited by their history and culture
from such a development, or is it the spectre of schools opting-out if the LEAs
were to develop better performance reporting?
At present the extent of data analysis is inadequate. If the system is seriously
to address issues of equity, for example, there is a need to have annual, large
scale, national and regional analyses of pupil and student performance by, at
least, gender and race. Whilst some of these data are already being collected,
they would have greater utility if some additional information were sought,
facilitating analysis by gender and ethnicity, for example.
The third party of the task is the choice of agency for undertaking some of the
work. If we define the first task as specifying a framework, might this be part of
a continuing role for the National Commission? This stage would not be expen
sive, but could contribute to shaping a debate about how best to specify our edu
cational needs and monitor our performance in meeting them. Beyond that, the
responsibility for monitoring and reporting is one that properly should fall to
government, but it may be necessary for a non-governmental body to take on the
role as an independent rapporteur.

As things stand at present, however, we have a rudimentary approach to
assessing our nation’s educational performance. Published examination
results, unauthorized absence data and the 4-year cycle of school inspection
reports do give some information, but, more important, are indicative of what
modern information systems could provide. Some of these data need to be
improved upon but it is also necessary to extend the range and form of the data
to be collected. Already, more information on provision could be extracted
from the OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) database and the Form
7 data provided by schools and held by the DfE. Formula allocations to
schools could be obtained from the Section 42 returns made to the DfE by
LEAs—the source of the funding data reported earlier in this article; some
process and performance data can also be obtained from some of these
sources. There are also examples of schemes for collecting the views of
teachers, parents and pupils and reporting them in comparative form (Scottish
A framework for reporting upon the achievement of national, regional and institutional goals can provide a means for reviewing and reporting upon the efficiency/cost-effectiveness and equity of the school system. It can provide a management source of information which by being more open, brings greater equality in debates which are otherwise heavily skewed in the direction of the professionals.

Information provided by the LEA about the quality of school processes and performance can, for example, assist governors in undertaking management responsibilities in a more equal relationship with their head teachers. Within schools, within LEAs and at the national level there is a potential for creating a framework and an information system by which a dialogue of accountability can be encouraged between the range of stakeholders in the system. Consistent with Judith Chapman’s comment cited earlier, there is scope for a pragmatic consensus against which the achievements of the school system can be assessed annually. Conclusion

In this article, I have argued that the school system operates in a mixed economy of exchange relations and suggested that it is desirable that it does so. I have also
sought to illustrate the applicability of the concepts of efficiency and equity to
schools and provide some perspective on how they can inform judgements about
the appropriate balance in the mixed economy. My discussion of efficiency and
equity concluded by asking whether any framework is available against which
we can judge the system’s general direction, and whether it is becoming more or
less efficient and more or less equitable. This led into a theoretical treatment of
the concept of educational need and a subsequent sketch of how it may be pos
sible to operationalize a framework for defining need and the criteria against
which achievement can be assessed. This concluded with the view that
contemporary information systems could be harnessed to this task and that a key
outcome would be information that was not owned by specific stakeholders but
available to all. As such, it could be the basis for a better and more open dia
logue of accountability, informing decisions about appropriate levels of provi
sion and, in that context, appropriate expectations about process and
performance.

For too many years in England and Wales, we have managed the school
system—and the education and training system as whole—where there has
been a quest for some efficiency, some effectiveness but—overwhelmingly—economy. Out of this, I suggest, have come many changes for the better but, associated with real concerns about genuine efficiency, too little concern with equity and a danger that the limited range of published performance information will lead to an over-emphasis upon a basic curriculum—a contemporary version of the 3Rs. I hope I have illustrated that there are ways and means for careful development of exchange relations in the school system which can improve efficiency and enhance equity. Doing so also requires attention to and the specification of a theory of educational needs, and from this could emerge a different 3Rs—a resourced, redistributive and relevant school system for all our children.

Notes
1 The absence of the ‘market’ in the curriculum was aptly put by Sir Keith Joseph: ‘The best “national curriculum” is that resulting from the exercise of true parental choice by parents and children acting collectively, and being provided collectively by governors and teachers in response to that choice. The substitution . . . of a government-imposed curriculum is poor second best’ (cited in Chitty, 1989: 217).

2 This is not to suggest that valuable work cannot be done
on efficiency in learning. A recent doctoral study is a rare example of an attempt at examining the 'personal time and effort given by a learner to achieve some desired learning' (Hewitt, 1994). Yet, a focus on the use of time in learning—not time on task but economy of (non-linear) steps to achieving desired learning—may have a potential in efficiency gains that far outweighs those obtained through decentralized resource management.

3 In this respect, the forms of democracy and how they might be measured (Beetham, 1994) cannot overlook the role of the school system in preparing its citizens for that democracy.

4 Approaches in developing more persuasive value-added data, contextualized for schools, have been commissioned by OFSTED and reported (Sammons et al., 1994).

SCAA (1994) has also completed its own review for the Secretary of State.


SCAA (1994) Value-added Performance Indicators for Schools: A Report by the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority to the Secretary of State. London: SCAA.


Scottish Office (1994b) Leaver Destinations from Scottish Secondary Schools 1992/93


PART 7 Further education


FURTHER EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (1997b) Women at the Top in
Further Education (Bristol: FEDA).


HUGHES, C. (2000) Is it possible to be a feminist manager in the 'real world' of further


Managers within further education have been subject to criticism both from those working in the sector and those observing from outside (Ainley and Bailey, 1977; Elliott and Hall, 1994), and stand accused of ‘managerialism’—an ill-defined concept which seems to imply the inappropriate adoption of business values and practice. Strategic planning can be seen as exemplary of the adoption of managerialism, deriving as it does from corporate practice. Prior to 1993, colleges participated in a planning process which was led by the local education authorities (LEAs), intended to produce some coherence in the provision of post-compulsory education and training. Since incorporation in 1993, colleges of further education have been required to undertake strategic planning as independent institutions, encompassing not only curriculum issues but also
aspects of planning such as human resources and premises which had previously been the formal responsibility of the LEA. In attempting a strategic view, harmonizing all assets and activity within a long-term plan, colleges have moved to a planning process much closer to that undertaken by independent businesses. A second aspect of the greater similarity to commercial strategic planning is the degree to which the absence of local coordination has resulted in a competitive environment which may be detrimental to current and potential students and may be of national concern (Kennedy, 1997).

Crisp (1991: 3) defines the process: 'Strategic planning is the set of activities designed to identify the appropriate future direction of a college, and includes specifying the steps necessary to move in that direction.' The generic literature abounds with reminders that strategic planning is a very complex and contested theoretical area. Both the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA, 1995) and the National Audit Office (1994) by inference adopt a rational approach in the guidance they offer colleges, and detail the failure of colleges to match the assumed features of this model, that is the achievement of a mission derived hierarchy of precise and measurable objectives with clear timescales and
responsibilities. This criticism has been balanced by the recognition that colleges have survived in a period of successive financial cuts (FEFC, 1996a) and expanded their student numbers (FEFC, 1996b), indicating some success with their planning process. The Kennedy Report (Kennedy, 1997) discriminates between increased student numbers and widening participation, arguing that the current deregulated context may be leading to colleges increasing numbers in ways which still do not address the non-participation of the disadvantaged, implying criticism of the value base and methods of colleges.

This article reports on interviews with principals in the context of analysis of a sample of college strategic plans, with the aim of further understanding how the process of strategic management has been experienced and understood in colleges, and to explore the relationship between college's experience and generic models of strategic planning. It also investigates the values colleges bring to strategic planning, exploring whether there is evidence to support Kennedy's concerns. Research method

As Ainley and Bailey (1997) point out, further education is undertheorized, and although there is a body of literature on applying corporate strategic planning...
concepts to the public services (Bryson, 1988; Wilkinson and Pedler, 1994), the parallel literature on further education is very sparse. An answer to the question posed by Wilkinson and Pedler (1994: 188), ‘Is the strategic managerial task inherently different in public service?’ and more specifically, inherently differ ent in further education, requires an answer urgently, both to enrich the pool of theory from which managers in the sector can draw to guide practice, and also to act as a touchstone against which to judge the justification of those who criticize strategic planning in further education for not conforming, or for conforming too strongly, to business models.

Bogden and Biklen (1992), in discussing the nature of qualitative research, emphasize the goal of better understanding human behaviour, and the use of ‘participant perspectives’ to this end. The research reported in this article was concerned not just with the products of strategic management, the strategic plans themselves, but also with how those concerned created meaning within the process. To achieve this ‘empathic’ perspective (Bogden and Biklen, 1992) interviews were conducted with four principals and one second-tier manager with particular responsibilities for strategic planning in colleges in five counties.
in the Midlands and eastern regions of England. Three colleges were in cities and two in smaller towns in more rural areas. Given the reluctance of many colleges to speak about what they perceive as a very sensitive area, the interview respondents were a convenience sample of those who offered help to further the research. As such they cannot be taken as representative, if indeed representation is achievable in such a diverse sector, but the conformity or divergence of their views may offer clues as to how strategic planning has been experienced by those charged with leading the process. For convenience, this group will be referred to as ‘the principals’ throughout the article.

To balance this personal perspective, the author requested copies of the strategic plans of the 222 general further education colleges in England. There were 53 responses: 29 full strategic plans and 24 partial plans. It was therefore possible to analyse the content of full or partial plans of 24 percent of all general further education colleges in England. The scrutiny of plans was designed to offer an insight into the process of planning and the stated intentions of colleges which could be related to generic theory of strategic management and form a context for the interviews with principals. The national framework
College strategic plans must be negotiated with both the FEFC and the local Training and Enterprise Council (TEC). The FEFC (1992) has offered guidelines on the structure it expects in college strategic plans. Analysis undertaken centrally indicates that most colleges conform to the expectations (FEFC, 1996b). The FEFC’s suggested approach is based on classical Taylorist ideas of management (Taylor, 1911), with carefully identified aims and objectives and the allocation of responsibility and resources against numerically specified outcomes, but the technical inclusiveness veils a strategic vacuum. The FEFC is charged with ensuring the adequacy and sufficiency of further education, so they have responsibility for the overarching mission. However, all of the principals felt that this was more evident in rhetoric than in fact. As one explained: ‘They are charged with providing adequacy and sufficiency. When you say to them what does this mean they do not know. I know they do not know because I have asked the question.’

The principals perceived the procedure of the FEFC to be to spot where a college was withdrawing provision in a curriculum area and then to consider if a response was needed:

The only approach of the Funding Council is to wait until
people say

ey they are getting out and then say, oh that is a problem. Could we talk to

eyou about perhaps staying in? It’s not a pro-active approach. It’s not

sitting down and saying what is adequacy and sufficiency. Have we got

provision to match demand? Where do we need to be? The situation at

the moment is for them to ask, well who’s giving up? Do we need to

patch the hole?

Generic theory (Ansoff and McDonnell, 1990) suggests that the responsibility

for the overall mission or vision is properly placed with the top level of the

organization, and that subunits must plan within the overall strategic aims which STRATEGIC PLANNING IN FURTHER EDUCATION

relate to mission. Within further education, the national mission is not defined in

a way which is meaningful, and the absence of such direction leaves colleges de

facto with the task of achieving a national strategy in a context where there is no

well-defined and agreed mission and where they have little power to shape

resources. Kennedy’s (1997) concern about a lack of coherence seems borne out,

but the suggested response of a greater degree of collaboration and partnership

will not address the lack of a national mission defining adequacy and sufficiency
further education provision.

If the FEFC framework was not seen as much positive help at a strategic level, none of the principals felt it to be a constraint on their strategic thinking.

Fitting the thinking into the planning framework was a secondary process: You have what you might call a technical constraint of having to try and think back and turning what you would do in terms of responding to need into a numerical format, putting so many students into each programme area, so there is a sort of constraint there but it is not a constraint on the way you think strategically. It is a constraint in terms of interpreting the strategic plan into something which satisfies the Funding Council.

Similarly the TECs were not seen as a constraint on strategic thinking. As one principal explained, he did not believe that his local TEC had the quality of information which would allow it to challenge any of the college’s plans: From our point of view, I tried to involve the TEC from very early on this year, sent them an early draft, but I hadn’t had a discussion with any one of them about it. They have simply written back saying we think it is lovely and here’s your letter (of endorsement) and that has been the extent of negotiations with them.

All of the principals felt that they would wish to take account of the FEFC and TEC as important players, and some had helpful and supportive relationships,

but ultimately, they felt free to shape their college’s objectives. The content of the plans

The plans themselves were analysed to identify the range of terminology, how far the different levels of the plans related logically to each other, and the range of aims and objectives. This uncovered a semantic minefield.

At the level of
expressing the overall corporate aims and objectives, colleges referred to vision, mission, values, strategic aims, corporate aims, objectives, targets, strategic tasks, key commitments, key themes, crucial objectives, critical success factors, outcomes for students, motto, significant factors. There was no common usage of these words. FURTHER EDUCATION

In many plans there was a loose relationship between the different sections.

Johnson and Scholes present a neat, logical sequence of planning in which each level relates to the previous one (see Figure 1, adapted from Johnson and Scholes, 1993: 13). This model assumes that the first level of planning is a visualization or concept of where the organization wants to be which is strategy neutral—i.e. the means to reach the desired state are not chosen. As the hierarchy descends, the means to reach the overall aims are chosen and become ever more specific, each dependent on the previous level. Whether this figure fully represents what happens outside education is contested elsewhere, but it certainly does not describe the majority of further education college plans that were analysed.

First, the means chosen to achieve the ends were apparent in many primary statements of aims: overarching vision, mission and aims.
were not necessarily strategy neutral. Additionally the sections which came in sequence and had titles

relating to the generic concept of a hierarchy of specificity, often were simple

restatements of the same general aims. In other words the ‘vision’ would give

some general aims which might be restated in the ‘values’ or ‘mission’ or ‘corporate aims’. Whatever sections were called, they were not necessarily a

further refinement or specification of the previous section. They were more

focused on rewording, finding new words to restate the same content as the pre

vious sections.

The plans often incorporated sections on quality, accommodation, etc., as

suggested by the FEFC and also sometimes sections which related to the units

into which the college was organized, such as faculty or programme areas.

Cross-referencing was used by some colleges to try to retain strong connecting

links between different parts of the plan, but there were many examples where

the multiplicity of sections were not clearly linked. It was often as if each indi

vidual or group of individuals, from governors through to programme area

teams, had reworked the sections into statements which were all their own and

which bore no strong connection to other parts of the plan.
STRATEGIC PLANNING IN FURTHER EDUCATION

Action/tasks ↓ Control ↓ Rewards

Mission ↓ Goal ↓ Objective ↓ Strategy ↓

Figure 1

It would be easy to hold this up as a failure to achieve the logic and precision required by rational planning models, and indeed colleges new to the process may have struggled to keep control of the coherence of the overall plan.

However, it may be that the contrast with a strictly rational approach points to a different need and a different way of working. All of the principals referred to the unimportance of the strategic planning document and the importance of the process. For four of the five, the fundamental purpose of the strategic planning process was to identify the purpose of the college: ‘It is actually about galvanising yourself into some conscious thought about what you are there to do. You have to say things to yourself and to each other if you are to be able to act purposefully.’ The key phrase in this statement is in italics (my emphasis). Strategic planning to this principal is not just about arriving at crisp rational aims, objectives and costed action plans, but about speaking to each other. The use of words is not to achieve unambiguous targets for action, but primarily to explore the values and understandings of those who are involved. This
may involve a
limited group, such as the senior management team, or the
entire college
community, but it is essentially a conversation, an
exchange which is only sec
ondarily designed to delineate action. Primarily, it is an
act of union, designed to
reinforce commitment and motivation.
Although the language and structure of plans varied, the
actual aims and
objectives were very general and very similar from college
to college. All of the
corporate aims could be categorized under four headings:
• the product or curriculum
• market
• resources/costs
• capability building
The majority of plans had strategic aims of all four types
and a generic list of
college aims could be deducted (see Table 1).
Of course, at a high enough level of generality, the
strategic aims of all
organizations would appear similar. ‘Surviving long term’
is just such an aim.
However, the wording of the college plans retained this
level of generality often
not just in the primary strategic aims but further into the
plan, at those levels
where one would expect specificity to distinguish one
college from another in
the way that one company might be distinguished from
another in business. This

raised another point of comparison with generic theory. In
the latter, companies

seek to acquire a competitive edge by differentiating
themselves from others,

particularly rivals within their market. As Peters (1989: 137) puts it: 'Don’t just

stand there, be something!’ Peters’s argument is further
developed to suggest

that companies must strive to be not just different from
others, but significantly
different. Colleges are clearly following the route of
attempting to focus on
product, costs and market, but this is not necessarily
leading all of them to a

significantly differentiated position. F U R T H E R E D U
C A T I O N Making strategic choices

To explore further this indication that colleges were not
necessarily seeking to
distinguish themselves from each other, the principals were
asked what strategic
choices they felt their colleges had. There were apparent
differences in opinion.

One felt ‘We have absolute freedom’. Another explained that
he did not feel that

there any true strategic choices at all: a hundred years
before someone had sat in
his office making decisions about the curriculum and
probably someone would
be undertaking the same task in a century’s time. The
decisions were tactical. He

argued that the only strategic decision was whether the
college continued or not,
and in this there was less choice than might be imagined, as he felt that if the college closed, the community itself would set up a college of further education, as it had set up the colleges a century before. The college would continue to exist as a service to the community whatever managers might deliberate. The only decisions were small ones concerning minor changes in the curriculum.

Another principal echoed this strongly, arguing that the inheritance of a college shaped the choices it could make. All felt that other colleges might have greater choices, but the principals emphasized a primary commitment to the college’s local community. Where work was undertaken elsewhere, it was to access resources which could be brought back to that community.

Our strategy is based on what we perceive to be our communities’ needs. We define our catchment and we are primarily here to serve.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product/curriculum</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the Nature of Increasing income Developing staff range of customers, age, Managing Developing provision geographically efficiently and partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the location, ability cost-effectively with external</td>
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flexibility of Numbers of Improving organizations
provision students accommodation Developing
Developing the Achieving a Meeting FEFC information and
quality of the positive image targets communications
curriculum in the eyes of Surviving long technology
generally actual/potential term Contributing to
Developing specific customers local economic
aspects of the growth
curriculum such Caring for
as guidance, employees
assessment Caring for the
Equal opportunities environment
Increasing retention

and achievement those with a 25 mile radius of any of our
sites but we go beyond that for a reason, and again this is
written in our policy, that if we deliver beyond that
catchment area we are doing so to make money to bring back
to our catchment area . . . We do not need a big
competitive edge against our nearest college. Most of the
people will come to us anyway.

Where choices were made to work outside the college’s local
area, they might
be value and not just finance driven. For one rural college,
the choice to engage

with several national and overseas market niches was partly
to put money back
locally, but also to ensure that students were not trained
in a parochial environ

ment.

Colleges which had a large local population were able to
make choices within
their local community, again, at least at the moment, based on values. One college, faced with costs of £12 million to offer the 16-19 curriculum, and income of around £8 million, had chosen nevertheless to continue to provide for this group: Sticking with it would be a value driven decision. Sticking with it would be to say that the market is 16-19 year olds and this college is about educating 16-19 year olds and that is the service that we wish to continue providing, even though we do so at some financial cost. However I don’t know how much longer I can continue to do this and let the buildings crumble around me.

Market choices were possible, whether to adopt specialist areas with national or international recruitment, whether to concentrate on training the 16-19 years olds or local employed people, or returning adults or to offer higher education,

but all this was within the parameters of a primary commitment to local people.

For some colleges, the need is to provide for as many of the local groups as possible: 'In the particular geographical location in which we operate i.e. largely a rural location, we have a particular responsibility to the communities in this rural area to provide the broadest curriculum portfolio.'

Underpinning the ability to achieve a sense of choice was the position in relation to resources. All of the colleges were engaged in activities which were designed to generate income to plough back into provision for the local
community, but the difficult financial position of some undermined strategic choice. The necessity to generate sufficient income to continue to survive may in effect dictate choice. The business of values

The colleges then were engaged in choices, but not all of them in the sense which might be recognized in the commercial world. The drivers of strategy were fundamental commitments to the value of education and training and to the FURTHER EDUCATION of the local community. These factors would be followed even at financial cost as long as the college could survive. The comment quoted earlier ‘You have to say things to yourself and to each other’ is relevant in that the people working in further education colleges may not have recourse to developing a strategy of competitive edge or differentiated markets-and-products. They are a public service and, as such, work within different parameters, and may need to reinvent continually their basic commitment to an unglamorous and low-status world. One principal said the real challenge lay with colleges like his own, which had historically grown up by meeting the range of local needs not covered by schools or universities:

The worst thing to be is a general purpose further education college . . .

because almost certainly, the really distinctive things
belong to some

other institution . . . I look at this college and we are transparent. The

worst thing you can be is in the middle ground with nothing distinctive.

. . . Lots of tiny little niches, that is where the strategic choices are, let

us try a bit of this, let us not do that. Actually, in a big sense there is

nothing particular, just lots of little tiny moves.

How can the generic theory of strategic planning, with the need to achieve dis

tinctiveness, be linked to this understanding, where the planning process is ‘lots

of tiny little moves’ in an organization which is ‘transparent’? Clearly, some

general further education colleges are working in a context which is too different

to business to find such a theory either a helpful description of their experience

or an appropriate basis to analyse the possibilities for further action. Compared

to the logic and competitive drive of the theory, many of the college strategic

plans appeared to be a muddle and lacking individuality. However, a minority of

plans had a driving sense of direction with clear connections between sections, a

logical development of a hierarchy of objectives and a strong sense of develop

ing a distinctive market position.

A hypothesis which emerged is that the difference in the nature of the plans
may relate to the geographical and historical context within which each college worked. Where the inheritance of geographical position allowed, the college had a real sense of strategic choices. For example, colleges located in an east coast port were able to offer a very distinctive vision of supporting a European market and global exporting industries. Colleges in a declining rural area, with a thin population and little concentration of industry or similar challenging environments, may feel that they are constrained by the imperative to meet as wide as possible a range of needs, particularly of those in the local community who are often the ‘socially excluded’. Despite an acute awareness of financial realities, values, not a competitive position, lay at the root of the choices or lack of them, and may also explain the language and structure of the strategic plans themselves.

A college’s plan could therefore be based on the need to achieve a distinctive niche and the ability to drive forward hard in a logical and focused way, or on the need to use the strategic planning process to reaffirm values and commitment to the needs of local people, a position which was not distinguished from other colleges, and where the creation of commitment overrides all
other possible aims of strategic planning. Despite the accusations of managerialism, the principals interviewed gave a strong sense of a value-driven process: This is the difference between a college and a company. A company can make a strategic decision to get involved in a different area of activity, and to employ resources in different areas so that they will creep away from what their founders initiated to some other area. A college can flavour education, but it can't strategically step away from it. . . . Why? What is the fundamental drive? It's because people want to learn, want to change.

Viewed from this perspective, the purpose of strategic planning in further education may differ fundamentally from that in business. The process of planning was seen as difficult by all the principals.

One described calculating the years of experience in education of those involved in formulating the strategic plan. It added up to a huge number and yet 'we can’t get the projections right. Every year we get them wrong . . . We are asking the impossible.' Two major issues were the difficulty of securing adequate information and the most effective way of involving staff. Local information was universally seen as problematic and may remain a stumbling block for some time to come.

The involvement of staff was a more complex problem. Ainley and Bailey (1997: 60) state: ‘Strategic decisions are taken at the centre and these are passed
for local implementation to middle managers in their specialist curriculum areas.

This is one of the sources of the new managerialism in further education. Interviews were only conducted with senior managers and therefore the perspective of middle managers and lecturers was not included. However, it was quite clear that the practice was, at least in intention, more varied than indicated by Ainley and Bailey and that the simple equation of involvement good, imposition bad, was not seen as unequivocal. The plans themselves sometimes indicated that the process had not been top-down. Some college plans were produced by a synthesis of plans written by programme area teams. One plan noted that contributions had been sought from the whole community and 120 staff had contributed ideas.

The whole issue was fraught with problems, as one principal explained: How do you get an organisation of 400 people who are all working in different ways, in different sets of people within the organisation, and don’t appreciate each others’ culture and values, to own something that is called a strategic plan? That is what all the models say you are supposed to do.

He went on to define his own position as disbelieving this as an absolute. He did not believe that all wished to make a contribution, nor that all could achieve an
overview of the college. Speaking of the IT technicians as an example, he explained:

I don’t think they would ever say that they want ownership of the strategic plan. They want leadership and they want to make some contribution. They want to feel that their views are important even if they have no views to make and often they will have no views to make. So I am a bit confused about exactly what ownership is.

The concept of ‘ownership’, if this meant everyone agreeing on aims and objectives and being fully committed to the plan, was seen as unrealistic. All of those interviewed had tried to involve staff to differing degrees. One had established a framework for every group from governors to programme area teams to be part of the process which was consensual not consultative. It was not a question of writing a plan and then sending it to people to comment. The plan was evolved through a collaborative process, each stage being agreed before the next was initiated. Other principals did use a consultation process, where the plan was written by senior staff, sometimes incorporating the ideas from a number of staff and other stakeholders, and then circulated for comment. Of the five principals interviewed, one was committed to a collaborative
approach. The others were attempting a consultative process:

I am not advocating total involvement. We are not a democracy. We are an organisation in which some people will have more influence in strategic planning than others, but we do want as much ownership as we can achieve and as much contribution as possible from different staff in formulating the plan. Implementing the plan

The difficulties of involving staff in the formulation of the plan shade into the difficulties of motivating them to implement it once formulated. The problem is widely acknowledged. Quinn (1993: 83) comments on executives who ‘rely on the awesome rationality of their formally derived strategies and the inherent power of their positions to cause their organisations to respond. When this does not occur, they become bewildered, if not frustrated and angry.’ The plan itself was seen by the principals as of limited value, partly because if it encompasses targets that can STRATEGIC PLANNING IN FURTHER EDUCATION be reached they may be too unambitious, and also because things change so fast that it is in a sense redundant from the moment it is completed. Nevertheless, the possibility of using it was a benchmark to guide and discuss progress emerged, though with some caution as to how far targets could be
delegated in an endless succession like ripples emanating from the centre. While the use of objectives and targets was seen as helpful, the process of changing attitudes and behaviour as a result was seen as much more difficult. One principal described the challenge: Of course having a plan on its own does not mean anybody will do anything. . . . At some point during the working week the caretaker in this institution has to think that what he or she is doing is making some sort of contribution to the college plan. That may sound grand, but if I don't get them to the point where they think about their attitude to students. . . . if they don't at some point in their working week realise that they are not putting a brick in a wall they are building a cathedral, then the strategic planning has failed. It must touch people's lives.

In attempting to achieve this principals were building ownership processes, but also micropolitical tactics and coercion. The power base of players resulted in agendas which were not always perceived as in the best interest of the students or of the strategic management process. Some people just did not want to change. One principal described a programme area which was convinced it had as many students as it could possibly teach and was already a centre of excellence. He told them that they needed to teach more students and that they were not yet a centre of excellence: ‘I had to tell them to do this. I listened to all their views as to why they could not and then I had to tell them to do it anyway.’

Questioned on how the staff had reacted, the principal answered: ‘The nice
answer would be that they were convinced by the arguments. The unpleasant

answer is that they saw the need to do it or else. I think it was both.’ The staff

had gone on to succeed in recruiting more students and improving quality. The

means of achieving this were a mixture of coercion and reason, with a reorganiz

ation so that some individuals had new roles dependent on achieving what was

planned. Not all agreed and it was acknowledged that they probably never

would. Achieving a ‘dominant view’, in the words of the principal, was the aim: All the time I am after a dominant view and sometimes it can be through the force of argument, sometimes it will be through putting people who are supporting in positions of power. It sounds hard but it is one way of doing it and also making people’s career dependent upon their supporting the direction of the institution and making it clear that if they don’t, they are along for the ride, but they are not moving anywhere in their own career. I don’t believe I just said that, but it is true.

Perhaps this could be seen as an example of the ‘new managerialism’ cited by FURTHER EDUCATION Ainley and Bailey (1997). The problem is that this is certainly not a new type of

behaviour. The use of micropolitical activity was recognized for at least two

decades before incorporation (Ball, 1987; Bolman and Deal, 1984). Consequently,

whatever type of managerial behaviour it may be, it is certainly not new. The

assumption that it is in some sense wrong is open to question. It is still not accept

able to openly admit to micropolitical behaviour, hence the
final sentence of the

comment above, where the principal surprised himself at the openness of what had

been said. There has been relatively little research in any phase of education into

micropolitical behaviour, partly because of the inherent difficulty of researching

behaviour which is by definition hidden. The use of career prospects as a lever to

create loyalty or direct behaviour is indisputably present in many institutions. It is

therefore more likely that when college leaders are exhorted to achieve a consen

sual approach, they may need to consider how far the prevailing models of colle

giality are a normative mythology and how far they may need to be modified into

a more realistic approach, including a wider range of tactics.

The need for all staff to be fully aware of and committed to the strategic plan

was also questioned. One principal pointed out that, in wandering round the

college, unless a senior manager was encountered, the staff met at random

would probably disclaim all knowledge of the strategic plan: ‘I think people are

aware that changes are happening but they would not package it up and say oh

that’s because of the strategic plan. They would describe it as managers cutting

budgets or attribute it to something else.’ The real need, as he saw it, was for
managers at all levels to be able to interpret and draw out the important points

and motivate people in the direction of the plan. The strategic plan was a failure

if the behaviour of teachers with students was not touched by it, but the behavi

our would not be touched only by every member of staff being fully conversant

with the plan and having fully contributed. The latter was certainly one way, and

an important way to all of the principals, but it was not the only way. If a teacher

changed what he or she did without realizing that it was as an indirect result of

actions set in motion by the strategic plan, that was fine.

Conclusions

All of the principals agreed that engaging with strategic planning had brought

benefits to their college. They felt that the process had resulted in:

• a greater sense of purpose

• an increased feeling of independence

• a benchmark against which all decisions could be measured

• better systems and efficiency

• better communication as there was something important to communicate

To use their words it had ‘taken away the adhocery’ and provided ‘a peg to hang

everything on’. There was admiration from one principal that the FEFC had STRATEGIC PLANNING IN FURTHER EDUCATION

forced colleges ‘kicking and screaming’ into better practice. The picture that
emerged did not support Kennedy’s criticism ‘that the new ethos has encouraged
colleges not just to be businesslike but to perform as if they were businesses’
(Kennedy, 1997: 3). Colleges had become more business-like, but not in any
simplistic sense of being profit or competition centred. They were more sure and
more committed to what their business was: Business-like means recognising who we exist for, who we are serving, who our clients are and measuring ourselves against the satisfaction of those customers/clients . . . so by business-like, I am not meaning that you have got to measure every success in terms of profit.

In a public sector environment, as Wilkinson and Pedler (1994) point out, what
may be required from strategic planning is a broad rather than detailed direction,
so when writers analysing public sector plans from the perspective of private
sector thinking criticize them as ‘travesties’ (Argenti, 1992) because of their
lack of detailed verifiable objectives, it may reflect misunderstanding. Equally,
those who have criticized senior managers in the sector for ‘managerialism’ may
need to research further how far the behaviours in question are new or deteri-
mental to the organization or the students.
The planning context of a perceived strategic vacuum at national and regional
level concerned the principals, and it may be that the new emphasis on develop-
ing regional partnerships (Department for Education and
will address this problem to some degree. Such a development was cautiously welcomed: As resources get tighter we have to work in more partnerships, employers, the TEC, government bodies, other colleges, whoever, and it is getting understanding with them at a stage which could influence our own planning. What tends to happen is that you issue plans to people which outlines this is what we are going to do instead of developing plans with people. There will be a bigger emphasis on that in the future.

However the move from a free market towards a partnership model may be difficult as colleges balance their own desire to retain autonomy with the desire to achieve regional coherence and widen participation (Lumby, 1998).

The process of strategic planning has provided a vehicle for colleges to engage in discussion as to what they are about and how they are to achieve it.

For some, the purpose may be to identify ways of surviving in the face of aggressive competition, but for many general further education colleges, the process is different. There are certainly strategic choices, but they are small ones about shifts in how to meet the vocational education and training needs of their local people. The process of planning allows them to commit to this business and to become more business-like, that is more centred on how better to meet FURTHER EDUCATION the needs of their students. The range of behaviours to achieve the plans may
include micropolitical manipulation, but this has always been the case. Perhaps

the real point is that there is now more chance of the purpose of such tactics

being clearly understood and related to student need.

Strategic planning in further education therefore differs greatly from that

undertaken by private sector organizations in that the process is used to position

not only, or in some cases not primarily, against competitors but against, in the

words of one principal, ‘governmental drift’. Government has policies for

schools and for higher education. Whatever is left over is further education, and

against this grim scenario strategic planning had helped to maintain some sense

of the worth and value of the work of the sector. Criticizing managers in further

education for not conforming to private sector rational models or for implement-
ing a business-derived inappropriate coercive regime is to underestimate the

diversity of practice and to miss the opportunity to better understand and support

those engaged in an almost impossible task. Acknowledgements

Acknowledgement is made of the generosity of many colleges which provided

their strategic plans, and of the principals who gave their time to share their


Ansoff, H.I. and McDonnell, E.J. (1990) Implanting
Strategic Management, 2nd edn.
London: Prentice Hall.


This paper explores the organizational and management consequences
of the changing policy environment facing public sector education in England and Wales over the past 10 years. In particular it considers how far arguments about the replacement of older ‘bureau-professional’ forms of organizational order by more ‘managerialist’ forms in the public sector in general can be applied to the specific case of education. The paper begins by reviewing the major policy changes that have affected schools and colleges since 1988. Drawing on published studies from these sectors, it then considers a number of themes: changing roles of senior and middle managers; changes in managerial and organizational culture; and changes in specific aspects of management.

Emphasizing the tentative nature of the evidence, the paper identifies some common trends which imply a movement towards managerialism in many institutions. However, it also identifies areas where the position is less clear and suggests a number of factors which may explain differences of experience. It emphasizes the importance of not reifying a previous ‘golden age’ of collegiality and concludes that what is being experienced is a complex and dynamic process of adjustment between
Introduction

Since the late 1980s the British educational system has experienced a roller coaster of policy changes. The focus and content of these changes have varied over time and among different parts of the educational system. Yet they have all been driven by a clear underlying rationale: to create a policy framework that will provide an imperative for schools and colleges to respond to the improvement agenda of both Labour and Conservative Governments.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the evidence on the organizational and management consequences for schools and colleges of this changing policy environment and, in particular, to explore how far and for what reasons patterns of change may be differentiated among organizational contexts. The paper begins by outlining the similarities and differences between the policy contexts facing schools and colleges as a result of the reforms introduced by the present Labour Government and its Conservative predecessor. These changes are then related to the concept of ‘managerialism’, which is becoming an increasingly important part of the discourse about public sector reform in the UK. The paper then proceeds to review some of the changes which appear to be taking place in...
the management of schools and colleges as a result of the reforms, before

drawing some general conclusions about the factors which may have affected

the different experiences of institutions as those within them have attempted to

respond to the new pressures which they face. The policy context for schools and colleges: variations on a theme

The policy framework for schools was established initially by the Education Reform Act of 1988 and modified by later legislation. Under these arrangements

governing bodies of schools have been granted considerable powers to manage

their own affairs, including the management of block budgets out of which the

great majority of their resources must be funded. These budgets are determined

by pupil number-led formulae that local education authorities (LEAs) determine

within government guidelines. The funding mechanism, therefore, is designed to

provide schools with incentives to maintain and enhance their enrolment, within

a context of enhanced parental choice.

These aspects of government policy – developed governance, formula

funding and enhanced parental choice – have, despite some changes in detail,

been the constants of the policy environment facing schools since the late 1980s.

However, for most schools, at least as important as these aspects of policy have
been other powerful non-financial control mechanisms which have been
designed to constrain the nature of the choices which schools make in the
deployment of their resources. These policies have focused directly on the cur-
riculum, the means by which it is delivered and the results achieved. A constant
theme has been the requirement that test and examination results be published to
enable the performance of schools to be judged and, it is argued, to inform
parental choice. Beyond this, the relative emphasis that has been given to
particular aspects of policy has varied over the period since 1988. Initially the
focus was on the National Curriculum so that for a number of years thinking in
the majority of schools was dominated by the twin imperatives of delivering the
National Curriculum and implementing devolution. From around 1992, FURTHER EDUCATION
however, a new policy pressure emerged: a regime of regular inspection with the
requirement for schools to produce action plans following such inspections (and
the monitoring of their implementation in the case of schools deemed to be
failing). Since then, the prospect and the experience of inspection has emerged
as a dominant pressure for many schools, placing stress on senior managers and
staff alike as they have prepared for and responded to
inspection visits.

Since the May 1998 general election, further themes have emerged. First, the focus on the publication of test and examination results has been developed into a regime of institutional performance management through the requirement for schools (and LEAs) to set targets for the improvement of student achievements as the focus for planning (DfEE 1997, 1998a). Secondly, more interventionist policies on input management have been established through centrally-driven recommendations on the organization of teaching and, more recently, proposals for potentially radical changes in the ways in which teachers are managed within schools (DfEE 1998b). Such developments suggest that the new Labour Government is placing less emphasis on incentives derived from the quasi-market of decentralization and parental choice and relying much more on placing demand ing expectations directly on institutions with the possibility of intervention when they are deemed not to be achieving them. There would seem to be two reasons for this: first, impatience with the assumed imprecision and unpredictability of mechanisms which attempt to affect performance primarily through the quasi market; and, second, concern about some of the equity effects of quasi-market
solutions to the 'problem' of school quality. 2

The policy framework for colleges was established by the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992. Under this, colleges were granted full legal autonomy as corporations, with responsibility for staff, assets and financial management, with their core funding provided on a formula basis. However, compared with the schools sector, the funding mechanism for colleges has been used more directly, more centrally and more ambitiously as a policy tool. Unlike the schools sector where, despite strong central government steers, responsibility for funding is distributed among, currently, more than 170 local education authorities, all insti tutions in the colleges sector receive substantial parts of their funding directly from one of two national funding councils (one for England and one for Wales).

Furthermore, again unlike the schools sector, this funding is provided on the basis of contracts which colleges make with the councils to deliver specified levels of provision at specified unit costs, with colleges bidding for resources in relation to criteria established on an annual basis by the funding councils. This means that the councils can, and do, use their funding mechanisms explicitly to achieve particular policy goals that are derived in substantial part from govern
ment policy. The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) in its early years has sought to achieve the following through the mechanism of formula funding:

• to encourage growth through enabling colleges to bid for additional funding for student numbers beyond a core level; EDUCATION A L R E F O R M A N D M A N A G E R I A L I S M

• to encourage efficiency (or, more specifically, to encourage high cost colleges to reduce their unit costs) by seeking a convergence of the level of unit funding across the sector;

• to reduce wastage and increase achievement by tying some funding to successful learning outcomes;

• more recently, to widen the participation of under-represented groups in further education.

Thus while all parts of the educational system have been subject to significant resource constraints, the pressures for increases in resource efficiency have been much greater for colleges than for schools as the Government has pursued a policy of substantially increasing participation while constraining expenditure.

As in the schools sector, these funding mechanisms have been complemented by other policy tools, which focus more explicitly on the internal management of colleges. These include inspection and requirements for a range of formal management provisions, such as strategic plans, college charters, disability statements and learner agreements for each individual student. However, these had not yet, at the
time of writing, significantly qualified the enormous power of the funding mechan
ism as an influential policy driver (Bradley 1996), although plans had been announced to introduce into the sector approaches to the management of outcomes based on benchmarking and target-setting similar to those in the schools sector (FEFC 1999).

In summary, all parts of the education system have been subject over the last ten years or so to a number of major policy pressures, but the ways in which these have been applied have differed in detail. Thus, each sector has experi
enced:

• decentralization of major powers from local education authorities to institutional level and the empowerment to varying degrees of clients as ‘customers’;

• outcome-based management through the specification of performance criteria and the establishment of target-setting and associated planning processes in relation to these. For schools these have focused primarily on outcomes measured in terms of test and examination results; for colleges the emphasis has been primarily on enrolment patterns and unit costs, although this emphasis is now to be supplemented by a focus on student achievement;

• more detailed interventions concerning organizational processes and decisions, relating for example to curriculum provision in schools and to planning and management processes in colleges;

• on-going processes of surveillance through regimes of inspection.

The rest of this paper examines the consequences of these changes for school
and college organization and management. Further U C A T I O N The rise of managerialism in education?

In a seminal paper, Kouzes and Mico (1979) argued that ‘human service organizations’ in the public sector operate simultaneously in a number of ‘domains’, each of which has a rather different set of legitimizing norms which generate particular kinds of governing principles, success measures, structural arrangements and work modes. These domains are: the ‘policy domain’ of representative government; the ‘management domain’ of hierarchical authority; and the ‘service domain’ of professional support for clients. Kouzes and Mico argue that the natural condition of such organizations is a state of tension as each domain struggles to maintain its own integrity and reinforce its own standards within the organization. I have argued elsewhere (Simkins 1997) that this kind of analysis is particularly fruitful in analysing the underlying changes in power distribution sought by the educational reforms of the last decade. In particular, these reforms have sought to introduce new forms of accountability which: redistribute power in the policy domain from local representative government towards central government and its agencies and newly constituted governing bodies of institutions; disempower the service (professional) domain within institutions in favour
of a reconstituted management domain; and empower ‘consumers’ directly through marketization and, in the schools sector, enhanced ‘voice’ within governing bodies.

The public policy literature suggests that such developments in education are part of a wider trend in forms of control in the public sector. For example, Hoggett argues that:

The restructuring of the public sector in Britain illustrates several elements of hands-off control systems (e.g., the development of structured markets, the linking of resource allocation to performativity, the new forms of operational decentralisation), but these have to some extent been dwarfed by visible elements of centralisation (e.g. the destruction of the autonomy of local government, the development of the quango state) and the extended use of hands-on systems of performance management creating a form of ‘evaluative state’ . . . (Hoggett 1996: 29)

It is further argued that these developments are changing patterns of organization and management within those institutions which are subject to them through the development of new forms of organizational control which can be
characterized as ‘managerialism’ (Pollitt 1993, Clarke and Neuman 1997). For example, Clarke and Neuman (1997) argue that such forms of control are replacing an ‘organizational settlement’ between two modes of co-ordination or ‘organizational orders’ – bureaucratic administration and professionalism (which they link as ‘bureau-professionalism’) – which dominated the public sector for much of the post-war period. Gewirtz et al. (1995) have argued similarly in relation to schooling. These analyses suggest that bureau-professionalism and managerialism can be distinguished along a number of dimensions.

First, bureau-professionalism is characterized by a series of cross-cutting attachments to client-centred, professional and public service values, such as equity and care, whereas managerialism is characterized by commitment to the over-riding values and mission of the specific organization. Such attachments are derived from different forms of socialization: those with management responsibilities within bureau-professional systems are socialized within the specific professional field in which their organization is located, for example education or health, whereas managers within more managerialist systems are socialised directly into the values of ‘management’ as a generic discipline. Second,
ius is characterised by decision-making through a combination of bureaucratic rules and professional discretion and judgement, whereas managerial decision making is characterised by discretion entrusted to those who hold clearly identified managerial roles and authority and who use specialist management techniques to help them make choices. It is assumed that such techniques for achieving better management are knowable: indeed that they are known and generally applicable – they can often be found in best practice in the private sector. Thirdly, bureau-professional agendas are based on the needs of individual clients and client groups as interpreted or formulated by professionals. Those of managerialism, in contrast, derive from concerns focusing around organizational objectives and outcomes and the deployment of resources as defined by managers in response to their interpretations of the environmental forces with which the organization is faced. Finally, the norms of bureau-professionalism are defined in terms of the well-being, needs and rights of clients while those of managerialism are based on concepts of efficiency, organizational performance and customer-orientation. The bureau-professional and managerial orders may be conceived in both normative and descriptive terms. In their normative or
ideological form they rep
resent sets of values and ideals which provide competing
discourses to justify
and explain particular policy and management regimes. In so
doing they also
embody contrasting assumptions about power and legitimacy. Thus bureau-pro
fessionalism gives primacy to the roles of the professional and the public service
bureaucrat; managerialism, in contrast, justifies and legitimates managerial
power and challenges the values and power bases embodied in the ‘traditional’
bureau-professional settlement. It requires that managers be given the ‘freedom
to manage’, which in turn implies delegation of power within managerial hier
archies and may also imply the disempowerment of other groups such as polit
ical representatives and workers, including professional workers.
Alongside their normative content, however, these ideas have considerable
potential for describing and analysing change in public service organizations,
including those in the education sector. Viewed from this perspective, manageri
alism provides a framework, not just for analysing the discourses which justify
and legitimate change, but also for exploring the particular arrangements which
are developed to translate policy agendas and goals into practical organizational FURTHER EDUCATION
consequences in particular situations. The rest of this paper will consider the ways in which the policy changes described earlier have impacted on the management of schools and colleges. It will explore in particular the degree to which the kinds of policy changes which education has experienced over recent years have indeed led to increased managerialism in schools and colleges and whether such an impact, if any, has varied across organizational contexts. Changes in organization and management A focus on the organization and its leadership

There can be little doubt that the reforms in both the schools and the colleges sectors have altered thinking about the purposes and outcomes of education to place the primary focus on the performance of the individual school or college. This does not mean that the dimensions of the individual pupil or student or of the wider local and national system have been lost. Indeed, in both sectors, greater emphasis is being given to the development of sophisticated tracking systems to monitor the performance of individual students, and in the schools sector LEAs as well as individual institutions are being required to achieve ambitious targets in relation to pupil performance. Rather, the new emphasis sees effective management at the level of the school or college as the primary means by which policy goals are to be achieved and the
place where the educational 'buck' stops. A major consequence is a reframing of the roles of senior managers.

It seems clear from all the literature on the consequences of reform that, despite de jure empowering of governing bodies, one of the major consequences of devolution has, in fact, been to reinforce the pivotal position of heads and principals as organizational leaders (Jephcote et al. 1996, Hall and Southworth 1997). This has been a natural consequence of two related facets of the new policy world: centrally-driven attachments and agendas which emphasize the overall performance of the institution above all other measures of success and the unprecedented degree to which individual leaders are now held responsible for that performance. Thus Hall and Southworth (1997) suggest that: heads have become more overtly aware of their schools' levels of success. Several factors have contributed to this move. All these have caused heads to monitor and evaluate trends in the school's performance. They are apparently taking a stronger interest in outcomes and the school’s 'product'. (p. 166)

Similarly in further education, a more robust approach to the quantitative mea
surement of performance has powerful effects on those aspects of the institution
to which senior management attention is addressed (Elliott and Crossley 1994).

The idea of strong and effective leadership seems to have attained a pre-eminent position in the discourse of school management in England and Wales.

It is quintessentially embodied in the priority given by the Government to national leadership qualifications for headteachers and the planned National College for School Leadership. In part, no doubt, this emphasis reflects the current attention given to leadership within the wider management discourse.

However, it also reflects the emphasis which, for example, the school effectiveness literature and the work of Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) and the Teacher Training Agency have given to the role of the headteacher. In further education, similar trends can be identified. The pressures created by incorporation for principals of colleges have been enormous, but the position of those who have survived seems to have been significantly enhanced by their typical designation as ‘chief executives’ of ‘corporations’.

Complementing this development are two sub-themes relating to senior man...
principal, there seems to be a trend towards greater sharing of responsibility at the top within, sometimes smaller, senior management teams (SMTs). Hall and Southworth (1997) make this point about secondary schools, while Menter et al. (1995) note the development of SMTs or analogous structural forms in some primary schools. In further education Ainley and Bailey (1997) found that, in both the colleges they studied, the SMT is ‘a small and cohesive group of people very different from the old hierarchy of Principal, Deputy and the Heads of Department’ (p. 40).

Secondly, the nature of the work of senior managers seems to have changed. It has certainly become more intense (Jephcote et al. 1996, Webb and Vulliamy 1996), but its emphasis has also altered. For many writers this change can be related to Hughes’ seminal distinction, in relation to headteachers, between the roles of ‘leading professional’ and ‘chief executive’ (Hughes 1985). Indeed, managerialism might be argued to be virtually synonymous with the dominance of the chief executive role. Thus Raab et al. report growing ‘tensions between [heads’] traditional role as educational leaders concerned with curriculum development, teaching and learning, and their new role...
as financial man

agers’ (1997: 151), while Jephcote et al., note similarly that the focus of

principals has become ‘the organization and financial management of the corpo

ration . . . [C]urriculum matters have generally not been amongst the main

current concerns of principals and boards of governors’ (1996: 44). Cultural change

One of the major consequences of the reinforced role of heads and principals,

the ‘drawing in’ of senior management teams and the increasing focus of their

work on the broad policy of the institution and its place in the wider world

seems to have been an increasing distancing of senior managers from other staff.

For example, some writers on the consequences of local management of schools, particularly those writing about secondary education, have identified an increas

ing ‘division of values and purposes’ (Bowe and Ball 1992: 58) between the

‘corporatist’ views of senior managers whose prime concern is with the school

as a whole and its relationship with its external environment, and the more ‘indi

vidualist’ orientation of teachers whose prime concern is with the needs of indi

vidual pupils (Simkins 1994). Some have gone so far as to suggest the

development of ‘schizoid organizations’ (Broadbent et al. 1992). A similar dis
Tancing has been widely commented on in the colleges sector. As Ainley and Bailey argue: 'While integration amongst the [senior management] team increases . . . there is a danger for them to cut themselves off from other areas of college' (1997: 42). For example, one study contrasts the perspectives of senior managers, 'who were very concerned with the survival of their colleges', with those of lecturers, among whom 'there appeared to be little awareness or concern for the substantial financial pressures that were motivating the senior management' (Hewitt and Crawford 1997: 118–19, 125). Another study in one college found that 85% of those interviewed believed that college management did not share the same educational values as staff (Randle and Brady 1997: 233).

When this idea of 'cultural distancing' is explored further a number of issues arise. First, the structural implications of 'distance' itself are interesting. For example, there appear to be contrasts in the ways in which organizational 'layering' is being managed in schools and colleges. In many primary schools new management layers are being created with clearer roles for deputy heads and curriculum co-ordinators where previously there was only 'the traditional two tier model' of head and classroom teachers. This may be having the effect of
reducing the direct influence of classroom teachers on school policy (Webb and Vulliamy 1996: 447). In contrast, in the college sector ‘delayering’ has been common, partly to establish clearer lines of accountability but also as a source of financial savings. However, it has been argued that this, too, has been accompanied by an increase in the distance between managerial layers, with less emphasis on management through face-to-face communication and greater use of new technologies (Ainley and Bailey 1997: 52–53).

Such changes in structures and communication patterns raise important questions about the ways in which organizational cultures are evolving. There is a good deal of debate about the degree to which the management of schools and colleges is becoming more or less participative as the consequences of the reform process work through. In the primary sector, for example, some studies claim to have found ‘a small shift to towards a top-down directive approach to management and a larger shift towards “managed participation” and away from a fuller form of collaborative collegiality’ (Menter et al. 1995: 303). Others, in contrast, argue that, their research shows ‘no evidence to support the view that, as primary schools become more autonomous, there is a shift away from collect
ive decision-making towards a more top-down or directive approach to manage

ment’ (Bell et al. 1996: 259). Similarly, while Gewirtz et al. identify ‘a tendency
towards speedier and non-consultative or pseudo-consultative decision-making EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND MANAGERIALISM by management’ in secondary schools (1995: 97), Hall and Southworth (1997)
suggest that ‘[t]he belief in heads monopolising leadership is at the very least
softening . . . [T]here is an increasing reliance on shared leadership’ (p. 165).

The situation in further education also seems far from clear-cut. For example,

Jephcote et al. note ‘how different principals sought to either increase or decease
[the] sense of alienation’ resulting from incorporation. ‘Several principals
described how they went to great lengths to involve staff in the changes and to
keep them informed . . . Others, however, deliberately engineered a situation
where staff were excluded’ (1996: 39).

At this stage, therefore, while cultural distancing seems a widespread phe
nomenon, it is difficult to discern clear common patterns of change in manager
ial cultures and styles more generally within sectors, let alone between them. In
part this may be because of lack of comparability between studies. Differences
may arise from the sample of institutions chosen in
particular studies, from the
methods used (for example, interviewing heads/principals
only or a wider
variety of staff) or from the ways in which evidence is
actually interpreted. The
difficulties are well-illustrated by a paper, which sees
simultaneous pressures in
the primary sector both ‘to break down the private
individualistic culture of
schools and replace it with one characterised by openness,
trust and collabora
tion’ and ‘to promote . . . managerialism and the directive
styles of headteachers
associated with it’ (Webb and Vulliamy 1996: 455). This is
clearly an area that
needs further systematic investigation. Middle management
roles
With changing roles for senior managers and their
increasing distancing from
other staff, it is to be expected that the roles of those
holding other leadership
and management positions would also change. The evidence
here is rather less
clear, but a trend can be identified towards the
establishment of more clearly
defined ‘middle management’ roles within tighter managerial
structures. The
term ‘middle manager’ means different things in the
secondary and primary
school contexts. In the former it increasingly means heads of subject depart
ments with line responsibility for groups of staff (Harris
et al. 1995), whereas in
the latter it means deputy heads and co-ordinators who typically have school wide responsibility for areas of the curriculum (Webb and Vulliamy 1996). In both cases however, such roles are being more clearly defined and clearer lines of accountability established, although the process has inevitably gone further in secondary schools. This trend is likely to increase as a result of current developments such as the Government’s proposals for the management of the teaching profession (DfEE 1998b).

The much greater complexity and variety of work of the typical college compared to that of schools, and the greater financial pressures to which many colleges have been subjected, has raised particular issues in relation to the role of middle managers in that sector. Resource accountability in particular seems to be being pushed lower and lower. For example, Carroll (1996) suggests that ‘caseloading’ is being explored as a method through which individual lecturers and teams might be given responsibility for using the flexibility associated with a high degree of delegation of the staffing resource to deliver targets for recruitment, retention and student achievement derived from college’s FEFC contracts.

Such developments suggest that the increased distancing of senior managers and
other staff described in the previous section may, paradoxically, be accompanied
by approaches to management which significantly reduce the degree of ‘loose
coupling’ which has often been claimed as a key characteristic of many educa-
tional organizations. In such circumstances it is perhaps not surprising, as one
study finds, that a very strong tension has emerged for many middle managers
‘between a sense of being impelled by finance and a real struggle to retain
student need as a basis for decisions’ (Lumby 1996: 336).

One general issue concerning middle managers which cuts across sectors is
that increasing numbers of staff are now expected to come to terms with the fact
they that they are middle managers, whatever this may mean. As one Head of
School in a college is quoted as saying: ‘[O]ver the last five or six years my role
has changed from being a teacher and doing some management to being a
manager and doing some teaching’ (quoted in Ainley and Bailey 1997: 57). In
schools, too, even where an individual’s teaching load has not changed, similar
changes in role understanding are expected. Managing staff
In both the schools and further education sectors, legislation has given govern-
ing bodies greater powers to establish personnel policies to meet the needs of
their institutions. Such freedoms have been considerably
less in the schools

sector - basic salary scales and conditions of service continue to be determined

nationally for most schools. Nevertheless, within these, governing bodies may

award additional salary points for excellent performance as well as defined

responsibilities and they are required to review the performance of the head

teacher annually and to determine his or her salary accordingly. Evidence sug

gests that most governing bodies are using these powers minimally or not at all

as a means of managing staff (DfEE 1998b, paras 42 and 67, School Teachers’

Review Body 1999), and personnel management issues do not seem to have

been as significant at an institutional level for many schools as they have been

for many colleges.

In contrast to the situation in the schools sector to date, perhaps the major

issue in the college sector since incorporation has been that of staff manage

ment. Pressures on costs, much more severe than in the schools sector, have

focused attention on the staff resource in particular. The experiences of ‘down

sizing’ and ‘delayering’ have been common, while major pressures have been

exerted on teaching staff to increase the intensification of their work through the

renegotiation of contracts. This has been a major factor in
the distancing of EDUCATIONAL REFORM AND MANAGERIALISM

senior managers described earlier and has undoubtedly made it more difficult to
maintain more open management styles. Nevertheless, differences have been
observed among colleges in their approaches to this issue. Thus Bassett-Jones

and Brewer (1997) link strategies of human resource management to broader
college strategies. They contrast strategies which focus on cost leadership with
those based on differentiation of quality, arguing that the former are associated
with human resource strategies based on a core-periphery model with increasing
reliance on part-time and contract staff, while the latter favour strategies based
around the levels of commitment which having a high proportion of full-time
staff provides. Organizational planning

How have the ways in which decisions are taken and control established
changed as a result of the reforms? One common feature in all sectors has been
the institutionalization of planning – school development planning in the schools
sector and strategic planning in colleges.

Although it is not a statutory requirement in the schools sector, strong
government advice supported by the expectations generated by the inspection
framework make it difficult for schools to avoid at least
creating the appearance of planning. Indeed, as a minimum all schools are legally required to produce an action plan in response to inspection recommendations. It is clear, however, that the idea of development planning can be interpreted in many ways. Thus studies in the primary sector have found ‘different approaches to authorship, involve ment and consultation from those [heads] who felt that it was simplest to prepare the plan themselves and then to persuade the staff and governors that it was right to those who sought a more interactive, developmental approach’ (Menter et al. 1995: 308). A major study of primary school planning (MacGilchrist et al. 1995) identifies four types of planning ranging from the ‘rhetorical’ to the ‘corporate’.

Similar differences have been found in secondary schools (Sutton 1994, Glover et al. 1996b). However, while MacGilchrist et al. (1995) suggest that ‘corporate planning’ – which could be described as the most ‘managerial’ of the types they identify – is likely to be the most effective, Glover et al. (1996a, b) find that schools which are deemed to be effective differ in the degree to which they adopt centralized and systematized approaches or retain more open and organic models. In other words, approaches to planning can be consistent with a number
of effective leadership and management styles.

In the colleges sector, strategic plans and planning appear to be both major expressions of organizational culture and an important means of influencing it.

The funding councils require the production of strategic plans and have imposed specific requirements, both for the content of plans and for the outline planning process which colleges should adopt. Nevertheless, it is probably much more broadly true of colleges than of schools that ‘from a senior and middle management perception, adopting the FEFC planning framework [is] not just lip service but [leads] to the creation of a better structured, more consistent planning process and thus a more effective service’ (Drodge and Cooper 1997: 47). There is some evidence that such planning is typically driven by ‘a broadly top-down approach to the mission of the college’ (Drodge and Cooper 1997: 38).

However, as with schools, there is evidence of more variation in the planning process itself and in the types of strategies which colleges embody in their plans. Thus Drodge and Cooper (1997), for example, found contrasts between, ‘on the one hand, an approach in which strategic management realises the mission by fostering individual and collective learning and, on the other, a managerially
directive approach in which the role of strategic management is to define college purpose and direction and then secure commitment to it’ (1997: 46). Managerialism in schools and colleges: similarities and differences

In summary, the evidence, limited and sometimes ambiguous as it is, seems to suggest that policy developments in both the schools and colleges sectors have, indeed, been accompanied by a move towards a greater degree of managerialism within institutions. Figure 1 summarizes some of the main aspects of this change that are suggested by the empirical literature. Given the limitations of some studies and the complexity of the issues involved, these might more appropriately be treated as hypotheses for further testing rather than firm conclusions.

Indeed, even allowing for these limitations, the evidence in not easy to interpret. On one hand, a number of ‘managerialist’ trends in the formal dimension of organizations and their management – tighter senior management teams, clearer middle management roles, more formal planning, agendas more dominated by measurable performance – seem fairly widespread. On the other hand the evidence in relation to the ‘softer’ aspects of management – levels and modes of participation, styles of planning – seem more ambiguous. Thus, while the managerial would seem to be challenging the
bureau-professional order in both

schools and colleges, it also seems to be the case that both the nature of the

accommodation that is occurring between the orders and the form that the man

agerialist component is taking varies between and within sectors.

In part this divergence arises because, as was described earlier, there are

significant differences among policy environments in different sectors despite

superficial appearances of convergence. These different policy environments have

potentially significant implications for the organizational and managerial

responses which schools and colleges make to policy pressures. Thus, there seems

little doubt that the severe funding pressures which have been placed on further

education colleges have caused the efficiency objective to dominate over almost

all others (Lumby 1996, Elliott and Crossley 1997) and a ‘hard’ approach being

taken frequently to human resource management (Elliott and Hall 1994). In con

trast, the government is establishing a climate in the schools sector which is essen

tially ‘effectiveness-focused’, albeit on the basis of an agenda which is tightly controlled from the centre and defines effectiveness in quite narrow ways (Gewirtz et al. 1995). Thus for many heads over the last few years inspection has been seen
as ‘a major, possibly the most significant, test of their professional credibility’

(Hall and Southworth 1997: 158). Now the agenda seems likely to switch further to nationally-imposed processes of target-setting in relation to pupil performance.

Internal factors are probably at work as well in the schools and colleges sectors (as well as in different phases of the schools sector). Each sector has significantly different cultural characteristics, and these have no doubt caused or allowed many institutions to respond to external pressures in different ways.

Size, too, may be a factor – a small primary school is a very different organization from an FE college. Nevertheless, consideration of the complexity of the further education Schools Colleges

Attachments Institutional performance as the primary focus of educational accountability

Decision-making Reinforcement of position of heads/principals: focus on over-riding accountability of the institutional leader Tighter senior management teams Middle management roles more clearly defined and more accountable Changing balance between central direction and collaboration unclear and apparently variable within sectors Emerging middle management Delayering layer (primary) School development planning Strategic planning generally variably embedded in culture, well embedded in culture, but and differences among school differences among college approaches approaches

Agendas Improving test and examination Reducing unit costs; meeting results; meeting inspection, inspection requirements; requirements frequently ‘hard’ human resource policies.

Norms Increasing ‘cultural distance’ between senior
managers and rest of staff Managers’ concerns: school
Managers’ concerns: cost effectiveness; school’s position
efficiency, college viability. in quasi-market. Teachers’
Lecturers’ concerns: concerns: curriculum and curriculum
and student pupil experience experience

Figure 1 Evidence of a shift towards managerialism.

change process which schools and colleges have gone through
should lead us to be

cautious about making easy generalisations about patterns
of change. While sector
differences seem to be important, a number of other points
need to be made.

First, it is important not to idealize the situation before
the reforms, as some of
the more radical critiques of managerialism seem to do. For
example, even before
the 1988 Act, the ‘pivotal, proprietal and paternalistic’
role of primary headteach
ers (Hall and Southworth 1997: 153) and the ‘extraordinary
centrality of the Head
teacher in British [secondary] schools’ (Torrington and
Weightman 1989: 135)
were noted. Similarly, while some writers on primary
schools have found greater
degrees of collaboration at an organizational level than
would typically be found
in secondary schools or colleges (Nias et al. 1989), it is
also true that a culture of
teacher autonomy and independence, certainly in relation to
professional matters,
was probably just as common. In this context, it would
appear that, while in some
schools the reforms may have threatened pre-existing
collaborative relationships,
in others they have encouraged the replacement of a culture of autonomy by more collegial relationships, albeit primarily of the ‘contrived’ rather than the truly collaborative type (Hargreaves 1994). Similarly in further education, it has been argued that the new managerialism often presented itself as a modernizing alternative, offering new opportunities for coherence and efficiency in college policies in contrast to the perpetual ‘Wars of Roses’ which arose from departmentally based ‘feudal’ college structures (Ainley and Bailey 1997: 40).

Second, although the reform process began in 1988, the process of radical policy development and implementation is still continuing as was noted at the beginning of this paper. Thus the position at any point in time is likely to be an unstable one. For example, the findings about growing cultural distance between senior staff and others may be associated with the pressures of devolution which placed major new resource management responsibilities on schools at the end of the 1980s. These pressures have now been superseded in part by pressures that are much more tightly targeted on the quality of teaching and learning and educational outcomes. This may lead to further changes in school cultures, and it is far from certain that cultural distancing will be a permanent phenomenon. Sim
ilarly in the colleges sector, it is possible that the proposed introduction of

benchmarking and target-setting approaches will shift the emphasis of institu

tional policies from cost-efficiency to educational effectiveness. As a final

example, it remains to be seen how far the relative 'softness' of personnel man

agement in schools continues when the Government implements its performance

management proposals, including more structured appraisal and performance

related components in the pay structure (DfEE 1998b).

Third, it is extremely important to note that significant differences in

responses to policy pressures have been observed within sectors as well as

between sectors. Some examples have been noted earlier. One reason for this

lies in the widely differing positions that institutions found themselves in with

the introduction of devolution and marketization. For example, the experiences

of individual colleges have been heavily influenced by their relative unit costs

and hence the scale of their required efficiency savings (Bassett-Jones and

Brewer 1997). Individual school experiences, in contrast, have depended

strongly on the relative competitiveness of the local market arenas in which they

have found themselves (Simkins 1994, Bullock and Thomas
Finally, it seems clear that the response of individual managers to the situation with which they are faced can and does vary. For example, Grace (1995) distinguishes between categories of secondary school heads who have differed markedly in their responses to policy changes: ‘headteacher-managers’, ‘head teacher-professionals’ and ‘headteacher-resistors’. Such a distinction perhaps explains in part the finding by Gewirtz et al. (1995) that some secondary heads have ‘enthusiastically embraced the new language and culture of management’ while others – the majority – have been ‘reluctantly implicated’ and have maintained ‘[a] strong adherence to comprehensivism or bureau-professional modes of operation combined with a grudging acceptance of market imperatives’ (pp. 99, 101). In further education, the pre-existing culture is likely to have created fewer difficulties for many principals, although there, too, reservations about the new market-oriented culture have been noted (Jephcote et al. 1996). Conclusion

The evolving policy environment which educational institutions have faced over the past 10 years in the United Kingdom has exerted a number of common pressures on those who lead and manage them. These pressures include:
• the need to ‘perform’ in the quasi-market and take a more ‘customer-focused’ approach to those whom they serve;

• the need to set and meet demanding targets in terms of measurable performance indicators which are set by central government or its agents;

• the need to exhibit ‘appropriate’ forms of management and organization which can be inspected and for which institutions can be held to account.

The argument that such developments are leading to increasingly ‘managerialist’ patterns of control in the public sector generally (Pollitt 1993, Clarke and Newman, 1997) have been echoed by those writing about primary schools (Webb and Vulliamy 1996), secondary schools (Power et al. 1997), and institutions of further (Elliott and Hall 1994) and higher education (Dearlove 1997). A review of recent studies in the schools and colleges sectors suggests that a number of managerialist trends are indeed discernible, especially in the more ‘formal’ dimensions of organization and management, and that these can be traced to changes in the policy environment. However, it also clear that the picture is a complex and evolving one, with considerable differences identifiable both between and within sectors, especially in relation to aspects of organizational culture and management and leadership style. This supports evidence from other parts of the public sector that suggests, not only that managerialism
can take many forms, but also that it can interact with existing organizational
orders in a variety of ways to produce different outcomes in different contexts

(Clarke and Newman 1997). The nature of these interactions and their outcomes
are likely to be affected by a variety of variables including:

• the detailed policy framework which affects the sector within which the
institution is located;
• the ‘relative positioning’ of the institution within the sector in relation to the
specific market and policy pressures with which it is faced;
• the ‘cultural starting points’ of particular sectors and of individual institu
tions within them; and

It is dangerous, therefore, to draw sweeping conclusions about the replacement of
the traditional bureau-professional organizational order in education by a man
agerial one. Rather, it is better to view the process as a dynamic one in which
growing tensions between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ are worked out within particu
lar policy and management arenas as different values systems and interests
compete for influence. However, while there is clear
evidence to support some
differentiation in the impact of managerialist trends on particular schools and col
leges, it is not possible to draw clear conclusions about the relative importance of
the variables listed above in influencing such differences, let alone about the mechanisms through which such differentiation occurs. The ways in which sec
toral, organizational and personal leadership factors interact to produce new cul
tural, organizational and managerial forms in particular contexts should be a major question for research and policy debate over the coming years. 3 Notes

1 This paper is concerned with schools and with colleges in the further education sector. The latter, in England and Wales, broadly comprises all those institutions in the post school sector whose primary purpose is not degree and postgraduate education (although they may offer some courses at that level). Higher (i.e. university) education is not the subject of this paper.

2 It should be noted that the Government, while increasing directive pressure in these ways, is also reducing the degree of prescription in the National Curriculum, and plans to increase the proportion of funding devolved to schools.


Roadbent, J., Laughlin, R., Shearn, D. and Dandy, N. (1992) “It’s a long way from teaching Susan to read”: some preliminary observations from a project studying the introduction of the local management of schools, in G. Wallace (ed.) Local Management of Schools: research and experience (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters).


DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT (1997) From Targets to Action: guidance to support effective target-setting in school.


(Buckingham: Open University Press).


The concept of a ‘counter-policy’ is articulated as a heuristic device for grasping the process of mediation whereby implementation of national policies may stimulate resistance and co-optation at other education system levels. The discussion is illustrated through exploratory research into initiatives promoting collaboration among English schools and colleges, some enjoying local education authority (LEA)
term counter-policy is defined and located within a local perspective on national policy implementation: the scope of the investigation is summarised; the national policy context stimulating counter-policies is sketched; how far the collaborative groups studied had developed a counter-policy is discussed; interaction between key players at different system levels impacting on these counter-policies is outlined, including reference to related counter-policies developed in some LEAs; and conclusions are drawn about application of the counter-policy concept to collaborative initiatives, utility of the conceptual orientation, an agenda for further research, and the potential of collaborative initiatives to subvert central government reform. Introduction The image of schooling underpinning the education reform policies and dis course of the recently overturned Conservative central government in the UK was that of the individual, largely autonomous-or self-managing—institution competing in the local market place, where parents as education consumers could choose amongst a diversity of state and private schools and colleges (Department for Education [DfE], 1992). To break the
mould of the post-war consensus between the main political parties over state education, an unprecedented range of powers was created to drive home these reforms.

All four ‘policy instruments’ in the typology of implementation strategies developed by McDonnell & Elmore (1991) were employed by central government. The major instrument was a comprehensive effort at system changing: shifting the balance of authority between teachers and headteachers, governors for each institution, local education authorities (LEAs), and central government. Other policy instruments were used to support this effort: from mandates, mostly in the form of legislation; through financial inducements to take up the opportunity for schools to be freed from LEA control; to capacity building where finance for staff development support was targeted on giving teachers and headteachers the knowledge and skills needed to implement reforms.

Yet enduring voluntary collaborative initiatives existed across the country where the schools and colleges belonging to these groups were close enough to compete for students (Lunt et al., 1994; Ranson & Tomlinson, 1994; Lomax &
A defining characteristic of such initiatives was the promotion of collaboration—joint work for joint purposes—in one or more areas of shared concern, promoting mutual survival of member institutions with variable effort to reduce or avoid competition inside the group (Wallace & Hall, 1994a). Moreover, despite the central government thrust to reduce LEA powers so as to increase school and college autonomy, some LEAs where collaborative initiatives were situated responded by shifting from an educational leadership to a service role. Supporting collaborative groups offered LEA staff a means of promoting their survival as contributors to state schooling in the face of ministers’ declared intentions.

Central government reforms were met in these cases by a response at other levels of the education system which reflected neither the practices envisaged by ministers nor the spirit of their reforms. The image projected by these collaborative schools and colleges was more that of the interdependent and mutually supportive institution than the individual, aggressively competitive, autonomous organisation beloved of reformers. Explanations of this apparent anomaly are thin on the ground. Most investigations and practitioner accounts of collaborat
tion have been descriptive, though a start is being made on
modelling forms of
collaboration (e.g. Husbands, 1996) and relationships
between collaboration and
competition (e.g. Glatter, 1995). These models have limited
potential to answer
generic questions to which this phenomenon gives rise: how
was it possible for
old or new practices antithetical to those envisaged by the
architects of educa
tion reform either to continue or to spring up and flourish
despite the use of such
a battery of policy instruments to secure faithful
implementation? How may we
explain such unintended consequences of policy changes?

This article is concerned with exploring complexities of
education policy
implementation in a large, multilevel system. Its main
purpose is to explore how further education implementation may be affected by interaction between
education policies
reflecting contradictory values held among actors at central
government and
other system levels. The notion of a ‘counter-policy’ will
be put forward as a
heuristic device for analysing the mediation of national
policies where their
implementation may stimulate resistance and co-optation in
target institutions at
other system levels, leading to subversion of these
policies (Hall & Wallace,
1993). A subsidiary aim is to ground the discussion through
an illustrative
account of exploratory research into initiatives to promote collaboration among schools and colleges in England, some with LEA support.

Attention is increasingly being paid to the complexity and contested nature of education policy (Boyd, 1988; Ball, 1994a), highlighting the importance of policy-related rhetoric in ‘manufacturing consent’ through influencing the discourse which shapes perceptions amongst those involved in implementation. Work remains to be done, however, on refining the conceptualisation of action and response both within and between system levels which commonly leads to emergence of some form of ‘implementation gap’ (Wallace, 1991a)

between policy-makers’ stated vision of the impact of new practices and what happens in target institutions. It is now more widely recognised that policies vary in the leeway offered for reinterpretation during implementation, not merely in terms of discourse, but in terms of practice (Ball, 1994b; Hatcher & Troyna, 1994).

A theme common to the complementary education policy implementation (e.g. Odden, 1991; Weatherly & Lipsky, 1977); and the management of planned educational change (e.g. Fullan, 1991) traditions is the idea that policies and associated
innovations are subject to a process of ‘mutual adaptation’ (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978). The intentions of initiators at one level in the education system are reininterpreted to a greater or lesser extent by those who are supposed to put them into practice, often resulting in a change in designers’ expectations. The explanatory power of this conceptual orientation is nevertheless restricted by its emphasis on single changes, neglecting the context for implementation (Bolam, 1982). The response of actors who are the target of an externally initiated policy tends to be viewed in terms of ‘strategic resistance’ (Corwin, 1965) to it. The possibility exists, however, that such actions could represent more than merely an attempt to block the imposition of an undesired policy. They could contribute towards the implementation of a proactive local policy agenda bearing only an oblique relationship to the initiative under scrutiny.

Second, focusing on single changes underplays the fact that, in a context of large-scale education reform, policies do not exist in isolation. A major reform effort generally involves the introduction of a bundle of interrelated policies which interact both within and across system levels, often in contrary ways (Coulby & Bash, 1991; Ball, 1994a; Wallace, 1996). Schools and colleges are
likely to be faced with a multiplicity of externally
initiated innovations at any
time (Fullan et al., 1986), alongside and often squeezing
out any originating
within. Research indicates how reforms produce a flow of
policies at different


levels which are frequently adjusted during their
implementation, resulting in an
evolving profile of innovations to be addressed by school
and college staff

(Wallace & McMahon, 1994). There is considerable
interaction between power

ful individuals and groups within and between central,
local, inter-institution and

individual institution levels of the education system,
according to partisan inter

est which may reflect contradictory values. In a large
system, this interaction

also reflects the limited awareness that actors at one level
may have of their

impact on others at different system levels (Wallace,
1991b).

To embrace the complexity of the change process in a
context of reform, Fullan

(1993) has advocated a new paradigm for understanding
educational change which

embraces its ‘dynamic complexity’. Following Senge (1990),
change is viewed as

involving more factors than we can take into account whose
interaction we cannot

fully predict. Therefore only limited control is feasible
at any system level. A major
contributor to dynamic complexity is the interaction between policies created at different levels beyond schools or colleges and policies developed within them, affecting the profile of innovations being addressed at any time.

In the spirit of this new paradigm, the present study is aimed at conceptualising one aspect of the interplay of policies across system levels, where powerful actors at these diverse levels hold contradictory values and subversive local practices emerge.

In the remaining sections, the counter-policy concept is elaborated as part of a local perspective on policy implementation, itself underpinned by a combined cultural and political perspective on interaction; the scope of the exploratory study is summarised; evolution of the national policy context stimulating development of counter-policies is briefly sketched; the extent to which the collaborative groups investigated may be conceived as having developed a counter-policy is discussed; interaction between key players at different system levels impacting on these counter-policies is outlined, including reference to related counter-policies developed in several LEAs; and conclusions are drawn about application of the counter-policy concept to the collaborative initiatives, the utility of the conceptual orientation, an agenda for further research, and the
potential of collaborative initiatives to subvert central government policies. National policy and local counter-policy

A counter-policy may be defined as: a proactive response by powerful actors in a locality to a policy initiated elsewhere that they perceive to threaten their beliefs and values, where they harness their institutional resources in a coordinated manner to mediate implementation of this external policy in ways that challenge or subvert its initiators’ stated aims.

A counter-policy may vary between the formal and explicit, perhaps enshrined in a public written statement, and the informal and implicit, articulated only in private conversation. A counter-policy may be oriented primarily towards active resistance to the external policy, especially at first, by persisting with present practice expressing existing values in the face of external pressure for change.

The research into collaborative initiatives portrayed efforts to ensure continuation of those which had been launched before the reforms. A counter-policy may become more subversive through co-optation: hijacking the external policy by adapting its implementation in such a way as to express contradictory values.

An example of co-optation, to be discussed more fully later, was an external evaluation programme superficially in line with the central government emphasis on increasing external accountability of individual institutions, yet
designed to enhance a local image of high quality education provided by all institutions in the collaborative group.

The notion of a counter-policy is located within a conception of policy making and implementation as a continuous process, where official policy statements and the associated discourses are both created and reinterpreted during implementation as a result of interplay between individuals and groups within and between system levels (Bowe et al., 1992). At the heart of the policy process lies interaction, which may range between the deeply conflictual and the strongly synergistic. Interaction is interpreted, through a combined cultural and political perspective, as reflecting the differential use of resources by actors to achieve their desired goals according to beliefs and values which they share to a varying degree (Wallace & Hall, 1994b).

Within a pluralistic society subcultures are likely to exist, each reflecting allegiance to beliefs and values that may be only partially compatible with those of others. The pro-market competitive values underpinning central government reforms do not square well with the long-standing dominant professional culture in British schools whose discourse has conceived education as a public service for local communities rather than a marketable product.
Activities reflecting contradictory beliefs and values may coexist without necessarily producing conflict if they are kept separate (Wallace, 1991b), as where actors collaborate to compete against a third party, or collaborate on some activities while competing in respect of others (see Levacic & Woods, 1994).

Following Giddens (1984), power is taken as ‘transformative capacity’: the capability to intervene in events so as to alter their course. It does not necessarily imply conflict: parties to interaction who work together synergistically have power to make things happen. Equally, each protagonist in a conflict situation may use transformative capacity to achieve contradictory goals. We may distinguish two forms of power (Bacharach & Lawler, 1980). Authority means use of resources legitimated by individuals’ beliefs and values associated with status, including the right to apply sanctions. System changing, as a policy instrument, therefore implies altering the distribution of legitimation to use resources and apply sanctions among people of different status: LEA staff have lost some authority to school governors and headteachers; these groups have lost some authority to central government. By contrast, influence refers to informal use of

A C O U N T E R P O L I C Y T O S U B V E R T E D U C A
TIONAL REFORM?

resources where there is no recourse to sanctions linked to authority, although

other sanctions (such as withdrawal of commitment or minimal compliance)

may be available.

All individuals have access to some resources, however asymmetrical their

relationship. Each party to interaction is implicated in a multidirectional ‘dialectic’

of control’ (Giddens, 1984) consisting of a flow of action and response. Conversely nobody has a monopoly on power: it is distributed throughout the system, albeit unequally. There is no sense in which central government ministers, despite having exclusive authority to alter the education system, have complete control over what others do or refrain from doing in response, let alone what they believe or value. Control is dialectical in the sense that it is shared among actors, each able variably to delimit—rather than simply direct—the actions of others.

This local orientation towards national policy implementation takes as its starting point those elements of the system-wide pattern of interaction most directly affecting individuals and groups in and around the institution level,

where both central government and LEA policies constitute external influences
on the use of power in these institutions according to particular beliefs and values. A model of implementation at this level is depicted in Figure 1. Since policies are never introduced into a vacuum, analysis begins with the situation into which an external policy is introduced. Here practice will probably reflect the beliefs and values of powerful actors, especially headteachers and principals who have substantial authority as institution managers. The values reflected by the external policy, as articulated by its initiators, may vary along the dimension whose extreme positions are portrayed in the diagram: between contradicting and being congruent with dominant institutional values. (My present concern is primarily with the former case, as indicated by the solid arrows.) In the light of their reading of this policy, powerful actors will seek ‘room to manoeuvre’ (Wallace, 1991a), whether to protect practice expressing their existing values where the policy contradicts them, or to engage in activities which express, synergistically, the values of the external policy where there is congruence. The policy thrust in this study has the added spice of posing the threat of closure, should a school or college staff fail to attract a viable number of students. Here the search for room to manoeuvre may include
a newly surfaced value placed on promoting the very institutional survival which was taken for granted until now. The outcome of this search is a response which varies similarly along a continuum: from counter-policy activity expressing values running counter to those underpinning the external policy; through acceptance of the policy, either where there appears to be little power to express contradictory values or where there is congruence of values; to synergistic activity which may even outstrip expectations of external policy initiators.

Subsequent evolution of a counter-policy could take various courses. It might wither in the face of enduring pressure from the external policy or successor policies, as consent is manufactured, reflected by a shift in dominant values. A sub-FURTHER EDUCATION A COUNTER POLICY TO SUBVERTEDUCATIONAL REFORM?

Figure 1 A local perspective on policy implementation.

sequent change in central government or its policy orientation might bring the values underlying what was a counter-policy into line with the new central government policy thrust, as might be the case if the newly elected Labour central government were to adopt policies fostering local collaboration. What ever happens, the process cannot be regarded as simply cyclic: as past actions
inform present practice, no actor can ever be in quite the same experiential place.

twice. In sum, the concept of a counter-policy addresses active and coherent
bottom-up and lateral uses of power, where opportunities are sought to reinforce
practices or develop new ones that reflect beliefs and values belying those pro
moted by initiators of an unwelcome external policy. Investigating inter-institutional collaboration
The exploratory research was designed to assess the applicability of the counter
policy construct to an instance of education reform policy. Collaborative initi
atives were identified through a national survey by letter of LEA officials and
representatives of professional agencies and unions, complemented by a search
through the education press for relevant articles. The criterion for inclusion in
this opportunity sample was evidence of working together for mutual benefit
despite being in a position where proximity between member institutions cater
ing for the same age range of students meant they could have competed. While
Initial
local
context Introduction of external Policy Search for room to manoeuvre Response to external policy external policy contradicts values of powerful “actors seek to protect existing values and ensure institutional survival
Active resistance: activities expressing existing values Co-optation: adapt external policy to
express existing contradictory values
current practice reflects values of powerful actors external policy congruent with values of powerful actors seek to express values underpinning external policy active endorsement support implementation: acceptance
inter-institutional collaboration was operationalised in different ways, all activities meeting this criterion lay within the definition adopted of collaboration as joint work for joint purposes. The activities were reportedly designed to benefit all schools or colleges involved, so helping to create conditions fostering their mutual survival within the increasingly hostile environment engendered by reforms.

From this set, seven initiatives were selected, offering diversity according to:
- their origin before or after the advent of relevant central government reforms from 1988;
- the coverage of different compulsory and post-compulsory phases of state education, from primary to further education sectors; and
- the form of linkage between the group and the local LEA.

Qualitative methods were used to conduct focused, interpretive case studies (Merriam, 1988) informed by analytical techniques developed
by Miles & Huberman (1994). Fourteen semi-structured interviews with headteachers or principals and initiative coordinators were conducted during spring 1995, supplemented by a document archive including press articles, position statements, bulletins and the handbook for a shared project.

These collaborative initiatives could all be interpreted as a counter-policy because they constituted, at least in part, a reaction against an external policy shift promoting competition between institutions. For many years, state schooling in the UK had constituted a ‘national service, locally administered’, where competition between schools was largely limited to situations where falling student numbers due to a decline in the birth rate left institutions with substantial spare capacity (Audit Commission, 1986). The organisation of state education as a public service, with LEAs enjoying a substantial measure of control over allocation of students, staff and finance, provided conditions for a stance of indifference or cooperation between the majority of neighbouring institutions.

The 1970s and early 1980s witnessed sporadic emergence of diverse grassroots and LEA initiatives promoting inter-institutional collaboration whose content varied. They included cluster groups of small
primary schools, pyramid

groups of secondary schools with their feeder primary
institutions, and arrange
ments for liaison between phases of schooling. From the
early 1980s, these
initiatives were supplemented by congruent central
government policies. Finan
cial inducements were offered to LEAs for projects
promoting clusters of rural
primary schools through the Education Support Grants scheme
(Wallace, 1988;
Galton et al., 1991), and to secondary schools and colleges
for consortia partic
ipating in the Technical and Vocational Education
Initiative (TVEI) and its
extension (Bridgwood, 1989). The General Certificate of
Secondary Education
examination was widely introduced through secondary school
consortia. In so
far as central government and LEA policies promoted inter
institutional collaboration, they were consistent with the
dominant (but not uniF U R T H E R E D U C A T I O N
versal) belief in state education as a local service, where
neighbouring schools
in the same phase were regarded more as partners than as
competitors.
Central government reforms, heralded by legislation in 1980
and 1986,
represented a policy U-turn from 1988. They reflected values
of increasingly
influential right wing advisers (Ball, 1990) contradicting
those expressed in the
earlier emphasis on collaboration. Interrelated policies
were designed to create
supply and demand sides of an education market and so foster competition
between individual institutions. A reduction in LEA authority was required to
free up schools and colleges to form this market. Policies to build the supply of a
greater diversity of institutions with enhanced autonomy included:

• more open enrolment of students to facilitate greater parental choice, requiring school staff to accept students up to the limits of physical capacity, and

removal of LEA authority to plan local provision through limiting schools' intake to a level below capacity;

• delegation of finance to each institution through a local management scheme according to a formula based on the number of students, removing LEA jurisdiction over this money and the staffing level. The tighter link between student numbers and finance, with direct implications for staff jobs, provided an incentive to expand or at least avoid any decline in the number of students on roll;

• ‘incorporation’ of sixth form and further education colleges, removing them from LEA control;

• diversification of types of school and maintenance of surplus capacity.
Financial inducements encouraged secondary schools to specialise in certain subjects such as technology, and primary or secondary schools to escape LEA control by becoming grant-maintained where they were now funded directly by central government, frequently to avoid LEA proposals for closure where student numbers were low (Halpin et al., 1993). City Technology Colleges were created with generous central government funding and industrial sponsorship, located in urban areas where there were already enough schools to serve the community; and

- an increase in the proportion of parents and local community representatives on school and college governing bodies, coupled with greater authority for oversight of individual institutions, giving governors more power over decisions affecting the market niche occupied by their school or college, including the hiring of staff.

Complementary policies informed parental demand for student places through:

- nationally imposed arrangements for assessing the teaching of the National Curriculum and publishing results, along with truancy rates, as league tables ranked according to raw scores, facilitating comparison between outcomes achieved by different institutions; and
A COUNTERPOLICY TO SUBVERT EDUCATIONAL REFORM?

• a national system of external inspection, entailing publication of reports which would also inform parental judgements of educational quality.

In the teeth of such a policy shift, collaborative initiatives represented a local counter-policy where they impeded the development of a market based on competition between individual institutions by acting in concert. Inter-institutional collaboration as a counter-policy:

Each of the seven collaborative initiatives displayed counter-policy characteristics. Composition of the groups and content of their counter-policies are summarised in Table 1. Member institutions included schools within LEA jurisdiction, grant-maintained schools, sixth form colleges and colleges of further education. The groups engaged in diverse shared activities which contributed not only to resisting external pressure to compete but also to co-opting aspects of the reforms to serve collaborative ends. Such activities were designed to empower all participating institutions, placing a high value on synergy to be gained from mutual support (in line with central government policy before the reforms). The vision statement for Group D was ‘to present a model for a group of LEA schools acting voluntarily within a consortium to enhance the educa
tional effectiveness of each member school for the benefit of all pupils in the area'. Several informants signified their awareness that engaging in collaborative activities reduced any competitive advantage their institution might have retained over others where, say, particular curriculum or management expertise was located in that school or college.

The first column of counter-policy content in Table 1 lists the main activities involved. The most common joint venture was curriculum and staff development where funds allocated to individual institutions and expertise within them were deployed for mutual benefit. Next came collaboration over finances, from sharing of ideas and experience to joint purchasing agreements made possible under the local management scheme. In the latter instances a central government reform policy designed to forge conditions for individual competition was co-opted through its formal adaptation to advantage the entire group.

These activities were incorporated in a more comprehensive formal arrangement in Group D, where a group of primary and secondary sector schools was established in the same town to share financial advantages and greater autonomy accruing to grant-maintained schools, without losing support of the LEA or
other group members. LEA officials agreed to explore how far finances withheld

for services such as library provision could be delegated to these schools, and an

LEA official was appointed as coordinator. Within the dialectic of control

between headteachers and LEA officials, the initiative empowered LEA staff to

use influence to support schools in a novel service role. The headteachers con

cerned found room to manoeuvre to exploit the opportunity reforms inadver

tently allowed for co-optation through a joint enterprise which contradicted the FURTHER EDUCATION

ACOUNTER POLICYTO SUBVERTEDUCATIONALREFORM?

Table 1 Collaborative groups and counter-policies

Collaborative Member Content of counter-policy

group institutions Main activities Internal Management competition

A 10 primary Curriculum and Informal Headteacher as sector schools staff development, no poaching volunteer

pa rnt newsletter for agreement time coordinator, parents headteachers’ meetings

B 8 primary Shared preInformal Part-time schools school facilities, no poaching coordinator, curriculum agreement

headteachers’ 1 special and staff meetings school development, shared resources 1 secondary including special

school needs teacher

C 14 secondary Curriculum and Informal Part-time schools staff development, no poaching coordinator, joint position

agreement headteachers’ 4 special statement, meetings, schools working parties working parties (e.g. on marketing)

2 further education colleges

D 13 primary Curriculum and Group LEA officer as sector


schools staff development, identity coordinator, joint purchasing, minimises headteachers’ 2 secondary 6 schools run promotion of meetings, schools school-based competition working parties initial teacher training scheme, governors’ forum

E 13 sixth form Curriculum and Accept some Principals’ colleges staff development, competition meetings, sharing financial for students project groups and management expertise, joint institutional evaluation scheme

values behind policies enhancing school autonomy at LEA expense. When

several schools in the group subsequently did become grant-maintained, they

continued to be accepted as part of the initiative, enjoying informal support of

the LEA despite severing formal ties.

Another co-optative activity was collaboration to develop a joint institutional evaluation scheme developed amongst a group of sixth form colleges (Group E).

Staff from one college were invited to review areas of provision in another and
to give a confidential report, in order to assist in improving provision in each member institution and also help prepare for external inspection under the new central government scheme. Curriculum expertise shared in this way contributed both to synergy in enhancing provision across the group and to all members making a good showing when externally inspected. The more inspection results turned out positive, the more their publication would help give prospective parents and students the impression that sixth form
colleges generally provided high quality education.

Valuing collaboration was tempered by the contradictory value accorded to individual institutional autonomy. A balance was struck between commitment to joint ventures for the communal good of the group, accompanied by loss of some individual autonomy, and retaining the authority of governors and headteachers or principals to do what they perceived to be in the best interests of their own institution. The aim of collaboration in Group D was stated as being ‘to offset the element of competition and to allow closer cooperation between schools whilst allowing each establishment to maintain their own individuality and autonomy’.

In a climate where finance now followed students and empty institutions would face closure, individual institutional survival had become the bottom line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative Member Content of counter-policy group institutions</th>
<th>Main activities</th>
<th>Internal Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F 25 primary Curriculum and No policy Steering sector schools staff development, committee, joint purchasing, full time 35 companies joint projects coordinator (e.g. road safety), 6 support joint negotiation agencies with companies, lobbying of LEA</td>
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<tr>
<td>G 2 secondary Joint sixth form Promote Headteachers’ schools teaching, shared equality of meetings, local campaigns provision decision-making and learning by paired</td>
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</table>
staff outcomes from both schools


value. As one head in Group B put it: ‘You need as much support as you can

get, especially in our situation as a small school . . . it’s going to be the only way

that we will survive’. Commitment to the joint work of collaboration was there

fore frequently instrumental, contingent on joint purposes being achieved in

such a way as to continue yielding benefit to the individual institution. The

present synergistic use of power within the dialectic of control between group

members might be replaced by something more conflictual. Should a decline in

student numbers mean that survival depended on competing against erstwhile

collaborators, this alternative strategy might be adopted. A minority of respon

dents, however, indicated that collaboration was of intrinsic moral value. A

headteacher from Group C stated:

I’ve always felt that there’s been great value, not just in collaboration,

but in a friendship group. That’s the very basic bottom line of what

should happen. It should happen between heads who are under tremen

dous pressure all the time from forces that are trying to make them cut

throat all the time . . . I’ve thought right from the
beginning that this

was the way to do it: corporate response rather than
individuals trying
to get extra money. Internal collaboration for external
competition

The collaborative initiatives did not empower their members
to buck the educa
tion market, but did ameliorate its impact. Depending on
the stance adopted in

other local institutions, the joint purposes of
collaborative activities could

include strengthening group members’ ability as a cartel to
compete against
aggressive outsiders. Here the contradictory values
underlying collaboration and
competition could be entertained without tension because
collaboration was
directed inside the group while competition was directed
outside. Cornering the
market through a collaborative cartel was co-optative to
the extent that, though
group members might be forced to engage in external
competition, their predica
ment as comrades in adversity could serve to reinforce
their collaborative values

while inhibiting parental choice and working to keep all
member institutions in

business. A headteacher from Group G referred to adopting a
‘siege mentality’

where the motivation for extending the scope of
collaboration was driven by the

need to resist an external threat.

Conditions favouring competition depend in part on a
surplus of student places
coupled with a push by parents to exercise choice. In four instances, there was
little environmental pressure because either schools were full, few parents wished
to move students between institutions catering for the same age range, or head
teachers abstained from competing. In the remainder, collaboration within was a
basis for resisting competition from without. Group C, near the centre of a large
city, faced a haemorrhage of students to suburban schools around the city limits.
This threat prompted expansion of the group, as staff in nearby schools sought
strength in neighbourly support, and the formulation of a joint position statement
articulating this concern as a basis for negotiation with the LEA over its policy of
accepting movement of students. One headteacher indicated how she seized
opportunities to reverse the trend and bring in students from outside the group:
‘I've actually rung colleagues in other schools and said, “So and so are on the
lookout for another school. It should be yours; chase them!” ’
The schools in group D were in an area where a significant proportion of
parents expressed interest in exercising choice and, by forming a group encom
passing all the schools in one town, its headteachers hoped to minimise the
impact of parental pressure. One indicated awareness of an emerging discourse of competition to be resisted: I don’t know where it could have come from, this pressure [to compete]. I don’t think it could have come from the LEA. To get those pupils in there because they mean money—I think it must have been this postmodernism, in the water, in the air, at a national level. More pupils would mean more money and your school would be more viable, and you would have the best resources and the best teachers. This was very much the culture of the early 90s when we got our delegated budget.

The sixth form colleges (Group E) had closed ranks because of their principals’ mutual self interest in withstanding increasing competition from further education colleges inside the area occupied by the group. Collaboration to avoid internal competition

Collaborative activities in five groups specifically designed to pre-empt internal competition are summarised in the second column of counter-policy content in Table 1. There was an informal, unwritten, ‘no poaching’ agreement between headteachers in three groups, where each would refrain from attempting to attract students from other member institutions. A headteacher from Group C pointed to undesirable consequences of successful competition where the supply of students was finite: ‘If you take pupils in here and appoint new staff, other people are losing their jobs. And you mustn’t do that; it’s a moral issue’. They would also try to dissuade any parent wishing to transfer a student to their school from another in the group.
In Groups D and G, identification of headteachers with the group was regarded as a buffer against the temptation to compete. One headteacher in Group D reported how, to sustain support of governors for the collaborative initiative, she claimed that her collaboration was a means of keeping informed about her competitors. A governors’ forum was set up to encourage governors from all member institutions to identify with the group, rather than just their school.

Only in Group E was a measure of competition for students accepted, with the safeguard that most member institutions were located far enough apart for its impact to remain within manageable limits. Collaborative activities were separated from competitive activities like marketing, allowing the contradiction to endure without conflict. Under Group E’s joint evaluation scheme, arrangements for matching reviewers to the college commissioning the review acknowledged the need to keep collaboration and competition apart. The handbook stated:

the coordinator will need to be aware of possible sensitivities if a reviewer is drawn from a neighbouring, possibly competitor, college. It will be important to ensure that there is no actual or perceived conflict
of interest. The college which is being reviewed should have the
opportunity to reject a reviewer where they consider there is a conflict
of interest, and they should be encouraged to do so rather than jeopardise the review itself. Implementation of counter-policies

The final column of counter-policy content in Table 1 shows how implementation was achieved through the introduction of roles, structures and procedures for developing and sustaining collaboration. The existence of coordinated management activity underlines the status of the collaborative initiatives as counter-policies, since the intention to collaborate had been backed by resources to make it happen and to make it last. In all cases, headteachers or principals held regular meetings to orchestrate collaborative activities and group development. These meetings were extended in Group F to include representatives from the companies and support agencies which were also members. Most initiatives were administered by a part- or full-time coordinator, drawn from the staff or from outside. Their responsibilities for promoting collaboration varied from organising occasional staff development activities (Group A and B), through liaising with the LEA (Group D), to recruiting new members (Group F). In Group D,
staff from each institution could opt in or out of any activity. A headteacher noted: 'I think it’s amoebic really . . . groups form and then others take part in other things; all the time there are changing groups’. Here about half the group members had elected to participate in a school-based initial teacher training scheme.

Closest coordination was achieved in the smallest group (G), consisting of two adjacent grant-maintained secondary schools in a small town. Shared decisions connected with the joint sixth form were made by paired staff with the same management responsibility in each school, to ensure that staff from neither could dominate. In the words of one headteacher:

A C O U N T E R P O L I C Y T O S U B V E R T E D U C A T I O N A L R E F O R M ? If you appoint somebody from inside [the group] then clearly he (sic) is one of them or one of us, and as soon as he makes a decision that happens to go against our school then we know he’s biased. We’ve always had two people who have done everything. The joint sixth form timetable is constructed by two timetabling officers, examination entries are supervised by two examination officers. The sixth form has two directors, and at the top of it you have two heads—and we have lunch together once a week . . . Action and response in the genesis of counter-policies

As noted earlier, implementation of central government reforms also entailed a complex series of interactions across individual school or college, inter-institution and LEA levels. In this sense counter-policies, which could emerge at any level
where the dominant culture of powerful actors was threatened, represented just one (possibly temporary) component of a perpetually unfolding policy process. Having illustrated how activity inside inter-institutional collaborative initiatives met the criteria of a counter-policy, we now consider how a flow of interactions gave rise to these counter-policies and related LEA activity, as portrayed in Table 2. The columns in this table list key interactions and contextual factors that variously affected initiatives and responses among the collaborative groups and LEA staff, the first two of which summarise the origin of initiatives and the institution level response to central government reforms. Three groups (A–C) pre-dated the recent reforms and none of them had originally constituted a counter-policy.

Group A was formed through an LEA initiative, where exchange of curriculum expertise in the primary sector was fostered by setting up a primary school development group in each locality. Traditionally relationships between schools and the LEA had been very positive. Group B was a grass roots initiative, where the secondary school headteacher had been the prime mover in developing a partnership with feeder primary schools. An LEA initiative promoting school self-evaluation had encouraged headteachers to work
together for their mutual
benefit, and LEA staff had supported development of the
partnership. Schools

making up the majority of the present Group C had
previously been formed by

their LEA into a TVEI consortium.

The 1988 central government reforms altered the climate for
collaboration in

these groups both as a result of the system changing
redistribution of authority

and because the potential threat to institutional survival
was increased under

local management. The main response was to reinforce the
group, taking

account of the reforms while rejecting their underlying
values. An audit of

resources was carried out in Group B schools to determine
what their combined

resources could offer. The LEA agreed to give financial
support to this or any

other partnership if member institutions matched it with
funds from their indi

vidual delegated budgets under the local management policy.
FURTHER EDUCATION

The other initiatives (D-G) were created as a by-product of
reforms, capital

ising on the new room to manoeuvre they offered to support
mutual survival of

member institutions. Group D was set up with LEA support to
explore a consor
tium approach to making best use of delegated and hitherto
undelegated funding

for LEA schools; Group E was formalised to share expertise
needed to manage

the novelty of incorporation where previously many
management tasks had been

the LEA’s responsibility; and Group F was formed to secure
better value for

money for participating institutions over purchase of
materials and services that

the LEA had been carrying out on an individual basis.

Looking along the columns of Table 2 relating to Group G,
we can see how

its formation provides a stark contrast to the other three
post-reform initiatives,

A C O U N T E R P O L I C Y T O S U B V E R T E D U C A
T I O N A L R E F O R M ?

Table 2 Interaction between system levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative Origin</th>
<th>pre- Institutional</th>
<th>LEA</th>
<th>LEA response</th>
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<td>Links between</td>
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<td>A Pre Reinforce No Counter-policy: Positive collaborative service group collaborative group</td>
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<td>B Pre Reinforce No Counter-policy: Positive collaborative service group collaborative group</td>
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<td>C Pre Reinforce Interest in Neutral and extend Yes servicing collaborative collaborative group group</td>
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<tr>
<td>D Post Create Counter policy: Positive collaborative No service group collaborative group</td>
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<tr>
<td>E Post Create Accept loss of Neutral collaborative No sixth form group colleges</td>
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<tr>
<td>F Post Create Accept: Neutral collaborative Yes service group individual institutions</td>
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<td>G Post Create Endorse: Negative collaborative No promote</td>
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group competition

underlining the importance of adopting a local perspective on interaction, here

encompassing a negative response to an LEA operating in sympathy with central government. The reaction at LEA level to central government reforms had been

strongly to endorse them, even to the tune of relinquishing control over state education in the area. According to the headteacher of one of the two grant-maintained schools in Group G: There are a large number of grant-maintained schools because of self-protection. The Authority made themselves perfectly clear that they would encourage people to opt out on the one hand, and they were quite prepared to take a totally non-education line . . . [The LEA] would have been perfectly happy to see a school flounder and go down as a result of the application of market forces economics. You've got some fairly ultra right wing Thatcherites—or you did have—calling the shots, and getting out from under was a safe policy. With the exception of one school in [the LEA] we are all grant-maintained. Not because we have this burning desire to be grant-maintained; not because we accepted the philosophy; not because we believe in grant-maintained schools particularly. We genuinely did opt out to say goodbye to [the LEA].

The headteachers of these schools had engineered becoming grant-maintained

together—ironically—as a pragmatic escape route from what they perceived to be a hostile, pro-central government LEA. They used resources made available by reforms to hijack the grant-maintained policy so as to facilitate collaboration,

and continued to resist LEA efforts to promote competition. When an LEA pro

posal was announced to create a new school in the area,
which would have competed for students, these headteachers successfully launched a campaign to prevent it being built. Their collaborative initiative represented a counter-policy directed against the unwelcome synergistic external policies introduced by the LEA and central government. They shared a common, institution-level professional culture which evaluated the LEA negatively. Accordingly, within the dialectic of control between these system levels, the two headteachers had grasped the opportunity central government reforms provided to increase their authority relative to the LEA so as to enhance their joint autonomy and chances of mutual institutional survival.

There had reportedly been strong congruence between dominant values in this LEA and those reflected in central government reforms. Room to manoeuvre was found to express these values at LEA level through a response of active endorsement to implement the central government policy (one option for response to an external policy which was highlighted in Figure 1).

The reaction was different in other LEAs. The third column in Table 2 indicates how the LEAs associated with Groups C and F were subject to a subsequent central government policy. A review of local government was carried
out in the early Further Education

1990s and some LEAs either had boundary changes imposed or were abolished and

new LEAs created to serve the region. The impending changes in two LEAs appear
to have inhibited any effort to work with the collaborative groups concerned. Offi
cials from the new LEA for Group C were reported as having expressed interest,

but fieldwork was conducted before the LEA was firmly established. Action and response in the genesis of LEA counter-policies

As the fourth and fifth columns in Table 2 reveal, staff in two other LEAs had
developed new ways of supporting the pre-reform collaborative groups (A and
B) within parameters imposed by central government reforms. As discussed
above, the LEA for Group D was integral to the development of the initiative,
even providing the coordinator. Establishing positive links with collaborative
groups of schools through these supportive activities amounted to an LEA
counter-policy connected with Groups A, B and D. Room to manoeuvre was
found within the dialectic of control between LEA and central government to
resist the potential loss of LEA power under central government reform policies.

Influence was employed to promote LEA survival by finding a group service
role valued by the headteachers concerned. These counter-policies were co-opta
tive in that LEA staff were assisting the kind of mutually supportive group that had no place in the central government rhetoric about state schooling.

The LEA for Group E had little room to manoeuvre since central government legislation had cut all ties with sixth form colleges. Officials had apparently accepted the loss of these institutions and directed their attention elsewhere. In seeking to understand how proclaimed central government policy changes turn out in practice, as mentioned earlier, it is necessary to take into account how much leeway they may allow for those on the receiving end.

Incorporation of sixth form colleges left LEAs with no formal link, whereas local management of schools could enable LEAs to develop a service role. In the LEA for Group F, similarly, there appeared to be acceptance of a diminished role, as prescribed by central government reforms, limited to servicing individual institutions. Mapping the flow of interaction affecting counter-policies on the basis of this detailed account of counter-policies, we can now build up a more comprehensive picture of the part they played in the policy process connected with implementation of central government reforms. The sequence of interaction within and between system levels resulting in the emergence of the
different collaborative group and LEA counter-policies is summarised in Figure 2. Activity spanned four system levels where collaborative groups formed an intermediate tier between the individual institution and the LEA. Policies at these levels with implications for inter-institutional collaboration changed and interacted over the previous decade. Policies prior to 1988 at all four levels variably promoted collaboration at other levels. The central government reform 


programme from 1988 impacted on and led to divergent reactions in the other three levels, as depicted by the long cross-level arrow:

- at LEA level, the response to central government reforms in some cases had been to develop a counter-policy of servicing collaborative groups whereas, by contrast, one LEA in this study even promoted opting out of LEA control;

- at collaborative group level, existing groups reinforced their activities and identity, several groups collaborated to compete against other local institutions, and one group tolerated a measure of internal competition;

- at individual institution level, schools or colleges in this study joined old or created new collaborative groups, while staff in other schools elsewhere had complied with reform policies by engaging in competition or opting for grant-maintained status, and college staff had capitalised on the opportunity for competition accompanying incorporation.

The subsequent piecemeal central government change in LEA boundaries had also, by 1995, made a cross-level impact on collaborative groups. A key
outcome of this four level interaction, at the time of the fieldwork, was that the education system now contained both collaborative groups and LEAs supporting them despite a sustained central government reform effort with a rather different outcome in mind. Within the system-wide dialectic of control, actors continued to wield considerable influence on the local stage.

Conclusion

The collaborative initiatives presented in the case studies show how, despite the formidable array of policy instruments used by policy-makers at one level to secure compliance, faithful implementation across other levels, nationwide, was not a foregone conclusion. A central government effort to offer parents increased choice amongst a greater diversity of educational provision with LEAs taken largely out of the frame gave rise to the irony that powerful actors in the study schools, colleges and LEAs, subscribing to subcultures whose values were out of kilter with this shift, were still empowered to exercise negative choice in response. Their collaborative approaches to aspects of educational provision lay beyond the limits of diversity promoted within central government.

Despite variation in the content and context of collaborative activities, they shared two key characteristics which enabled them to develop and endure. First,
they were all substantial and sustained efforts where considerable energy was put into coordination and they all featured ongoing negotiation among key players. Second, they represented more than mere resistance to central government reform policies. Rather, they constituted a counter-policy which was the foundation for synergistic responsive action by participants in collaborative initiatives and, in some instances, LEA staff in reinterpreting central government A C O U N T E R P O L I C Y T O S U B V E R T E D U C A T I O N A L R E F O R M ?

Figure 2 Summary of factors affecting development of collaborative group and LEA counter-policies.

policy and moving to co-optation in achieving the contradictory interest either of looking after the group of schools or colleges, or of finding a new niche for the LEA.

Yet it would be naive to overestimate the degree of subversion achieved or the prevalence of these counter-policies. Even if they enabled such leeway to be fully exploited as reform policies promoting autonomous and competitive self-managing institutions and reducing the power of LEAs allowed, pressure to comply with the requirements of other polices in the reform package remained.

The combination of policy instruments may not have secured universal imple
mentation in line with ministers expectations, but it does appear to have delimited the range of local responses. Collaborative initiatives certainly did not leave their members untouched by reforms. Moreover, while the exploratory research was not designed to establish the spread of such counter-policies, the initial postal enquiry suggested that they represent a minority response.

The idea of a counter-policy appears to have wider potential as a heuristic device for exploring the policy process. It may be dynamically complex, but patterns can be found if analytical tools are developed for the job. The local perspective on policy implementation and the concept of a counter-policy can help answer questions of the kind posed earlier: they show just how practices may endure in cciitr.igovernm ent. 1.1: A collaborative group in individual institution. Pie I-low ot Policies I "iKS prom ote c ollaboration promote competition between exchangesome 1.1:Aboundariesins tutions, reduce I.HA p o wers vari ably pr o motecollaboration I'ariable response: counter-policy service collaborative groups service individual institutions, promote competition between institutions, variable activities, variable link with 1.1: A variable response: variable values about collaboration and competition between institutions, variable competition inside: and outside groups, variable link with 1.1:AIMUKLpslliti: collabor ate compete, become granting in targeted institutions within a large multilevel system which
run counter to the thrust
of central government reform policies, even where a system
changing instrument
is employed over several years. If room to manoeuvre can be
found to resist or co
opt an unwelcome external policy, it will be.
Counter-policies come into play in
those situations where reinterpretation is a possibility at
the level of practice.
The counter-policy idea fits the purpose of analysing local
mediation of edu-
cation policies, but more detailed conceptual mapping is
required to refine the
notion so that different forms of counter-policy may be
distinguished, and con
ditions under which they may emerge, endure or decline may
be understood.
The possibility of transition from a counter-policy to the
more generally
accepted norm requires conceptualisation, attending to
local uses of power to
produce the cultural shifts that may be engendered where
co-optation catches on
system-wide. The research also indicated how the combined
cultural and polit-
ical perspective on interaction could highlight the
centrality of contradiction and
congruence in beliefs and values in affecting the
conflictual or synergistic use of
power between actors at different system levels.
A substantial research agenda is suggested. Promising
directions for investi-
gating the policy process from a local perspective include:
• longitudinal studies, tracking the policy process contemporaneously over a period of years, whether focusing on a single policy and its associated innovations or an overall policy thrust;

• multilevel investigations focusing simultaneously on two or more system levels and tracking the interaction between them as it happens;

• projects exploring a variety of settings inside and outside education; and

• comparative research, in, say, centralised and decentralised systems, or large and small states where the number of system levels and the degree of interaction between them varies (see Jones, 1996).

Finally, we have seen how voluntary local collaborative initiatives constitute counter-policies that subvert, on a small scale, a national policy thrust promoting competition between individual educational institutions. As for the future, who knows? We have witnessed one policy U-turn away from inter-institutional collaboration towards competition. The dynamic complexity of the policy process suggests we might yet see another, where collaborative initiatives in UK schools and colleges become cutting edge exemplars of policies launched by the new central government, and new counter-policies emerge within the aggressively competitive autonomous institutions whose managers actively endorsed the past reforms. Acknowledgements

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LETTING GOOD OUTLIVED PROFESSION
Leadership provided by the headteacher is widely acknowledged to be a crucial variable in determining the effectiveness of schools. However, the majority of leadership studies consist of either surveys or interviews which the researcher has conducted with head teachers or case studies written by the head teachers which draw heavily upon their own experience, and as such are essentially 'autobiographical' in the perspective they provide on leadership in schools (Ribbins & Sherratt, 1992). The objectives of this article are to: set out a new model of effective school leadership based on recently completed empirical research; demonstrate how the multi-perspective methodology adopted contributed to a critique of existing models of leadership and the development of a new grounded model and discuss the analytical issues raised by the multi-perspective methodology which involved all the stakeholders in a school community. Theoretical framework

The emerging picture of school leadership in the late 1990s in all countries has become increasingly complex. In the UK the pace of change shows no sign of slackening as the Government continues to impose new demands upon schools and to expect results within relatively short time-scales. Much of the impetus for implementing successive national reforms rests primarily with the leaders of individual institutions. It has been argued that the particular view of leadership which the nature, direction and pace of reform implicitly endorses as effective, has become increasingly managerialist (Gunter 1997; Slee et al., 1998). Ball (1987) suggests that the dominant discourse of
leadership embodies direct control (‘old managerialism’) and people-centred management (‘new managerialism’). However, it has been claimed that the emphasis upon the ‘monitorial’ role of 'managing directors’ has given headteachers less time to perform the role of ‘leading professional’ (Pollard et al. 1994). This claim directly contradicts the popular academic research view that the headteacher’s main role is to influence the quality of teaching and learning in the school through purposeful ‘transformative leadership’ (Leithwood & Jantzi 1990; Fullan, 1992), to articulate a vision and to promote shared ownership (Louis & Miles 1990; Blase & Anderson 1995; Starratt 1991). In this literature the search continues for a model of effective leadership which is suited to a postmodern context.

Recently, leadership studies have focused upon values—the ‘moral purposes’ and moral craft of leadership (Sergiovanni 1992; Tom 1984); the roles of leaders in creating a ‘community of learners’ (Barth 1990; Senge 1990); and the capacities of leaders to ‘make a difference’ through their ability to ‘transform’ (Sergiovanni 1995; Leithwood et al., 1999) or ‘liberate’ (Tampoe 1998) rather than simply ‘transact’. The most popular theories are located in
the 'transactional'

and 'transformational' models identified more than twenty years ago (Burns 1978) and lately reinvented through such terms as 'liberation' (Tampoe 1998),

'educative' (Duignan & Mcpherson 1992), 'invitational' (Stoll & Fink 1996)

and 'moral' leadership (Sergiovanni 1992). What is clear from these, and the effective schools literature, is that successful leaders not only set direction,

organise and monitor, build relationships with the school community and are people-centred but they also model values and practices consistent with those of the school (Sergiovanni 1995: 119).

This research study (commissioned by the National Association of Head teachers) is one of the most recent studies of leadership in the United Kingdom.

When work commenced on the project, few recent studies were in existence that had attempted to identify the key components of effective school leadership through the eyes of those who experience and witness it, whilst also relating analyses of multi-perspective grounded data to existing theoretical and empirical literature. Research methodology

On the evidence of the literature it would appear that previous research has relied too heavily on headteachers to be the primary source of data on leadership.
in schools. However, there is evidence to suggest that when researchers turn
their attention to alternative perspectives they prove to be rich sources of data.

For example, studies of pupils’ views about school (Babad et al. 1991; SooHoo GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES 1993; Rudduck et al. 1996; Smees & Thomas 1998), reveal that they ‘can be
both astute and articulate observers of the school environment’ (Smees & Thomas 1998). By failing to draw upon the different ‘perspectives’ provided by students, teachers and others, previous research has clearly ignored a plethora of evidence about both the ‘production’ and the ‘consumption’ of leadership in schools. Few studies have sought information from heads recognised as effective; fewer still have sought educated opinion from those who know most about them and who have experienced the realities of their leadership in times of change i.e., their students, staff, governors and parents. As a response to this,

this research study was designed to consider effective leadership from multiple perspectives within the school organisation.

The project adopted the view that since the workings of the real world (even at the scale of a very small primary school) can be bewilderingly complex hence, no single observer, not even the most perceptive of head
teachers, is restricted to viewing from a particular perspective or ‘angle of observation’ (Schatzman & Strauss 1973). The opinions of any individual, therefore, are inherently ‘biased’ by the position from which they have observed events in what Shimahara (1990) has called ‘contexts in process’. The research on which this report is based, therefore, was designed to capture the ‘silent voices’ (SooHoo 1993) of authentic sources of data about leadership in the case study schools on the assumption that new insights would inevitably arise if all too familiar situations were viewed afresh from ‘new angles’ (Schatzman and Strauss 1973; Morgan 1993). In addition to enabling the project to draw upon hitherto untapped and highly fruitful sources of evidence, the adoption of this multiple perspectives approach made it possible to compare data collected from different perspectives and sources for the purposes of triangulation (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983; Gill & Johnson 1991). The main objectives of the research were to:

- collect data in schools from a multiplicity of perspectives including those of head teachers, deputy head teachers, governors, parents, students, support staff and teachers;
- compare effective leadership in contexts ranging from small rural primary schools to large urban secondary schools;
- identify the personal qualities and professional
competencies which are generic to effective leadership in schools;

- re-examine existing theoretical perspectives on school leadership through insights derived from new empirical research; and

- contribute to the wider educational debate on the relationship between leadership and school effectiveness and improvement.

It was acknowledged that the term ‘effectiveness’ when applied to the leadership provided by headteachers is both a contextualised and relational construct. Consequently, it was decided to investigate effective leadership by reference to a wide range of contexts and leadership challenges. This was achieved by the selection of theory-generating case studies based upon three dimensions (Yin 1989; Maykut & Morehouse 1994). These dimensions were:

- schools of different sizes operating within different phases of education (i.e., the early years of primary schooling through to upper secondary and including special schools);

- schools located within a range of economic and socio-cultural settings (i.e., including rural, suburban and inner-urban schools as well as those with mixed catchment areas); and

- schools in which head teachers who were widely acknowledged as being ‘effective’ leaders had spent different amounts of time (i.e. ranging from relatively new to well-established head teachers with many years of experience).

Given the goals of the research, the most critical and problematic of these dimensions concerned the selection of schools in which the head teacher met the
criterion of providing 'effective' leadership. The research team adopted a working definition of 'effectiveness' which enabled schools to be chosen on the basis of the following criteria:

• schools which had received a ‘positive’ Inspection Report by Ofsted, particularly with regard to the leadership provided by the head teacher;

• schools which, on the basis of test scores and examination results, could be shown to be performing better than local and national means; and

• schools in which their head teachers were widely acknowledged by their professional peers (through the local, regional and national networks of the NAHT) as being ‘effective’ leaders.

Once schools meeting all of the above criteria had been identified it was then necessary through a process of negotiation (in which the NAHT acted as an intermediary) for the research team to gain access to schools in which the head teachers were prepared to:

• subject themselves to intensive questioning during three interviews, each lasting for at least an hour;

• give the researchers access to deputy head teachers, governors, parents, students, support staff and teachers in order to conduct one-to-one and group interviews which would focus (perhaps critically) on the leadership which they had experienced; and

• organise and manage a programme of interviews and group meetings over a period of three days at a busy time in the school year (February–June).

The main methods used to collect data in the twelve case study schools were a short fact-finding questionnaire, one-to-one interviews and
group interviews.

Information about each of the schools appears in Appendix A and further details GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES of the research methodology can be found in Day et al. (2000). In addition to the collection of primary data, documentary evidence was obtained from such secondary sources as school development plans, school prospectuses, OfSTED Inspect Reports, newsletters and examples of media coverage. These sources were used to contextualise the empirical data as research has shown the importance of context in understanding approaches to school leadership (Leithwood et al. 1999). The analysis of 12 case studies by the team of five researchers followed a complex pattern of theory development and testing (Yin 1989). As a process it revealed the possibilities and problems inherent in combining researchers who felt more comfortable with a ‘grounded approach’ (Glaser & Strauss 1967) and those who wish to apply existing theoretical frameworks during the initial analysis of the data. This tension between researchers with fundamentally different approaches to data analysis was evident in each of the five-phase analysis of the interviews. It was inevitable that thirty six days of qualitative fieldwork in the case study schools which included e.g., a total of thirty six one-to-one interviews of a minimum of
one hour’s duration with their head teachers would yield a rich abundance of data in the form of field notes, audio-cassette recordings and the researchers’ own recollections and impressions of their experiences. The principles and procedures of qualitative research as derived from ethnomethodology and phenomenology (Tesch 1990) were used in the analysis of this plethora of evidence.

Consequently, the analysis of the field evidence was not deferred until the end of the project. It began early and proceeded concurrently with the collection of data in schools so that the two became closely integrated (Glaser & Strauss 1967) to the extent that they began to inform each other (Miles & Huberman 1984). The simultaneous collection and analysis of data was a reflective activity, both individually and for the team as a whole. This process of reflection took a number of forms including periodic meetings of the project team at which progress was reviewed and ideas and opinions were discussed usually as a result of analytical notes (or ‘memos’) based on the reflections of individuals. These reflective documents and the discussions they prompted furthered the process of analysis by helping the team to move between concrete field data and conceptualisation. They also provide an accountable record or
‘audit trail’ (Lincoln & Guba 1985) which showed that the process of reflection and inductive data analysis not only occurred, but proceeded in a manner which, while being flexible and eclectic, was nevertheless orderly and systematic.

The sheer volume and diversity of the data collected by the team made it necessary to organise it into smaller homogeneous units of information in order to begin to make sense of it. Consequently, the project, by means of the reflective process described above, arranged the data into ‘segments’ of material based on an organising system derived from the data themselves. The process, therefore, was essentially one of inductive cross-case analysis (Miles & Huberman 1994), the main outcome of which was a two dimensional matrix with issues and themes related to school leadership on one axis and the different sources of evidence (i.e., head teachers, governors, parents etc.) on the other. In the early stages of this process the organising categories, especially the issue and themes, were regarded as being tentative and provisional and were subsequently modified in the search for a more satisfactory system—though it would be difficult to disagree with Lofland (1971) who concluded that ‘no order fits perfectly’.
Manipulating the field work data in this way proved to be a time-consuming but intellectually-exacting activity.

Having arranged the data for purposes of analysis in such a way, it was possible to compare what the different sources of evidence (i.e., head teachers, deputies, governors etc.) had revealed about leadership in their schools, or what a particular category of stakeholder had to say about different aspects of leadership. In the event it was decided that the richness of the insights provided by the analysis of the different perspectives of the various stakeholders interviewed should be reflected in the way in which the research was reported. The aim was to go beyond what Hyoner (1985) called a ‘composite summary’ and what Patton (1980) has referred to as a descriptive account of ‘patterns and themes’.

Instead the final goal was to offer a critique of existing theories of effective leadership in schools in the light of the project’s empirical findings and to suggest some ‘provisional’ hypotheses (Turner 1981), new concepts or ‘theoretical categories’ (Lazarsfeld 1972) and some tentative thoughts on ‘substantive theory’ (Glaser & Strauss 1967).

The analysis eventually developed along two distinct strands. Firstly, the process of thematic induction began to build into a picture
of the characteristics

and behaviours associated with effective leadership as viewed from the perspectives of the key stakeholders. At the same time, the research team was searching for ways of encapsulating the perspective provided by the headteachers themselves. Although it would have been possible to have drawn upon the characteristics and behaviours described by the headteachers, these did not seem to adequately capture their day-to-day experience of leadership. It was at this point that the team began to develop the idea of using the tensions and dilemmas which headteachers and other respondents had raised during the interviews. The idea of dilemmas proved to be especially attractive because it seemed to encapsulate much of the problematic nature of leadership. It also provided a link between the construction of leadership by the various stakeholders and the individual theories of headteachers—a link based on the overlapping needs and expectations of those surrounding the headteachers and their own beliefs and values. We approached the role of the leadership within schools from what Clark et al. (1999) have termed a ‘dilemmatic perspective’. A perspective in which: Dilemmas are not merely accidental and temporary difficulties which arise in particular situations. Rather, social life itself is essentially dilemmatic since it involves choosing between courses of action which grounding knowledge of schools in stakeholder realities are to a greater or lesser
extent mutually exclusive. Education is therefore
caracterised by a series of dilemmas which are endemic,
though they may surface in different forms at different
times and places. (p. 170)

Tensions on the other hand reflected specific sets of
pressures experienced by

leaders which in certain contexts. Although different sets
of tensions may ‘pull’

headteachers in different directions these did not
necessarily involve leaders in

having to choose between mutually exclusive courses of
actions or decisions.

Our attempts to uncover tensions and dilemmas which were
endemic, and to a
degree perennial, was driven by our desire to identify
those which shaped or

limited the leadership approaches of the headteachers we
researched. Dilemmas

and tensions, therefore, offered the prospect of gaining
new insights into the dif

iculties which headteachers have in navigating their way
through a complex

matrix of expectations while maintaining their personal
integrity.

In addition, the adoption of this approach allowed the team
to bring together

aspects of several of the case studies in a holistic
format. No one headteacher

encountered all of the chosen dilemmas but the field
evidence showed that they

had all experienced aspects of each dilemma. The analysis
allowed these frag

ments to be drawn together around shared incidents, values
and expectations,
and in so doing it began to reveal how the headteachers were being positioned by those around them and were positioning themselves.

By presenting the analysis in the form of dilemmas, it was hoped that they would aid further reflection, not just on the nature of leadership, but on the experience of leadership. It’s impossible to adequately capture that experience in its totality and the dilemmas do not attempt to do so. Rather they provide a structure for considering how the experience of being a leader arises from the complex interaction of personal ideologies, relationships with staff and students, and the demands of the school situation.

However, given the insights which the interviews with headteachers gave into the impact which their professional work has on their personal lives it would have been worthwhile, on reflection, to have pursued this matter further by questioning those people who are closest to them personally—their partners and friends who know them well. The original research design did not anticipate that this particular perspective might be a valid and potentially-fruitful source of evidence. The leadership construct The methodology recognised that ‘effective’ leadership is both a highly contextualised and relational construct. Therefore not only did it need to be investi...
providing a wide range of contexts and leadership challenges but also with reference to multiple perspectives within the broader school community. This allows for a critical analysis of people-centred models of leadership in real ‘leadership contexts’ within which LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS school headteachers both establish themselves as leaders and in which they are judged by others. By viewing these relationships from the perspectives of those whose knowledge was based upon close or indirect and direct experience of them it was possible to identify not only the felt tensions and dilemmas of leaders but also the demands and aspirations of key stakeholders in the school community. These perspectives were investigated by individual and group interviews of key stakeholders. This was an attempt to develop a perspective on leadership which Ribbins & Gronn (1996) describes as ‘post-positivist’ approach to the role of contextual influences in defining and shaping personal agency, an approach which moves beyond a singular focus on the headteacher’s self construction of themselves as a leader. It allows for a consideration of the interaction between the headteacher’s self construction, the shared social construction of leadership by the various stakeholders, and those aspects of leader
ship which are valued and demonstrated in their interactions.

The presence of a shared social construction of effective leadership amongst very different stakeholders is significant for three reasons. Firstly it helped us realise the extent to which what we were gleaning from the various stakeholders were not just characteristics of their headteachers that they had observed, but were also beliefs about how ‘good’ leaders should act. Such beliefs have their roots within shared social construction of what leadership is about and the way in which leaders should act. These formed a complex matrix of demands and expectations around the headteachers which they partially assimilated, always had to manage and occasionally challenged. Secondly, the analysis had begun to reveal patterns within the expectations of different groups of stakeholders who gave greater significance to certain characteristics because of their position within the school and its broader community. For example, honesty and openness in decision making was seen as particularly significant by teachers whose careers and working conditions were directly affected by them; parents placed particular value on their headteacher’s ability to communicate and draw them into the community of the school; and governors emphasised the strategic and
micro-political skills of head

teachers. Each headteacher’s work was, therefore, set
within a matrix of needs and

expectations all of which had to be navigated. Thirdly,
this 360° matrix of expec
tations and demands placed on the headteachers by the
broader school community

formed the backdrop to a number of tensions and dilemmas.
Not only did it play a

part in their construction, but it also represented a

number of critical audiences as

the headteachers attempted to lead and manage them. The
results (1) Beyond transformational leadership

The evidence is sufficient to suggest that existing theories
of leadership do not

adequately reflect or explain the current practice of
effective leaders. Rather,

they suggest a people-centred model of leadership we have
termed ‘values led contingency leadership’. They adhered to a ‘person centred’
philosophy that

placed emphasis upon improving teaching and learning via
high expectations of

others. For them, the primary task of leadership concerned
building and moni
toring the conditions for professional, institutional and
broader community
growth (Leithwood et al. 1999). They were constantly
engaged with the daily

business of simultaneously managing inter-personal
relations and challenging

others to give of their best in the context of
policy-driven imperatives which
were not always universally welcomed. (2) Values
led-achievement oriented-people-centred

The findings from the research study demonstrate that
effective leadership is
defined and driven by individual value systems, rather than
instrumental man
agerial concerns. Management and leadership were essential
components of
these headteachers’ roles and heads were able to do both
successfully. They
engaged in people-centred leadership, constantly creating,
maintaining, review
ing and renewing the learning and achievement cultures for
students, staff and
the close communities of parents and governors whom they
served; and they
modelled this in the many thousands of daily interactions
through which
common visions, expectations, standards, relationships and
definitions of effect
iveness were formed, framed, supported and tested. Of equal
importance was
their ability to create and monitor organisational
structures appropriate to the
fulfilment of the legitimate interests and aspirations of
both internal and external
stakeholders. It follows that effective heads have a major
responsibility both for
the ongoing, evolutionary development of the schools in
which they work and,
within this, the more formal accelerated learning
opportunities and challenges
collectively known as ‘school improvement’ and ‘teacher
development’. The headteachers communicated their vision and values through their leadership relationships. They had been able to raise the self-confidence, morale and sense of achievement of staff by using these relationships to develop a climate of collaboration and by applying within them high standards to themselves and others.

Their focus was always upon the betterment of the children, young people and staff who worked in their schools. In this respect, they exercised ‘educative leadership’ (Duignan & Macpherson 1992). They were empathetic, warm, genuine in their love for children and concerned for their well being and achievement (Mintzberg 1994; Jackson et al. 1993; Noddings 1992). All valued and encouraged collegiality, a feature of ‘moving’ schools (Rosenholtz 1989; Hargreaves 1991), and all fostered climates of openness in their schools between students, staff and community, encouraging staff to participate in discussions about values and beliefs as well as in decision-making processes, emphasising mutual respect and providing supportive leadership for all their staff.

The heads in this study operated on the basis of both internally and externally determined measures of quality control so that their quality assurance criteria had
a broader agenda in keeping with a holistic broader moral vision of a good school LEADERSHIP AND HEAD TEACHERS

and good teachers, it involved everyone in the organisation seeking systematically,

with evidence, to ensure that standards were constantly improving. It was contin

gent but within a framework of unshakeable core values. All the heads:

• were clear in their vision for the school and communicated it to all its constituents;

• focused upon care and achievement simultaneously;

• created maintained and constantly monitored relationships recognising them as key to the cultures of learning;

• were reflective in a variety of internal and external social and organisational contexts, using a variety of problem-solving approaches;

• sought, synthesised, and evaluated internal and external data, applying these to the school within their values framework;

• persisted with apparently intractable issues in their drive for higher standards;

• were prepared to take risks in order to achieve these;

• were not afraid to ask difficult questions of themselves and others;

• were entrepreneurial;

• were ‘networkers’ inside and outside the school;

• were not afraid to acknowledge failure but did not give up and learnt from it;

• were aware of a range of sources to help solve problems; and

• managed ongoing tensions and dilemmas through principled, values-led contingency leadership.
A number of writers (Shakeshaft 1989; Blackmore 1989) have argued for a paradigm shift in conceptions of leadership which start not from the basis of power and control but from the ability to act with others and to enable others to act. The heads in the study rarely used their personal rather than positional power to obtain the results they wanted. Yet at the core of their personal power resided a particular vision for the school shaped by a particular set of values. These effective head teachers saw themselves as the source of a vision for their institutions, working through their relationships with members of the school community. Centrally important in this new model of leadership is the co-operation and alignment of others to the leaders’ values and vision with those of the leader. The heads in the study communicated their personal vision and belief systems by direction, words and deeds. Through a variety of symbolic gestures and action, they were successful at realigning the school community to their particular vision.

In short, they led both the cognitive and the affective lives of the school, combining structural (developing clear goals), political (building alliances) and educational leadership (professional development and teaching improvement) with symbolic leadership (presence, inspiration) and human ‘principle-centred’
leadership (demonstrating care and support) (Bolman & Deal 1984; Covey 1990). It was the human resource management which occupied most of their daily time and which created the most tensions and celebration. In this respect, their leadership approaches were heavily people-centred. They were both trans-actional—ensuring that systems were maintained and developed, targets were formulated and met and that their schools ran smoothly—and transformative—building on esteem, competence, autonomy and achievement, raising, ‘the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both the leader and the led’ (Sergiovanni 1992); and bonding, ‘by inspiring extraordinary commitment and performance’ (Sergiovanni 1992: 25). Contingency driven: managing tensions and dilemmas.

What seemed to really make the difference for the stakeholders was not only the persistence of vision and values with the simultaneous focus of the headteachers upon process and achievement (product) but also their ability to manage a number of tensions and dilemmas which characterised the human imperfections school contexts which, like classrooms, were by their nature, dynamic, complex and unpredictable.

In this section use is made of two linked concepts—tensions
which are grounded in the data as ‘lenses’ (Berlak & Berlak 1981) through which
to focus in on leadership. The main distinction between
tensions and dilemmas
concerns the possibilities of choice and influence. The
tensions identified in this
study tended to be those over which headteachers had little
choice or influence. In
the case of the dilemmas, possibilities of choice and
influence did exist, but the
degree to which the heads exercised such possibilities
varied considerably. A
dilemma, in this sense, is a situation which presents at
least two contradictory
propositions. Whichever is chosen, however, will not be
entirely satisfactory.
Together these constructs of ‘tensions’ and ‘dilemmas’
capture the immediacy of
the continuing conflicts faced by many of the heads in the
study. They underscore
the continuing dynamic between their core personal values,
management functions
and leadership demands. They capture their past, present
and future pressures,
challenges, and concerns and aspirations with which they
are daily faced and
which reflect the multi-faceted demands of the role. Heads
are constantly juggling
competing demands upon their time, energy and resources.
The data revealed seven key tensions and three dilemmas of
‘effective’ head
teachers which focus upon their roles not only in
maintaining and consolidating what they have already achieved, but also in managing the challenges associated with moving their individual schools forward. The tensions focus broadly on issues of leadership, personal time and professional tasks, personal and institutional values, maintaining presence, improving quality and developing staff, internal and external change, autocracy and autonomy and leadership in small schools. They reflect the concerns of a group of headteachers who are primarily concerned with achieving success for the teachers and pupils in their schools, for whom improvement is a permanent part of their personal and professional agendas. LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS (1) Leadership versus management Leadership is essentially the process of building and maintaining a sense of vision, culture and interpersonal relationships, whereas management is the coordination, support and monitoring of organisational activities. To enact both roles successfully requires a careful balancing act. Leadership is about having vision and articulating, ordering priorities, getting others to go with you, constantly reviewing what you are doing and holding on to things you value. Management is about the functions, procedures and systems by which you realise the vision. (Infant School Deputy) (2) Development versus maintenance If I don’t develop others, the school won’t develop. So that’s my priority. Other jobs can be delegated but not this one. (Primary Head)

There is a tension between the amount of time and energy
devoted to system

maintenance and that devoted to ensuring that staff were always more than com

petent and were challenged and supported actively in seeking higher standards. (3) Internal versus external change The pressure is from outside, but I have to manage the pressure inside . . . (Secondary Head)

The growth in external scrutiny of schools creates its own tensions. Headteachers found themselves positioned uneasily between those forces outside schools instigating and promoting changes and their own staff who, ultimately, had to implement them. They demonstrated their leadership by the selection of which initiatives to take on; the relative support which they provide for their implement; their knowledge of how others were tackling new initiatives and by the ways they adapted initiatives to their particular values and circumstances. (4) Autocracy versus autonomy Although we can work closely, there has to be a time when decisions are taken and she has to say whether we can or cannot do this . . . (Primary Deputy)

GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES

In school cultures of collaboration in which decision making is no longer the exclusive preserve of headteachers, and yet heads remain responsible and accountable for the schools’ success (or otherwise), a key leadership skill that these heads displayed was their ability to manage the boundaries of autocratic and democratic decision making. (5) Personal time versus professional tasks
Increasing external requirements upon schools had led many heads to commit more and more of their personal time to school-related business: I work at least 60 hours a week . . . it worries me because I don’t know how long I can go on putting in the amount of energy. (Primary Head)

Although most heads in the study had found ways of managing the demands of intensification the personal opportunity costs were universally high and, long term, potentially damaging. (6) Personal values versus institutional imperatives

Whilst there was little evidence in the study of opposing sets of values within the schools, tensions did arise from externally generated pressures of rationalism, and definitions of efficiency and effectiveness which were perceived as challenging strongly held people-centred values. He holds traditional human values—care for people and community and giving back to society the benefits of what you have been given at school. You are a better person if you achieve academically, but that is only part of being a balanced person. (Primary Teacher) (7) Leadership in small versus large schools

Heads in small primary schools were disadvantaged on two main counts.

Because they had regular, significant class teaching responsibilities, they were unable to fulfil their strategic leadership roles satisfactorily: . . . it’s all the stress of planning and preparing and co-ordinating as a class teacher which is too much . . . (Primary Head)

The breadth of the curriculum which needed to be addressed also provided addi...
For headteachers who have to make decisions about teaching standards, continuing poor teaching by a member of staff creates a leadership dilemma, cutting across the headteachers' personal framework of values and beliefs, their ideological and educative commitments to the development of everyone in the school community. You can support somebody who is incompetent for as long as you like, but there comes a point where you know that it is not going to make any difference, particularly if they have been doing it for a long time. (Infant Head)

Engaging in dismissal procedures touches upon the culture of the school, staff morale, and the nature of the relationship between leader and led. The head teachers in the study, however, had not shrunk from taking such 'tough decisions', illustrating the clear if painful boundary that must be drawn at key times between the personal and professional relationships which are at the heart of the educational health of school communities. (9)

Power with or power over

The basis of this dilemma is the extent to which similar and dissimilar values can be reconciled. The headteachers in this study sought to achieve a balance between consulting and involving staff in their decisions whilst still providing a clear direction forward, but were aware that such involvement might well lead to
demands for a bigger say in the direction and that this might well challenge their right always to make the final decision. We are leaders in our own little domain and sometimes it’s hard to accept the overall leadership... because you think you have got a better way of doing it... (Primary Teacher) (10)

Sub-contracting or mediation?

This final dilemma reflects the position of most heads in the study as they found themselves legally responsible for the implementation of externally imposed change some of which challenged their own moral purposes, sets of core values and practices, and analysis of the needs of their particular school. At the end of the day the head has to have integrity and to stick to core GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES values and beliefs. It is important that the head can demonstrate integrity in the face of adversity... (Infant Head)

The heads had not become ‘sub-contractors’, unthinking links in a chain leading from those who developed policy to those who received it. Nor were they subversives, attempting to undermine the authority of policy imperatives. Rather, they managed changes with integrity and skill, integrating them into the vision,

values and practices of their schools. Discussion A values-led contingency model: post-transformational leadership We in ‘mainstream’ educational management have become to preoccupied with what might be called the institutional side of leadership and management to the extent of disregarding, or at least under-emphasising policy and contextual factors. In doing so we may be playing into the hands of those who accuse educational management of being too technocratic and mechanistic and of paying insufficient regard to values. (Glatter et al., 1996: 3)

The findings from the research study have demonstrated that
effective leadership

is defined and driven by individual value systems, rather than instrumental man

agerial concerns. They demonstrate also the important influences of socio, polit

ical, economic and personal and professional contexts on effective leadership.

Moreover, they illustrate that there are alternative models to the bureaucratic,

rational and entrepreneurial forms of leadership espoused in government policy

and documentation which are more appropriate to leaders in the third millen

nium and more likely to lead to success. Thus, they pose a direct challenge to

the current orthodoxy of such forms of leadership theory and leadership training

which are based upon them.

Within the study, there was ample evidence that people were trusted to work

as autonomous professionals, within clear collegial value frameworks which

were common to all. There was a strong emphasis upon teamwork and participa

tion in decision-making (though heads reserved the right to be autocratic). Goals

were clear and agreed, communications were good and everyone had high

expectations of themselves and others. These collegial cultures were maintained,

however, within contexts of organisational and individual accountability set by

external policy demands and internal aspirations. These
created ongoing ten
sions and dilemmas which had to be managed and mediated as
part of the estab
lishment and maintenance of effective leadership cultures. These heads, for
example, were able to live with the dilemmas of ‘development or dismissal’, LEADERSHI
P AND TEACHERS ‘sub-contracting or mediation’ or ‘power over or power
with’. They were not
part of, nor did they encourage a ‘dependency’ culture (Fullan 1998). They were
constantly engaged with the daily business of simultaneously managing inter
personal relations and challenging others to give of their best in the context of
policy-driven imperatives which were not always universally welcomed. In
these schools, a new kind of hierarchy had emerged: . . . one that places purposes, values and commitments at the apex and teachers, headteachers, parents and students below in service to these purposes . . . (Sergiovanni 1992: 27)

It seems that morality, emotion and social bonds provide far more powerful
stimulants to motivation and commitment than the extrinsic concerns of transac
tional leadership in which leaders and followers exchange needs and services to
achieve independent objectives. Sergiovanni’s (1995) concepts of ‘servant
leadership’ and ‘stewardship’ and the ‘flexibility’ and ‘resiliency’ which he sees
as key characteristics of effective leaders relate closely to the findings in this
study, as does the work in England by Grace (1995), and Bottery (1992) which focuses upon the ethics of leadership: Leadership in general must maintain an ethical focus which is oriented towards democratic values within a community. This has to do with the meaning of ethics historically— as a search for the good life of a community . . . Ethics here refers to a more comprehensive construct than just individual behaviour; rather it implicates us and how we as a moral community live our communal lives. (Grace, 1995: 55)

The heads in the study were centrally concerned with developing their organisation through developing others. In Sergiovanni’s (1998) analysis they developed social capital by encouraging collegiality and collaboration. The data provided by teachers, pupils, parents and governors emphasised ‘building community’ as an important dimension of the leadership role. Further more, it was evident that within the various school communities there was a strong and clear commitment to academic achievement as evidenced by the heads’ high expectations of their staff. This academic capital was developed through a commitment to the success of all pupils and a shared belief in rewarding and praising pupils.

This new model of leadership which we are proposing takes leadership and management to be mutually reinforcing within a conception of leadership that is diffuse rather than hierarchical. The knowledge and skills that are required are
both generic and specific, within and between phases and sectors. The kind of
moral leadership that Hodgkinson advocates for example, is a generic feature of GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES
effective leaders. Similarly, effective leaders must have the ability to read and
adjust to the particular context or set of circumstances they face. In this respect,
their leadership behaviour is contingent on context and situation. The choices that
they make relate directly to their own beliefs, values and leadership style. Different contexts will present different challenges and will require different responses.
In the turbulent and unpredictable climate of uncertain and changing challenges
which characterise schools of today and tomorrow the room for manoeuvre is constrained and inevitable tensions arise. Consequently, effective leadership in the 1990s and beyond is essentially concerned with adapting strategies and tactics (but not values) to address unanticipated events and new demands.
The capacity of leaders to make a difference will, then, depend upon their interpretation of and responses to the constraints, demands and choices that they face.
Goldring (1997) argues that effective leaders, like those in this study, must know how to span boundaries in order to promote information and resource control. At the same time as they negotiate the constraints of internal and external environ
ments, they must capitalise on the many opportunities for making choices.

The concept of leadership proposed here, then, has a number of different dimensions which combine to represent the complexity of leadership. It includes a range of features, or characteristics that are not mutually exclusive. Values and vision are centrally important in this new model of leadership is the co-operation and alignment of others to the leaders’ values and vision with those of the leader.

The heads in the study communicated their personal vision and belief systems by direction, words and deeds. Through a variety of symbolic gestures and action, they were successful at realigning both staff and pupils to their particular vision of the school. As Bhindi and Duignan (1996) have proposed in their visionary paradigm for leadership in 2020: Organisations are not solely concerned with outcomes, processes and resources. They are also concerned with the human spirit and their values and relationships. Authentic leaders breathe the life force into the workplace and keep the people feeling energised and focused. As stewards and guides they build people and their self esteem. They derive their credibility from personal integrity and ‘walking’ their values. (p.29) Integrity

In many respects, the heads in the study did ‘walk the talk’. Through the consistency and integrity of their actions, they modelled behaviour that they considered desirable to achieve the school goals. This dimension of values-led con
Tingency leadership incorporates, but is more than, what has been termed by Stoll and Fink (1996) as invitational leadership. This emphasises the way in which positive and negative interactions shape one’s concept of self. Invitations are messages communicated to people which inform them that they are able, responsible and worthwhile. Such messages are communicated through interpersonal action, but also through institutional policies, programmes, practices and physical environments. Invitational leadership is built upon four basic premises:

Optimism—the belief that people have untapped potential for growth and development;

Respect—the recognition that each person is an individual;

Trust—the need to trust others to behave in concert and in turn, as leaders, to behave with integrity; and

Intention—the need to be actively supportive caring and encouraging.

All of these were perceived characteristics of the heads in the study which has provided the basis for this book. The heads in the study did display invitational leadership in their day to day dealings with individuals. Their behaviour with others was premised upon respect and trust and their belief in developing the potential of staff and students commonly held. Their ability to invite others to
share and develop their vision was frequently commented upon by staff and stu
dents alike. Alongside these qualities, however, were examples of heads being

firm (in relation to values, expectations and standards), and, on occasion, ruth

less. In many respects, the way they interacted with others was the common
denominator of their success. The human qualities they possessed enabled them
to lead others effectively and to establish confidence in others that their vision

was worth sharing. Context

Another important dimension of effective leadership is the power of context.
The heads in the study were highly responsive to the demands and challenges
within and beyond their own school context. In managing people and cultural
change they managed external as well as internal environments. They had skills
in communicating, in supporting colleagues’ development so that they felt confi

dent in fulfilling expectations of their contribution to the achievement of strate
gic goals and in the management of conflict and negotiating positive outcomes.

In this sense, they were ‘adaptive’ (Heifetz 1994). In adaptive leadership, first
developed in a medical context, it is recognised that the leader’s task is to

advance the goals of the organisation by designing appropriate strategies which
others must carry out. However, ‘resolving problems’ and ‘tackling and tough decisions’ is seen as a context-related collective responsibility. Thus the role of GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES the leader is to engage in activities designed to raise awareness, ‘ripen the issues’ in order to mobilise groups to tackle the issues and to take responsibility for consequences of their decisions (Edwards 1999). The heads in the study were adaptive and through these processes were able to manage conflict in a way that achieved positive outcomes. They were also adept at keeping the balance between involving others and taking individual action. It is clear, then, that effective leaders are able, within competing values frameworks, to combine a moral purpose with a willingness to be collaborative and to promote collaboration amongst colleagues, whether through teamwork, or extending the boundaries of participation in decision making. Continuing professional development: power with and through The heads in this study adopted highly creative approaches to tackling the complex demands of implementing multiple change. The decision to work with and through teams as well as individuals was a common response to the management of change. Telford (1996) argues that collaborative leadership is the most certain way of ensuring the vision of the school is
realised. Her model of collaborative leadership identifies ‘artistry’ as an additional key ingredient of successful school leadership. Such artistry is required to read the idiosyncrasies of each leadership context and to know how to exploit the situation to maximum advantage. Within the study the heads did operate a form of collaborative leadership and saw staff and students as central to achieving the school’s purpose. The heads used a number of strategies for bringing out the best in staff.

In addition to formal development opportunities, these strategies included: the power of praise; involving others in decision making; giving professional autonomy; leading by standing behind, alongside and in front. Although the heads tended to concentrate on teaching staff in the first instance, they used similar approaches when dealing with governors, parents and, to some extent, students.

All the heads invested in others in order to lead the school. From the perspectives of governors, deputies, teachers, parents and pupils the overarching message was one of the head building the community of the school in its widest sense i.e., through developing and involving others.

Implications for leadership training and development

The characteristics of successful leaders and their ability to be simultaneously...
people-centred whilst managing a number of tensions and dilemmas highlight
the complexity of the kinds of values-led contingency leadership exercised by
these successful heads. The study illustrates that there are no neat solutions to
situations which hold within them so many variables; that successful leadership
is defined and driven by individual and collective value systems rather than
instrumental, bureaucratic, managerial concerns. Leaders in this study were
identified as being reflective, caring and highly principled people who emphasised
the human dimension of the management enterprise. They placed a high
premium upon personal values and were concerned more with cultural than
structural change. They had all moved beyond a narrow rational, managerial
view of their role to a more holistic, values-led approach guided by personal
experience and preference. What, then, are the implications for the leadership
training and development of aspiring and serving school leaders? Nations across
the world are extending their provision of training and development pro-
grammes. In England, the establishment by the Teacher Training Agency of
such programmes for aspiring and serving headteachers as Headteachers Leader
ship and Management Programme (HEADLAMP), National
Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) and Leadership Programme for Serving Headteachers (LPSH) provide a testimony of the importance attached by government to effective leadership, and this has been further underlined by the establishment of a high profile, innovative National College for School Leadership.

Currently, even the most recent training programmes fail to address the key themes which have emerged from the study. Since values, it seems, are central to successful leadership, reflection upon these must be central to training.

Alongside this must be a focus upon critical thinking, emotional and cognitive (echoing Roland Barth’s wise dictum that heads must be the ‘leading learners’ in their schools), and intra as well as inter personal skill development. Recognition of the intimate link in successful leadership between the personal and the professional, between the development of the individual and the organisation is paramount. Finally, problem solving and the management of ‘competing forces’ must be key components of leadership training for school improvement if schools are to become the high achieving learning communities espoused by government. The seven tensions and three dilemmas presented...
here highlight the complex and fraught nature of headship. They illustrate that effective heads, like others, must manage these whilst engaging in the central tasks of building cultures and promoting learning and achievement. Indeed, they are an inherent part of the context in which these occur. There are no easy or perfect answers. The worlds of schools, like those of classrooms, hold too many variables and few neat solutions. The concepts are useful because they reveal that effective leaders are not always successful at all times with all people and that a key characteristic is their determination and ability to continue to try to reconcile the irreconcilable.

Within governments’ overall strategic vision for education, in all countries the training, re-skilling, and certification of heads occupies a central place. The problem is that many of the training models focus upon managerial rather than leadership functions. In doing so they fail to build capacities of heads to reflect upon their own values and those of the whole school community and do not provide sufficient emphasis upon building the range of interpersonal qualities and skills necessary and appropriate to effective leadership. For governments’ GROUNDING KNOWLEDGE OF SCHOOLS IN STAKEHOLDER REALITIES
rhetoric of lifelong learning, high teaching standards, pupil achievement and

school improvement to become a reality, schools need to be led by headteachers

who are not only knowledgeable and skilled in managerial techniques but also,

like those in this study, people-centred leaders who are able to combine the man

agement of internal and external change with a strong development and achieve

ment orientation. Their practices need to be based upon clear and communicated

values to which all in their community subscribe.

If schools are to become ‘knowledge creating’ in which ‘the knowledge of all

the school’s members and partners is recognised’ and shared (Hargreaves 1998:

29), if teachers are to continue to be committed to making a difference in the

learning lives of their students through skilful teaching combined with the ethics

of ‘care, justice and inclusiveness’ (Hargreaves & Fullan 1998: 35), then effective

ive headteachers may themselves be justifiably expected to demonstrate these

qualities through the kinds of leadership which they exercise.

Power and politics will continue to provide the context and daily realities for

life in all schools and it is the management of the tensions and dilemmas that

these create which, within a strong values framework, is a distinguishing feature
of effective leadership. The heads in this study were effective because they held and communicated clear vision and values. They empowered staff by developing a climate of collaboration, by applying high standards to themselves and others and monitoring these, by seeking the support of various influential groups within the school community, by keeping 'ahead of the game' through ensuring that they had a national strategic view of forthcoming changes and by managing their own personal and professional selves. They managed tensions between dependency and autonomy, between caution and courage, between maintenance and development. Their focus was always upon the betterment of the young people and staff who worked in their schools. They remained also, often against Babad E, Bernieri F & Rosenthal R (1991) Students as judges of teachers' verbal and non-verbal behaviour, American Educational Research Journal, 28(1), 211-34.


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A School's summary table

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Gender of Number of Appointed Number of Years of headteacher years as from inside or headships service as headteacher of outside school (including a teacher present
The term ‘knowledge’ carries several meanings in professional discourse, but for our purposes these can be reduced to two. Type A, which I shall call public knowledge, is defined in terms of propositional knowledge, codified and stored in publications, libraries, databases and so on, subject to quality control by editors and peer review, and given foundational status by incorporation into examinations and qualifications. Under this definition, skills are regarded as separate from knowledge (although some of them, such as reading and reporting, are essential for acquiring knowledge and passing it on to others). Hence there is a potential problem when an educational system, which has evolved with propositional knowledge as its main focus, is also expected to deliver certain skills and competences. (Eraut, 1997b)
Type B knowledge, which I call personal knowledge is defined as what people bring to practical situations that enables them to think and perform. Such personal knowledge is not only acquired through the use of public knowledge but also constructed from personal experience and reflection. It includes propositional knowledge along with procedural and process knowledge, tacit knowledge, and memories of images, episodes, incidents and events. Under this definition, skills are treated as part of knowledge rather than as separate from it. This allows for representations of competence, capability or expertise in which the use of skills and propositional knowledge are closely integrated. (Eraut, 1997b)

I define the terms 'professional knowledge' and 'management knowledge' as forms of Type B knowledge. Thus, the personal knowledge of a headteacher includes both professional knowledge developed as a teacher and management knowledge, as well as knowledge acquired outside school contexts but still relevant to them, e.g. from living in the local community or through experience of being a parent, not to mention several years of experience as a pupil. To explore the nature of headteachers’ knowledge more deeply, let us consider three diverse examples. 1. The relationship with governors

Every headteacher and governing body have to develop or negotiate their own interpretation of their respective roles. This will be influenced by some members’ prior experience of governing bodies or similar kinds of group and by other members’ lack of such experience. Governors’ prior expectations may not
match those of the headteacher; and the development of the group will also
depend on the interests and personalities of its members. What knowledge, then,
do headteachers bring to this situation? Their public knowledge will come from
statutes, inspectors’ reports, books and articles. More private knowledge may be
gained from their own experience and from hearing about other headteachers’
experiences. In addition they bring with them a range of relevant skills in listen
ing, presenting oral and written reports and getting to know people and under
stand their viewpoints both as individuals and group members. Most of the skills
of communication and acquiring situational understanding will have been
acquired in a wide range of contexts, many of them unconnected with schools;
but some newly appointed heads may not be well prepared in all these areas.
This whole gamut of knowledge, personal experience and skills for communica
tion and developing understanding is likely to be used by experienced head
teachers in some integrated form, both reflectively in preparation and intuitively
in response to unexpected events. 2. Relationships with individual teachers
In order to manage teachers appropriately, heads need to make judgements about
their individual performance and potential, to understand their social and polit
ical situation in school, to have some understanding of relevant aspects of their life outside school and to relate to each teacher in a way that suits them both.

How do heads acquire sufficient valid knowledge of individual teachers to do this? Their files will include job applications, appraisal reports and correspondence – all compiled for specific purposes. Any evidence of their students’ performance will rarely be of a value-added kind. Heads receive oral comments about a teacher from a range of sources, but usually as incidental comments rather than considered reports. Otherwise the information comes from a series of incidents: one-to-one conversations; group meetings; observations of the teacher interacting with pupils and colleagues in various settings. Apart from formal interviews for appraisal or appointment, few of these incidents will have had the intention to learn about the teacher concerned. Even incidental knowledge from direct contact tends to be regarded as more authentic. What is remembered will be determined by what was perceived at the time and stored in episodic memory as a series of impressions. Though not sufficiently processed by reflection to yield propositions, these observations and encounters will nevertheless con
tribute to heads' knowledge of the teacher but without them being aware of how

the selection, integration and reorganisation of knowledge in episodic memory

had occurred.

These remembered episodes are likely to be a highly atypical sample of a teacher’s behaviour, partly because the head was present and partly because the most typical incidents are often the least memorable. Salient and recent incidents are the most likely to be remembered, and there will also be other sources of bias (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). For example:

a In order to sustain human interaction, rapid interpretations of the other person have to be made early in order to make a response: but this response itself affects the ongoing interaction and affects later interpretations, often in ways which tend to confirm the original and possibly inaccurate interpretation.

b Headteachers’ personal constructs, developed by experiences before they even met the teacher, will affect how that teacher is perceived.

c Preconceptions, gathered from earlier incidents, affect the interpretation of later incidents, so that the sample is not constructed from genuinely independent events.

In general, we may conclude that headteachers’ construction of their knowledge of individual teachers is often a mainly intuitive process, which is significantly affected by potentially biasing factors of which they are unlikely to be aware.

Both a head’s current communication with each teacher and those past interactions which have constructed their relationship (including
occasions when the teacher has not been a specific recipient but one of a larger group of staff) will depend on interpersonal skills developed over a lifetime as well as their ability to make appropriate use of their knowledge and prior experience of that teacher.

Thus informally acquired skills are integrated in performance with knowledge of people which has been mainly acquired by informal and implicit learning.

Without such knowledge, the skill dimension of a headteacher’s performance is likely to be of only limited effectiveness.

LEADERSHIP 3. Understanding schools as organisations

This example has been chosen as an area of personal knowledge where theory makes a particularly significant contribution. The experience of myself and my colleagues in teaching masters level courses to mid-career teachers and public service managers has been that many theoretical concepts link easily with people’s experiences of working in organisations and provide frameworks which enable them to make sense of that experience and transform it into useful knowledge for decision-making. When combined with training in qualitative research, they acquire a capability to investigate the nature of organisations more quickly and at greater depth, using other people’s experiences as evidence as well as
their own. Their own experience is likely to have been acquired informally and incidentally as in the previous example; but becomes far more useful when set alongside that of other people and when theoretical frameworks are available to help develop more considered and generally recognised analyses. Given the complexity of organisations, different theoretical perspectives are needed as well as multiple sources of evidence. My research on learning at work found strong support for mid-career management qualifications in the finance, engineering and healthcare sectors (Eraut et al., 1998) and several respondents noted without prompting that modules on organisational behaviour had been particularly useful.

We need to recognise, however, that acquiring this useful knowledge is not a simple process. Having relevant prior experience enables managers to quickly appreciate that theories of this kind may help them in their current work and future careers. They then need the time and opportunity to think and talk about it, and gradually expand their personal cognitive framework to accommodate it. They may note that others have interpreted the same theories in different ways and argued about their relative significance. After a while, those theories they
find particularly convincing become part of their normal way of looking at organisations, a platform for their future learning. The total learning time involved will ultimately be much greater than that allocated to that particular course module. Transfer, change and learning

This last example involved the transfer and personalisation of public knowledge about organisational behaviour from an academic to a school context. This was not an event in which managers applied (or failed to apply) a piece of recently learned public knowledge, but a lengthy learning process during which that knowledge was transformed through use. Transfer might also occur when a head of department becomes a deputy headteacher in another secondary school in a different part of the country. Given the change of role, school and location, how much knowledge of schools as organisations would be relevant to the new context and what would be involved in learning to use it? Research indicates HEADTEACHERS’ KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND MODE OF COGNITION that a theoretical framework would help by suggesting ways of sorting out the similarities and differences between the two schools and reducing the risk of imprudent transfer (i.e. overgeneralisation). The new deputy will need to be aware of the challenge and prepared to learn a lot about
the new school before making strategic decisions, then to reinterpret their prior knowledge - both theoretical and practical - in ways that suit the new organisational context. Similar considerations will apply to changes in the community context, pupil culture, individual colleagues and so on. When the contexts are very similar, for example from one governors’ or staff meeting to the next, little further learning may be necessary; but even then circumstances may have been changed by external events. Interpersonal skills, in particular, have to be resituated for every new encounter in the light of one’s best knowledge of the people and circumstances involved. Any performance or management process involves the integration of skill with knowledge of people and situations and often with conceptual knowledge. This knowledge has to be constantly updated, the skills retuned and the action sensitively monitored in case a change of direction is needed. Such integration is rarely recognised in the literature about headteachers’ knowledge, competence and expertise.

Another neglected aspect of change is the amount of unlearning which has to occur. We have already mentioned the inevitable acquisition of unbalanced perspectives of people and situations, as a result of the
uncritical way in which
informal information is collected, selected and aggregated. Unless this is period
ically checked against more carefully collected evidence, inappropriate decisions
and behaviour will result; and relationships and understandings will gradually
become more difficult to adjust or modify. Routines and habits are even more
difficult to change. They are needed to avoid information overload and to cope
with busy contexts, so one comes to depend on them. As circumstances change,
routines become dysfunctional; and people take shortcuts which save effort but
reduce effectiveness, often without being aware of it. Yet abandoning them
leads to disorientation and an inability to cope until new routines have been
developed to replace them. The problem for headteachers is not only to evaluate
and, where necessary, change their own practice but also to facilitate this learn
ing process for all their staff.
The recently introduced National Standards for Headteachers uses the word
‘effective’ nearly 40 times in order to emphasise a commitment to improving
pupils’ achievement. But having the will, contrary to popular belief, does not
ensure finding the way. What expertise do headteachers need in order to be able
to improve their schools? Evidence suggests that there is
both a sociopsychological dimension, generic to all organisations, and a technical dimension specific to schools. The implication of my earlier discussion is that expertise is a dynamic capability which constantly changes and develops. Hence school improvement depends on all staff being committed to continuing learning focused on this purpose. My own research (Eraut et al., 1998) suggests that workplace learning arises mainly from the challenge of the work itself and through interacting with other people (colleagues, customers and clients). Such learning depends on confidence, motivation and capability (knowledge and skills previously acquired), which in turn depend on how they are managed and on the microculture of their immediate work environment. The key person is the local manager whose management of people and role in establishing a climate favourable to learning, in which people seek advice and help each other to learn quite naturally, is critical for those who are managed. (Eraut, 1998a)

Few schools are organised to support and facilitate this kind of teachers’ learning.

The technical dimension is highly dependent on theories of what constitutes effective teaching, an area where the Standards are not entirely consistent.

Sometimes effectiveness appears to be treated as an absolute unproblematic
judgement, as when heads are expected to have knowledge and understanding of ‘effective teaching and assessment methods’ (Section 3d) and to ‘secure and sustain effective teaching and learning throughout a school’ (Section 5b). Some times effective teaching is more contextualised as, for example, when teachers are expected ‘to employ the most effective approach(es) for any given context and group of pupils’ (Section 2b). In this latter case, the head could not reasonably be expected to know the group of pupils that well nor even the context of the lesson; and would not therefore be in a position to judge the most effective approach, although bad teaching might be more obvious. This distinction is important because the first interpretation implies that knowledge of effective teaching is public propositional knowledge, while the second suggests that it is mainly personal process knowledge. Significantly the contextual interpretation is accompanied by process criteria which could be applied to almost any teaching method: pacing lessons appropriately, using time and resources effectively, extending pupils’ learning and achievement through setting consistent and challenging homework.

The notion of ‘effective methods’ has great political appeal, especially when
linked to ideas of evidence-based practice imported from the field of medicine.

But not more than 20 per cent of medical decisions and virtually no teaching decisions can be made on the basis of ‘gold standard’ evidence from meta-analyses and randomised control trials. Educational ‘diagnoses’ and ‘treatments’ show so much natural variation that the construct of an ‘effective method’ is highly questionable. Elsewhere the Standards accompany statements about effective practice by discussion of standards of achievement, the use of benchmarks and setting targets; which suggests that effectiveness is to be judged only by the outcomes and not by the method employed. But it is difficult to tell whether it is the method or its application that is effective, which brings us back to a contextual interpretation of effectiveness. This depends more on teacher expertise than prescribed methods, so heads have to work with teachers to continually develop that expertise. Agreed targets between headteacher and teacher or teacher and pupil may signify rising expectations and confidence in their ability; imposed targets may be perceived as threats and lower their sense of self-efficacy. Headteachers’ practice and mode of cognition.
During the last decade the nature of professional expertise has become increasingly an issue for debate. The traditional academic stance, by no means as dominant as often presented, defines the professional knowledge base in terms of Type A knowledge – public, propositional and grounded in established research traditions. In so far as it is theoretical, the relevant expertise lies with the academicians; in so far as it is empirical, the relevant expertise lies with researchers. The modernist stance, often described as hyper-rational, focuses on competences and achievements. Expertise is attributed to those who achieve good results even though the attribution of such success to individual merit may be highly questionable. Neither approach tells us much about how experts actually do their job. To do that we have to identify and deconstruct the various processes which constitute their practice, then find out what enables them to conduct these processes with (or without) quality and expertise.

Those processes which constitute a manager’s or a professional’s practice can be usefully analysed in terms of four types of sub-process, linked in a variety of sequences and combinations:

i. Acquiring situational understanding through collecting and interpreting information about people and situations.
ii Deciding how to respond to this current representation of the situation, both immediately and over a longer period.

iii Activities required for implementing one’s own or other people’s decisions: routine actions, special techniques, giving advice, referral, delegation, further inquiry etc.

iv Meta-processes concerned with directing and controlling one’s own behaviour in accordance with one’s main purpose, whilst also monitoring one’s clients and their environment (vide Eraut, 1999)

These sub-processes are most often described in the context of a deliberative process in which professionals assess a situation, think of alternative options and their implications, plan an appropriate course of action then modify it in the light of information from ongoing monitoring. This model of practice gives prominence to analytic reasoning; and is favoured both by academics, who see it as an essential framework for research-based practice, and by government who recognise that public defence of policy requires a reasoned approach which is difficult to criticise. However, this approach is limited by the amount and quality of evidence available.

In a seminal paper, the McMaster University Working Group (1992) on evidence-based medicine argued that: evidence of all kinds should be gathered more systematically and interpreted more critically; the balance between patient evidence, personal experience, theoretical reasoning, research
evidence and advice from local experts should be altered to give more weight to systematically gathered patient evidence and research evidence. More systematic observation and recording of patients is needed to construct a valid personal knowledge-base, alongside regular consultation and critical appraisal of the literature. Advice from local experts should be sought (rather than rejected) but used more critically. They also argue that clinicians must be ready to accept and live with uncertainty and to acknowledge that management decisions are often made in the face of relative ignorance of their true impact.

The Government and TTA now advocate this approach for teaching.

However, as noted above, the research evidence on the respective merits of different classroom ‘treatment’ is neither available nor likely to become available in the future. While it is clearly desirable to attend to as much classroom-generated evidence as possible, the absence of valid and relevant research imperatives significantly changes the decision-making context from that found in medicine.

There are also practical difficulties. Hospital doctors can concentrate on diagnosis and decision-making while relying on healthcare teams to look after their patients and imaging and pathology departments to provide scientific evidence.

General Practitioners can refer more complex, urgent or critical cases to hospi
tals. Teachers are the equivalent of the whole healthcare team (doctors, nurses, scientist, therapists, porters); and there is nobody to mind their classes while they make individual diagnoses of pupils’ learning. Even at school level, where there are strong arguments for collecting evidence about critical issues before making decisions, the allocation of staff time has to be carefully considered when making pre-decisions about the scope and scale of such inquiries.

The alternative for professionals, but not necessarily for managers, is to locate prime authority with acknowledged expert practitioners. Such people become experts as a result of years of experience in a particular domain of professional practice, usually quite specialised. In some professions such experts may need to be very familiar with research, but it is their use of research knowledge rather than their creation of it, that characterises the expert practitioner. It would be wrong to suggest that experts do not use analytic reasoning; but their superior performance will have been primarily constructed through learning from experience and being able to call upon that experience quickly and appropriately. This perspective receives considerable backing from psychological research contrasting novices with experts. A particularly attractive model for many professional practitioners is
that of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986). They define skill as an integrative overarching approach to professional action and identify five stages of skill acquisition: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient and expert.

Their model’s early and middle stages involve:

- the development of situational recognition and understanding;
- the development of standard routines which enable one to cope with crowded busy contexts;
- the later abandonment of explicit rules and guidelines as behaviour becomes more automatic; and
- a peaking of the deliberative mode of cognition (not usually very analytic) at the competence stage.

Progression beyond competence is then associated with the gradual replacement of analysis by more intuitive forms of cognition. Their claim that experts make considerable use of rapid decision-making is well substantiated by research (Eraut, 1999); but they do not establish their claim that deliberation has become virtually redundant. Benner (1984) recognises two situations where analytic approaches by experts might be required: when confronted with a situation of which they have no previous experience or when they misdiagnose a situation and then find that events and behaviours are not occurring as expected. Thus it can be argued that the Dreyfus model neglects the self-evaluative dimension of
The gradual development of experience-based intuition may enable a person to become an expert, but without a more explicit evaluative dimension it can become so self-confirming that it slips into decline. Is there not a danger that an almost wholly intuitive model of professional expertise will perpetuate the myth of an almost infallible expert? The problems of sharing intuitive expertise with colleagues or explaining the basis for their ‘expert opinions’ will severely constrain participation in collaborative endeavours, thus minimizing their exposure to different, possibly critical, perspectives.

The term deliberation has been used hitherto in the sense of taking time to think about a situation, decision or problem. As Aristotle observed over 2,000 years ago, many practical problems in society require thought but cannot be resolved by logical argument and evidence alone. The ‘real world’ is too complex. Managers need to mull over problems, consult and discuss, then judge the probable best course of action; more likely, they settle for an option good enough for the purpose, even if it might not turn out to have been the best. According to the context, deliberative decision-making may vary from ‘just sorting something out’ to making ‘high stakes’ decisions after a period of careful
consideration, consultation, predict

ing consequences then finally deciding. In this latter context headteachers would

normally aspire to that maturity of judgement we sometimes call wisdom. Wisdom implies experience in making difficult decisions, access to multiple perspectives, a balanced viewpoint and an ability to situate the expertise of others in a broader social context. It conveys neither the analytic reasoning of the researcher, nor the confident, intuitive grasp of the expert practitioner, but an ability to deliberate about LEADERSHIP HEADTEACHERS issues and problems, to see how different people might be affected and to put them into longer term perspective. Part of the skill of a manager is to recognise which problems can be dealt with fairly quickly by satisficing strategies and which require prolonged attention and more evidence.

The most important variables affecting the time devoted to decision-making are likely to be the significance and complexity of the decision, the timespan during which it has to be made and other demands on the decision-maker’s time. The less the time available, the more headteachers will have to rely on more rapid, intuitive approaches. Figure 1 depicts the effect of time (and indirectly also complexity and busyness) on three of the four types of sub-process identified earlier (Eraut, 1995).
Since thinking time is the focus, action itself has been omitted and the thought accompanying action treated as interpretation, decision-making or reflection.

The relationship between time and mode of cognition is probably interactive:

shortage of time forces people to adopt a more intuitive approach, while the intuitive routines developed by experience enable people to do things more quickly.

Crowded contexts also force people to be more selective with their attention and to process their incoming information more rapidly. Under conditions of rapid interpretation and decision-making, reflectiveness is necessarily intuitive, in accord with Schon’s (1983) concept of reflection-in-action. But as the time scale expands, the role of meta-processes becomes more complex, expanding beyond self-awareness and monitoring to include the framing of problems, thinking about the deliberative process itself and how it is being handled, searching for relevant knowledge, introducing value considerations, etc.

Headteachers do not start as novices in quite the same way as beginning teachers; but neither, especially at primary level, do they have experience of the headteacher role before their first headship. Many important relationships will have been constructed and major decisions made before significant expertise has...
Figure 1 The effect of speed on the nature of professional work.

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Speed

been developed. By then, patterns of work will have been formed which may be considerably less effective than they might have wished, and changing them will require a significant amount of determination and effort. For headteachers to maintain critical control over their own practice they will need to be aware of their habits and routines and their ways of thinking about people and situations, even if they cannot easily explain them (Eraut, 1994). Otherwise they are, in effect, abdicating their responsibility for the outcomes that follow. This is why the self-evaluation dimension of headship is extremely important, as well as being a strong argument for facilitating constructive criticism within the senior management team and gov
errors rather than seeking to avoid uncomfortable or time-consuming debate. The relationship between capability and performance in a changing context

Another important consideration is the problem for new headteachers in both con

verting their current capability into competence in a new role and context and con

verting that competence into performance. When the expected level of performance does not result, there is a natural tendency to look for dispositional factors, such as drive and motivation. But often closer inspection reveals significant factors in the work context which constrain performance. Capacity to perform is affected by the total demands of the job, emotional as well as physical. Headteachers’ performance will depend not only on their expertise but also on their overall workload and the expectations of governors, senior managers, teachers and parents about access to them and about what they ought to be doing. It is easy to forget when formulating standards that the ‘whole job’ role is the most important of all.

This ‘whole job’ role, however, still needs to be seen in the context of the whole management function of the school. Ultimately it is the performance of the school’s management which counts. Some headteachers are much better sup

ported by governors and their management team than others. This is partly their
own responsibility but they normally inherit both groups and working conven

tions, and have little control over the loss of valued people through illness or

promotion. Developing the capability of the management team as a whole has to

be a major priority, even though it may be periodically upset by changes. Thus,

depending on the senior management team’s expertise, the head’s personal role

in many of the activities listed in the Standards may vary from ‘do it yourself’ to

monitoring and occasionally advising capable colleagues, thus affecting their

priorities for time management and professional development.

This emphasis on the ‘whole job’ role of the headteacher and the ‘whole

team’ approach to the management function emphasises the over-riding import

ance of prioritisation and the deployment and development of management

expertise. Thus the key requirements for a headteacher are to:

• make an accurate and balanced assessment of the school’s current state and of trends, risks and opportunities;

• formulate, through consultation, short- and long-term priorities for action;

• ascertain how staff can best attend to the priorities without causing negative side-effects.

This may entail some staff, including the headteacher, developing new cap

abilities; and this overall management development plan should determine the
head’s own professional development priorities.

Finally, it should be recognised that government and school policy and prac-
tice change. Views about the relative merits of different types of learning out-
comes will change. So also will views about the teacher’s role and how schools
should be managed. Staff will also have to change their roles or practices
because of internal reorganisation, promotion or new external mandates. What
constitutes competence or expertise today will not be the same tomorrow. Hence
it is important for people to have capabilities which extend beyond the confines
of their current job but may be valuable in future.

Conceptually it is important to distinguish between a head’s capability,
which is individually defined in terms of what that particular person can think
and do, given the appropriate context and opportunity, and the competence
required to be the headteacher of a particular school, which is socially defined
in terms of the performance expected from the holder of that post (Eraut,
1998b). That definition of competence will also change; and in responding to
that change the headteacher will need to call upon or develop additional capa-
ibility. Equally important for headteachers in the modern world will be their
ability to redesign their own job in accordance with the changing needs of their school; and this of course will change what counts as being competent in that job. Should they not also expect such proactive innovation from others?

Rapidly changing organisations are not only dependent on the current competence of their staff but also on their additional capabilities and understandings.

These need to be continually developed in the interests of the school’s mission:

but they also need to be properly appreciated and used. Individual capabilities and understandings relevant to group or whole school issues have to be incorporated into the capabilities and understandings of the school as a whole and its constituent sub-groups (Eraut, 1997b). Where there is synergy, the potential of groups will be greater than that of their members; where there is division, stratification or mutual isolation, the group potential will be less. That is what transforms learning professionals into learning groups and learning organisations;

and what headteachers in rapidly changing contexts need to develop in their schools. Conclusion

My conclusions from the above analysis of headteachers’ knowledge, practice, mode of cognition, job priorities and leadership role are that training for new
headteachers should concentrate on: HEADTEACHERS’ KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND MODE OF COGNITION

1 Aspects of the management role which can be undertaken only by the headteacher.

2 Assessing the school’s current state and determining priorities for action, by enabling rather than prescribing.

3 Collecting evidence to complement informal learning.

4 Understanding the school’s culture and sub-cultures and the symbolic impact of their behaviour and thinking about the promotion (if desired) of cultural change over a period of time.

5 Leadership of the senior management team and sharing duties among them.

6 Their own self-evaluation and continuing professional learning.

7 Supporting and developing managers, groups of staff and learning throughout the school.

8 Organising the administration of the school to give its professional staff thinking time.

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ing and learning in the professions, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
In common with education systems in other parts of the world, school leadership in Britain has gone through a quantum change in the last 10 years. This has been in response to the radical reforms embodied in central government education policies, from the 1988 Education Act onwards. The focus of this paper will be on school leaders in primary and secondary school in Britain. Our intention is to review the literature, particularly that which reports research, deriving mainly from Britain, but making reference to other contexts where appropriate. We will therefore use the terms 'headteacher' and 'headship' to describe the phenomenon with which we are concerned.

A review of the 'state-of-the-art' of headship in the 1990s in Britain has to take the 1988 Education Act as a watershed. In the 1990s, the scale of change throughout the education system makes a review of both primary and secondary headship crucial to our understanding of contemporary school leadership. They can or should no longer be considered in isolation from each other. If in the 1970s the expression of the transformation of the head’s role was in terms of ‘autocrat’ and ‘chief executive’ (Morgan & Hall, 1982), the issue now is, as we
shall see, around the extent to which headteachers must choose to be or not to be entrepreneurs; and the extent to which a positive choice inevitably compromises their identity and activity as leading professionals, as well as their ability to be critical of the system of which they are a part. For those who question the desirability of entrepreneurialism in education (e.g. Smyth, 1989; Grace, 1995) an issue for school leaders now is whether they interpret their role as managerialist or emancipatory and how they can most effectively contribute to successful schooling.

The other striking feature in reviewing school leadership in Britain is the continuing absence of research-based analyses of headship in primary and secondary schools. Practitioner accounts and informed commentaries abound, but the empirical base is limited. We have ourselves had the privilege of carrying out extensive research into headship, allowing us the comfort of knowing that many of our own conclusions are data based (Southworth, 1995a; Hall, 1996).

Our intention in this paper is to allow our own and others’ research to lead the identification of issues and findings that can point towards future directions for school leadership as we approach the millennium. These will be considered
alongside the continuing debate between academics, practitioners and others about the nature of headship now and in the future.

Although we will focus strongly on research and literature from the past decade, some historical perspective is necessary, not least because most head teachers today were nurtured in yesterday’s schools. Yet our review will show how one of the main challenges to headteachers and aspiring headteachers is in developing the capacity to adapt to an ever-changing scenario without compromising their own and others’ professional and educational values. In other words, they need to be ready for the future but draw on foundations established in their own personal and professional pasts.

The accounts which inform our own version of headship towards the year 2000 fall into three types: research inquiries, mainly using qualitative data collection methods, with a specific focus on school leadership; structured accounts either by or in dialogue with headteachers; research enquiries that include headship but did not have that as the main focus. Our discussion is framed by the radically changing context of schooling leading to a re-conceptualisation of the headship role and the tensions this creates for school heads. Our purpose is to
present what can be learned from the accounts that will help us understand what is needed in school leadership come the Millennium. The focus will be first on primary headship, then on secondary headship, enabling us to consider how headship in both phases was conceptualised before and since the national reforms of 1988 were placed on the statute book and implemented. Studies of primary headship pre-1988

The literature and research focusing on primary headteachers is almost entirely made up of small scale studies. The observation that 'writing and research on the topic remains the province of individuals' (Coulson, 1990, p. 101) remains as true for the 1990s as for the 1970s and 1980s, because no major funded investigations or national surveys have been conducted.

Prior to 1988, Coulson’s (1976) work on the role of primary heads was among the most important because he developed his ideas over time (Coulson, 1978, 1985, 1986, 1990) and his conceptualisations underpinned the ideas of others who took an interest in leadership in primary schools (e.g. Alexander, 1984; Campbell, 1985).

In the 1970s Coulson drew upon his experience as a deputy head in a large primary school, where he worked with three heads, and his simultaneous research into headship and deputy headship. He argued that
the job title of head

teacher signalled that they were to be thought of as teachers rather than adminis

trators and that heads had a freedom to set the school’s aims and underlying LEADERSHIP AND HEAD TEACHERS philosophy (Coulson, 1976, p. 275). Coulson saw headship as a blend of per

sons control and moral authority, derived largely from a Victorian conception

of headship and which was implicitly gendered. Heads were the pivot and focus

of the school and were expected to mould the school ‘in accordance with their

own views’ (p. 276). While they acknowledged the teacher’s ‘zone of autonomy

inside the class-room’, heads exercised ‘hegemony over matters of general

school policy’ (p. 278). Furthermore, since heads often determined the shape of

the curriculum, they were responsible for creating other posts of responsibility in

the school and for the appointment of staff, heads were often able to determine

singlehandedly the structure of the school.

Coulson accepted that heads affected a more benevolent image in the 1970s

than they had in the 1950s and 1960s and were more consultative on some

matters than formerly, but, nevertheless, the centralised pattern persisted: At the root of the primary head’s paternalism lies the ego-identification which he normally has with the school. He tends to think of it as ‘his’ in a very special way and therefore to feel a deep sense of personal responsibility for everything and everyone in it.
According to this interpretation primary heads were pivotal, proprietal and paternalistic.

In his later work Coulson elaborated on these themes. He argued that in primary schools power and influence were generally seen as personal and individual. Consequently, schools were ‘particularly vulnerable to the vagaries of individuals’ and that the ‘head’s dominance in the school is inimical to the personal growth and professional development of individual teachers’ (Coulson, 1978, pp. 80–81). The issues of development and personal growth became strong themes in his subsequent work, where Coulson suggested ways of modifying the paternal model of headship by advocating a collegial approach to school management (Coulson, 1985) and by attending to the personal and professional development needs of headteachers (Coulson, 1990).

The centrality of headteachers within ‘their’ schools was also noted by Nias (1980). Her longitudinal research into a group of graduate teachers’ views on teaching as a career revealed that many ‘were often frustrated by what they perceived as inefficient management or alienated by dictatorial leadership’ (p. 256).

Nias’ study offers a followers’ view of headship and shows that for many teachers,
heads are positive or negative significant others. Nias analysed her data in a three
fold typology of leadership and found her teacher respondents favoured a head

who set high standards, was involved in the school to high degree, was readily
available for discussion, interested in teacher development, gave a lead on school
aims and encouraged participation in goal setting and decision making. Such
heads Nias classified as initiating in-school structures, being considerate to teacher
colleagues and providing a measure of decision decentralisation (p. 260). H E A D S H I P

Lloyd (1985) used similar categories to investigate the role perceptions of 50
heads and concluded his data showed a move away from a ‘head-centred’

approach. While Lloyd acknowledged that primary heads remained influential

and powerful figures in their schools, he reported that over half the heads in his
sample saw this as no longer desirable. Yet he also noted that many found it dif
ficult to combine high levels of decision decentralisation with high levels of initiating structure. Lloyd’s study, therefore, may only have shown heads

becoming more aware of the need to soften their dominance, but finding it a

challenge to achieve in practice. The rhetoric of heads had changed, but the

reality of power relations in schools remained unaltered.
This theme of heads sustaining high levels of both staff participation and overall control of the school was evident in the writings of others who pre
scribed how headship should be conceived (e.g. Whitaker, 1983; Dean, 1987; Bell, 1988). However, what these texts most clearly revealed was the continuing lack of descriptive analyses of primary heads at work.

During the 1980s some studies were published which offered partial descrip
tions of headship and heads in action. Clerkin (1985) analysed heads’ time diaries and concluded that headship was: more often about tackling a high intensity of tasks with frequent interruptions rather than a systematic ordering of curricular or organisational programmes based on agreed policies or clearly understood management structures. (p. 298)

Harvey (1986) examined 32 heads’ intended and actual use of time and con
cluded that heads need to develop coping strategies to deal with the unexpected (p. 66). Davies (1987) used open-ended observation and diary methods to study four primary heads. He found that each head was at the centre of the school’s information network and that their work days were characterised by brevity, variety and fragmentation, with nearly one quarter of activities undertaken being interrupted (pp. 44–45).

Coulson (1986) also presented an interpretative account ‘built firstly upon
close knowledge and observation of how a number of heads conduct their work and secondly on what they and their closest colleagues say about what they believe they are doing’ (p. 5). Coulson developed a category analysis of headship, drawing upon Mintzberg (1973) and Hughes’ (1976) ideas. In the light of his analysis Coulson argued that heads and teachers believe that a head’s managerial behaviour should be integrated with and help to realise his or her particular educational and organisational vision (p. 84). Here Coulson applied Bennis’ (1984) notion that vision meant the capacity to create and communicate a view of a desired state which induces commitment among organisational workers.

Coulson (1986) also presented his views on the characteristics of successful heads. Successful heads are: goal-oriented; personally secure; proactive; sensitive to the dynamics of power inside and outside their schools; analytic; in charge of the job; tolerant of ambiguity (pp. 85-86).

The move to observational studies was also evident in the Primary Schools Staff Relationships project (Nias et al., 1989). This ethnographic study used the concept of organisational culture to analyse how heads and teachers in five schools worked together. The findings on leadership showed
the heads to be central, proprietal figures. The researchers characterised the heads as the

'owners' of their institutions because of their close association with the school

and the ways they established a sense of mission for them (pp. 98–99). The heads were described as the founders of the schools' cultures, since they exemplified and promoted particular educational, social and moral beliefs. Although these heads often behaved in ways similar to those depicted in the time studies and in Coulson's (1976) work, the significance of the heads' work lay not only in what they did, but also in the meaning of their behaviour.

In the follow-up research Nias et al. (1992) examined curriculum development in a different set of schools and noted that the heads 'all worked hard in a variety of ways to secure their staff's allegiance to their particular visions' (p. 148). Subsequently, Southworth (1993), reflecting on these two studies, suggested that heads are often motivated to work hard because they are pursuing their own visions. Headship is the licensed promotion of an individual's professional values (pp. 23-24). For heads this is personally empowering and, along with their positional authority, legitimates their exercise of power in the school.
Mortimore and associates’ (1988) findings on effective junior schools and departments largely supports the picture presented so far. The research identified 12 key characteristics of effective schools, the first of which is purposeful leadership of the staff by the headteacher (p. 250). This means the head under standing the school’s needs and being actively involved in the school’s work without exerting total control. Effective heads influenced the teaching strategies of teachers and monitored pupils’ progress and teachers’ records. They ensured pupil records were maintained and were knowledgeable about what went on in classrooms (pp. 250-251). In other words, effective heads are centrally involved in the school.

This outline was congruent with several ‘official’ prescriptions for headship [e.g. Department of Education and Science (DES), 1978, 1985; Inner London Education Authority, 1985]. It also continues the pattern that headship involves two potentially opposed dimensions. On the one hand, heads are powerful and controlling figures. On the other, they need to involve colleagues and create a measure of organisational unity (Southworth, 1987). While the duality of participation and control was promoted, the fact that for some heads it can be a
dilemma—pulling them in opposing directions or difficult to reconcile—was barely recognised.

Taken together these studies show four things. First, that headship was strongly concerned with organisational power, with heads being key players in their schools’ power relations. Second, apart from some limited attention to the personal aspects of headship, the work was largely conceived in terms of functions and tasks. In large measure an instrumental view of headship prevailed which relied upon a bureaucratic and managerial rationality. Third, the great majority of the writing and research was conducted by males, so that a gendered construction of headship was sometimes implied or remained unexamined. Acker’s (1988) study of a female head at work is the only antidote to this trend. Nevertheless, Acker notes the centrality of this headteacher and how she performed ‘a key role in shaping the values of the school’ (p. 32). Fourth, in research terms, while some observational studies were beginning to be presented, no close-up, sustained studies of headteachers at work were conducted and published. Studies of primary headship post-1988 Southworth’s (1995a) year-long ethnographic case study of a male headteacher at work during the 1988-1989 school year used data collected by participant observa
tion and interviews. The study showed the head ‘at the centre of the school, person

dully involved and closely associated with almost every aspect of it’ (p. 148). The

head was pivotal and powerful. Although he was considerate to others and con

sulted and encouraged staff participation, this was not at the expense of his control.

Indeed, ‘his control pervaded the school’ (p. 150) and he dominated the school.

Southworth explains this head’s domination not in terms of role theory, or

because of positional authority alone, but because power and domination were

part of his professional identity (p. 150). At length (pp. 157-181) Southworth

argues that organisational norms about power relations and decision centralisa

tion become sedimented in teachers’ and heads’ professional practices and

understandings and so become part of their occupational selves.

This case study is especially pertinent here because one of the reasons Southworth focused on identity was because the national reforms, which began to be

introduced during the year of the fieldwork, were seen as threatening the head’s

occupational self. This head saw his work as the transmission of his educational

beliefs to the staff and he feared the arrival of the National Curriculum would

cause him to lose control of his curricular vision, while Local Management of
Schools would diminish his professional leadership and increase his administrative role (pp. 119–125). In short, the national reforms were a major challenge to this head's approach to headship and a profound threat to his sense of self.

Other studies noted how the national reforms increased the tension between the head-as-teacher and the head-as-manager. Mortimore & Mortimore (1991) reported that primary headteachers were having to spend much more time on management (p. 125) and noted in the Chief Inspector's annual report (1991), that Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) detected signs that management and administrative duties were beginning 'to take their toll' (p. 8, para 40) on the curricular leadership of primary heads.

Alexander et al. (1992) also acknowledged the changing nature of headship, but argued that heads should take a lead in ensuring high quality provision, monitoring teaching and learning and providing 'a vision of what their schools should become' (p. 47).

Webb's (1994) survey of 50 schools across 13 Local Education Authorities (LEAs), showed that headship had altered in some ways, but not others. While there was more to manage and administer (see also Bolam et al., 1993), the long
standing 'expectation at the level of national policy that heads should be curricu

lum leaders' continued unaltered (see Webb & Vulliamy, 1996, p. 139).

The notion of continuity and change in the role is evident in two other

studies. Southworth (1995b) interviewed 10 heads about their work in the 1990s.

He used these experienced heads’ first hand knowledge of headship before 1988
to compare and contrast with their work in the mid 1990s.

Three major role con

tinuities were identified.

• The persistence of work patterns. The heads continued to
deal with many things at once, interruptions, variety and fragmentation (p. 25).

• Ego-identification. These heads felt personally responsible for ‘their’ schools. If anything the increased accountabilities (through publication of results and inspection reports) had strengthened the heads’ sense of responsibility (p. 25).

• Power. The heads readily spoke about their influence, authority and control, clearly recognising they were powerful and describing themselves as resident inspectors of their schools’ performance (p. 27).

The role changes included:

• an intensification of the work;

• more management and school maintenance tasks;

• more politics and diplomacy because they were networking and liaising with parents and governors and dealing with more ‘players’ and stakeholders;

• more of a public role (pp. 25-27).

Overall the changes had altered the balance between being a head and being a
headteacher, because the increase in management was apparently accompanied

by a decrease in teaching. The changes generally took the form of quantitative

shifts in the work. There was more to do: more players to liaise and consult with

(e.g. parents, governors, agencies); more meetings; more administration because

of increased site management and budgeting being devolved to the school.

However, one exception to this pattern was the introduction of a national

system of school inspections. The 1992 Education Act established the Office for

Standards in Education (OFSTED) to manage the inspection of every school in

England and Wales over a 4 year time scale. Schools are inspected by a team of

external inspectors who produce a public report for parents, governors and the

staff on the quality of the school’s work and the pupils’ achievements. For the heads in this study (and in our view for most heads whether primary or secondary phase headteachers) school inspections were the contemporary issue and change. They were the major preoccupation of these heads, whether they had been inspected or were preparing for one.

There are many reasons why inspections were the predominant issue for these

heads. They were concerned about the validity of the inspectors’ judgements and
how these would impact on the school’s reputation. Some were critical of the inspection process, regarding it as only a ‘snapshot’ of the school. However, it was also the case that being closely associated with their schools these heads were acutely sensitive to how the school’s report would reflect on them individually. In other words, the inspection was not only an external audit of the school’s strengths and weaknesses, it was also, because of the head’s strong identification with the school, a professional and personal assessment of themselves. The school’s inspection was tacitly understood as a public examination of themselves as headteachers (pp. 22–23).

A major change in headship, therefore, is that in the 1990s heads are guaranteed that their schools will be inspected and the report published. The meaning of this exercise for primary heads is that directly and indirectly their school leadership, their ways of doing headship are now being judged and made public. Moreover, some heads see the inspection process as a major, possibly the most significant, test of their professional credibility. Furthermore, it is a test both in terms of how other colleagues and stakeholders see them and, most sensitive of all, how a head comes to regard her/his self. For many primary heads when the school is inspected it is not
so much that there is a lot at stake as that the head sees her/himself as going to the
stake. Accountability for heads has altered dramatically.

Menter et al. (1995) used data from 12 heads and also perceived headship in
the 1990s to be a blend of old and new approaches (p. 309). Most noticeably,
while there have been significant changes in working practices, the centrality of
the head remained as clear as ever. Their conclusion that it is ‘heads who are
still carrying the can’ (p. 311) echoes much of the foregoing.

While Webb’s (1994) research was among the first to highlight the theme of
continuity and change, latterly Webb & Vulliamy (1996) have challenged the
appropriateness of such a duality. They see it as unreasonable to expect heads to
take on more and more executive tasks while simultaneously sustaining high
levels of curriculum leadership (p. 139). Moreover: Given this unrealistic and unmanageable workload, headteachers have to make choices about their priorities based on the size, staffing levels and expertise in their schools. An enormous variety in these contextual factors was revealed in our sample schools, suggesting the need for management advice to develop a range of approaches which recognise that the work of primary headteachers should differ in contrasting circumstances. (pp. 139–140) L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S

This call for a more differentiated awareness of headship is significant. Little
account is made of the diversity of school contexts and circumstances in large
sections of the literature focusing on headship. This is especially true of advice and prescription emanating from central government and its agencies. The differences which can exist because of variation in school size, type and location need to be emphasised and their implications more thoroughly examined, other wise writing about headship may remain too general and become unconvincing to practitioners because it does not recognise nor reflect the individual context.

Another reason why headship research remains undifferentiated is the lack of attention paid to gender differences. Although awareness has been signalled in some studies, only Hall’s (1996) study of three women primary heads, alongside her enquiries into three women secondary heads, has begun to explore how they approached headship. Her research raises important questions about leadership, collaboration, entrepreneurship and ethics: A picture emerges of women heads enacting strong leadership within a collaborative framework. In spite of this, the women heads (in common with men and women in the studies by Southworth and Grace) were firmly committed to the belief that sharing leadership still required them to take the lead when appropriate, including having a personal vision for the school. They saw themselves (and were seen) as key players co-ordinating, developing and using others’ efforts to the benefit of the school’s purpose. (p. 190)

Hall’s research suggests that we are at a relatively early point in understanding the subtleties of headship. Analysis through the lens of
gender may help us to identify some of these differences and so too will other ways of looking at headship. While an outline of primary headship has now been drawn, the pattern and textures of headship need to be further explored and a richer set of portraits developed which capture the range of approaches with greater perspicacity than at present.

What we can say at this juncture is that primary headship in the 1990s has become more complex and challenging than formerly. There has been an increase in the number of tasks, the network of stakeholders and communications with them and others have expanded, while the responsibilities and accountabilities have sharpened. Heads appear to have responded to the changes by taking on more and more, hence their work has intensified and their work hours increased. Yet, while they are doing more, and in some respects doing some new things, there does not appear to have been a wholesale change of approach to headship, since they remain powerful figures in their schools.

Although aspects of primary headship have changed, one of its strongest and most notable features endures. Writing in the early 1970s and drawing on his doctoral
study of the role of the secondary head, Hughes kicks off the debate about school headship in transition by quoting suggestions that school headship is an obsolete institution which should be transformed, dismembered or abolished (Hughes, 1972, p. 34).

Twenty five years on, headship is still centre stage, neither dismembered nor abolished but definitely transformed. Reviewing the research and debate over the past 25 years enables us to track the nature of that transformation and identify what headship looks like as the century draws to a close. Hughes concluded from his research that, however strong the push for more democratic, participative procedures, the head would continue to be ‘in a very real sense, the focus and pivot of his (sic) school’ (p. 40). Later Hughes elaborated his dual role model for leadership in professionally staffed organisations, in which the ‘chief executive’ is also considered the ‘leading professional’ (Hughes, 1976).

Closely interdependent, the head as chief executive is primarily concerned with allocative and coordinating functions within the school and relationships with the governing body and others external to the school. As leading professional, the head’s concern is predominantly with the professional guidance of staff,
teaching and counselling within the school and acting as
spokesperson, with
involvement in professional activities outside the school
(Hughes, 1985, p. 279). Hughes saw the distinction between these two roles
and the need for their
integration as fundamental to a coherent, situated model of
headship that took
account of the tensions between the ‘instrumental’ (task)
and ‘expressive’
(consideration) dimensions of the job.
In spite of the strong lead offered by Hughes, neither of
these sets of tensions
was fully addressed in the research projects that emerged
in the 1970s and
1980s. Instead, research was concerned to establish the
empirical base for under
standing the tasks of headship, particularly as these
informed first the selection
of secondary heads, then their development as school
managers. Lyons’ (1974)
research into the administrative tasks of heads and senior
staff in large sec
ondary schools resulted in Heads’ Tasks: a handbook of
secondary school
administration (Lyons, 1976), which subsequently informed
many of the man
agement training programmes set up by the Department of
Education and
Science in the 1980s. From this point on, research into
secondary headship in
the 1980s had a conspicuously instrumental purpose.
Simultaneously the bound
aries between management in education and management elsewhere became increasingly blurred and the role of secondary headship increasingly defined in terms of the management competencies that are seen to characterise other leadership roles (Mintzberg, 1973; Boyatzis, 1982). Subsequent research by Early (1992) and Esp (1993) contributed towards the legitimisation of competency-based approaches to headship, in spite of the narrowing vision of school leadership that these represented.

Continuing this theme, Jirasinghe & Lyons’ (1996) research-based analysis of heads’ tasks and personality factors is the most recent attempt to use job analysis techniques to document the skills and qualities associated with effective headship, to enable an objective and accurate assessment to be made of a head’s job performance. Their sample of 255 heads across England and Wales, representing a variety of types of schools, phases of education and experience of headship, results in a profile of ‘the competent head’ as she or he needs to be at the end of the century (Jirasinghe & Lyons, 1996). The starting and finishing point for the authors is that school heads must develop the use of a range of management skills and behaviours if they are to deal effectively with current
reforms. Challenging earlier views such as Hughes', they claim: the latter may be far removed from those headteacher attributes and skills that have emerged from much previous research into school management, e.g. the head’s functions polarized into professional and administrative leadership. (p. 7)

Their research enables them to draw up a list of competencies, based on the use of two major questionnaires (Work Profiling System and Occupational Personality Questionnaire) and heads’ self-reports. They found as many differences within groups (e.g. of men) as between groups (e.g. of men and women), but at least their research embodied a specific gender focus and allowed them to make substantiated claims about similarities and differences between men and women heads. They also found few differences between primary and secondary heads, leading them to conclude: Thus the majority of dissimilarities observed are likely to be a reflection of gender differences between male and female heads and their preferred ways of managing rather than attributable to a fundamental distinction in the way primary and secondary schools are organized and run. (p. 65)

Their findings reflect the continuing tensions embodied in the head’s role, which they express as dualities of being ‘strongly affiliative and not affiliative’, ‘strongly democratic and strongly controlling’, ‘caring and not caring’, ‘change oriented and not change oriented’, ‘relaxed and not relaxed’, ‘critical and not critical’ and ‘having emotional control and not having emotional control’. Such
nebulous conclusions sit uncomfortably in a study that claims a positivistic approach to data collection.

However, both the focus of Jirasinghe and Lyons’ research and its conclusions show how far the understanding of heads’ tasks has come since 1983.

Then the POST Project, funded by the DES to look at the selection of secondary headteachers, was forced to construct a theoretical job description in the absence of job descriptions in all but one LEA. At that time there was no demonstrable relationship between the theoretical view of headship and secondary headship as practised. A subsequent study of Headteachers at Work (Hall et al., 1986) confirmed many of Lyons’ earlier findings about the brevity, discontinuity and people intensive character of heads’ tasks. Drawing on Mintzberg’s analyses of managerial work (Mintzberg, 1973) the intention of Headteachers at Work was to describe the head’s role based on what heads do rather than what they or theories say they do. Fifteen heads were observed at their daily work, four of them in depth on a regular basis for a year. The findings were reported in terms of commonalities in headship performance, contrasting interpretations of headship, LEAs and headship practice, secondary headship and public policy expectations.
and headship theory and practice. Referring to an earlier (single case) study of
headship by Richardson (1973), the authors confirmed the continuing uncer-
tainty about the boundaries of the head’s role and subsequent difficulties in the
exercise of authority by those in leadership positions. By the 1990s, as we shall
see, the demands of educational reforms led by the need for schools to become
self-managing have forced heads to clarify the division of duties between them
selves, their senior and middle manager colleagues and other staff.

Other research in the 1980s reflected the interest in tasks and competencies,
which was itself a mirror of the increasing concern (backed by funding) with
heads as managers as well as leaders and leading professionals. Jenkins’ (1985)
study of the job perceptions of senior managers in schools and manufacturing
industry also drew heavily on Mintzberg’s ideas and informed his later
commentary on headship, Getting It Right: a handbook for successful school
leadership (Jenkins, 1991). The fact that the majority of the research projects on
headship before 1988 led to prescriptive handbooks indicates the predominantly
instrumental purpose of the research, particularly where government funding
was involved. Critical perspectives on secondary headship,
examining its rela
tionship to the policy framework within which heads operate were, in the UK at
least, still to come.

Two other research projects which demonstrated a primary concern with the
‘reality’ of secondary headship, were completed before the 1988 watershed.

Weindling & Earley’s (1987) study of newly appointed secondary heads had
two components: large scale national surveys of new heads, more experienced
heads and LEAs and 16 case studies in which a large number of interviews were
conducted with the heads and their staff, over the heads’ first 2 years in post. In
common with other studies at the time the conclusions were
accompanied by
recommendations, focusing on four groups: deputies wishing to become heads;
INSET providers; new and experienced heads; and LEAs. Many of those recom
mendations are now part of the Teacher Training Agency’s rhetoric (improve
preparation for headship, tailor training to management development needs,
provide planned induction for new heads). Others, such as recognising the value
of Senior Management Teams, have become part of most secondary heads’
repertoires, albeit with different manifestations. Recent research by Wallace & LEADERSHIP AND HEAD TEACHERS
Hall (1994) shows how secondary heads have as much to lose as gain when they commit themselves and colleagues to a team approach to managing the school.

The Senior Management Teams in the study were the brainchild of the heads, who played a critical role in creating them and promoting a shared culture of teamwork. Inevitably there were clashes between this culture and the heads’ decisions at times to take over the leadership role.

Torrington & Weightman’s (1989) The Reality of School Management is based on the findings of a research project in 24 maintained secondary schools in eight local authorities. They interpreted the surprise they encountered at their intention to study managers other than the head as an indication of the ‘extraordinary centrality of the Headteacher in British schools’ (p. 135). Rather than reducing their puzzlement about this centrality, their research confirmed their belief about the head’s role as a main impediment to improving school organization (p. 136). Providing examples of heads’ power and good practices, they use the research to make prescriptions for school management that echo the management gurus so influential in the 1980s, such as Peters & Waterman (1982). These include the head as ‘the mover of the mission’ and ‘manager of
the boundary’ (p. 143). Studies of secondary headship post-1988

These attempts by researchers to clarify the role of the head in ways that would be useful to government and other paymasters were superseded after 1988 by the government’s own prescriptions for the role and functions of headteachers and the clear policy framework in which they and others were expected to operate (Hall, 1997b). Most of the studies appearing after 1988 have been undertaken in the spirit of collegiality and intellectual curiosity, their format justified by changing views of what is methodologically appropriate. Ribbins & Marland (1994) capture these changes well in Headship Matters, in which they report conversations with seven secondary school headteachers. In their view, what we know of headship from current accounts ‘relates to a bygone age’ and that knowledge is based on accounts that present headteachers as ‘one-dimensional creatures’ (p. 4). They conclude that to answer current questions about the role of the contemporary headteacher needs not just more research, but new methods of research. Most importantly, it needs to be contextualised in three main ways:

as a situated perspective, i.e. give full access to the views and actions of the headteachers involved across a representative range of issues and events; as a
contextualised perspective, i.e. within the context of the views of heads’ signific

ant others and the community of the school; as a contextualised perspective in

action, i.e. explore what heads say in the context of what they do (p. 6). Ribbins’

own research looking at the personal, professional and managerial attitudes of

more than 30 secondary heads has involved him in all three levels described

here. Working closely with the head of the largest comprehensive school in the

UK, Ribbins has modelled an approach to understanding headship in which the H E A D S H I P

head becomes both the principal subject of the research and also a full partner

within it (Ribbins, 1996, p. 258).

His is not the only study to emphasise the importance of the ‘meaning’ of

heads’ behaviour for themselves and others, captured mainly through their own

words. Mortimore & Mortimore (1991) allow eight secondary heads to present

their account of their school and its community, how the school is managed and

their unique and personal reflections on headship. Summing up the issues that

arise from the heads’ accounts, they conclude on a positive note. These heads

have survived the heat, developed their skills and are ready to take their schools

into the new order (p. 172). They make a distinction between newer heads wel
coming the freedom to use resources as they wish and established headteachers

missing the security of an LEA taking care of financial and staffing aspects (p. 165). Similarly Hustler et al. (1995) have produced an edited volume of secondary heads and educational commentators in dialogue. Valuable though such inquiries are in representing individual heads' views, their contribution to understanding headship is limited by the absence of theoretical perspectives and methodological rigour. The picture of headship that emerges is still predomi

antly first level. This shift in emphasis in our ways of knowing about headship from outside to inside or from characteristics to characters', as Hodgkinson clearly quoted in Ribbins (1996, p. 260), echoes the organising principle in research in which we have ourselves been engaged. Hall's in-depth study of six women heads and Southworth's research-based account of a primary school head represent attempts to provide the kind of contextualised account in action that Ribbins has called for. The conclusions about headship in both studies are grounded in methodologies that involve the head as co-enquirer and theoretical frameworks that help both explain and challenge the findings. They are part of what Gronn (1996, p. 25) calls 'a new world order in the
study of headship’

which is about: . . . more and better leader-watching or
on-looking; longitudinal, naturalistic and biographical
investigations, particularly the latter, to better enrich
knowledge of where leadership comes from and to ascertain
what leading and following look like when scrutinised in
any depth.

Carried out between 1992 and 1995, Hall’s study represents
the most recent

attempt to research systematically the nature of heads’
responses to educational

reforms. The description of headship that emerges shows how
some heads are

dealing with the constraints and demands of government
policies and making

choices about how these will be managed to ensure their
schools are ‘successful’

by whatever criteria they decide are important.

A feature of Hall’s study was the attention paid to a wider
range of factors

than is usual, including life histories and gender, as well
as the use of a wider

range of methodologies including interviews and
observation. A triple metaphor

of power, culture and gender was used to frame the
interpretation of research L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E
A D T E A C H E R S

findings. These were compared with those of Grace’s (1995)
study based on

interviews with 88 secondary and primary heads in England.
Both studies found

heads committed to the belief that sharing leadership still
required them to take

the lead when appropriate, including having a personal
vision for the school. In
Hall’s study, the women secondary heads’ actions for achieving these purposes were collaborative rather than directive, but within a conception of the head’s role that included clarifying the direction and ensuring people were reminded of where they had agreed to go. As women heads they shared most of the characteristics of Jenkins’ (1991, p. 164) ‘transforming post-heroic leaders’.

Summing up in a word their own leadership styles, they talked of being ‘exemplars’, ‘motivators’, ‘interpreters’, ‘opportunists’, ‘reflectors’, ‘facilitators’. Like the heads in Evetts’ (1994) study of Becoming A Secondary Headteacher, the women heads’ formal careers are shown as intricately embedded in their private lives and earlier childhood and work experiences. Their ‘subjective’ careers are set alongside their symbolic leadership behaviour, approaches to managing staff, use of power generally and specifically with governors and senior colleagues. Conclusions

In this section we shall highlight the major themes which are common to the studies of headship in the two school sectors we have reviewed. There are seven themes to note.

First, the central importance of the headteacher is a longstanding theme. It appears in a number of guises, but most compellingly in the school effectiveness
research which claims to show that heads make a difference to the schools they lead. The idea that powerful and visionary heads enhance the school’s effectiveness (see Bolam et al., 1993) is thus a continuing belief in the research and the teacher profession generally. Yet beyond this assertion surprisingly little else is known. For example, it remains unclear in what ways heads actually influence and shape their schools. School effectiveness studies and more recently school improvement commentaries have offered some broad ideas about the nature of effective leadership, but these are relatively generalised and superficial. Longitudinal and observational studies of heads increasing the effectiveness of the schools they lead are presently lacking. Hence, we do not have a sophisticated understanding of how heads make a difference and how this might vary according to the school’s context, size, development needs and the head’s professional background, experience, skills and knowledge. Although the centrality of the head is widely acknowledged, it has not been examined in very much depth.

Second, while heads are central players, there are strong indicators that this is altering. The belief in heads monopolising leadership is at the very least softening. Heads now speak less of ‘my’ school and refer more
commonly to ‘our’

school. Also, there is an increasing reliance on shared leadership, most evident in

the rise in senior management teams, assistant headship, as against deputy head

ship, and with the promotion in some LEAs (e.g. Birmingham) of leadership at H E A D S H I P

all levels. This move to a more distributed pattern of leadership might also

signal increased complexity in school leadership where the challenges are now

so great no individual can meet the demands by her/himself. It might also imply

that the volume of tasks has expanded so much that there has to be a correspond

ing growth in the number of leaders to deal with them. Furthermore, this trend

might show that heads are now striving to develop more leaders in their schools.

The use of management teams reflects heads’ attempts to improve the effective

ness of their schools by increasing the power of colleagues’ contributions. Such

heads may be seeking to empower colleagues by transforming the nature of

leadership in the school.

Notions of empowerment and transformational leadership suggest that heads

and others interested in school leadership are still wrestling with the perennial

challenge of establishing and sustaining a balance between, on the one hand,

control of the organisation and, on the other, staff
participation and involvement.

It appears that there is presently a trend towards increased levels of participation, but whether this is because heads believe it is necessary for pragmatic reasons or because heads in the 1990s have increasingly strong principles about democratic organisation and wish to create schools which are communities is uncertain.

The value of the triple metaphor that informed Hall’s study was in raising issues that relate to the current pessimistic debate about the transformation of headship in response to government policies, into simple technical formulations for making schools effective as organisations (Grace, 1995, p. 26). For Grace, this transformation represents the reconstruction of headship over time from moral to market relation terms. Challenging Grace’s view that educational entrepreneurialism necessarily means managerialism, Hall proposes the possibility of heads being new educational entrepreneurs. As such, they demonstrate a model of educational entrepreneurialism that seeks to preserve the integrity of the educational enterprise by using rather than being used by government reforms.

Whether this meets the demands of those who call for ‘critical leadership’ is still a matter of debate. Grundy (1993, p. 174) defines critical
leadership in terms of ‘emancipatory praxis’. She says: Emancipatory praxis is not a set of behaviours in which an educational leader can be trained. This form of praxis is grounded in a critical consciousness which will manifest itself in action that will always be becoming emancipatory. The question for the educational leader is not, ‘Am I emancipated and how can I emancipate my staff?’ but ‘How can I engage in forms of critical, self-reflective and collaborative work which will create conditions so that the people with whom I work can come to control their knowledge and practice?’

However headship is described from the perspective of critical theorists, the reality is that the task load has increased and the character of the work has changed significantly in some respects. Heads have had to adapt to the ideology of an ‘educational market’. The increase in competition between schools for pupils has, in part, led to a concomitant need for heads to be entrepreneurial in promoting the school and securing resources for it. Without doubt, the ‘selling of schools’ has advanced.

At the same time, as this third theme shows, heads have become more overtly aware of their schools’ levels of success. Several factors have contributed to this move, including: the inspection of schools; the introduction of school league tables based upon test and exam results; value-added analyses of pupils’ learning gains; an upsurge in interest in using pupil achievement data and manage
monitor and evaluate
trends in their schools’ performance.

Moreover, as heads begin to take a harder and increasingly
evidence-based
view of the school the character of their professional
leadership changes. Some
studies suggest that heads in the 1990s are finding it more
difficult to teach,
because of demands on their time. These heads do not see
themselves as leading
by classroom example, rather, they are now acting as the
school’s resident
inspector and leading school reviews. In effect, their
professional leadership has
been recast. They are apparently taking a stronger interest
in outcomes and the
school’s ‘product’.

These three themes combine and suggest a fourth, which is
that heads are
increasingly dealing with educational change. They are, of
course, also respond
ing to change in a wider sense, for example, the revolution
represented by the
explosion of information technology, the globalisation of
corporations and
markets and the influence of the European Union upon life
and work in the UK.

However, in terms of educational change heads have had to
make quite consid
erable shifts in their assumptions. For instance, while
many contemporary head
teachers entered the profession and made their first career
steps at a time when
political intervention was relatively gentle and distant, over the last decade they have had to adjust to central government applying structural solutions through top-down regulations (Fullan, 1993, p. 2). In other words, educational change has changed. As Handy (1989, p. 5) says, change is not what it used to be. While change is now everpresent, in recent years it has, in education, become discontinuous. Discontinuous change means policy initiatives are unlikely to be 'more of the same only better' (p. 6). Thus, heads have become accustomed to policy developments disturbing established structures and creating turbulence in schools (e.g. the introduction of school performance league tables; the advent of school inspections). Moreover, such changes powerfully affect how teachers’ and headteachers’ work is organised.

Headship, therefore, is less to do with managing a steady-state school organisation and more to do with anticipating and responding to new initiatives, challenges and opportunities. Some regard such change as learning (Brighouse, 1996, p. 77) and connect it to notions of learning organisations and life-long learning for all (see also Fullan, 1993). Presently we are only on the brink of H E A D S H I P exploring, let alone understanding, how leaders establish and sustain learning
schools. However, the constancy of change in schools and society and the acceleration of educational developments means that headteachers need to be: future oriented; capable and sophisticated managers of multiple changes; able to live with change in proactive and productive ways; aware of the professional learning needs of themselves and the school’s staff; active in orchestrating development activities which support staff and which advance the school’s capacity to improve.

Fifth, there is a lack of differentiation in the studies examining headship.

Although there is some appreciation of differences between school sectors, there is little awareness of differentiation within them. Yet there are important issues to explore in terms of the effects of differences in school size and school type (e.g. country, denominational and grant maintained schools; nursery, infant, first, junior, primary, middle, comprehensive, high, upper, grammar) within the same phase of education.

The other important area of differentiation relates to gender. Understanding the ways in which women and men headteachers interpret and enact school leadership is not about highlighting differences and identifying the character
istics of one gender as superior to the other. As Hall (1997a) argues elsewhere, understanding the impact of gender on life in schools and colleges is an essential component of our ways of knowing about educational leadership. Using a gender perspective creates new possibilities for exploring the lives of men and women who teach, manage and lead in education. As researchers into headship we have both concluded that educational leadership is firmly rooted in professional identity. Gender, in turn, is a crucial component of that identity. Future research into headship that fails to take this and the gendered nature of schools and colleges into account is likely to be incomplete.

Sixth, we have yet to fully understand the development of headteachers. For example, what are the lessons to be learned from experienced heads? What are the key ingredients of the process of headteacher maturation? Longitudinal studies are needed to begin to uncover the changes that occur as heads move from their first headship into their second and third headships. We also need to map what are the critical incidents and epiphanies in their professional development and understand ing. If it is true that heads are central players in their schools’ success, then we urgently need to embark on studies which illuminate how they can be supported,
challenged and developed into highly effective headteachers.

These six themes in the literature add up to a seventh. While there has been

some sustained interest and research into headship over the last 25 years, the

research has been limited in both scale and scope. We have some interesting and

insightful studies on which to draw, but the absence of

longitudinal studies means that there is much more to investigate. Furthermore, as the

character of headship changes, the earlier studies will become redundant. In terms

of research into headship in the UK, we are probably, at best, only approaching the

end of the beginning in our understanding of headship. We need more research into the topic, new methodologies and more sophisticated reflections and under


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HEADSHIP 47 THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOL Kenneth Leithwood and Doris Jantzi Source: Journal of Educational Administration 38(2) (2000): 112-129. Abstract Most school restructuring initiatives assume significant capacity development on the part of individuals, as well as whole organization; they also depend on high levels of motivation and commitment to solving the substantial problems associated with the implementation of restructuring initiatives. Transformational approaches to leadership have long been advocated as productive under these conditions, and evidence suggests that transformational practices do contribute to the development of capacity and commitment. Much less evidence is available, however, about whether these socio-psychological effects actually result in
organizational change and enhanced organizational outcomes. Survey data from an achieved sample of 1,762 teachers and 9,941 students in one large school district were used to explore the relative effects of transformational leadership practices on selected organizational conditions and student engagement with school. Results demonstrated strong significant effects of such leadership on organizational conditions, and moderate but still significant total effects on student engagement.

Most school reform initiatives assume significant capacity development on the part of individuals, as well as whole organizations. Efforts to reform instruction encompassed in the “teaching for understanding” movement (e.g. Ball and Rundquist, 1993), for example, often require teachers to: . . . think of subject-matter content in new ways . . . [be] much more attentive and responsive to the thinking of students . . . and [become] more adventurous in their thinking. (Putnam and Borko, 1997, p. 1229)

Initiatives such as this one also depend on high levels of motivation and commitment on the part of school staffs to solving the often complex problems associated with their implementation. “Reform documents”, Putnam and Borko point out, “stop short of offering concrete images and prescriptions for what this new reformed teaching should be like”. This assertion could be made for most reform initiatives. As a consequence, whether a reform initiative actually improves the quality of education or simply becomes another “fatal remedy” (Seiber, 1981) hinges on the work of implementors. And the extent to which they do this work depends a great deal on their commitments.
and capacities.

Transformational approaches to leadership have long been advocated as productive under conditions fundamentally the same as those faced by schools targeted for reform (Yukl, 1994; Leithwood, 1994). Considerable evidence suggests that transformational practices do contribute to the development of capacity and commitment (e.g. Yammarino et al., 1998). Much less evidence is available, however, about whether these socio-psychological effects actually result in organizational change and enhanced organizational outcomes, especially in school contexts (for a recent review of this evidence, see Leithwood et al., 1996): exploring this question was our purpose in this study. Framework

This is the third in a series of studies concerned with the effects of different forms and sources of leadership using two comparable, relatively large data bases (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998, 1999). Each study in the series has been guided by a framework consisting of the same mediating and dependent variables but focused on a different independent (leadership) variable. According to this framework, the influence of leadership on student engagement with school is mediated by both school and classroom level conditions. School conditions
influence student engagement directly, as well as indirectly through their influence on classroom conditions. Family educational culture is a variable which directly influences not only student engagement, but school conditions, as well. Transformational leadership is Part of a cluster of related approaches termed “new leadership” by Bryman (1992), transformation leadership only recently has become the subject of systematic empirical inquiry in school contexts. As has been pointed out, this approach to leadership fundamentally aims to foster capacity development and higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals on the part of leaders' colleagues. Increased capacities and commitment are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985).

Authority and influence associated with this form of leadership are not necessarily allocated to those occupying formal administrative positions, although much of the literature adopts their perspectives. Rather, power is attributed by organization members to whomever is able to inspire their commitment to collective aspirations, and the desire for personal and collective mastery over the capacities needed to accomplish such aspirations.

Current educational leadership literature offers no unitary
The concept of transformational leadership. Kowalski and Oates (1993), for instance, accept Burns’ (1978) original claim that transformational leadership represents the transcendence of self-interest by both leader and led. Dillard (1995, p. 560) prefers Bennis’ (1959) modified notion of “transformative leadership – the ability of a person to reach the souls of others in a fashion which raises human consciousness, builds meanings and inspires human intent that is the source of power”.

Leithwood (1994) used another modification of Burns, this one based on Bass’ (1985) two-factor theory in which transactional and transformational leadership represent opposite ends of the leadership continuum. Bass maintained that the two actually can be complementary. Leithwood identified six factors that make up transformational leadership. Hipp and Bredeson (1995), however, reduced the factors to five in their analysis of the relationship between leadership behavior and teacher efficacy. Gronn (1996) notes the close relationship, in much current writing, between views of transformational and charismatic leadership, as well as the explicit omission of charisma from some current conceptions of transformational leadership.

The model of transformational leadership developed from our
own research

in schools, including factor analytic studies, describes transformational leader

ship along six dimensions: building school vision and
goals; providing intellec
tual stimulation; offering individualized support;
symbolizing professional

practices and values; demonstrating high performance
expectations; and develope

oping structures to foster participation in school
decisions (Leithwood, 1994;

Leithwood et al., 1999). Each dimension is associated with
more specific leader

ship practices and the problem-solving processes used by
transformational

leaders also have been described (Leithwood and Steinbach,
1995).

Most models of transformational leadership are flawed by
their under

representation of transactional practices (which we
interpret to be “managerial”

in nature). Such practices are fundamental to
organizational stability. For this

reason, we have recently added four management dimensions
to our own model

based on a review of relevant literature (Duke and
Leithwood, 1994). These
dimensions, also measured in this study, include: staffing,
instructional support,

monitoring school activities, and community focus.

There is a small but compelling body of empirical evidence
concerning the
effects of this form of leadership on a wide array of
organizational and student outcomes when exercised by principals (Leithwood et al., 1996). Our study contributes to this literature in two ways. First, the study examined the effects of transformational practices exercised by those not only in administrative roles, potentially a distributed form of transformational leadership. Second, the study focused on an especially important student outcome, student engagement, for which there is no prior evidence of leadership effects.

School conditions

Studies that inquire only about the direct effects of school leadership on student outcomes tend to report weak or inconclusive outcomes, whereas studies that include mediating and/or moderating variables in their designs tend to report significant effects (Hallinger and Heck, 1996a). Because the largest proportion of school leadership effects on students are mediated by school conditions, a significant challenge for leadership research is to identify those alterable conditions likely to have direct effects on students, and to inquire about the nature and strength of the relationship between them and leadership. In their 1996 review, Hallinger and Heck reported evidence of only one mediating variable, school goals, consistently interacting with principal leadership. One reason for
such limited results may be insufficient importance attributed by researchers to their choices of mediating variables (Hosking and Morley, 1988).

Building directly on prior work by Leithwood (1994) and Ogawa and Bossert (1995), and using evidence from their two 1996 reviews, Hallinger and Heck (1998) have proposed four school conditions through which leadership may exercise its influence. These conditions include purposes and goals, school structure and social networks, people, and organizational culture. Our choice of school conditions for this study included three of these four variables along with several others not identified by Hallinger and Heck. In a factor analysis carried out as part of our previous study (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998), all of these conditions loaded on the same factor.

“Purposes and goals”, one of the school conditions included in our framework, includes what members of the school understand to be both the explicit and implicit purposes and directions for the school. It also encompasses the extent to which such purposes and directions are believed to be a compelling and challenging target for one’s personal practices as well as the collective school improvement efforts of staff. Evidence from our reviews suggested that
such purposes contribute to school effectiveness, for example, to the extent that

members are aware of them, and to the extent they are perceived to be clear,

meaningful, useful, current, congruent with district directions, and to reflect

important educational values. This variable bears close similarity to what String

field and Slavin (1992) refer to as “meaningful goals” and what Reynolds et al.

(1996) label “shared vision and goals”. It is the only mediating variable that

Hallinger and Heck (1996b) found consistently interacting with principal leader

ship across the 40 empirical studies included in their review.

Although conceptually part of Hallinger and Heck’s (1998) purposes and THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

goals variable, we treated “school planning” as a separate school condition in

our study. It includes the explicit means used for deciding on mission and goals,

and on the actions to be taken for their accomplishment. Planning processes con

tribute to school effectiveness, for example, to the extent that they bring together

local needs and district goals into a shared school vision (Mortimore, 1993; Har


“Organizational culture” is a third school-level mediating variable included in

our study. Hallinger and Heck (1998) suggest that this
variable focuses on the
importance of developing shared meanings and values. For
purposes of our
study, organizational culture was defined as the norms,
values, beliefs, and
assumptions that shape members’ decisions and practices.
The contribution of
culture to school effectiveness depends, for example, on
the content of these
norms, values, beliefs, and assumptions (e.g. student
centred). It also depends on
the extent to which they are shared, and whether they
foster collaborative work.
This variable shares elements of Reynolds et al. (1996)
“learning environment”
and the “consensus and cooperative planning” to which
Scheerens (1997), and
Creemers and Reetzig (1996) refer.

“Structure and organization”, the fourth school condition
included in this
study, was defined as the nature of the relationships
established among people
and groups in the school and between the school and its
external constituents. As
Hallinger and Heck (1998) argue: . . . leadership is linked
to organizational roles and the networks of relations among
roles because it is this network that comprises the
organizational system. (Hallinger and Heck, 1998, p. 173)

Such relationships contribute to school effectiveness, for
example, when they
support the purposes of the curriculum, and the
requirements for instruction.

Structure and organization also contribute to school
effectiveness when they
facilitate staffs’ work, professional learning, and opportunities for collaboration.

This variable includes elements of what Reynolds et al. (1996) include in “shared vision and goals”, as well as in school ethos or “learning environment”.

Information collection and decision making was the final variable included among the school conditions in the framework guiding our study. This variable includes the nature and quality of information collected for decision making in the school, the ways in which members of the school use that information and how they are involved in decisions. Schools benefit, for example, when information for decision making is systematically collected, varied, and widely available to most school members for decisions. This variable is reflected in the importance attached to “monitoring student progress” (Reynolds et al., 1996; Mortimore, 1993) as well as the extensive support now available for the contribution to organizational effectiveness of employee participation in decision making (Lawler, 1986; Conley, 1993).
evidence that classroom conditions make a substantially greater contribution to student achievement than do school conditions (Bosker et al., 1990), the strength of the relationship between such conditions and student engagement is unknown. If student engagement is as important a variable as we argue it is below, a comprehensive understanding of the avenues through which leadership influences it is called for.

Two classroom conditions were included in this study, instructional services and policies and procedures. These conditions loaded on the same factor in our previous study (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998). Instructional services were defined as interventions by teachers with students aimed at stimulating their educational growth. Practices associated with this variable included, for example, instructional planning, the consideration of learning principles, clarification of appropriate instructional goals, decisions about curricular content, selection of instructional strategies, and the uses of instructional time. A large literature supports the important contribution to student achievement of these and closely related variables (Reynolds et al., 1996; Creemers and Reetzig, 1996).

Policies and procedures, was defined as guidelines for decision making and
action in the school. Although not referring directly to practices in the class room, when policies in the school are student oriented, encourage continuous professional growth among staff, and encourage the allocation of resources to school priorities without stifling individual initiative, their contribution to class room practice is expected to be significant. At least indirect support for this variable can be found in evidence concerning the influence on school effects of “high expectations”, “consistency” and “control” (Mortimore, 1993; Creemers, 1994). Student engagement with school has both behavioral and affective components. Extent of students’ participation in school activities, both inside and outside of the classroom, is the behavioral component. The affective component is the extent to which students identify with school and feel they belong. As it was defined and measured in this study, student engagement is quite similar to the “social cohesion” variable used by Oxley (1997) as a dependent measure for her test of the effects of community-like school qualities on students. Student engagement was chosen as the dependent measure in this study for several reasons. Expanding our understanding of leadership effects beyond basic
math and language achievement was one of the reasons. Such achievement measures have served as dependent variables in the vast majority of school leadership studies, to date, not because they are the only, or always the most suitable, measures but because they are available for research at little or no cost to the researcher. Since the research team had to collect any outcome measures to be used in this study themselves, a measure was chosen which would extend the knowledge base concerning the scope of leadership effects.

The choice of student engagement is warranted on four additional grounds, as well. First, for many students, dropping out of school is the final step in a long process of gradual disengagement and reduced participation in the formal curriculum of the school, as well as in the school’s co-curriculum and more informal social life. Reversing such disengagement is a necessary requirement for achieving the ambitious outcomes advocated by most current school reform initiatives. Variation in schools’ retention rates are likely to be predicted well from estimates of student participation and identification (Finn, 1989). Second, some factors giving rise to students becoming at risk are to be found very early in the child’s pre-school and school experiences. Patterns
of student participation and identification are sensitive to the consequences of these factors as early as the primary grades. Change in a student’s participation and identification is a reliable symptom of problems which should be redressed as early as possible (Lloyd, 1978). Finally, at least a modest amount of evidence suggests that student engagement is a reliable predictor of variation in such typical student outcomes as social studies, math, and language achievement (Finn and Cox, 1992; Bredschneder, 1993; Dukelow, 1993).

Our orientation to understanding and measuring student participation and identification began with the work of Jeremy Finn. In his paper “Withdrawing from School” (1989), Finn offers a model explaining continuing engagement in school as a function of participation in school activities which, along with other influences, results in successful performance. Such performance is esteem building and fosters bonding or identification with the school. One central construct in the Finn model is identification with school. The terms “affiliation”, “involvement”, “attachment”, “commitment” and “bonding” encompass the two ideas which, Finn (1989) suggests, constitute a good working definition of identification: First, students who identify with school have an
internalized conception of belongingness – that they are discernibly part of the school environment and that school constitutes an important part of their own experience. And, second, these individuals value success in schoolrelevant goals. (p. 123)

Such identification and engagement with school, an internal state, has been found to mediate a wide range of achievement and behavioral outcomes among students, as mentioned above.

The second construct central in the model is overt behavior – students’ actual participation in school activities. Finn identifies four levels of such participation and suggests a strong positive relationship between these levels of participation and the extent of students’ identification with school. Level One participation involves acquiescence to the need to attend school, to be prepared for school tasks, and to respond to teachers’ instructions. At Level Two, students take initiative in the classroom, are enthusiastic, and may spend extra time on school work. Level Three involves participation in school activities outside of the formal curriculum – the social and co-curricular activities of the school, in addition to extensive participation in academic work. Participation in school governance is the fourth level of participation in Finn’s model. In the present study, the mean of these four levels was used as the measure of participation.
Finn conceptualized the participation-identification model in the form of a developmental cycle which included other variables. Participation in school is essential to successful school performance, although such performance is also influenced by students’ perceptions of the quality of their instruction and their own ability (perhaps better understood as academic self-efficacy). Quality of instruction is also an influence on participation. Successful performance influences the students’ sense of belonging and valuing of school-related goals. Such identification, in turn, has a position effect on participation. While evidence was collected about those variables in the model in addition to participation and identification, that evidence was not used in this study.

Family educational culture

In this study, family educational culture, a moderator variable, was used in place of more commonly used socio-economic status (SES) measures to represent contributions to student outcomes from home and family sources. Historically, SES has been the most powerful predictor of student success at school (e.g. Coleman, 1966; Bridge et al., 1979). It also has been shown to influence the form of leadership exercised by principals (Hallinger et al., 1996) – hence the arrow in Figure 1 signifying influence flowing from family
educational culture to school leadership. But SES is a crude proxy, masking a host of family interactions which have powerful educational consequences. These interactions vary widely across families, often without much relation to family income, for example, and this is why we prefer family educational culture over SES as a moderator variable in this study.

The content of family educational culture includes the assumptions, norms, values, and beliefs held by the family about intellectual work, in general, school work in particular, and the conditions which foster both. Six literature reviews were used as the sources of eight dimensions of either the family’s educational culture or resulting behaviors and conditions demonstrably related to school success (Bloom, 1984; Walberg, 1984; Scott-Jones, 1984; Finn, 1989; Rumberger, 1983; 1987). Taken as a whole, these dimensions represent what Walberg (1984) referred to as the “alterable curriculum of the home”. This curriculum, twice as predictive of academic learning as SES according to The Effects of Transformational Leadership Walberg’s analysis, includes family work habits, academic guidance and support, and stimulation to think about issues in the larger environment. Family
culture also includes the academic and occupational aspirations and expectations of parents/guardians, the provision of adequate health and nutritional conditions, and a physical setting conducive to academic work in the home (see Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998, for a more detailed description of these variables).

Based on this framework, our intention in carrying out the study was to identify: the proportion of variation in school and classroom conditions explained by teachers’ perceptions of the extent of transformational leadership practices exercised in their schools; the total direct and indirect effects (explained variation) of transformational leadership on student engagement; the amount of variation in student engagement explained by school and classroom variables; whether transformational leadership explains comparable amounts of variation in each of the two dimensions of student engagement (participation, identification); and the proportion of variation in both transformational leadership and student engagement explained by family educational culture. Methods Context

Data about leadership, school and classroom conditions, student engagement, and family educational culture were collected through two surveys in one large LEADERSHIP AND HEAD TEACHERS

Figure 1 Effects of transformational leadership on student
engagement. Family Educational Culture

Transformational Leadership (.99) .65* .27* Organizational Conditions ^
(.46 ) .42* ^ 15* (.16) .82* .52* Participation
Identification (.22)

Total

Effects______________

Family Educational Culture

Transformational Leadership

Organizational Conditions Student Participation .8 8 * .07
* .11* Student Identification .8 7 * .10 * .15*

school district in a province in eastern Canada. The district served a population

of approximately 58,000 urban, suburban, and rural elementary and secondary students. Data for this study focused on the 2,465 teachers, and 44,920 students

in the district’s 123 elementary and junior high schools.

At the time of data collection, all schools in this district were confronted with

expectations for change from both the district and the provincial government

which clearly called out for the exercise of school-level leadership. For example,

just two years prior to the study, the district had been newly formed through the

amalgamation of three much smaller administrative jurisdictions. This gave rise

to the need for considerable district-wide culture building, policy realignment,

and structural reconfiguration. During this period, as well, the provincial govern
ment was proceeding with a host of other changes affecting schools – changes in curriculum, student assessment and funding formulae, for example. Comparable changes were being in many educational jurisdictions across Canada at the time of the study. Instruments

Two survey instruments were developed, one to collect data from teachers on school and classroom (organizational) conditions, and transformational leadership, the other to collect evidence from students on their engagement with school and their families’ educational cultures.

The “Organizational Conditions and School Leadership Survey” contained 214 items measuring five sets of school conditions, two sets of classroom conditions, and the perceived influence of teacher and principal leadership in the school. Items measuring school and classroom conditions were stated in the form suggested by the research literature to be most desirable, and were rated on a five-point Likert scale (“strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) that the statement was true for their school, with a “not applicable” response option available, as well.

The “Student Engagement and Family Culture Survey” contained 61 items measuring student participation in school activities (34),
student identification

with school (17), and students' perceptions of their family educational culture (10). Students responded to each item on the same five-point scale used by teachers (“strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”) that the statement was true for them, with a “not applicable” response option also available. Sample

All elementary and junior high school teachers in the school district (n = 2,465) were asked to respond to the “Organizational Conditions and School Leadership Survey”. Because of the extensive number of items, however, two forms of the survey were developed. Each form collected data about at least three sets of organizational conditions and all leadership items. All schools with fewer than ten teachers were asked to complete both forms of the survey, preferably at two different times to prevent fatigue. Each form required an average of 20 minutes to complete. In all other schools, each teacher was randomly assigned either Form A or Form B. A total of 888 teachers completed Form A of the survey and 874 teachers completed Form B for an overall response rate of 71 per cent.

The “Student Engagement and Family Educational Culture Survey” was administered to all students in one class in each of the three highest grades. In
order to protect student anonymity, principals rather than teachers supervised the administration and subsequent collection of these surveys. A total of 8,805 students responded in the 110 schools in the sample. Data for all variables in this study were complete for 110 of the 123 elementary and junior high schools in the district. Data analysis Responses of individual teachers and students to the surveys were aggregated to the school level. SPSS was used to aggregate individual responses by school and then to calculate means, standard deviations, and reliability coefficients (Cronbach’s alpha) for all the scales measuring the variables. As in our previous study (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998), principal components extraction with varimax rotation was used to analyze the seven school and classroom conditions to estimate the number of factors measured by the specific conditions and assess the extent to which our conceptual distinctions among the seven organizational conditions could be verified empirically. LISREL was used to assess the direct and indirect effects of leadership on student engagement. This path analytic technique allows for testing the validity of causal inferences for pairs of variables while controlling for the effects of other variables. Data were analyzed using the LISREL 8
analysis of covariance
structure approach to path analysis and maximum likelihood estimates (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1993). Hierarchical linear modelling is the analytic technique of
choice for some researchers exploring databases such as this one. For a variety
of practical reasons, however, we were unable to collect our data in a way that
allowed us to link the responses of individual student with their teachers, a pre
requisite for HLM. Results
Table 1 reports means and standard deviations, aggregated to the school level, of
teachers’ ratings of transformational leadership and all school and classroom
conditions. Comparable information about student responses to items included
in the three scales of the Student Engagement and Family Culture Survey appear
in the last three rows of this Table. The far right column indicates that the
internal reliabilities of all scales were acceptable, ranging from 0.74 to 0.95.
Results of the factor analysis, reported in Table 2 indicate that only one factor LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS was extracted from the seven organizational conditions, rather than two factors
(a school factor and a classroom factor) as in one of our previous studies using
comparable data (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998). Five of the conditions loaded at
0.83 or higher, whereas the relationship of structure and organization to the factor was somewhat weaker at 0.72. Instructional strategies had the weakest relationship at 0.70. Table 3 demonstrates a similar, single factor outcome of the **THE EFFECTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

Table 1 Teacher ratings of organizational conditions and student ratings of family culture and engagement (N = 110 schools) Mean ± SD Reliability 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher ratings of school conditions</th>
<th>Conditions (Aggregate)</th>
<th>3.83 ± 0.25</th>
<th>0.93</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purposes and goals</td>
<td>4.07 ± 0.37</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional services</td>
<td>4.03 ± 0.26</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>3.92 ± 0.33</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information collection/DM</td>
<td>3.85 ± 0.26</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy and procedures</td>
<td>3.72 ± 0.27</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>3.63 ± 0.32</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and organization</td>
<td>3.57 ± 0.36</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher ratings of transformational leadership</td>
<td>Transformational leadership</td>
<td>3.76 ± 0.48</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Student ratings of family educational culture | Family educational culture | 4.10 ± 0.24 | 0.79 |
| Student ratings of engagement with school | Identification | 3.93 ± 0.30 | 0.90 |
| Participation                          | 3.62 ± 0.25           | 0.74        |

Notes

a Rating scale: 1 = disagree strongly; 5 = Agree strongly
Table 2 Factor matrix resulting from teacher ratings of conditions within their schools Factor loadings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposes and goals</th>
<th>0.85</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and organization</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information collection</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy and procedures</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional services</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue 4.77
Percent of explained variance 68.21

Table 3 Factor matrix resulting from teacher ratings of leadership within their schools (N = 110 schools) Factor loadings

| Staffing                     | 0.67 |
| Instructional support        | 0.89 |
| Monitoring school activities | 0.86 |
| Community focus              | 0.71 |
| Building school vision and goals | 0.92 |
| Providing intellectual stimulation | 0.93 |
| Providing individualized support | 0.90 |
| Symbolizing professional practices and values | 0.92 |
| Demonstrating high performance expectations | 0.84 |
| Developing collaborative structures | 0.91 |

Eigenvalue 7.38
Percent of explained variance 73.81

Table 4 Relationships among leadership, organizational conditions, family educational culture and student outcomes (N = 110 schools)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Family Educational</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family educational</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.34**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.88**</td>
<td>0.87**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>0.19*</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.88**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.90**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.87**</td>
<td>0.90**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes

* p < 0.05.

** p < 0.01.

Factor analysis of the ten leadership and management dimensions of our model of transformational leadership. Results of both these factor analyses are reflected in the path model tested below.

Table 4 reports correlation coefficients among all variables included in the path model. All relationships are statistically significant except the relationship between transformational leadership and family educational culture.

Figure 1 reports the results of testing (using LISREL) a version of the initial framework for the study adapted in response to the factor
analyses, reported in Tables 2 and 3, in which all items measuring school and classroom conditions loaded on the same factor and all items measuring leadership and management loaded on the same factor. Although the model also tested relationships between family educational culture and leadership as well as between conditions and participation, to facilitate interpretation only the significant paths are shown in Figure 1. The model is an acceptable fit with the data ($\chi^2 (2, N = 110) = 1.91, p = 0.38; \text{AGFI} = 0.95, \text{RMR} = 0.01; \text{NFI} = 1.00, \text{PGFI} = 0.13$) and, as a whole, explains 84 per cent of the variation in student participation, and 78 per cent of the variation in student identification. Family educational culture has the strongest relationship with student engagement as reflected in its significant total effects on participation (0.88) and identification (0.87). Family educational culture has significant effects on organizational conditions, and these conditions have significant, although modest, total effects on both student participation (0.11) and identification (0.15).

Transformational leadership has strong, significant direct effects on organizational conditions and weak but significant indirect effects on student participation (0.07) and identification (0.10). Discussion and
conclusion

The purpose of this study was to inquire about the effects of transformational leadership practices on organizational conditions and student engagement with school, taking into account the potentially large effects of family educational culture. Results of this study are consistent, in many respects, with evidence provided by other large-scale, quantitative studies of principal leadership effects, as well as several of our own earlier studies of transformational leadership (Leithwood, 1994). With student engagement in school as the dependent variable, results of the study indicate that transformational leadership effects are significant although weak on the affective or psychological dimension (identification) and the behavioral dimension (participation) of student engagement. The size of these transformational leadership effects are approximately the same as those found for the effects of leadership provided specifically by principals in two of our previous studies (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998, 1999) which also used student engagement as the dependent variable. It is possible, of course, that respondents in the present study primarily had principals in mind as they responded to questions about the extent to which they experienced transformational leadership in
their schools.

Whether the focus is on leadership from principals, in particular, or on trans
formational leadership practices whatever their source, two quite different inter-
pretations of these results are possible. The most obvious interpretation is that
principals, in the case of our earlier study, and transformational leadership prac-
tices, in the present study, make a disappointing contribution to student engage-
ment. Had the dependent variable in the study been basic math or language
skills, this interpretation would be seen as fundamentally in contradiction with
the assumptions of most school professionals, normative assertions about the
role of leadership in schools (e.g. Hudson, 1997; Foster, 1989), and the results of
many school effectiveness studies (e.g. Mortimore, 1993). In fact, student engage-
ment is an outcome not nearly so obviously tied to teachers’ classroom
practices as are more conventional outcome measures, and so potentially more
susceptible to influence by those outside the classroom. Our results, for this
reason, might be considered doubly disappointing. This might be termed the
“romance of leadership” interpretation, after Meindl’s (1995) argument that
leadership is a convenient, phenomenologically legitimate, social construction
which, nonetheless, masks a complex, multi-sourced bundle of influences on organizational outcomes.

A second interpretation of these results, after Hallinger and Heck’s (1996b) analysis of principal leadership effects, cautions against dismissing, as not meaningful, the admittedly small effects of leadership on, in this case, student engagement. Transformational school leadership practices, after all, do explain a large proportion of the variation in organizational conditions, those features of the school to which leaders have direct access and which are, conceptually, the means through which school effects are exercised.

To put this interpretation in a broader context, recent reviews of empirical research on school effectiveness suggest that educational factors for which data are available explain, in total, something less than 20 per cent of the variation in student cognitive outcomes; very little evidence is available concerning such non-cognitive outcomes as the one used in this study. Reynolds et al. (1996) suggest 8-12 per cent for research carried out in the UK, while Creemers and Reetzig suggest 10-20 per cent for studies carried out “in the Western Hemi sphere . . . after correction for student intake measures such as aptitude or social
Variation within this range across studies may be explained by such variables as school size, type of student outcome serving as the dependent measure, nature of students, and department and subject matter differences.

While these relatively small amounts of explained variation are now considered to be both meaningful, and practically significant, a school is not a single variable. It is an aggregate of variables, the “correlates” of effective schools, or the organizational conditions used as mediating variables in this study. Some of these variables most likely contribute more strongly than others to school’s effects, although they have yet to be unpacked empirically, except for distinguishing between classroom and school level factors (Creemers and Reetzig, 1996; Scheerens, 1997). Efforts to do the unpacking, however, realistically begin with very modest amounts of variation to be explained, especially if it is assumed, as seems reasonable, that at least a handful of factors contribute to explained variation. This was Ogawa and Hart’s (1985) argument in claiming importance for their finding that principal leadership explained 2-8 per cent of the variation in student performance, similar to the results of this study. Under
such circumstances knowing the relative explanatory power of a variable will be
at least as interesting as knowing the total amount of variation it explains.

Results of the study involving family educational culture are significant for
three reasons. First, most school effects studies acknowledge a central role for LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS SES in accounting for variation in student achievement. In this study family educational culture replaced SES on the grounds that it more precisely targeted those elements subsumed by, typically, very global SES measures (e.g. percent age of students in school eligible for free lunches) contributing to student success at school. Our results support the validity of this concept and its measurement in future school and leadership effects studies. Family educational culture behaved statistically in a manner comparable to the behavior of SES in most previous school effects studies.

Second, the exceptionally large proportion of variation in student engagement explained by family educational culture raises the possibility that different student outcomes may range considerably in their sensitivity to family, as compared with school, variables. This is apparent already in studies attempting to explain variation in mathematics as compared with language achievement, for example.
(Thomas et al., 1997). It seems likely to become much more apparent as evidence from school and leadership effects studies accumulates across a wider array of student outcomes, especially across important but “non-standard” outcomes such as student engagement. These outcomes, while reflected hardly at all in current school effects research, are an important feature of most curriculum policy, and are central to many parents’ assessments of their local schools (Townsend, 1994).

This suggests that future school and leadership effects studies ought to conceptualize family variables more centrally in their designs: they also might do well to reconceive themselves as “school and family effects” or “leadership and family effects” studies. Our understanding of school effects in general, and leadership effects in particular, is unlikely to progress much further without systematically inquiry about how schools and families co-produce the full array of outcomes for which schools are responsible.

Finally, effects on student engagement of transformational leadership practices were substantially weaker than those of family educational culture. This pattern of effects was especially strong for teacher leadership in one of our previous studies (Leithwood and Jantzi, 1998). A plausible implication of these findings is that high
levels of student engagement reduce teachers’ perceived needs for either teacher or principal leadership. Student engagement could be conceived of as a substitute for leadership (Howell, 1997), as well as a student outcome. 1 Note


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Source: International Journal of Leadership in Education 3(4) (2000): 315-330. There has been much debate about the types of leaders needed in tomorrow's schools and about the optimal forms of leadership preparation. This study examined the applicability of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model to a cross-cultural travel study programme for Canadian and New Zealand graduate students in educational leadership programmes at two universities. The Canada–New Zealand travel study exchange was designed to foster participant understandings of educational issues that are prevalent in education internationally. Grounded theory data analysis techniques were used in the study. The information contained in the journals, field notes, reflective commentaries, and surveys was sorted and re-sorted into related categories until four broad groups of findings emerged. The categories focused primarily on the effects of the cross-cultural exchange on the graduate students’ learning. The categories were the
emotional experience of learning, the culture of critical enquiry, moving beyond self, and developing agency. The study of the use of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model demonstrated and reinforced several key points. Firstly, in-depth reflection by students on their personal educational contexts is enhanced through examination of other educational contexts, both locally and internationally. Secondly, the breaking of boundaries between theory and practice, between university professors and students, between two nations, and between self and others, can foster the development of critically enquiring leaders. Finally, the article concludes that these leaders are likely to be critically reflective about the quality of education in their schools and to demonstrate the belief that they are able to make a difference to the quality of education offered. The need for cross-cultural leadership development

The nature of school reforms internationally, over the past decade, underscores the need for cross-cultural leadership development initiatives. Educational leaders now must respond proactively to a wide range of pressures. For example,

governments in the Western world are looking increasingly to schools to promote the economic competitiveness of their nations. Clear links between levels of education, long-term employment, and income (Statistics Canada 1996) along with a variety of international comparisons of student achievement (Le Metais and Tabberer 1997) have led policy makers to promote educational reforms that include site-based management, increased accountability measures,

charter schools, and school choice. Further, educational reforms have been accompanied in virtually all Western nations by budget cuts and various forms
of privatization as governments strive to reduce their debt load, decrease taxes, promote investment by business, and create an entrepreneur-friendly environ
ment. In fact, the almost ubiquitous move toward budget reductions and some variation of a market model for programme delivery led to the criticism that school reform has been more economic than educative in nature (Aronowitz and Giroux 1993, Barlow and Robertson 1994, Radnor et al. 1998).

Despite criticism, school reforms are perceived as successful in some ways by significant numbers of school community constituents. For example, studies of charter schools in the United States report that, along with good levels of satisfaction among students and parents, charter schools have forced greater accountability upon other public schools (Horn and Miron 1999). Also, higher levels of parent involvement in school decision making are apparent in Western Australia following government policies requiring schools to involve parents substantively in school matters (O’Donoghue and Dimmock 1998). As well, decentralization policies in New Zealand, in conjunction with a relevant programme of partnering of principals, have encouraged some principals to develop an increased sense of agency, or ability to change their practices (Robertson 1998). Clearly, there is a
need to enhance the ability of principals in Western nations generally to change
their professional practices constructively.

School reforms internationally have been accompanied by significant prob
lems with which school leaders must be familiar. For instance, Cobb and Glass
(1999) cautioned that charter schools in Arizona may be promoting ethnic segre
gation. Timperley and Robinson (1998) and Webber and Townsend (1998) high
lighted the strong tensions that exist between educators’ accountability to public
authorities and professionalism in New Zealand, Canada, and Australia. In addi
tion, Apple (1998) articulated the dangers of schools spending energy on mar
keting rather than on ‘curricular substance’ (p. 25).

Finally, school reforms of the past decade have been primarily a Western
phenomenon (O’Donoghue and Dimmock 1998, Whitty et al. 1998). Reforms in
Western nations are characterized by their almost simultaneous occurrence,
speed of attempted implementation, economic focus, and devolution of authority L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S
to school communities, which collectively led Webber and Robertson (1998) to
call for strong leadership development programmes that include international
perspectives.
This article describes an effort to use a specific leadership development framework, called the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model (Webber and Robertson 1998), as the basis for providing graduate students in two universities in Canada and New Zealand, with learning opportunities through which to better understand school reforms common to their two nations. Framing the study

The study that we had conducted the previous year with our graduate students examined the utility of an electronic mail discussion group called the Change Agency 1, in the context of university leadership courses at the University of Calgary in Canada and the University of Waikato in New Zealand. The electronic mail discussion group consisted of teachers, principals, superintendents, trustees, parents, Department of Education personnel, preservice teachers, graduate students, and professors. We studied the cross-cultural and cross-role dialogue that occurred on the Change Agency in terms of the listservers’ usefulness as a leadership development tool. The results of the exploratory study supported the tentative proposal of a leadership development framework called the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model (Webber and Robertson 1998). We described the model as ‘boundary breaking’ because we believed the
data gathered in our research demonstrated its capacity to move learning beyond

the boundaries normally imposed by cultures, roles, institutions, economics, and

nations. Further, we proposed that the framework moves some way towards

closing the gaps between theories-in-action and espoused theories of the

participants involved.

The study described here examined the applicability of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model to a cross-cultural travel study programme

for Canadian and New Zealand graduate students in educational leadership programmes at two universities in the following year. The cross-cultural exchange

was designed to fit closely with all the attributes of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model, a key component of which is the provision of

international perspectives. Therefore, we designed the Canada–New Zealand travel study exchange to foster participant understandings of educational issues

that are prevalent in education internationally, for example, parent and community involvement, self-managing schools, school choice, charter schools and

accountability and the Boundary-Breaking Model was used as the framework of

our pedagogy. We wanted to research whether this model did provide an effect
ive pedagogical framework to enhance graduate student learning experiences.

In the first part of the study, three New Zealand and sixteen Canadian graduate students plus one researcher from the United Kingdom participated in a series of classes, meetings, seminars, and school visits in Calgary, Alberta. Then, ten CROSSCULTURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT Canadian graduate students went to Hamilton, New Zealand, for a series of parallel activities. The graduate students in the study tour were either teachers or principals, with a depth of teaching experience. Other participants included over one hundred guest participants in public seminars and field trips in Canada and New Zealand; these participants comprised teachers, principals, superintendents, trustees, parents, Department of Education personnel, graduate students, and professors.

Study data were gathered from a variety of sources.

- Reflective journals kept by graduate students throughout the Canadian and New Zealand events.
- Field notes compiled by the two researchers, who also designed and facilitated the cross-cultural exchange.
- Evaluative and reflective notes written by the graduate students during their daily coursework.
- Survey instruments, based on field notes and observation data, administered to the Canadian and New Zealand graduate students.
- End-of-course evaluations (administered by an outside
We used grounded theory data analysis techniques (Glaser and Strauss 1967) in this study. The information contained in the journals, field notes, reflective commentaries, and survey data was sorted and re-sorted into related categories until four broad groups of findings emerged. We were conscious of being in the role of researcher and professor and shared this with the students throughout the study. We told them when we were gathering particular information as 'data' and we openly declared our intentions and what we were studying and actively sought this reciprocity. The students carried out an activity for us where they filled in a blank Boundary-Breaking Model Rubric where they reflected on their learning experience in relation to the model and to our perceptions. We shared findings with them as they arose and the students were also given the article on the previous study as part of their coursework. The students knew that they were part of theory building during this study tour. This again was intentional to purposely model ways in which to 'break the boundaries' between theory and practice, and researcher, professor and learner.

The categories which emerged from the analysis focused primarily on the effects of the cross-cultural exchange on the graduate
students’ learning. The categories were: the emotional experience of learning, the culture of critical enquiry, moving beyond self, and developing agency.

Leadership and Head Teachers

The emotional experience of learning

Four major propositions were evident in this category of findings.

• The construction of meaning requires active listening as reflection on own practices, beliefs and values takes place.

• The juxtaposition of self and others highlights and evokes different emotions—jealousy, humility, pride.

• Experience of public self-expression requires risk-taking and self-evaluation. This can be affirming and self-validating as well as disquieting.

• The asynchronous communication through electronic networks can complement face-to-face experiences and vice versa.

The type of experiences the students were involved in during their cross-cultural exchange facilitated the construction of their own learning. They began to realize the importance of listening to others and to understand that learning was not a passive process but one that required their active involvement.

Through the classroom and cultural activities, students realized that there were many different practices, values and beliefs within a class that they first thought was relatively homogeneous. One student described her learning like this: ‘I understand the discomfort I put my students through . . . I have had to learn
too—too listen.’ Another said, ‘I was very aware of how the
participants in my
group were struggling with constructing meaning. I was
reminded of the import
ance of entry points to new learning and about the power of
the group talk to
help with personal construction of meaning.’

Students experienced a depth of emotion that, although
apparent to the
researchers during the travel study experience, was much
more apparent through
an analysis of narrative within the data. As Hargreaves
(1998: 324) stated, ‘Pro
fessional development, where colleagues learn from one
another’s differences,
therefore necessarily involves moments of discomfort and
anxiety, of challenges
to the self.’ Here are examples of how students described
the emotions associ-
ated with their learning: They still amaze me at the things
we still have not discussed . . . I am in awe . . . the
work has been invigorating . . . My mind is muddled with
wonderful levels of learning . . . Today’s class has been,
as usual, mindbending . . . I was mortified to realize . . .
I am humbled by the . . . I have very much appreciated and
enjoyed the . . . the richness and diversity of the course
is amazing (and exhausting) . . . the depth of the dialogue
has left me mentally drained . . . I worry that tomorrow’s
session will be strenuous . . . My concern . . . It’s like
a treasure hunt!

The intensity of ‘total immersion’ into the travel study
learning community was
mentioned by the majority of students. They felt that the
experience provided C R O S S C U L T U R A L L E A D E R
S H I P D E V E L O P M E N T

‘powerful insight’. For one, it seemed quite painful. She
said, ‘You are squeez
ing my brain—it is now tapped out!’ For others, the study tour exchange was too intense and suggestions were given to adapt the assessment requirements for those billeting overseas visitors and providing cultural activities as they felt they could not fully do justice to either. Others felt that the programme was too rushed and that they did not get enough ‘down time’ for reflection. However, students commented that they also had experienced positive feelings of pride, of affirmation and of confidence. Students also felt more comfortable speaking about their values and beliefs. A student said, ‘At the end of the day my mind is muddled with wonderful levels of learning but I often have more questions, wishes and wants than knowledge. However, I do not feel alone.’ Another student said, ‘The activities used in class . . . allowed me to make sense of and affirm my learning of not just this course, but my entire grad experience.’

The Change Agency listserver supported the travel study experience in several ways. It provided the participants with an asynchronous forum for discussion where responses could be made at times that suited the respondent. The Change Agency listserver also helped to network the graduate students before the study tour began. About two months before the exchange
started, one student started an online dialogue about the course topics with most of the New Zealand and Canadian graduate students. She later related how the participation of all exchange graduate students in the Change Agency discussions made her ‘feel connected to a learning group even though the classes had not started.’ Other students agreed that the face-to-face meeting of colleagues had given new meaning to their electronic community. A student said, ‘Having met, it will be easier to be direct and informal over the electronic links,’ and another said, ‘I will rely on this “community” again in future.’ Most students felt that ‘the face-to-face meetings and discussions gave greater depth to our interactions’ but that ‘the Change Agency postings [during the course] created a second forum for discussion with an even wider audience.’ Interestingly, some students preferred the asynchronous nature of the electronic forum: ‘I felt much more inclined to contribute to the Change Agency than to participate in large group discussions. With the Change Agency I had time to formulate my thoughts and do some research in the area.’ Another student reflected, ‘I now have the desire to develop my e-mail skills and to put my school on the web. Before, I got into e-mail because Jan
said to. NOW I am empowered to continue my own personal/professional develop-
ment.'

This empowerment and responsibility for learning was an important part of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model. The next category of findings explores this further. Creating a culture of enquiry: developing a critical perspective

The following four propositions were developed from the data that formed the second category of findings: LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS

- The flexible course structure allowed for active involvement of the students in the directions the course of study took and, therefore, some responsibility for their own learning. This in turn required less intervention from instructors and a trust in the process.

- A generative approach to learning allowed opportunities for shared leadership from within the group. Their leadership extended beyond the Canada–New Zealand experience to include additional professional activities that the students initiated at a later stage.

- Facilitating generative learning increases the depth and scope of a course curriculum, but developing a culture of enquiry and critical perspectives takes place over time.

- The critical analyses created dissonance at the international as well as national level as students actively explored their own practices, values and beliefs.

The flexible course structure, or ‘flexibility with an agenda’ as one student described it, was generally appreciated by the students. The fact that so many noted the flexibility suggested that students did not perceive this to be the usual

style of graduate study. However, some students needed to
work through the

issue of ‘generative learning’. For example, one student
pondered in this way: Not sticking too much to readings,
but OK, because as graduate students we should be able to
make interpretations and connections to literature. But in
two weeks we lose the ‘friendly resource’—at least in
person, so best to maximise that resource now . . .

Another student commented that, ‘the flexibility and the
variety in the sessions

make this a special place to be,’ while another said, ‘I
personally liked the fact

that we were not “tied” to the text.’ Students also
commented on the richness of

this process for them: ‘I would say that this has been one
of the most powerful
courses that I’ve taken so far as collaboration and respect
for others is con
cerned, I have come away with many thoughts and am anxious
to implement
ideas.’ Another said, ‘This class had a life of its own and
it was allowed to live
it.’

Although students perceived the summer institute and the
travel study units

as rich with dialogue and debate, the students also felt
their study was rich in
theory. They felt ‘It has put a “face” to the readings’ and
that ‘It will broaden
our understanding of education in tangible ways due to
contextualizing others’
lived experiences.’ Students were also cognizant that they
were ‘creating theory’
and ‘being researched’. One participant felt that ‘the
opportunity to hear how
policy “plays out” in the practice and lives of school leaders really made all the reading, writing, thinking I've been doing all year come alive, make sense.'

It was only natural that the students reflected on our facilitation roles as we had encouraged them to do so to gain their involvement in theory building in C R O S S C U L T U R A L L E A D E R S H I P D E V E L O P M E N T this study. The most common observation was the ‘trust’ that was apparent: trust in the process, trust in the group, trust in the model. One student said, ‘I have been amazed at how generative this course has been given that it is such a short time line. It shows great trust on the part of the two instructors.’ Another said, ‘This model allows us to “take off” on areas of interest and yet there are gentle reminders and time lines which keep us focused towards a big picture.’

Many of the students referred to our ability to draw the class back on track to attain the course objectives; for example, ‘Many thanks for providing the situation which allowed me to learn. It all looked effortless and laid back—but I realize that the casual look takes a great deal of work.’

The opportunities for shared leadership and informal leadership added to the depth of the learning process. One student said, ‘I found myself learning and questioning more about our educational practices, by having to explain them to
others.' This leadership and ‘explaining to others’ also went beyond the cross cultural experience. For example, one student (a principal) wrote two articles for professional magazines on her experiences, and another student (a teacher) combined with others to give a seminar on international perspectives on policy issues.

Some students worried about their ability to ‘deal’ adequately with all the topics that were raised. For instance, one student worried, ‘New information . . . have I understood correctly? . . . Am I trying to acquire too much data—should I just let some of it go and focus on key stimuli to exploring issues?’ Another said, ‘I know my course requirements will not reflect the true scope and dimension of this learning experience.’ A third student said, ‘At what point do lists of counter arguments make the work just unmanageable? Should I change jobs? My word, doesn’t this add to the burden, to the feeling of inadequacy!’ By day eight she was more accepting: ‘I realize even more what a luxury it is to have two weeks with informed, committed people when each answered question raises half a dozen more for which there is no time to get answers.’

Our style of teaching was generative in that it challenged students to question
and critique within this course. This did not always sit comfortably with the students. One student explained this discomfort: 'As a young person I was taught that “the experts knew” and [learners] only listen and perform. Even today I find it hard to look at articles and question . . . but I did see in chapter 10 . . . aren't the “big issues” the students really or am I just too bottom line to see through the fog?’ However, students also understood the importance of questioning. One said, ‘I wonder whether we make basic assumptions so basic that we do not question them. They are almost innate . . . we do take things for granted.’

Another said, 'Thank you to you both for helping me to open doors to questioning.' As course professors, we often also experienced discomfort as the students struggled with their construction and generation of new knowledge.

Another comment was: I was surprised that, considering how similar many of the reforms of L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S Alberta, NZ, and England are, there were significant differences in interpretations of policy, attitudes towards and practices (that is, the way we see the implications of accountability in different areas, such as curriculum).

The graduate students from both New Zealand and Canada began to examine more carefully their local contexts and the differences and similarities apparent within the same policy guidelines. One student said: 'There were countless times
throughout the discussions and readings where a process of reconfirming occurred

in regards to the earth beneath my feet. It was reconfirmed that my beliefs and

values are rooted deeply in the soils of learning.’ Another said, ‘Clearly bottom-up
discovery maximizing contextual participation. Very much the entire experience

challenged me to question my beliefs.’ As well, the variety of perspectives in the

class was noted. One student on day two said ‘Today’s class was a wonderful

opportunity to talk, learn, explore and listen to new perspectives and ideas.’

Another on day eight said, ‘So many different directions in people’s reading and

areas of interest. I feel very privileged to be part of such a “culture of inquiry”.’

However, the exploration of personal and professional values and beliefs

through the many forums for discussion, also created a level of dissonance

within the group, particularly at the national context level where there had been

the assumption of being more homogeneous than at the international level. A

student described this process in this way: ‘I would agree heartily with today’s

comment that we see our own system in a new light when in the company of

others.’ Another said, ‘It has also been interesting to watch the local tensions

play out in the group, e.g. Catholic/public in Alberta.’
Another reflection from a student who had been 'on the other side' of the debate about Catholic/public school systems said, ‘I was mortified to realize my strong negative feelings about the separate board versus public board . . . I had better get over this.’

Another ‘local’ student also was challenged to examine values and beliefs and said, ‘the visit [to a Canadian private school] forced me to face some preconceived ideas I have about private schools.’ Yet another stressed the ‘need to continue to explore my own prejudices and biases and how I have come to hold them . . . If my perspectives become the truth, then I cannot develop—I simply stagnate.’

A reflection in one researcher’s field diary captured growing explorations of ‘power’ and leads us into the next category of findings: There is an amazing use of ‘we’ and ‘they’ that needs exploring further. When as educational leaders/citizens are we ‘we’ and when are we ‘they’? CROSS CULTURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT Moving beyond self

The following italicized statements captured the propositions that developed from the data in the third category.

- Through a culture of enquiry, with multiple perspectives, the graduate students began to see the bigger picture of education. This required new learning for many who also felt that this was only a beginning of their journey of learning.

- The graduate students began to reconsider the politics of
accountability within their local contexts which led to an analysis of power and the use of ‘we’ and ‘they’.

• The graduate students began to challenge ‘whose’ voice was being heard in education and asserted their right as leaders able to make a difference and be heard.

• The graduate students felt less opposed to change.

The multiple perspectives offered in the Canada–New Zealand exchange led students to see the bigger picture in education, something that they commented had not always been apparent to them. One students said, ‘Last night I went over the presentation material with my wife. Our discussion focused on the “big picture”—this view often eludes us as educators and citizens.’ Often this ‘big picture’ focus left students feeling somewhat overwhelmed. For example, one student reflected on day two: Perhaps my biggest challenge is that I have been focused for so much of my teaching career on my own ‘school context’ that I feel somewhat ‘BEHIND’ or ‘IGNORANT’ on issues that are discussed from a broader perspective. The international perspectives, discussions, presence of international educators, reading, etc. is helping me to learn a lot in a very short period.

A few days later the same student said, ‘Again today I feel as though I acquired a couple more pieces of the puzzle in my understanding of the BIGGER PICTURE.’ Another said, ‘I find the complexity of the topic of accountability somewhat overwhelming! It is excellent for me to gain awareness of the broad issues on accountability.’ Many other students realized that they were only just
beginning their learning on an international level: I believe that this course is only the beginning to provide opportunities to create an international bridge/link. When will there be another course that can link Britain, the United States and others?

Power and who holds it was an interesting issue for debate when the graduate students explored the politics of accountability. One student said, ‘Through my listening I found myself thinking about “power” . . . and the exasperating need for it in certain political levels all around the world . . . I have always felt that those truly with the most “power” are the ones who do not even know they have it.’ The graduate students argued about the ‘ownership’ for the reforms and made comments such as, ‘When are we “we” and when are we “they”?’ Another said ‘We (oops, pronoun) meaning “all those involved in education” have to share the most common purpose—“the students”—what is going to be best for the children.’ Another explored why we categorize people into ‘we and they’ and how it won’t get us anywhere. She said: We can’t be afraid of stakeholders. We can talk among ourselves forever, and put every other stakeholder on the ‘other’ side but we will never grow and develop. We can’t stay with our own truths—we have to listen to everyone. Still, with perspectives from the international visitors, it makes me truly value what I have and what I have to fight for.

Further, students began to see that perhaps change was inevitable: ‘The inter national perspective had led me to be less oppositional towards change. Change
and reform are happening—so if I don’t want to be left behind I may as well embrace it.’

The graduate students began to challenge whose voice was being heard in educational reform, and to experience a ‘lack of their teacher-voice’ nationally and internationally. They also recognized the dissent at the local level amongst different stakeholders: There is so much division amongst teachers and administrators, schools and business, government and educators, public and Catholic teachers that is based on misinformation, innuendo, rumour, hearsay— that it becomes apparent why we as educators become depprofessionalised. We don’t (or maybe I don’t) understand and know or internalize the facts.

Another student mentioned the division between teachers’ views even within schools. She asked, Why are people distrustful of the teaching profession ... But this distrust seems to be there and in fact grows within individual schools: Staff worry that one class would outdo another/schools [would] outdo each other. Where does our collaboration fit in? How can we ‘just get at’ the work we have to do?

Finally, a willingness to act as educational advocates, even activists, was apparent by the end of the course: CROSSCULTURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT We need to look at articulating what is important in our schools in ways that our communities really understood and can buy into ... A positive outcome of reform is that we are much more willing to share exactly what we are doing in our school ... We need to have a serious look at what we value as a society of Albertans and Canadians, global persons, because we have come through an I/me situation to a community situation—and who decides on the agenda and values?

This developing sense of agency, or the belief that one can make a difference
(Robertson 1998), is explored further in the next section.

Developing agency

The following six propositions summarize the general content of the fourth data category.

• Scrutiny of students’ prior assumptions led them to realize that differences are possible and that they had the ability to make a difference—they shared increased feelings of efficacy and confidence.

• A study of ‘counter culture’ was important to the development of possibilizing and recognition that things could be different.

• The graduate study helped these graduate students to lift their heads from their classrooms and schools to global political issues and back again to the purpose of education.

• The students always contextualized their learning with reflection and anecdotal examples.

• A critical examination of values and beliefs led to some affirmation of their beliefs as well as an alleviation of concerns they held. Hence some students experienced greater confidence.

• There was also much evidence of changes in and challenges to values and beliefs over the period of the travel study exchange.

Scrutiny of the graduate students’ prior assumptions within this international framework led the students to examine what was meant by ‘counter culture’.

They came to the conclusion that perhaps what was counter, or thought to be counter, was not, and what was homogeneous, was not. A student said, ‘Does our same skin colour and language mean we initially judge ourselves to be homogeneous?’ Another student pondered this and wrote: What
is ‘counter culture’? As soon as you think you are a part of one, aren’t you part of a culture? Perhaps the only true counter culture is what we rest with each day inside our own minds, which is truly unique, individual and maybe ‘counter’. LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

Students found it interesting that ‘we are all following along the same path of accountability’ and felt perhaps that ‘the politicians are all reading from similar sources. Is it a package?!’ They found the similarities between countries frightening. For example, they stated, ‘We are going down your road and it’s scary’.

They questioned each other: ‘I’m interested in the assumption that change in NZ has had very little effect on teaching and learning. What does this really mean?’

‘There is no question that authentic assessment pushes teachers into more creative teaching, greater use of materials, experiments . . . [but] accountable to whom and for what purpose?’

A study of differences in international trends took the students to the bigger questions such as: What are the purposes of schooling? Who decides? What should accountability be? This led them to perhaps the most important questions, to asking, ‘What should the purposes of schooling be? What could the purposes be?’ As one student said, ‘Our educational tinkering is not enough.

Somehow we have got to be prepared to shed what is no longer working.’
This imaging of alternatives or ‘possibilizing’ became an important part of the learning process, for example ‘So then what could it, should it be like?’ A student reflected, Why do we need ‘either this or that’ conversations in education. There may not be a need to approach educational problems as if there is always a paradox present. There are two agendas operating—a pedagogical agenda and a political agenda that are not always the same. Important to have discussions from both pedagogical and political agendas.

As the graduate students discussed professionalism in their respective countries, one student said, We need to reflect on the percentage of teachers who leave early in their careers. Why aren’t we critiquing that problem? Perhaps we need to make teaching a profession. It’s lost a lot of its professionalism. Society’s perception of educators must take some of the blame.

While students examined the larger picture for education, they found that their thoughts always brought them back to the school or classroom level, or, as one student described it, to their ‘heartwork’. A student said, ‘I constantly want to put what I am learning back into my own context . . . by asking . . . What does that mean to me as a teacher in a high school with 80 students per day?’ Another said, ‘Is it time for teachers to stop resisting assessment and get on the boat and influence that assessment so that it is fair to everyone?’

One student described their abilities to refocus on students’ learning: I am finding it interesting how often emergent patterns continue to spiral out of our informative discussions . . . almost as if the branches of
these patterns are ‘rooted’ in the soils of our common foundation . . . yet we travelled a full circle back to our main purpose as educators . . . that being, the meaningful and purposeful learning opportunities we create with students.

Students were challenged on a number of leadership issues throughout the exchange. Some of the issues were appraisal, accountability, self-managing and charter schools, public and private education, and the purpose of education. One student demonstrated how the multiple perspectives and experiences had changed her thinking when she said in the second week: Today I am thinking about how much my thinking has evolved since the beginning of this experience. I began by considering the idea of competing forces, or dilemmas or paradoxical situations . . . I think that my idea of democratic accountability and professional accountability has moved from an ‘or’ to an ‘and’. I am feeling more comfortable with the idea of democratic accountability now, as we have had time to talk about our varied experiences.

The graduate students found that the experiences during the course with other educational stakeholders gave them ideas that alleviated some of their concerns and dissonance. One said, ‘My cognitive dissonance was as follows . . . I was impressed by some of the strategies used by administrators in our group.’ Another said, ‘Administrators are “stuck” with policies they often must do their best to “deal” with. It is these administrators who effective “deal” with these reforms maintaining “healthy positive” school communities who have lessons we can learn from.’ They also worried that they, as
teachers, did not always understand the bigger picture: ‘Someone needs to reframe the issue so that teachers understand that their knowledge of assessment has a direct impact on their professional autonomy and interactions with students.’ Discussion

On one level, the study data provided valuable guidance for the management of future cross-cultural exchanges. For example, we learned to keep in the mind the intensity of the experience for both graduate students and professors. That is, expectations for student assignments should be realistic within the time available to students in the exchange, particularly in the light of the high value the graduate students placed on the informal aspects of the experience. As well, students need to be allowed some flexibility in terms of when they are able to do the reading and written assignments associated with the exchange. For instance, it is important to allow students to do presession independent study for partial course credit and to extend deadlines for final assignments. As planners of such experiences, we also need to allow exchange participants sufficient time to debrief their experiences. Also, reciprocal billeting arrangements need to be flexible enough to allow some students to make their own arrangements for local accom
modation and transportation. It needs to be safe for students to decline the opportunity to host visiting colleagues because of family, work, or personal needs. It is important to structure extended travel time between sessions in each country to allow the graduate students to recover from the intensity of the work and to adjust to local time zones. Equally important is the need for visiting students and professors to have opportunities to participate in social and sightseeing events that provide valuable opportunities for collegial dialogue and participant bonding. Finally, as the professors who were delivering the travel study units, we had to grapple with university semesters in opposite hemispheres that overlapped only slightly. Thus, university registrars and office staff had to allow the two professors wide latitude in terms of when marks were submitted, while one of the professors had to arrange for colleagues to cover her teaching assignment during the out-of-country component of the exchange.

On a second level, the data that were collected reinforced the validity of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model as a pedagogical frame work for the provision of graduate learning. According to the graduate students from both countries, the cross-cultural exchange was a
pivotal experience in
their graduate programmes in educational leadership. Certainly, various com-
ponents of the model played a larger role in the Canada–New Zealand exchange
than they did in the earlier study that suggested the leadership development
model. For example, the international nature of the model was much more
powerful in the present study than in the earlier online study. As well, it could
be argued that the model could be collapsed from eight components to six. That
is, others may find the model less cumbersome if two of the components—con-
struction of meaning and generative approach to learning—were collapsed into
one category. Further, the model might be as useful if two other categories were
integrated—provision of a forum for discussion and sense of community.

However, the overall differences among the model components, although at
times relatively subtle, certainly merit consideration by those responsible for
leadership development programmes. For this reason, the results of this study do
not argue convincingly for substantive changes to the descriptions of the attrib-
utes of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model.

What the data do suggest, which was perhaps at best implicit in the previous
study, is that the leadership development model has an
additional dimension.

Certainly the model should include its eight attributes and descriptors for learner and facilitator practices. However, the present study also highlights the fact that Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development seems to have a clear set of desired outcomes:

• emotional engagement with learning,

• development of a critical perspective, C R O S S C U L T U R A L L E A D E R S H I P D E V E L O P M E N T

• movement beyond self, and

• development of agency.

The eight model attributes and the degree to which they are implemented appear to have a direct influence on the learning outcomes. These four outcomes and their relationship to the original Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model are portrayed in Figure 1. Increasingly, it is these very outcomes of our pedagogy and work with students which are the focus for ongoing critique and discussion. Conclusion

There has been much debate about the types of leaders needed in tomorrow’s schools and about the optimal forms of leadership preparation. Although this study does not purport to settle the debate, it does go some way toward challeng
gogy, why they teach the way they do, and what the impact of their teaching is on learners.

In addition, this study of the use of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model of teaching in a cross-cultural exchange demonstrated and reinforced several key points. First, in-depth reflection by students on their personal educational contexts is enhanced through examination of other educational contexts, both locally and internationally. Second, the breaking of boundaries between theory and practice, between university professors and students, between two nations, and between self and others, can foster the development of critically inquiring leaders who may not only have more questions than answers, but, more importantly, know that there are still more questions to ask.

LEADERSHIP AND HEAD TEACHERS

Figure 1 Dimensions of Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development. Attributes: Construction of meaning, Formal & informal leadership, Sense of community, Growth of a counter culture. Practices: Co-learning, Public learning and teaching, Flexible timing, Integration of technology, Confluence of theory and Reduced control, Pastoral, Shared modeled leadership, Possibilities. Outcomes: Emotional engagement with learning, Development of a critical perspective, Movement beyond self, Development of agency, Validation of personal knowledge, Provision of a formal approach. Big inflations inflations inflations inflations inflations inflations inflations inflations.

Finally, perhaps these leaders are likely to be critically reflective about the
quality of education in their schools and to demonstrate the belief that they are able to make a difference to the quality of education offered in their settings.

Certainly, the wide scope of school reforms in Western nations requires leaders who can respond proactively and effectively to change. The Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model could be a powerful leadership development tool that contributes to clear and desirable learning outcomes. Note


At a key point in Educational Leadership: The Moral Art, Hodgkinson ‘having considered at length the general theory of value’ and the relationship of theory
to practice concludes ‘we can proceed to examine their workings in the practice,

or, more correctly, praxis of educational administration and leadership’ (1991, p. 110). His analysis of ‘value praxis’ and account of ‘prescriptions and practicalities’, offers much leaders will find thought provoking. However, as he is the first to acknowledge, his approach is essentially abstract. I am aware that there is nothing so practical as a good theory, but my interests have been rather more concrete. As such, my research over the last 25 years has focused mainly on trying to understand how a number of educational leaders at a variety of levels within the educational systems of the United Kingdom and elsewhere describe, justify and enact their leadership. Much of this has been, and continues to be, ethnographic in character, but I have come to supplement this with life and career history based approaches. In doing so with Ron Best, Peter Gronn, Chris tine Pascal, Steve Rayner and Brian Sherratt, I have tried to work out the theoretical implications of doing so. In what follows I will say something about this approach and its implications for context and value in the study of administrative praxis. I will seek to illustrate the possibilities of the approach drawing on a case study of three successive regimes of headship enacted
at a comprehensive
school in England. Appreciating context

I believe that studies of leaders, leading and leadership need to be contextual

ized. What does this mean? I begin from the idea that the world of the institution

is a complex one in which, in an important sense, there are as many 'realities' as

individuals. To accept this is to be committed to an approach which makes the

study of the person and his or her subjective interpretation of reality a 'founda

tions block' of any satisfactory account of social life (Ribbins, 1986). In taking

this view, I have been influenced by Greenfield’s subjectivist critique of educa

tional administration (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993). Greenfield acknowledges

the influence of Weber on his thinking but, unlike his mentor, concentrates on

human agency to the virtual neglect of social structure. I take Weber’s view

(Best, Ribbins, Jarvis and Oddy, 1983). Accordingly, Gronn and I, following

Seddon (1994) and others, propose a ‘contextualized perspective’ for the study

of leaders (Gronn and Ribbins, 1996). In doing so, we advocate the need for

approaches which have a concern for both agency and structure viewed within a

context seen to be shaped by the interaction of one or more of macro (the soci

etal), meso (the institutional) and micro (the individual)
levels of relationship.

Reconceptualized as the sum of the situational, cultural and historical circum
stances that constrain leadership and give it meaning, context can be regarded as
a vehicle through which the agency of particular leaders in specific situations
may be empirically understood. Amongst other things, this would have the
advantage of refocusing attention away from an overconcentration on
leadership, characteristic of traditional approaches, and towards leaders and
leading. Applied to education what might such an approach look like? Regarding context: a three-level approach
I have developed a framework with five propositions which taken together com
prise a prolegomenon (a preliminary and tentative sketch for a yet to be pro
duced fully worked out theory) for the study of leadership during periods of
radical reform (relevant to steady-state conditions) which has yet to be pro
duced. Applied to the case of the headteacher, such an approach would need
data on:

1 the reforms in their specific historical, social, economic, cultural and values framework;

2 the contemporary scope, dimensions and character of the reforms;

3 the interpretations of, and responses to, the reforms of key national/local stakeholders;

4 the interpretations of, and responses to, the reforms by
key institutional stakeholders as seen from the perspective of particular schools;

5 the interpretations of, and responses to, the reforms by individual headteachers within the schools identified in 4 above.

Propositions 1 and 2 constitute macro-level, longitudinal and comparative elements of the relational context; 3, 4 and 5 cover actors operating in a variety of interpretive contexts and at a variety of levels. In what follows, I focus on LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS propositions 4 and 5 and will argue for meso- and micro-level ethnographies of educational leaders. Three main elements of interpretive contexts are implicit: I have termed these situated, individual portrayals; multi-actor perspectives; and multi-actor perspectives in action. A situated portrayal such an approach would present the reader with sets of portraits of individual heads, and of their views across a representative range of issues, each reported in some depth (Mortimer and Mortimer, 1991a, 1991b; Ribbins and Marland, 1994). It can take various forms. I know of no study which replicates for head teachers the kind of approach Gardner (1995) has used. His portraits of leaders are his, and presented in his words, rather than theirs and in their words. In contrast, the studies listed above are largely in the words of the heads involved.

Even so, they differ in important ways.
The Mortimers, for example, invited seven primary and eight secondary heads, to respond in writing to issues specified by the researchers. My work on headship has emphasized the need for greater spontaneity and a more open process of agenda negotiation. As such I have derived my various accounts from face-to-face interviews and have used the same broad format. A group of heads/other educational leaders are invited to take part. Those who agree are sent a list of topics and asked to indicate any they would not wish to discuss and/or to add any they felt might be helpful. In an interview it is usually possible to renegotiate the agenda as the conversation progresses. Interview schedules have varied between projects in terms of agenda and the level of detail set out for individual themes. All were interviewed once, some twice, for about two hours. They knew the discussion was ‘on the record’. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and edited. The editing sought to create a text which was authentic and readable. Censorship was restricted to the deletion of likely libels. Each respondent was sent a full transcript of the edited interview and invited to propose such additions and amendments as he or she wished to see included.

The original letter of contact usually made clear they
could pull out at any time

and that should their interview be published there would be regard to their

wishes for revision. Some have made considerable use of the right to propose

revisions, others very little. It is possible that the advantage of allowing respon
dents to have sight of the interview schedule and enabling them to propose revi

sions to the draft text might entail some loss of spontaneity or authenticity. This

was a risk worth taking and in any case was the price of an on-the-record inter

view. I do not believe the published texts lack colour or authenticity. Multi-perspective

Traditional reports of headship decontextualize in the way described above but

also insofar as they do not attempt to locate what headteachers say within a CONTEXT AND PRAXIS IN THE STUDY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

context of the views of significant others (staff, pupils, parents, governors) in the

community of the school. A multi-perspective gives the reader some access to

such information. Multi-perspective in action

Relatively few studies explore what heads say in the context of what they do. To

achieve this the researcher must do five things: collect relevant documentary

evidence which touches upon the role of a specific headteacher in a particular

school; observe such a head as he or she enacts his or her role in practice in rele
vant situations; discuss with the head what he or she is trying to do and why; set this account against the views of significant others; and, compare and contrast the available evidence. Ethnographic research of this kind can offer an enhanced understanding of the headteacher and headship in a variety of settings. The following examples are classified into three categories according to the extent to which the headteacher is the principal focus and his or her status in undertaking the research.

Category 1 research treats the head as one among a number of actors at the school to be studied. Since the case study reported in the latter part of this paper is just such a case in point, I will not discuss the issues which this category raises until then.

Category 2 studies are characterized by their concentration on the perceptions and actions of particular headteachers. Insofar as Elizabeth Richardson’s on-the-record study of Nailsea Secondary School focuses on the views and actions of Denys John, its headteacher, it is an exemplary case (Richardson, 1973).

Southworth has recently published an interesting ethnography of a primary school. In it he studies ‘a headteacher by observing him at work inside the school... I investigated the idea of producing a
portrait of the subject and saw parallels with biography’ (1995, p. 1). The book is a ‘case study of Ron Lacey, head of Orchard Community Junior School’ (p. 2). He is described as ‘the informant’ and Southworth emphasizes that ‘Ron was the native I was studying and the research was aimed to elicit his vision of his world’ (p. 38). Lacey is the subject of the research, not a partner in it. As such it is a Category 2 study of headship, albeit a full and interesting one.

Category 3 studies identify the headteacher as co-researcher. Since 1989 I have been involved in third level research at Great Barr GM School in Birmingham. At first, this study was informed by ideas developed at Rivendell and refined elsewhere. It was planned to investigate how a large urban comprehensive school was responding to the reform agenda initiated by the 1988 Education Act and, in this form, was Category 1 research. As the work progressed I became increasingly interested in the role of the head as an interpreter and enactor of change. As a portrait of Brian Sherratt at Great Barr, during this phase, it had much in common with Southworth’s study of Ron Lacey at Orchard and could be classified as Category 2 research.

Since 1992, however, with Sherratt’s active involvement, I
have been trying
to develop a novel third level approach to the study of headship. In this version
the head is both the principal subject of the research and a full partner within it.
As such the research in which we are jointly engaged is autobiographical,
insofar as it enables the head, as internal researcher, to reflect systematically and
critically on his praxis during a period of intense reform. The study is also biographical insofar as I, as external researcher, have talked to him and many others at Great Barr and have observed a wide variety of events related to the exercise of his leadership in practice. We have recently called a halt to the field research and have begun to think about writing it up. This is not proving straightforward;
we know of no close precedents upon which to draw in resolving some of the difficult theoretical and methodological problems entailed.
What has been fully written up is the kind of Level 3, Category 1 research which has been discussed above. To an example of this, I will now turn. In doing so, I will focus in particular upon the issue of leadership praxis in action. A case of Level 3, Category 1 research: three heads for Rivendell Values, power and the administrator
In a conversation I once had with Thomas Greenfield, he talked movingly about Boethius: a Christian who stood at the hinge between the Roman World and the Middle Ages. He is an administrator,
one caught between the Emperor and the Pope, or as it turned out, the wrong Pope. He is condemned, and as he awaits his death he thinks back on his career and writes, thus bringing us new insights into the administrative task. Few of us will face the horror that Boethius did, but I am convinced that potentially there is that same dimension in all administrative rule, a kind of horror. The wielding of power is terrible, and the more power, the more terrible it becomes. If there is to be a kind of humanizing of that power a contemplative, philosophical dimension must and should be brought to it. (Greenfield and Ribbins, 1993, p. 262)

Acton has said ‘all power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely’. Less famously, and in less politically correct times, he went on to claim that ‘almost all great men are bad men’. I have met many fine educational leaders who I could not describe as bad. Even so, I have long been interested in the potential which leadership can have for corrupting those who seek to exercise it and of the ways in which its horrors can be humanized.

Applied to the study of leaders, leading and leadership in education this can entail many different things. In this chapter, I will restrict myself, among other things, to a comparative examination of the more or less coherent and consistent framework of educational and managerial values of each of three successive headteachers at one school, ‘Rivendell’, and of the ways in which this shaped their actions in terms of the strategies and tactics of management they sought to apply. Contextualizing the case
Rivendell, at the time of our research, was a fairly large, coeducational, comprehensive located within the south-east of England. Our intention had been to engage in an ethnographic study of pastoral care at the school (reported fully in Education and Care – see Best et al., (1983). We soon found it was necessary to engage in a wide ranging examination of education, order and welfare at the school if we were to hope to understand pastoral care in context. Thus our 'three year study' took almost six years from start to finish, but that is another story.

However, we were fortunate enough to encounter three headteachers at Rivendell and this encouraged us to attempt an account of the characteristics of three successive regimes of headship over a 25-year period at the school. In undertaking our research we drew upon a model which postulated that individuals within social settings of all kinds can be located along a continua of power and authority and in terms of their policies by the degree of their attachment to, or rejection of, the status quo. This means that the extent to which headteachers can manage either continuity or change along lines which they prefer, is to an important extent dependent upon the accuracy of their appreciation of these configurations and on their ability to mobilize support and minimize
opposition. In analyzing
these three regimes of headteacher we wished to explore the educational and
managerial values espoused by 'Mr Barber', 'Mrs Sewell' and '
Mr Lucas': the
extent to which and how they sought to enact these in practice and with what
outcome; and, the responses which this engendered in other members of the
school community. Mr Barber
At the time of Barber’s appointment, Rivendell did not exist. What was to
become its site was occupied by two schools, one for boys and the other for
girls. His first task was to put them together into a secondary modern. Ten years
later he presided over its comprehensivization. At the time of his retirement, ten
years later still, Barber’s period of tenure tended to be described by himself and
staff as characterized by its commitment to egalitarian, democratic and curricu
lum-centred reform. In fact these policies were associated with his second, and
not his first, decade in office. Shortly after comprehensivization, Barber’s philo
sophy of education underwent a major transformation. Why this happened need
not trouble us here, but a consequence was that under his driving influence LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS
Rivendell came to have a coherent policy which underlay a set of largely consis
tent policies on key features of its provision.

Teachers’ accounts demonstrated the depth and breadth of this philosophy and of its effective implementation in practice. As a deputy head put it, ‘It is unusual to find a school with a cohesive philosophy across the whole spectrum of its work. Barber’s philosophy underlay everything that went on in the school.

The philosophy went back to the 60s and the provision of a well-rounded person.’ The policies which flowed from his conversion represented a radical reform agenda which was generally believed by staff and others to have fundamentally altered the whole ethos and practice of the school. At the time, other schools were also attempting to introduce similar reforms. Usually with much less success. Why was Barber successful?

There were several factors which worked in his favour. First, since his policies were broadly in tune with the drift of educational thinking towards more informal-progressive, open, egalitarian and child-centred methods, some staff would have been receptive. Second, his initial attempts to achieve change coincided with comprehensive reorganization and the increase in resources which this made available to the school. This made staffing and resourcing his innovations practicable. Third, the very fact that in his early
years he had been seen as
an effective and successful conservative helped when he
wanted to implement
change. Fourth, some teachers who did not favour aspects of
his reform agenda
nevertheless felt, as they told us, it would have been
unprofessional to have
opposed him. Even so not all staff, initially at least,
were willing accomplices.

What strategies did he use to secure at least their
acquiescence? Some he seems
to have won over by securing their commitment to his
educational values. How
he did this was not always clear, but several commented on
his ability to articu
late and justify his policies in terms of a coherent and
watertight philosophy.

Attempts to better him in debate rarely succeeded. He came
to be seen by staff
as far-sighted, even visionary. Many attested to the power
of his argument. By
good and determined argument and appeals to certain
normative values, Barber,
it seems, re-educated his staff to see their work in a new
light and in doing so to
accept the policies entailed in such a redefinition. By
fostering the same kind of
enthusiasm he felt himself, he gradually gained the support
of more and more
staff. For some this ‘was very exciting. It was just like
being back at college.

The atmosphere was one of continual debate and discussion’.
For others, ‘You
could almost describe some (teachers) as brainwashed.’

This last comment hints that there was a darker side to Barber’s strategies of reform and to his values as a manager. There is evidence that there was some more-or-less blatant coercion of staff who did not easily accept his policies.

According to one ‘If you did not toe the line, Barber would come round and thump the table and boot you in the pants’, although another suggested ‘he tended to ask opponents to go elsewhere’.

Conversely, he was good at assembling allies through appointment. He was also skilful in giving potential allies a stake in the innovations as they contextual and praxis in the study of school leadership progressed and in doing so promoting them to positions of greater authority within the school. How he did this can be seen from the way in which he implemented mixed ability and integrated humanities throughout the school. A member of the humanities team described it as follows: Barber set up the system year by year. He, the deputy and head of humanities began with the first year, when they had worked through the year left ‘Jane Rayner’ in charge and moved to the second year. When they had devised the 2nd year work and worked through that they left ‘Roslyn Parker’ in charge and moved on to the 3rd year . . .

By such a process converts were systematically and gradually located in key positions.

This seems to have been a feature of his approach generally to the system.
of meetings and teams he established to make key decisions within the school.

Here he used powerful allies to instigate and defend the changes dictated by his broad philosophy, and through his personal membership of almost all these groups, he was able to monitor progress and if necessary to veto proposals which ran counter to his policies and values. Many staff considered the deliberations of these groups and committees to have been systematically rigged. It would have been possible to offer numerous examples of this view but I must be content with two or three: In Barber’s day he had a ‘Cabinet’ meeting . . . of between 15 and 20 people . . . It did not work formally through agendas, resolutions and minutes, rather through the discussion of issues brought to it, an informal agenda under the control of the head and deputy. The School Council met monthly, chaired by the head . . . it was meant as a vehicle for children to influence democratically the working of the school, but he was an authoritarian not a democrat so it didn’t work in practice. There was a lot of verbiage from him which meant that he restricted the questions . . . Barber was good at manipulating people to get them to do what he wanted.

Not surprisingly, Barber was widely described as a ‘totalitarian’, an ‘autocrat’ and a ‘ruthless manipulator’. Yet, overwhelmingly, staff also spoke highly, if grudgingly, of his qualities. They commented on his ‘visionary powers’, his impressive ability to articulate and defend his values and philosophy, and his powers of leadership. Even those who did not prosper under his regime acknow
ledged his immense ability to work and his dedication and involvement in the work of the school. As one put it ‘he was always around the school, he attended LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS pretty well every team meeting and there were a lot of team meetings’. Barber was seen as devoting his working hours to the real work of the school, only beginning his administration after school and always working late. We met no teacher who believed that he or she or any other member of staff worked as hard as Barber. Moreover, several acknowledged that ‘With Barber, if you agreed with his philosophy, or at least attempted to apply it, he would back you to the end.’ Finally, as time went on, the visible success of his policies in the public arena, expressed in growing numbers of visitors to the school and increasing and often flattering media attention, made it more and more difficult to stand against him. However, all good things come to an end and after 20 years in office Barber finally, and reluctantly, reached an age when he was required to retire. Mrs Sewell By the time of his retirement in the late 1970s, the circumstances of the school had changed substantially. Public expressions of a conservative backlash on many of the developments he had fostered such as mixed-ability teaching, ‘soft option’ integrated studies course, liberal exam methods
were becoming more frequent and trenchant. In addition, there were those within the school for whom discretion had been the better part of valour during the Barber years, who began to express disenchantment with aspects of the existing regime. The new head therefore took up her appointment in a situation which had a strong and established pattern of policy and practice, but which was also moving out of a period potentially ripe for change. As it turned out, her values, policies and strategies differed in a number of important ways from her illustrious predecessor.

We, and many staff, found it difficult to decide if her overall policy either in general or in terms of Rivendell was conservative or radical. Sewell seemed to approve of the overall philosophy of education which Barber had tried to implement, and she seemed to have wanted to conserve much of the best of his era.

Yet she also seemed to believe that some structural change was necessary to make their implementation more effective. One thing was clear. She recognized the potential difficulties of succession. As she put it: I knew it was going to be a hard act to follow . . . the very fact that he had made such an outstanding and such a morale-boosting success of the school’s recognition to comprehensive education by his avowed policy - which I thought was absolutely the right one of not imitating the grammar school but of becoming a different kind of school - this seemed to be absolutely the right thing to have done.
However, on specific issues, notably attempting to raise the profile of science
and technology and diminishing the overwhelmingly privileged position of the
humanities, she clearly wished to encourage some change. In attempting these
and other innovations she seems to have tried to employ a strategy of CONTEXT AND PRAXIS IN THE STUDY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
assembling allies in a way substantially similar to that used with such success by
her predecessor. As she told us, ‘It was very much with the sort of object I had
in mind that one of the deputy head appointments was made.’ Again, she used a
similar approach in appointing staff to new positions in the revised pastoral
structure of the school. For whatever reason, these strategies were not effective
in strengthening her position within the school. Those she chose as allies and
sought to promote by no means always reciprocated. This was recognized by a
senior member of staff who quickly became an important opponent. As he put it,
‘It is worth remembering that some staff gained from her coming. Some of them
reneged on her afterwards. They had no right to do so.’
This is an interesting comment in various ways, not least because it demon
strates that this member of staff recognized the ‘rules of the game’ of these
appointments and promotions for what they were: a strategy for gaining loyalty.
and support. If this is what they were, too many were unsuccessful. This was notably the case with the appointment of two relatively young teachers to deputy headships within the school. Both found the struggle to make their own position within the school too demanding to have much time for lending support to the person who had appointed them. In addition, some members of the old guard felt they had been passed over for unacceptable reasons for inexperienced people which the new head had known and brought in from outside the school.

However, as she recognized, some, at least, of the resistance which she encountered owed something to rather less rational reasons: ‘I think there was bound to be . . . an element of suspicion and a little bit of antagonism in that a relatively inexperienced teacher was appointed to what was obviously a very coveted headship . . .’ How, then, did she try to exercise this coveted headship?

Reflecting in retrospect, she described her values and management style in the following terms: I tended to be a consultative head . . . and probably in the upshot found that there were certain decisions which everybody expected a head to take and that if you spend too much time consulting about them you just end up offending everybody . . . If you didn’t make the consensus of opinion type decisions . . .

Certainly, she fostered discussion on a number of highly contentious issues and
established working parties of various aspects of organization and management of

the school. In doing so she sought to involve as many staff as possible on these

groups and committed herself to having their reports being presented to the gover

ors. In the early days of her regime, quite unlike her predecessor, she even tried
to make full staff meetings opportunities for full, free and open discussion. As far
as we could tell from our conversations with her and our observations, her policies
on decision making, the committee structure, and her role as a consultative head
did not seem to have been conceived or employed as a means of manipulation and
control. However that may be, they were not well received.

Leadership and Head Teachers

Within a few months of her appointment, a growing number of staff became
highly critical. Some argued that her management was undirected by any clear
philosophy of her own. As one senior teacher put it to us, ‘She had no real philo

sophy of the comprehensive school and saw her job as dealing with day-to-day

things.’ Others shared this view and concluded that as a result, the school lacked
leadership: ‘the school is falling into the trap of too many people doing what
they want without any real direction . . .’ Yet others criticized her policy and
practice on all aspects of staffing, including establishment, appointment and
promotion, suggesting that decisions were made on inappropriate grounds and this had led to the institutionalization of unhelpful bureaucracies. There were certainly some grounds for the latter claim. During her term of office Rivendell developed a pastoral structure of such impenetrable complexity that it was commonly described by staff as a ‘bureaucratic nightmare’. Finally, there was also much censuring of her alleged failure to support the teachers she had appointed and her use of these appointments as a means of evading her responsibilities. I can only illustrate the vigour with which these and other criticisms were made: She made an absolute mess-up of things. She had a thoroughly bad effect on the school. Despite all you hear about how good she was, she didn’t back her teachers . . . She gave rapid promotion to people she knew outside the school. All this had a very bad effect on the school. Mrs Sewell has introduced a series of faculty, year and house meetings partly in order that she can farm out responsibility to the people involved. If a criticism came she could say, for example, I am sorry, I have to consult my head of faculty, house, etc. She would not let the ‘can’ come back to her.

There was also a good deal of resentment over the distinction which she was purported to make between administrative and other posts, and, especially worrying for those of us who teach the subject, her enthusiasm for the jargon of educational management: Under Barber there was no talk of administration, you did your administration in an odd minute here and there. Barber didn’t start his administration until after 5 o’clock. During the day he was always around the school. So when ‘Madam’ came, she was talking ‘a language that nobody understood’ . . . Of
course, now I have been on courses and heard people talking about ‘top management’ and ‘middle management’ and realize that I have been in a backwater.

A few staff did speak with approval about what she was trying to do and compared her favourably with her predecessor but they were very much in the minority. Most saw her brief term of office as a bad thing for the school. Yet, as CONTEXT AND PRAXIS IN THE STUDY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP I have tried to show, she claimed to have approved of much of her predecessor’s values and philosophy, she sought to conserve the best features of the school as she had found it and, in particular, she encouraged consultation and attempted to replace manipulation and coercion with more open and democratic methods. But she failed to carry staff with her. She came to be seen as a head who lacked clear values and a discernible philosophy, who gave little leadership and shuffled off responsibility whenever she could, and who had presided over a sharp decline in the quality of life and schooling at Rivendell. Where did she go wrong?

Several possible explanations are possible. We did consider if gender was a significant issue and did find some limited evidence in support of this. But Sewell herself did not seem to regard this as important. Rather it was her youth and relative lack of experience and, therefore, of
understanding of how to proceed which seems to have been much more critical. That both she and others understood this is evident in some of the quotations presented earlier. In conversation with us she talked about the kind of head that she would like to have become in time, rather than the kind of head she actually was. This led to a lack of certainty on how to handle difficult matters. As she says, 'It's very difficult, I think, to know just how properly to manage such things . . . I hope I would have had the wisdom and insight to have done (what her predecessor did) had I been, you know, that much older . . .'.

In the face of such inexperience and uncertainty, a policy of consultative and democratic decision making might seem a logical response, but in practice it led to a mixture of ad hoc management on the one hand, and a large measure of laissez faire on the other. In retrospect she believed she did have significant polices on a number of matters, but these were not given coherence by the kind of overall philosophy which Rivendell had enjoyed under the previous regime, or if they were, this was not clear to the staff. In seeing her predecessor as a hard act to follow, she was more correct than she knew. First, because at a macro level the climate of opinion which had supported Barber’s
core innovations was

becoming more hostile. Insofar as she sought to preserve key aspects of his

legacy she did so in markedly less favourable circumstances. Second, not only

did she seem to lack a philosophy as coherent as her predecessor, she also

lacked his capacity to win and strengthen allies and to lose and neutralize

enemies. Third, she was unwilling or unable to press home the kind of strategies

of manipulation and control which Barber had used so ruthlessly and effectively.

She soon came to see herself as a failure and this view was shared at Rivendell.

In little more than two years she left headship and moved to another post. Mr Lucas

Perceived failures of the previous administration meant staff morale was gener

ally thought to be low, with many hoping that the new head would give some

sort of lead to fill the vacuum left by Barber’s retirement. But there were also L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S

misgivings. Some were concerned that the new head might ‘initiate even more

changes from the Barber philosophy’. Others feared the prospect of some

dismantling of the structures of posts which had mushroomed during Sewell’s

brief period in office and from which they had benefited. One even threatened to

resign if this took place. In the event some restructuring did take place but he
proved to be a major beneficiary. No more was heard of this threat.

Sewell had been 34 when she took up the headship at Rivendell. She had been a teacher for some 10 years. Her first and only prior post had been as a Deputy Head to which she had been appointed directly from a managerial post in publishing. On appointment Lucas was in his early fifties, had spent his working life as a school teacher and, before he came to Rivendell, had been for many years the head of another, if smaller, comprehensive school within the same local authority. He had some knowledge of what had happened at Rivendell under his predecessor and came determined to achieve rapid change. He saw the innovations he wished to make as a rational response to change in the light of perceived constraints. He was also clear about the potential advantages of the new systems that he wished to put in place; we at the time, as researchers, saw these as being primarily to do with achieving a smoother and more streamlined administration in which better use might be made of the resources invested in various positions of responsibility.

The changes were driven through very rapidly and with little general consultation. Lucas once told us he believed that ‘any meeting for more than 20
minutes is useless’. He tended to be as good as his word on this. Staff meetings became 10-minute weekly meetings ‘for the dissemination of information’, mainly in a top down format. When major meetings took place they were usually carefully stage managed. At the key meeting at which staff had the ‘opportunity to discuss’ the structural changes he was intending to implement, they found themselves filing in faced by a semicircle of people seated at the front of the room who represented the new order and who had most to benefit from the reforms. Lucas opened his remarks by making it clear that he did not welcome debate on the broader principles and concluded that, ‘I will be happy to end this meeting at 10:20 but would definitely want to finish by 12:00; I don’t want to dwell on the reasons for these changes’. He used much the same approach when introducing the proposed changes to a meeting of the Parent–Teacher Association.

Although there was a good deal of support, along with some opposition, to the structural and other reforms Lucas proposed, there was strong objection to the way in which these changes were being introduced. There were numerous the various discussion documents which were being produced at the times as the
pronouncements or the edicts. Perhaps because of all this, a number of staff quickly concluded that, like his predecessor and unlike Barber, Lucas had no educational policy and was not much interested in trying to develop one. Yet for us it seemed that there was a clear, if implicit, philosophy behind the quite radical educational changes he sought to implement at Rivendell. Conversely, there was a widely shared understanding that a major change in the rules of the game had taken place in terms of the values which underpinned management and decision making at the school. Everyone was clear, including Lucas, that the authority resides in the head and, by their inclusion in policy formulation, in his deputies. The new system was at best hierarchical and at worst overtly autocratic.

However one evaluates the changes Lucas introduced, or the methods he used to achieve them, there can be no doubt that within his first year at the school sweeping educational and managerial changes were made and more were on their way. It is also beyond doubt that these changes were by no means welcomed by all. Yet the actual level of resistance, despite the heated rhetoric sometimes heard within the school’s staff rooms and
elsewhere, was relatively small. Why was this?

In part, this was because Lucas was skilful in buying or squaring off those who might have been most disaffected. He was also successful in ‘building in’ senior and influential staff into key positions within the new structures and in making them clearly accountable for key aspects of the work these entailed. This gave the structures an aura of power and officially-legitimated authority in the eyes of most staff. In some respects, for example, in his attempts to restrict the scope of staff meetings, Lucas might be thought to have been using an approach which reflected the kind of more-or-less manipulation which had characterized the Barber regime. On balance we felt that this was not an appropriate interpretation since given the overtness of his autocratic style of management, Lucas did not seem to require manipulation of any subtlety. Conversely, given the absence of opportunities for debate, discussion and consultation, he left himself little room to employ some of the strategies that Barber had used with such telling effect. The opportunities for advocating the normative grounds for the changes he wished to make were simply not there, and without them the kinds of attachment to his philosophy that Barber secured from many of his
strong moral appeals were almost impossible to achieve. If 
Barber surrounded himself with disciples at all levels amongst his teachers, 
the best Lucas could hope for were loyal line managers and an acquiescent staff. 
Insofar as this is what he wanted, the evidence suggests that he was successful both during an 
initial brief period of intense reform and in the many years of his regime that 
followed. Conclusions on a case 
As an illustration of the praxis of three educational leaders some may find the 

case of Rivendell makes for uncomfortable reading. It tells us of Mr Barber, 
who espoused a coherent and comprehensive set of 
egalitarian and democratic 
egalitarian philosophies that were at variance with the often calculating and 
manipulative managerial strategies which he employed with such telling effect LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS to achieve his purposes. It also tells us of Mrs Sewell, who had no coherent edu 
cational philosophy or was unable to make clear what this was, lacked the will 
or the ability to be manipulative. Thus, while Barber merely espoused demo 
cratic managerial ideals, Sewell made a real effort to introduce democratic struc 
tures and processes, only to be accused of a lack of leadership and a poverty of
philosophy. Seen as unsuccessful, she came to share this view and gave up headship. Rivendell teachers, it seemed, preferred strong leadership and a semblance of democracy, even when they knew this to be largely a sham. From their third head, Mr Lucas, they got strong and honest leadership without much manipulation and little attempt at even a facade of democracy. Again, they were not satisfied. Lucas was in a hurry and successfully drove through many major changes during his first year at the school yet, despite much passionate talk of opposition, very little came of any of this. Final thoughts

In this chapter I have outlined a three level approach to the study of leaders, leading and leadership. I have sought to illustrate the merits of this approach in one of its third level ethnographic forms with reference to three successive, and very different, regimes of headship at a secondary school in the United Kingdom. I believe that this approach can be applied to good effect to research into the praxis of leaders and led within a wide variety of educational and other contexts and would wish to take this opportunity to call for more such studies.

Those who are mad enough (Wragg, 1995) to want to be leaders, but who have no desire to be corrupted by the exercise of this ‘moral art’, need them.
Hodgkinson (1991) notes that one of the functions of his book is to ‘ground action on better theory, on the best theory available’ (1991, 111). I believe it is


CONTEXT AND PRAXIS IN THE STUDY OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP


In his recent review of research on leadership in the Handbook of Organization Studies, Alan Bryman (1996) writes that ‘Leadership theory and research have been remarkably and surprisingly uncoupled from the more general field [organization studies] in which they are located’ (p. 259). Much leadership research floats ethereally above the humdrum of organizational life, abstracted from the tasks that leaders are alleged to help others accomplish. When leadership is disconnected from tasks we pay too little attention to their structure and
to the resources required to progress them. We may also
misunderstand the
skills and capacities involved in leadership, focusing too
much on decontextual
ized processes of interpersonal influence and too little on
substantive task
related expertise.

These are the themes I explore in this chapter. I begin
with a brief review of
leadership research, and show how it disconnects task
performance from leader
ship. I then propose a way of reconnecting the two by
describing leadership as
exercised when ideas or acts are recognized by followers as
capable of progress
ing tasks or problems that are important to them. The
argument involves
describing what it is to progress a task or problem,
through an account of prob
lems and problem-solving. Since most educational problems
are solved by inter
acting actors and not isolated individuals, I then show how
this account
constrains the type of interpersonal influence process
involved in leadership.

Finally, I contrast this view of leadership with the recent
emphasis on leadership
as visionary and transformational. The disconnection of
task and leadership performance

The following definition of leadership is typical of those
which dominated the
field until the mid-1980s: ‘Leadership may be considered as
the process (act) of
influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting

and goal achievement’ (Stogdill, 1950, p. 3). The inclusion of goals and goal achievement in this definition suggests that task performance is an important aspect of leadership, but despite this acknowledgment little of the research within this rational tradition has theorized the processes that contribute to task performance. For example, in the search for the holy grail of leadership effectiveness, hundreds of studies have correlated leaders’ traits and styles with task outcomes, but there is doubt about even whether the results reflect the causal impact of leaders on task performance, or the inclination of followers to attribute task outcomes to their leaders (Lakomski, 1998).

The contribution of leadership to task performance has also been clouded by the assumption that leadership is adequately studied by the study of leaders, that is, those who occupy formal leadership positions. By contrast, when leaders are identified by the effects of their acts on others, rather than by the fact of their appointment, attention is drawn to the processes by which influence is exercised, the emergence of leadership in the course of interaction, and the way different individuals exert varying influence across situations (Hosking, 1988). Further
more, when acts of leadership are distributed across individuals, studies of leaders will capture but a small percentage of the contributions that advance the relevant tasks.

When rational approaches to leadership were overtaken by New Leadership in the mid-1980s, there was even less focus on task accomplishment. The term New Leadership, which embraces a variety of approaches including transformational, charismatic and visionary leadership, treats leaders as ‘managing meaning’ rather than goal achievement, and motivating followers through a variety of symbolic activities. Alan Bryman (1996) describes the common ground between the various New Leadership approaches as follows: Together these labels revealed a conception of the leader as someone who defines organizational reality through the articulation of a vision which is a reflection of how he or she defines an organization’s mission and the values which will support it. Thus the New Leadership approach is underpinned by a depiction of leaders as managers of meaning. (p. 280)

Leaders in this approach need to be charismatic and inspirational and they need to know how to motivate followers. What knowledge they need of the work of the organization is unclear. The disconnection between task and leadership is seen in the following definition of James MacGregor Burns whose study of political leaders produced the distinction between transactional and transforming...
leadership – a distinction that has been very influential in educational administration literature. For Burns (1978), ‘Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of followers’ (p. 18).

On this account, leaders access resources to satisfy the motives of followers, which in the case of transactional leadership is achieved through rewards and sanctions, and in the case of transforming leadership is achieved through the articulation of vision and values. The requisite leadership skills include the accurate reading of follower psychology, so that one knows how to motivate and inspire. Task-relevant knowledge and skill play little role in this conception, so that one gains the impression that leaders can motivate, engage and inspire regardless of task demands. If followers are motivated by task demands, then leadership through satisfaction of motives will be compatible with task performance – if not, then leadership and task performance will be disconnected. These themes remain influential, for in his 1996 review of ‘New Leadership’, Peter Gronn (1996) proposes that ‘leading’ is best defined as ‘the
framing of meaning

and the mobilization of support for a meaningful course of action’ (p. 8). While

Gronn’s reference to a ‘course of action’ implies a task dimension, his review makes clear that what is problematic is the mobilization of support, not framing the meaningful course of action. Leadership is analysed as an influence process that is disconnected from, rather than embedded in, task accomplishment. Embedded performance

While leadership research, or at least large portions of it, have ignored the task contexts in which leadership is exercised, the practice of leadership is inextricably woven into the fabric of task performance. The following scenario provides a typical enough picture of how school staff go about accomplishing tasks together. The question I raise about the scenario is ‘What, if anything, does the scenario have to do with leadership?’ Mei, the Head of Science, is chairing a meeting in which her staff are reviewing the results of the assessment of the last unit of work. She circulated the results in advance, with notes about how to interpret them, and asked the team to think about their implications for next year’s teaching of the unit. The team identifies common misunderstandings and agrees they need to develop resources which help students to overcome them. Jushan, a second year teacher, was pretty unhappy with the assessment protocol used this year, and suggests revisions which he thinks will give more recognition to students who have made an extra effort. Most of his suggestions are adopted. Lee, who teaches information technology as well as science, shows the group how the results have been processed on the computer so they can be combined with other assessments, and incorporated in reports to parents and to the Board. Several team members express nervousness about reporting to the Board so they
decide to review a draft report at the next meeting.

If we were to believe some of the more popular accounts of leadership, the above EMBEDDED LEADERSHIP TASK PERFORMANCE scenario would not be recognised as relevant to the topic. Mei is not in the driver’s seat, articulating a vision, motivating the troops or satisfying their needs. What she is doing is structuring the task, doing it, revising how it will be done next time and simultaneously completing related tasks. Her contributions articulate with those of others, whom she influences through her talk or actions, but Jushan and Lee also influence her. In this scenario leadership has gone underground because it is embedded in the task rather than floating above it as a meta-level commentary. I try to capture the way leadership is embedded in organizational action in the following definition:

- Leadership is exercised when ideas expressed in talk or action are recognized by others as capable of progressing tasks or problems which are important to them. The recognition does not require a verbal endorsement from followers. Leadership is detected by its effects, that is by identifying those contributions around which other contributions are coordinated. Mei structures the task of reviewing the science results by providing guides to their interpretation and suggesting an agenda. Her staff indicate agreement with this influence attempt, by simply
doing as she has suggested. Jushan makes a similar
contribution, and so we see

that leadership occurs wherever and whenever such
contributions arise, whether

or not the contributors hold formally designated leadership
roles. The notion of

leadership as distributed across work groups contributes to
the democratization

of leadership by decoupling leadership from rank and
focusing attention on who

is doing the work and how it gets done.

If leadership is about making contributions through actions
and words that

are accepted by others as progressing an important task,
then we need to focus

on the nature of tasks and what it is to progress them.
Clarification of these

issues will enable us to make progress on understanding the
skills, knowledge

and attitudes that might be associated with making
leadership contributions. Our

research will then be grounded in the detail of task
contribution rather than in

assessments of the personal qualities of those who are
designated as leaders and

who may or may not make such contributions to any given
task. Task performance as problem-solving

In previous writing I have proposed an account of problems
and problem

solving that I believe is useful in understanding what it
is to progress a task

(Robinson, 1993, 1998). It draws on the work of Thomas
Nickles (1981), a
philosopher of science who defines a problem as ‘the demand that a goal be achieved, plus constraints on the manner in which it is achieved’ (p. 111).

Nickles argues that problems arise through demands that they be solved and that such demands arise within particular historical and cultural traditions. What counts as a problem changes over time and across social and cultural contexts. L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S

The shift to school self-management, with its associated emphasis on account ability, has increased the demand that schools address a number of problems of finance, property, personnel and curriculum, that were either not previously seen as problems, or were the responsibility of central agencies. Whether these particular problems ought to be on schools’ agenda raises more general questions about the political processes creating the demand that particular problems be solved. Precisely because these processes are political, the problems through which leadership is exercised are not uncontested, both in the sense of how a particular problem is formulated and in the sense of whether any particular problem ought to be on the agenda at all. It is important, therefore, that the above definition of leadership can be developed into an account that demon
strates how leadership contributes to task performance through both the emergence of particular issues as problems, and through the resolution of contested formulations of those problems that are on the agenda.

In the following, I explain Nickles’s somewhat abstract account through the example of a hypothetical school trying to solve the problem of how to monitor and report on the collective achievement of students. Let us imagine that some staff in this school do not accept the problem demand, which has largely come from regulatory agencies, and other staff accept that the problem should be on the agenda, but are wary of how it may be formulated.

The problem of how to monitor collective achievement in the context of an individual school, like many problems in education, can be described as ill-structured because there is uncertainty about the information and methods needed to solve it, and about what counts as a solution (Simon, 1973). In education, such problems are controversial as well as uncertain because people develop emotional and value-based commitments to different understandings of the problem, and it is unclear whether they can be adequately reconciled. Ill-structured problems are solved by making them more well-structured, that is, in Nickles’s terms, by specifying the constraints on the
solution. Constraints

narrow the solution alternatives by specifying the
conditions that are to be satis

fed. Constraints could include relevant values and beliefs, regulatory require
ments, material conditions such as available financial and
human resources, and

other school practices with which any proposed solution
must articulate. The

more constraints that are specified, the more
well-structured the problem, which

means that there are fewer degrees of freedom available
about how it may be

solved, and a narrower problem space in which to search for
the solution.

This account can now be applied to the example of
collective assessment as

follows. Imagine that the comments in Table 1 are a summary
of the main con
cerns that have been raised in staff’s preliminary
discussions about the type of

collective assessment they wish to develop. On the right
hand side of the table

are the positive and negative constraints on any proposed
solution that are

implicit in the associated staff comment. For example, the
comment that the

information will be used against teachers implies
opposition to any assessment

practices which may be used punitively; advocates of this
constraint may not EMBEDDING LEADERSHIP IN TASK PERFORMANCE

accept any solution if they believe that it is not possible
to solve the problem.
without violating this constraint to an unacceptable
degree. If sufficient staff
shared such a view, the problem of collective assessment
would remain irresolvable until this constraint was formulated in a more flexible
manner. Alternatively, the demand for its solution could be dropped until a more trusting
political climate emerged – this amounts to taking the problem off the agenda, at
least for the time being.
Problems are solved by discovering or designing practices which adequately
integrate the proposed constraints. For our assessment problem, this involves
developing procedures which, as far as possible, provide reliable information,
have utility for both classroom teaching and programme evaluation, satisfy
external accountabilities, protect teachers from possible misuse of the informa
tion and are efficient.
It will be obvious to anyone familiar with current debates on collective
assessment that there is considerable tension between staff’s various solution
requirements – indeed, some would argue that the constraints in Table 1 are
irreconcilable. The tension inherent in this example can be appreciated by evalu
ating various assessment practices against the listed constraints. Achievement
data that are easily aggregated and reported to external
stakeholders may tell
teachers that improvement is needed, but provide little
diagnostic information
about students’ difficulties. If more detailed diagnostic
data are collected, the
requirement to assist classroom teachers will be better
satisfied, but the effi
ciency constraint may then be violated to an unacceptable
level. While this
example may be extreme, tension between constraints is
precisely what makes
so many educational problems intractable, and subject to
repeated reform
attempts, as different stakeholders advocate new solutions
which give greater
weight to their preferred constraints. L E A D E R S H I P
A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S

Table 1 Implied constraints on collective assessment

Staff comments Implied constraints
‘The Board will misinterpret the Accuracy of interpretation
information’
‘It must be useful for my teaching’ Useful to classroom
teachers
‘As Director of Curriculum, I need to Useful for programme
evaluation
know whether our programmes are
effective’
‘We are legally required to inform Accountability to
external stakeholders
the Board and the government’
'In this political climate the information Protect teachers from misuse of will be used to further bash teachers’ information

‘It must be computerized to be Efficiency manageable’

The degree of tension between constraints is a function of both their formula
tion and the objective relationships between them. For example, if the comment that ‘the Board will misinterpret the information’ implies that it should not receive the information, then the problem may be irresolvable, for this constraint contradicts any legal requirement to provide such information. If, on the other hand, it represents a plea for accurate interpretation, then these two constraints are not incompatible, because certain sorts of reporting to the Board could reduce the risk of misinterpretation to acceptably low levels.

The process of constraint specification and integration are concurrent rather than sequential, for in attempting to integrate constraints, problem-solvers adjust their meaning, their relative weighting and their proposed solutions until they are satisfied with the degree to which they have been integrated. Satisfaction does not, of course, indicate an absolute level of integration, only that problem solvers see the solution as good enough for now. For example, staff who are
concerned that individual teachers will be held accountable for their students’ results might accept a system which aggregated results across a whole year, but not one which aggregated and reported results by class. The latter system would make it too easy, they would argue, to target allegedly under-performing teachers.

In summary, problems do not arise until there is a demand that they be solved and both the demand itself, i.e. the claim that there is a problem, and its formulation may be uncertain and contested. Problems are solved, however inadequately, when problem-solvers adopt practices which sufficiently integrate their proposed constraints on the problem. When I say ‘their’ constraints, I mean

In other words, the constraint set proposed for a particular problem is likely to be environment controlled by others which they believe must be taken into account.

Practices which solve problems have short- and long-term, intended and unintended, and positive and negative consequences. Since many such consequences are neither predicted nor predictable, the solution may subsequently be judged inadequate and trigger a new demand that the problem be re-solved (Nickles, 1981). From task structure to leadership
Most educational problems are formulated and resolved not by isolated actors,
but through the coordinated understanding and action of multiple actors. Earlier,
I defined leadership as exercised when ideas or actions are recognized by fol
lowers as capable of progressing tasks or problems that are important to them.
Now that we have an account of what it is to progress a task, we can turn to the
influence processes that promote the collective accomplishment of problem
solving. In turning to social considerations at this point, I am not outlining a
two-stage theory of leadership in which problems are solved in the heads of EMBEDDING LEADERSHIP IN TASK PERFORMANCE
leaders who then engage with followers in order to convince them of his or her
solution. What I am doing is exploring how problem-solving constrains the
social dimension of leadership activity.
Problem-solving constrains leadership by suggesting the relevant aspects of
social interaction. The word ‘social’ rather than ‘interpersonal’ is deliberately
chosen, for the latter implies influence through face-to-face interaction which is
only one of various ways in which influence over others may be exercised. For
example, followers may value ideas that are conveyed through written descrip
tions, demonstrations, or that are implicit in the observed actions of others. A
teacher may notice how a curriculum leader is able to use individual assessment records to give teachers useful feedback about particular students, and to use those same records, along with those of the remaining children at that level, to evaluate the teaching programme. Leadership is exercised in this case, not because the teacher holds the position of curriculum leader, but because her assessment practice shifts her colleague’s belief that information collected for the purpose of programme evaluation cannot provide useful information about individual students.

Some clues to the nature of the influence processes that constitute leadership are found in the earlier definition of leadership as ‘exercised when ideas expressed in talk or action are recognized by others as capable of progressing tasks or problems which are important to them’. First, leadership is identified by the reaction of followers, not, in the first instance, by the position, character or style of particular individuals. The latter type of investigation becomes useful when it focuses on those who have been independently identified, through the reaction of others, as making more than the usual number of contributions.

Second, the influence is accepted because the ideas and actions are attractive,
not because of coercion, fear or a sense of duty or obligation (Fay, 1987). The basis of the attraction is the belief, which may or may not turn out to be true, that the contribution will progress the task or problem in a manner consistent with one's own understanding of it. This means that others sense an alignment between the values and interests through which they understand the problem, and those implicit in the contribution. Or, to put it more technically, the contribution is accepted, because it incorporates and gives appropriate weighting to those constraints which are important to followers. The processes of leadership

What knowledge and skills are involved in influencing others through making contributions that are recognized as progressing relevant tasks or problems? Gaining and utilizing knowledge relevant to the task or problem

Experience with similar problems and tasks provides information about the constraints that may be relevant, their inter-relationships, and the possibilities for their integration. The deeper one's knowledge of a problem's constraints, the more possibilities open up about how they may be integrated because they are understood at the level of underlying principle rather than surface detail. To return to our former assessment example, whether or not school-wide assess
ment practices can be informative for teaching as well as management purposes, and still be efficient, depends on the subtle detail of their design. Staff who have a superficial rather than a detailed knowledge of assessment are unlikely to recognize or make the distinctions needed to craft practices that can satisfy all three requirements.

People with prior relevant experience are more likely to anticipate unintended consequences of certain patterns of constraint satisfaction, to accept more complex constraint sets because they are more confident of their integration, and to avoid crafting constraints in ways that set up opposition between them. Like expert problem-solvers, their experience with similar tasks enables them to perceive a possible structure through the detail of the initially ill-structured problem (Chi, et al., 1982). Skills in constraint integration whilst this process is closely related to that of gaining and utilizing task-specific knowledge, it is treated separately, for it is possible to influence others’ understanding of specific constraints without contributing to the process of their integration. Indeed, partisan leadership achieves just that, by emphasizing the importance of one aspect of a problem while neglecting, if not opposing, other
dimensions or perspectives. Integrating constraints requires relevant knowledge, attitudes and skill. Dewey’s (1922) notion of imaginative deliberation captures what is involved: The aim in deliberation should be to devise an action in which all [competing tendencies] are fulfilled, not indeed in their original form but in a ‘sublimated’ fashion, that is, in a way which modified the original direction of each by reducing it to a component along with others in an action of transformed quality. (p. 194)

The competing tendencies, or constraints, are fulfilled, not by crass compromise or trade-offs between them, but by understanding their underlying principles and values so that more possibilities are revealed about how they may be satisfied.

Inseparable from this knowledge is an attitude of commitment to the whole problem, which motivates problem-solvers to search for solutions that as far as possible satisfy the whole constraint set rather than maximize those they initially favoured. Such integrative contributions are more likely to be made by those who are skilled at recognizing and creating common ground, than by those who more readily perceive conflict and opposition.

E M B E D D I N G L E A D E R S H I P I N T A S K P E R F O R M A N C E Gaining and utilizing knowledge of actual or potential followers when actors know what is important to potential followers, they are more likely to craft ideas and actions in ways that are recognized as contributions, not simply because they are trying to ‘win them over’, but
because they have

learned more about what the problem involves. Because this knowledge is con

textualized in terms of particular tasks or issues, it is not necessarily gained by

what is sometimes described as ‘getting to know’, or ‘getting alongside’ others.

Someone in a formal leadership position may not have such knowledge, despite

friendships and years of shared experience, because they have assumed that they

know what is important, or because they have not had an opportunity to learn

how others understand a particular problem.

Hosking (1988) describes how knowledge of others’ interests is gained through

networking – the process of making contacts and building social relationships.

Networking promotes collective problem-solving through learning what is import

ant to others and building relationships which can be channels for influence.

Ideas and actions may gain recognition from groups that have had no contact

with their originator because understandings gained from engagement with

similar groups are widely applicable. Leadership is thus always social (con

firmed by the response of a follower) without being necessarily interpersonal (it

does not always occur in a face-to-face context).

Like all of the processes described in this section, utilizing knowledge of fol
lowers implies both cognitive and attitudinal dimensions. Gaining knowledge of how others frame problems implies that one cares about others, especially when their beliefs and values differ from one’s own. Respect for difference produces ideas and acts that take into account the interests and values that others bring to the problem, so, as a result, more people with initially different positions will identify with the resulting problem formulation. Thus gaining knowledge of followers increases the likelihood of being influential through negotiating a problem formulation that is sufficiently shared to allow a solution to be reached.

In summary, I have suggested three leadership processes that increase the likelihood of making contributions that others recognize as progressing problems that are important to them. Two of those processes, gaining relevant knowledge and integrating constraints, emphasize the role of task expertise in leadership, and the role of experience in gaining such expertise. The remaining one, gaining knowledge of followers, recognizes the contested and political nature of educational problem-solving and the value of an empathic and respect ful understanding of the differing interests and values that inform alternative problem formulations. Leadership, vision and task
When leadership is embedded in task performance, it becomes more mundane and less dramatic than portrayed by those authors who write of leaders as inspiring and transforming followers through their vision for the organization (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Senge, 1990). What are we to make of this popular conception of what it is to lead? Do these leadership attributions bear any relation to the actual work of leadership as we have described it here?

The articulation of a vision draws attention to what is important and what is important ought to shape the way ill-structured problems are formulated. A vision expresses those constraints that are intended to guide all organizational problem-solving and if this is achieved, there will be overlaps between the constraint structures of many organizational problems. Let us say that ‘serving its community’ is part of the vision articulated by a school leader. This espoused constraint shapes the school’s theory-in-use to the extent that it is incorporated within the constraint structure that informs relevant school practices (Argyris, 1982; Argyris and Schön, 1996). In the assessment example referred to earlier, this ‘vision’ would require dialogue with parents about the type of assessment.
the eventual problem solution. Vision becomes meaningful when it makes a difference by ruling in some alternative actions and ruling out others.

Vision gets a bad name when it is represented in words, rather than in words and deeds. Some words cannot be represented in deeds, because the words do not recognize the constraints that will determine the deeds regardless of what the new words are. That is why Karl Weick (1993), who has made a brilliant career out of turning things on their head, advises leaders that rather than learn how to ‘walk the talk’ they should learn to ‘talk the walk’.

Workable visions are developed by those whose intimate knowledge of the past makes them wise about what can be accomplished in the future, rather than by those who engage in elaborate planning disconnected from evaluation of current practice. Discussion and conclusions

If task-relevant expertise is critical to the resolution of complex educational problems, then leadership that accesses expertise, wherever it lies, makes sense.

The phrase ‘wherever it lies’ requires careful consideration, however, for expertise lies in the tools and resources that are the products of previous problem solving efforts, as well as in the heads of individuals. These resources lie both within individual self-managing schools and in the wider
Educational environment. One of the mistakes that may be made in the move to school self-management is to misunderstand how the problem-solving capacity of individual schools is partly dependent on the capacity of the system as a whole (Hutchins, 1995). For example, the capacity of a school to grapple with the problem of designing school-wide assessment policies and procedures is dependent on the resources available in the wider educational environment. While each school must solve the problem for itself, this does not mean that each one should start afresh. The state has a leadership role in supporting school self-management, not just by increasing the demand that certain problems be solved, as it has done in numerous OECD countries, but also by offering a menu of resources, including a variety of solution possibilities. Such solution possibilities increase confidence that the problem is soluble, provide a concrete reference point against which envisaged threats and opportunities can be assessed, and provide a basis from which schools can formulate their own solutions.

If leadership is linked to task-relevant expertise, then is there such a thing as
generic leadership? When leadership is disconnected from

task performance it is

reduced to a decontextualized interpersonal influence

process which lends itself

to generic analysis. It may be the case that some people

make contributions

which are recognized as progressing a wide range of tasks,

but the basis of their

apparently generic leadership is their wide ranging

substantive expertise. If I am

right about this, we should be wary of claims that there is

little difference

between managing a school and a supermarket. My proposal of

a theory of a

problem and problem-solving should not provide comfort to

advocates of

generic leadership, for while that theory identifies a

generic problem structure, it

makes clear that fleshing out the structure to formulate and

solve any particular

problem requires task-specific knowledge.

The more one embeds leadership in task performance the more

it disappears

from view – which raises the question of whether the

concept is needed at all

(Mintzberg, 1998; Ogawa and Bossert, 1995). Is it possible

that leadership

research is marginal to the wider field of organization

studies because organi

zational action can be explained without appealing to the

concept? This question

deserves a paper in itself, but here are some initial

thoughts. Leadership disap
pears when tasks are well-structured, because the knowledge that progresses the

task has been structured into the technologies and routines that are involved in

its completion. When tasks are well-structured, their solutions are known, so the

problem is solved automatically rather than through conscious deliberation. It is

the conversion of ill-structured to well-structured problems that requires leader

ship, because the routines that would otherwise coordinate action have not yet

been devised. Over time, well-structured problems may return to being ill-struc

tured as changed circumstances create a demand that the problem be re-solved.

As discussed in the earlier example, the science staff had solved the problem of

how to assess the science unit, but became dissatisfied with their solution as they

learned more about the pattern of grades it generated. The assessment problem

then became more ill-structured, and leadership more visible, as team members

contributed to its reformulation.

As schools become more self-managing, they encounter dozens of ill-struc

tured problems, ranging from property maintenance to personnel management.

The resolution of these problems provides countless opportunities for leadership

from administrators, parents, teachers and students themselves. One of the jobs
of leaders is to make such leadership opportunities accessible to all those who
have or would wish to develop expertise which is relevant to the formulation


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Source: International Journal of Leadership in Education 1(1) (1998): 37-46. This article proposes pedagogical leadership as a more effective alternative to bureaucratic, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership in improving schools. Pedagogical leadership invests in capacity building by developing social and academic capital for students, and intellectual and professional capital for teachers. This emphasis on human capital development provides the conditions necessary to improve levels of student learning and development. Pedagogical leadership develops human capital by helping schools become caring, focused and inquiring communities within which teachers work together as members of a community of practice. To understand pedagogical leadership one must understand the story of community. This story includes unique ways of thinking about connections and human nature that run against the grain of conventional thought. In traditional schools connections are understood using the narrative of social contracts and human nature is understood using the constrained narrative. In schools that are striving to become communities, connections are understood using the narrative of social covenants and human nature is understood using the unconstrained narrative. Examples are provided that show how these narratives are embodied in leadership practice.

How can we bring about change that will result in higher levels of student performance, enhanced social development and improved levels of civility in
This question, uppermost in the minds of policymakers and school leaders throughout the world, is usually answered by advocating one or more of the following strategies:

- Provide bureaucratic leadership that mandates certain things for schools to do and mandates certain outcomes for schools to achieve. Support this leadership by providing management systems that emphasize supervision, evaluation and incentives.
- Provide corporate style visionary leadership that provides a powerfully spoken sense of what must be done. Support this leadership by motivating and inspiring schools to change.
- Provide entrepreneurial leadership that applies market principles to schools. Support this leadership by encouraging competition, providing incentives for winning and disincentives for losing.

Despite their widespread use bureaucratic leadership, visionary leadership and entrepreneurial leadership have not improved schools in ways hoped for. Unfortunatel, if we continue to do what we are now doing - even if we do it better - we will continue to get what we are now getting. Better results for all students, I argue in this article, will not be achieved until we emphasize a new conception of leadership and a different set of school improvement strategies. Instead of continuing to place bureaucratic, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership at the centre, I propose the following alternative for this centre position:

- Provide pedagogical leadership that invests in capacity
building by developing social and academic capital for students and intellectual and professional capital for teachers. Support this leadership by making capital available to enhance student learning and development, teacher learning and classroom effectiveness.

Pedagogical leadership differs from bureaucratic, visionary and entrepreneurial leadership in that it is capital intensive but not in an economics sense. Instead of increasing material value, pedagogical leadership adds value by developing various forms of human capital.

Capital refers to the value of something that when properly invested produces more of that thing which then increases overall value. This emphasis on capital development provides the conditions necessary to improve the level of student learning and development. Capital expansion is, therefore, the key mediating variable that stands between pedagogical leadership and school results. These relationships can be depicted as follows: Pedagogical Capital Value Added Leadership → Development → to Students

Critics can point to numerous instances where students are learning and developing at high levels even though the schools they attend pay scant attention to capital development. Chances are these students are bringing to school the capital they need from home and other places. But society is changing. For many students, families are less stable and supportive. Neighbourhoods are in
disarray. And traditional institutions such as the extended family, the YMCA and YWCA, the church, the social club and the community itself are not able to provide the support they once did. These students experience a society that is capital poor.

Community building is a powerful way for school leaders to develop capital.

The value of capital generated as schools become communities is more important in determining a school’s success than are its physical and financial assets.

Pedagogical leadership develops capital by helping schools become caring, focused and inquiring communities within which teachers work together as members of communities of practice (Sergiovanni 1997).

Developing social capital

Schools develop social capital by becoming caring communities (see for example, Bryk and Driscoll 1988, Battistich et al. 1989, Sergiovanni 1994).

Social capital consists of norms, obligations and trust that are generated by relationships among people in community, neighbourhood or society (Coleman 1988, 1990, Gamoran 1996).

When students have access to social capital they find the support needed for learning. But when social capital is not available, students generate it for them.
selves by turning more and more to the student subculture for support. The
result, too often, is the development of norms and codes of behaviour that work
against what schools are trying to do. This seeking of support elsewhere often
takes its toll on both academic performance and social behaviour. Developing academic capital

Schools develop academic capital by becoming focused communities that cultivate a deep culture of teaching and learning. The rituals, norms, commitments and traditions of this culture become the academic capital that motivates and supports student learning and development. Teaching and learning, for example, provide the basis for making school decisions. Leaders in focused communities are committed to the principle that ‘form should follow function’.

They strive to embody this principle as decisions are made about organization, staff, time, money, space and other resources; curriculum focus, content, implementation and assessment; teacher development, supervision and evaluation; and other matters that impact the quality of teaching and learning (Sergiovanni 1996).

In a focused community there is a strong and clear commitment to academic achievement as evidenced by rigorous academic work, teachers’ personal
concern for student success, and the expectation that students will work hard,
come to class prepared and complete assignments (see for example Sebring and Bryk 1996). This commitment to academic success is more likely to be achieved when the curriculum is narrowly focused and common for all; assessment is authentic and linked to purposes; standards of achievement are explicit and public; and students are encouraged to do their best.

Teaching and learning in focused communities are characterized by assignments and teaching strategies that encourage students to create knowledge for themselves; to anchor what they learn in frameworks, theories and disciplinary structures; and to link this learning to real world problems (Newman et al. 1995).

Schools with a strong and deep culture of teaching and learning know what they are about and communicate this to students in a way that increases their academic engagement and performance. Developing intellectual capital Schools develop intellectual capital by becoming inquiring communities. Intellectual capital is the sum of what everyone in the school knows and shares that can help the school be more effective in enhancing the development of students. As the amount of intellectual capital increases, the school's
capacity to add value to the lives of students increases. The school gets smarter as a result.

Pedagogical leaders realize that the link between what happens to teachers and what happens to students is direct (see for example Elmore 1996). They know that inquiry in classrooms is not likely to flourish where inquiry among teachers is discouraged. A commitment to problem-solving is difficult to instil in students who are taught by teachers for whom problem-solving is rarely observed. Where there is little discourse among teachers, discourse among students will be harder to promote and maintain. Aspirations to transform classrooms into learning communities for students will remain more rhetoric than real unless schools become learning communities for teachers too.

Getting students academically engaged at higher levels and improving student performance in today’s world requires teachers to develop new capacities for understanding the subjects they teach and the pedagogical decisions that must be made to teach effectively. The practices of effective leaders reflect the belief that teachers learn best when learning is focused on the issues they consider to be important; is situated in their classrooms; is supported by adequate resources; is
continuous; and is valued. Further, this learning emphasizes not just the development of new knowledge and understandings but the skills and dispositions needed to actually practice differently. And finally, learning occurs in a social context that enables teachers to learn from each other, support each other and care for each other. Developing professional capital

Good schools take collegiality seriously – so seriously that they strive to create a single practice of teaching in the school that is shared by many. They cultivate communities of practice as a way to generate professional capital. One hallmark of an established profession is the willingness of its members to be concerned not only with their own practices but with the practice itself. Professional capital is created as a fabric of reciprocal responsibilities, and support is woven among the faculty that adds value to teachers and students alike.

Though membership in a community of practice can be a powerful source of expanding professional capital for teachers and the school, it is still under-valued and under-developed in most schools. Communities of practice, for example, are more likely to emerge in small schools, family-grouped schools, teams that stay together for more than one year and
other configurations found in learning communities that
provide for continuity

and that promote sharing. But policy makers and school
leaders, particularly in

North America, remain committed to larger scale schooling
and the formally

organized management systems needed to ensure that schools
run properly. Leadership in school communities

In communities, leadership and learning go together. So
does leadership and

sense-making. Leaders and followers reflect together, learn
together and

inquire together as they care together to construct a
reality that helps them to

navigate through a complex world. This process of
reciprocal influence is

guided by shared purposes and involves accepting roles that
are connected to

moral obligations. Just as teachers, parents and students
have roles linked to

moral obligations, principals too are expected to meet the
obligations that

come from their role responsibilities as leaders.

It is through morally held role responsibilities that the
principalship becomes

a profession in the more traditional sense of what a
profession is and means.

Principals are bound not just to standards of technical
competence (I know how
to do it well) but to standards of public obligation (I
know what is good to do)
as well (Bellah et al. 1995). Standards of public
obligation always override tech
nical standards when the two are in conflict. It is in the principal’s role
responsibilities that we find the roots of pedagogical leadership – a commitment
to administer to the needs of the school as an institution by serving its purposes,
by serving those who struggle to embody these purposes, and by acting as a
guardian to protect the institutional integrity of the school.

Pedagogical leaders take their ministerial roles seriously. But how do they
embody these roles? What are the tasks that they emphasize in their practice?
The following ten tasks are central (Sergiovanni 1996):

Purposing – Pedagogical leaders bring together shared visions into a convenant
that speaks compellingly and with a moral voice to principals, teachers, parents,
and students.

Maintaining harmony – Pedagogical leaders build a consensual understanding of
school purposes, of how the school should function, and of the moral connecL E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S
tions between roles and responsibilities while respecting individual conscience
and individual style difference.

Institutionalizing values – Pedagogical leaders translate the school’s convenant
into a workable set of procedures and structures that facilitates the accomplish
ment of school purposes, and that provides norm systems for
directing and

guiding behaviour.

Motivating – Pedagogical leaders provide for the basic psychological needs of

members on the one hand, and for the basic cultural needs of members to

experience sensible and meaningful school lives on the other.

Problem solving – Pedagogical leaders mobilize others to tackle tough problems

and help them to understand the problems they face.

Managing – Pedagogical leaders ensure the necessary day-to-day support (ie.

planning, organizing, agenda setting, mobilizing resources, providing proce

dures, record keeping) that keeps the school running effectively and efficiently.

Explaining – Pedagogical leaders give reasons for asking members to do certain

things, and give explanations that link what members are doing to the larger

picture.

Enabling – Pedagogical leaders remove obstacles that prevent members from

meeting their commitments, and provide resources and support to help members

to meet their commitments.

Modelling – Pedagogical leaders accept responsibility as head follower of the

school’s convenant by modelling purposes and values in thought, word and

action.
Supervising – Pedagogical leaders provide the necessary oversight to ensure the 

school is meeting its commitments, and when it is not, to 

find out why, and to 

help everyone do something about it. 

Most of these tasks are straightforward. The ‘supervising’ 
task, however, may 

need some explaining. The word supervision has a negative 
tinge that conjures 

up factory images of ‘snoopervising’ foremen checking up on workers. But 

supervision was originally a virtuous word that referred to the carrying out of 

one’s stewardship responsibilities. Traditionally, stewardship meant the oversee 

ing and caring for an institution such as a university, church or school. 

As supervisors, principals act in loco parentis in relationship to students, 

ensuring that all is well for them. As supervisors, principals act as trustees in 

relationship to parents ensuring that all is well for them too. And as supervisors, 

principals act as stewards, guarding and protecting the school’s purposes and 

structures. 

With supervision as an expression of stewardship at the core, the tasks of 

leadership are brought together when school leaders 
practise leadership as a LEADERSHIP AS PEDAGOGY 

form of pedagogy. The term pedagogy has deep historical roots and meanings.
As Max van Manen (1991: 37) explains, the term pedagogue derives from the Greek, and refers not to the teacher, but to the watchful... guardian whose responsibility it was to lead (agogos) the young boy (paides) to school... The adult had the task of accompanying the child, of being with the child, of caring for the child. This is a kind of ‘leading’ that often walks behind the one who is led. The... pedagogue was there in loco parentis.

Teachers practise pedagogical leadership directly since in schools they stand first and closest in a caring relationship to children. They have the major responsibility for guiding children academically, socially and spiritually through the world of childhood to adulthood.

Principals practise pedagogical leadership by facilitating this process, and by ensuring that the interests of children are served well. A key part of this practice is the ability of the leader to mobilize people and community to face their problems, and to make progress in solving them (Heifetz 1994). In this sense, the pedagogy they practise is understood as a form of authority. Pedagogical author-ity ensures that people make good decisions and face up to their responsibilities, and that things work right for children. Its legitimacy comes in part from the virtuous responsibilities associated with the principal’s role, and in part from the principal’s obligation to function as the ‘head follower’ of the school’s shared purposes, ideals and commitments. This followership represents a moral
compact that transforms the school into a moral community.

Moral communities generate leadership capital. Leadership in moral communities is idea-based. The source of authority for leadership is found neither in bureaucratic rules and procedures nor in the personalities and styles of leaders but in shared values, ideas and commitments. Those who identify with this idea structure are members of a community of mind. This membership both empowers them and requires them to accept responsibility for providing leadership and for helping the leadership provided by others to work. As leadership capital expands, leadership density in the school increases. Leadership density increases the likelihood that social, academic, intellectual and professional capital will all expand. The story of community

Why do many policy makers and school leaders have doubts about the efficacy of pedagogical leadership, preferring to improve schools by sticking exclusively with bureaucratic, visionary or entrepreneurial leadership? The answer, I believe, is that pedagogical leadership requires them to accept the story of community as a valid theory to guide policy and practice.

The story of community includes unique ways of thinking about connections between leadership and teaching.
and human nature that run against the grain of conventional thought (Sergio vanni forthcoming). In schools that are traditionally organized, connections are understood using the narrative of social contracts and human nature is understood using the constrained narrative. In schools that are striving to become communities connections are understood using the narrative of social covenants and, human nature is understood using the unconstrained narrative.

The narrative of social contracts guides the practice of the principal of the Locke Elementary School. He promised the student body that if 2,000 books were read during the month of October, on Hallowe’en night he would dress up like a witch and kiss a pig on the roof of the school building. This goal was achieved and, to the apparent delight of the students, the deed was done. The Locke prin
cipal believes that contracts are important motivational devices and that unless stu
dents get something tangible for their efforts they will not be motivated. You can’t expect a manager to manage well, a worker to be diligent, or a football player to play hard unless there is something in it for them. So, he asks, how can we expect teachers to teach well, students to learn well and schools to reform themselves without incentives? How can we expect them to display proper behaviours without
providing long lists of rules and regulations or long lists of outcome requirements that are linked to clear consequences for non-compliance?

This narrative is about calculations involving trades that offer incentives in exchange for compliance. Self-interest is presumed to be paramount and 'let's make a deal' is the order of the day. Social contracts, however, are maintained only as long as each of the parties gets what it wants. When teachers no longer receive the contracted amount of money, health benefits, fulfilment and security they are less willing to hand over to the school time, muscle and brains. And when students no longer get gold stars, attention and grades, they are less willing to endure the rituals of schooling.

The narrative of social covenants guides the practice of the principal of the Rousseau Elementary School. She encourages teachers and students to develop together a description of how everyone in the school should lead their lives together. Connected to a larger vision of school purposes, critical values and pedagogical beliefs, this ‘covenant’ provides the basis for an ongoing discussion about how teachers, administrators, parents and students can meet their commitments to each other and to the school. Students at Rousseau, for example, expect
teachers to work hard, to be caring and to teach well. Since relationships are reciprocal, teachers expect students to respond similarly. Students are given considerable latitude in deciding important things at Rousseau. They help decide how learning goals will be achieved and help make decisions about how they will spend their time. But decisions must be responsible ones that embody and advance the school’s covenant. Both teachers and students work hard to make reading fun and useful while also increasing mastery.

The Rousseau principal believes that when given the opportunity to make important decisions about school goals, purposes, values and other important school matters, teachers and students will respond by being morally obliged to lead and embody these decisions in their actions. Further, the bonding of school members and their binding to shared ideas and ideals provides a normative environment that encourages moral responsiveness. Social contracts, the principal reasons, have important roles to play in the real world. But so do social covenants. The school is the place, she argues, to learn about social covenants, to practise developing them, and to use them in a practical way to govern affairs.

In comparing the two narratives, Sacks (1997) argues that a social contract is...
maintained by the promise of gain or the threat of external force. A social covenant is maintained by loyalty, fidelity, kinship, sense of identity, obligation, duty, responsibility and reciprocity. A social contract, he points out, 'gives rise to the instrumentalities of the state' both corporate and political. 'A covenant gives rise to quite different institutions - families, communities, traditional and voluntary associations. It is the basis of civil society' (Sacks 1997: 16). Social contracts are at the core of what connects people in communities and social covenants are at the core of what connects people in more formally organized traditional schools. The former are rule-based and the latter are norm-based (Sergiovanni 1994). The nature of human nature Related to the social contract and social covenant narratives are two narratives about the nature of human capacity and will - constrained and unconstrained (Sowell 1987, Etzioni 1988, Hertzberg 1996). The constrained narrative is aligned with the selfish side of human nature, rooted in physical needs satisfaction and psychological egoism. The unconstrained narrative is aligned to the altruistic side of human nature rooted in moral conceptions of goodness. The altruistic side includes our capacity to practice such virtues as moral bearing,
self-sacrifice and cooperation aimed at the enhancement of the common good.

The selfish side includes our propensity to put self-interest first, to compete to win, and to strive to accumulate advantages such as wealth and power aimed at enhancing our individual pleasure and position.

The major story line in the constrained narrative emphasizes controlling the impulses of self-interest thought by Hobbes (1950) and others to dominate human nature. According to this narrative, people are self-centred, competitive, devious, addicted to gratification and even unscrupulous as they seek to maximize their own gains with little regard for the common good. The constrained story avers, that principals, teachers and students must be ‘constrained’ if they are to overcome these brutish impulses and instincts. Without constraints they will not be inclined to do the right thing. Society therefore must use rewards and punishments to provide the necessary constraints that will channel human behaviour in the right direction - be it paying taxes, communing with God, providing leadership, preparing lessons, being collegial, or studying and behaving at school.

The major story line in the unconstrained narrative emphasizes the capacity of leaders and head teachers...
of people to embody such virtues as altruism, moral bearing
and cooperation

aimed at enhancing the common good, even if doing so
occasionally requires

sacrificing one’s self-interest. Instead of viewing people
as being cost-benefit

machines who make individual choices rationally in an
effort to win, the uncon

strained narrative includes the emotive, normative and
altruistic side of people.

Motivation, in this story, is not only a result of the
complex interaction between

our emotions, values and beliefs, but between these and our
ties to others

(Etzioni 1988). Connections, in the unconstrained
narrative, are normatively
derived and have moral overtones (Sergiovanni 1992).

Policy makers and school leaders who subscribe to the
unconstrained narrat

ive believe that principals and teachers can be trusted to
act morally, and there

fore should be provided with the freedom to optimize their
moral propensity to

do what is right. Principals and teachers, for example,
have both the capacity

and the need to sacrifice their self-interest for causes
they believe in and for con

ceptions of the common good that they value. As
professionals, they willingly

accept responsibility for their own practice and they
commit themselves to the

learning needs of their students above other concerns. A
similar tale is told for
students.

Within the constrained narrative, by contrast, it is believed that principals and teachers will act selfishly if given the chance. Their primary concern is to maximize their self-interest. Thus constraints in the form of incentives and penalties must be provided to force them to do the right thing. Principals and teachers may have the capacity to do the right thing, this narrative concedes, but this capacity will only be motivated if constraints are provided. A similar tale is told for students.

Undoubtedly the truth lies somewhere in between the extremes of social contracts versus social covenants and constrained versus unconstrained views. The intent of this article is not to argue for the replacement of bureaucratic, visionary or entrepreneurial leadership with pedagogical leadership. It is, instead, threefold: to recognize the importance of pedagogical leadership to the development of social, academic, intellectual and professional capital; to recognize the importance of capital development in improving schools; and to move pedagogical leadership to the centre position as the primary basis for developing school.

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Instructional Leadership in Schools: Reflections and Empirical Evidence

Geoff Southworth


Abstract This paper examines the notion of instructional leadership. The paper opens with a review of current work on school leadership, arguing that more inclusive, differentiated, holistic and learning-centred accounts are needed. Next the paper examines definitions of ‘instructional leadership’. In the third section the discussion looks at the empirical evidence we have about such leadership, drawing upon work in the USA and England. The latter study was conducted into leadership in small primary schools. Parallels between the studies are drawn and links made with the definitions of instructional leadership. The concluding section highlights the importance of leaders being learners, the implications for leadership development and the importance of creating and sustaining certain organisational conditions which facilitate instructional leadership. The paper ends with the point that instructional leadership is becoming more significant with the growing emphasis on organisational learning.

Introduction

In this article I examine the notion of instructional leadership. Instructional leadership has become increasingly popular in North America and is attracting interest in Britain. However, writers and researchers in the UK have usually preferred to talk about ‘educational leadership’ or ‘pedagogic leadership’. None of these three labels—instructional, educational or pedagogic—seems very satisfactory to me, but rather than try to find a better one, I will use ‘instructional’ for this article.

My discussion is organised into four sections. In the first section I will set out some of my reflections on the current state of our knowledge and understanding of school leadership. In the second section I will review
definitions of instructional leadership. In the third I will examine two empirical studies and relate them to the literature reviewed in section two. In section four I will set out my conclusions. Here I will argue that we need to create ‘learning and teaching schools’ as environments most amenable for instructional leadership and for the development of instructional leaders. 1. Reflections on school leadership

I want to raise four overlapping and interrelated points in this section. The first is that leadership is socially constructed. When I interview practitioners or discuss with scholars their ideas about leadership it is obvious that each is using a set of concepts they have adopted or created to portray the phenomenon they call ‘leadership’. These constructions vary in many and subtle ways. For example, there is presently a growing interest in how leadership is influenced by cultural values (Dimmock & Walker 2000), while contingency theories of leadership have for some time explained how leadership varies from organisation to organisation or system to system. The importance of leadership being a social construction is that it suggests that it will vary from setting to setting.

Therefore, instead of searching for an over-arching theory we may need a more...
pluralistic approach to take account of the inherently variegated nature of leadership.

Furthermore, it is important that we take a more generous view of leadership than has been the case until very recently. Much of the empirical data on school leadership has explored what headteachers have to say about school leadership, particularly in primary schools. I do not doubt the importance of this work, but it also needs to be accompanied by studies into deputy headship and other leaders.

Sadly, there has been too little empirical work on school leadership at other levels (although heads of department in secondary schools seem to be now attracting some attention). For example, as Ribbins (1997) says, it seems ‘heads are interesting and deputies are not’ (p. 295). This fascination with headship means that we have, generally speaking, developed a leaders’ view of leadership. We have not explored enough the followers’ perspectives and expectations of their leaders, although the study of Bolam et al. (1994) into effective school management surveyed teachers’ perceptions and Day et al.’s (2000) recent study of effective leadership provides one of the most comprehensive enquiries because it included the perspectives of teachers, students, ancillary staff, parents.
and governors, as well as head teachers. As Leithwood states in his introduction to Day et al.: Data collected from teachers about effective heads’ leadership tells us something about how well the heads’ practices conform to teachers’ mental models of what leaders do: their leader prototypes. (p. xiii) LEADERSHIP AND HEAD TEACHERS

We cannot know what effective leadership means unless and until we include the stakeholders’ perspectives and their constructions of leadership. If leadership is a social construct then we need to make it truly social and not a singular construction. Recent developments such as Day’s study are therefore most welcome.

Second, school leadership theorising has suffered from a lack of differentiation. It seems to me that we need more differentiated accounts of leaders working in different ways and contexts and over time. Currently, we have concentrated on how poor performing schools, and schools in disadvantaged circumstances improve. We have yet to consider leadership in other settings, or how differences in school size influence the nature and character of educational leadership. We also know too little about how leaders and leadership changes over time as individuals mature and increase their experience (Weindling 1999).

Neither should we forget that the field of leadership and management study
has been dominated by male writers. Nor that we need to know more about how
gender influences school leadership, particularly as there are increasing numbers
of women in leadership positions and because many schools are almost or
to women. Recent work in England by Hall (1996) and Coleman
(2001) has contributed to our understanding of women's experience and concept
ions of leadership and builds on the work of other researchers outside the UK
(e.g. Shakeshaft 1989; Blackmore 1989; Acker 1994).
In my own work I have always made it plain that I have (largely) studied
leadership in primary schools. This is not to be sectarian about the work, but to
acknowledge that I have focused on some school leaders and not all. Generalisa
tion in educational research is difficult enough without conflating leadership, or
indiscriminately extrapolating findings from a sample of leaders in one type of
school to all schools. Instead of striving for generalisations that homogenise
leadership, we might be better advised to work towards more heterogeneity.
Third, writing and research about ‘leadership’ in education has often concen
trated on what leadership entails. Scholars have been very good at producing
lists of what leaders do or should do, but we are far from the creation of a taxon
omy of school leadership and management because leadership is a contested
notion. Moreover, these lists are usually lengthy and atomised because they par-
ticularise and fragment the work of leaders into categories and elements.

Lists, of course, have useful analytic and heuristic purposes. However, too
many list-producers fail to distinguish between theory for understanding and
theory for action (Hoyle 1986). Lists may help develop understanding, but that
does not mean they are theories for action. Moreover, the utility of listing
characteristics is reduced when they become over long. National standards for
head teachers can be useful to help develop, train, recruit and assess colleagues,
but few head teachers or deputies when talking about her/his work refer to the
national standards, probably because they see them as ‘lifeless lists’ (Bredeson
2000).

Another difficulty with ‘list logic’ is that the work of school leaders, particularly the work of
leaders, is polyphonic. Leaders do many things at once, often at rapid speed so that
their work is characterised by simultaneity, inter-connection and holism. It seems
that leaders are often trying to develop and sustain a view of their work and the
school which is a ‘gestalt’ and not a set of particularities. A challenge to
researchers then is to portray leadership in a more inter-related and sophisticated way than has so far been achieved.

Fourth, school leaders commonly regard their work as involving tensions,
dilemmas and dualities (Southworth 1995; Dimmock 1996; MacBeath & Myers 1999; Day et al. 2000). According to these researchers the dilemmas take many forms and include the exercise of power, ethical issues, conflicting expectations of stakeholders and satisfying internal and external demands. The interest in the dilemmas of school leadership supports the argument that there is unlikely to be a ‘golden rule-book or recipe for effective leadership’ (MacBeath & Myers 1999, p. 67).

One of the major dilemmas of school leadership centres on the fact that heads in England are expected to be both organisational managers and leaders of effective teaching and learning. This duality has been most clearly articulated in Hughes’ (1975) classification of secondary headship which he saw as consisting of two roles: the chief executive role and the leading professional role. Coulson (1986) has applied this classification to primary heads and demonstrated its relevance across the sector boundaries. The chief executive role includes liaison and communication,
resource handling and entrepreneurial activity, while the leading professional role covers goal setting, supervision, evaluation and the exemplification of professional values and beliefs. Both roles are important and following a period in the early 1990s, when the chief executive role was enhanced as a result of devolution of resources to the school (site-based management), the leading professional role has latterly been placed at the very heart of school leadership: There is now much more clarity and agreement about the core tasks of teaching and schooling and, therefore, about the tasks of school management. As we have seen, this has come about because of the introduction of such major policy changes as the National Curriculum and assessment and the national inspection system. One does not have to agree with every aspect of these reforms to recognise that they, together with the research and development work on effective schools and improvement, all place increasing emphasis on effective teaching and learning . . . (Bolam 1997, p. 277)

In short, despite leadership and management involving a diverse number of activities and processes and although it is differentiated in its character, instructional leadership is central to successful school leadership. Hence it becomes important for researchers and scholars to focus on the concept and to describe what it looks like in action. The latter is particularly necessary because the leadership and management literature appears to be far stronger in prescribing such leadership than in describing it.

Given these concerns and criticisms of our current
knowledge base, I now want to examine definitions of instructional leadership before moving on to consider the empirical evidence about instructional leadership. Moreover, I want to look at instructional leadership in the light of the reflections I have discussed in this section. For example, how is it socially constructed? Has it been and can it be differentiated by context, gender or school size? Does contemporary theorising embrace both theories for understanding and theories for action? What are the dilemmas and tensions of this approach to leadership? However, before addressing these questions it is necessary to develop some clarity about instructional leadership and that is the purpose of the next section. 2. Instructional leadership

To find definitions of instructional leadership it is necessary to turn to the North American literature. I will discuss three relatively recent reviews of instructional leadership by Leithwood et al. (1999), Hallinger and Heck (1997) and Blasé and Blasé (1998).

Leithwood and his colleagues (Leithwood et al. 1999) recently reviewed six approaches to school leadership. They searched four representative English language educational administration journals (two from North America, one UK-based journal and one reflecting perspectives from
Australia and New Zealand). Given the reputations of these journals it was assumed that it was ‘likely that most significant contemporary conceptions of leadership in the English-speaking world would find some expression in their contents’ (p. 7).

One of the six approaches to school leadership this review identified was

instructional leadership which: Assumes that the critical focus for attention by leaders is the behaviours of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students. (p. 8)

The emphasis on teacher behaviours which affect the growth of students is clearly the key issue, as Leithwood’s italics demonstrate. It was also noted that some versions of instructional leadership focus, additionally, on other organisational variables such as school culture because these are believed to influence teacher behaviours as well. Therefore, it is possible to distinguish between ‘narrow’ and ‘broad’ views of instructional leadership (Sheppard 1996). Broad forms encompass organisational and teacher culture issues, whereas narrow forms restrict themselves to leadership which focuses only on teacher behaviours which enhance pupils’ learning. This distinction between broad and narrow forms also implies that it is possible to differentiate between ‘direct’ and instructional leadership in schools
'indirect' instructional leadership (Kliene-Kracht 1993). Leithwood et al. also note that principals alone cannot fulfill all of a school’s need for instructional leadership.

Instructional leadership is portrayed as occurring along multiple dimensions and incorporating a number of practices. Leithwood believes that the most fully tested model of instructional leadership is the one developed by Hallinger and his associates and consists of three broad categories of leadership practice (p. 8):

• Defining the school mission
• Managing the instructional programme
• Promoting the school climate

Hallinger has subsequently developed these ideas (Hallinger & Heck 1997).

They review research between 1980 and 1995 exploring the relationship between principal leadership and pupil achievement and developed a three-fold classification of principal (headteacher) effects:

1 Direct effects—Where the principal’s actions influence school outcomes.

2 Mediated effects—Where principal actions affect outcomes indirectly through other variables.

3 Reciprocal effects—Where the principal affects teachers and teachers affect the principal and through these processes outcomes are affected. (Hallinger & Heck 1997, pp. 162–163)

Reviewing this classification Hallinger and Heck are critical of the first insofar
as those researchers who use it do not typically seek to
control for the effects of
other in-school variables such as teacher commitment, or
curricular organisation

(p. 163). The lack of attention to other factors creates a
simplistic view of head

teacher action and effects. The mediated effects model

hypothesises that leaders

achieve their effects on outcomes through ‘indirect paths’: Leadership practices contribute to the outcomes desired by
schools but the contribution is always mediated by other
people, events and organisational factors such as teacher
commitment, instructional practices or school culture. This
conceptualisation is consistent with the proposition that
leaders achieve their results primarily through other
people. (p. 167)

The reciprocal effects model presents heads as ‘enacting
leadership through a

stream of interactions’ (p. 168) through which they address
the salient features

of the school, such as pupil outcomes, staff morale or
commitment. However, in

so doing they adapt to the organisation in which they work
and change their

thinking and behaviour over time. As Hallinger and Heck
argue, this model

regards leadership as an ‘adaptive process rather than a
unitary independent L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E
A C H E R S

force’ and allows for the possibility that ‘causal
relationships may be multi

directional, change over time and even be non-linear’ (p.
168).

Hallinger and Heck conclude that mediated effects studies
yielded more con
sistent findings than did the direct effects studies. They argue that the general pattern of results drawn from their review supports the belief that principals exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and pupil achievement (p. 186). They also note that researchers in the early years of research in this domain focused on answering the question: ‘Do principals make a difference?’ More recently they have transcended the bounds of this question to try to understand ‘not only if principals have effects on school outcomes, but more particularly the paths through which such effects are achieved’ (p. 187). In their review Hallinger and Heck conclude that a primary avenue of influence appears to be in shaping the school’s direction through vision, mission and goals.

This work suggests that instructional leadership is likely to be more effective when it is conceptualised as ‘broad’, rather than ‘narrow’ because the former includes both direct and mediated (indirect) effects and increases the scope for other leaders to play a role as well as the principal or headteacher. Moreover, the broad approach implicitly recognises how social organisations operate (e.g. interpersonal and group dynamics, micro-politics, cultural norms, values and
beliefs). By contrast the narrow approach relies heavily on the individual leader’s influence and may sustain more heroic notions of leadership.

Blasé and Blasé (1998) start from the idea that instructional leadership has long been viewed by practitioners as a blend of supervision, staff development and curriculum development. They draw on Sheppard’s (1996) synthesis of the research on instructional leadership behaviours, ‘especially those linked to student achievement outcomes’ (p. 11), which take a broad perspective wherein both leaders’ and followers’ beliefs are regarded as important. Sheppard itemises the following principal behaviours as being connected to teachers’ professional growth and performance:

- framing school goals †
- communicating school goals
- supervising and evaluating instruction
- co-ordinating the curriculum
- monitoring student progress
- protecting instructional time
- maintaining high visibility*
- providing incentives for teachers
- promoting professional development † *
- providing incentives for learning

(Key: * = most influential behaviours, elementary school; †
Blasé and Blasé emphasise that promoting teachers’ professional development was the most influential instructional leadership practice at both elementary (primary) and high (secondary) school levels (p. 11).

These three reviews outline the nature and character of instructional leadership. They show, unsurprisingly, that it is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth. While distinctions can be made between broad and narrow formulations and between direct and indirect influence, all three favour a broad configuration which includes the use of direct and indirect effects. However, as both Blasé and Blasé and Leithwood et al. recognise, there is a dearth of description which ‘makes it difficult to assess the extent to which such leadership means the same thing to all those writing about it’ (Leithwood et al. 1999: 8). The lack of descriptive and empirical evidence is compounded by the reliance of these reviews on lists of characteristics and behaviours because, as argued in the previous section, lists tend to facilitate theoretical understanding, but not necessary...
ily theories for action. In other words, we need to look at the empirical evidence we have concerning instructional leadership, then compare and contrast the two sets of ideas and try to develop some theories for action.

3. Empirical evidence

There are two sources of evidence I shall draw upon in this section. The first is work on ‘how really good principals promote teaching and learning’ (Blasé & Blasé 1998). The second is a study I conducted into successful leadership in small primary schools (Southworth 1999a).

Blasé and Blasé (1998) are aware that until recently, we had little knowledge about the behaviours of effective instructional leaders in the literature (p. 11).

They therefore conducted a survey of: Over 800 teachers working in elementary, middle and high schools in the South-eastern, Midwestern and Northwestern United States. Teachers completed open-ended questionnaires on which they wrote detailed descriptions of principals’ positive and negative characteristics and exactly how such characteristics affected them and their performance in the classroom. (p. 5)

The Blasés’ (1998) findings suggest there are three interrelated aspects to effective instructional leadership behaviour. These findings are valuable, although given the cross sectional design of their research, they do not make it clear whether these findings applied equally to elementary, middle and high schools, or whether there were contextual differences. The three aspects of effective
instructional leadership are: LEADERSHIP AND HEAD TEACHERS

• Talking with teachers (conferencing)
• Promoting teachers’ professional growth
• Fostering teacher reflection

These three aspects are tied to three other head teacher behaviours that can have positive or negative effects:

• Being visible—versus interrupting and abandoning
• Praising results—versus criticising
• Extending autonomy—versus maintaining control (see p. 18 for summary)

Positive effects were associated with the use of visibility, praise and autonomy,

while ineffective principals use abandonment, criticism and control (p. 156).

Conferencing is regarded as lying at the ‘heart of instructional supervision’: Principals who are good instructional leaders develop a deep appreciation for the potential artistry of an instructional conference with a teacher . . . Such principals realise that most teachers expand their teaching range only with carefully designed support and assistance. (p. 19)

The latter point is important because the Blases believe that some principals assume that when given minimal information and assistance, most teachers can analyse their own teaching and formulate and act on it to develop their pedagogy (p. 20). Such an assumption is over optimistic and many teachers can benefit from formal, explicit support structures and systems such as conferencing.
Conferencing is described as involving knowledge and skill in the following areas:

- Classroom observation and data-gathering methods
- Teaching methods, skills and repertoires
- Understanding of the relationship between teaching and learning
- Data analysis
- Knowing how to make the conference reflective and non-threatening
- Communication skills (e.g. acknowledging, paraphrasing, summarising, clarifying and elaborating on information)
- Awareness of the stage of development, career state, levels of abstraction and commitment, learning style, concerns about innovation and background of the teacher (p. 20)

This list alone suggests that instructional leadership requires high levels of professional knowledge, skill and understanding about pedagogy, pupil learning, adult learning and human interaction. These skill and knowledge demands become even more evident when the processes of conferencing are identified.

The Blasés set out five conference strategies:

- Making suggestions
- Giving feedback
- Modelling
- Using enquiry
- Soliciting advice and opinions (pp. 20-43)

Blasé and Blasé go on to analyse staff development and teacher reflection in
similar ways. Staff development includes the study of teaching and learning,
support for teacher collaboration, peer coaching, action research and the 'appli
cation of the principles of adult growth and development to all phases of the
staff development programme' (p. 156). The development of teacher reflection
included behaviours such as: Modelling, classroom observation, dialogue, suggestion and praise. The essence of reflection, as we found, was associated with collegial enquiry, critical thinking and expanding teacher repertoires. (p. 156)

Three points emerge from the Blasés’ study. First, instructional leadership is
complex and demanding. It requires high levels of professional knowledge, skill
and understanding which we cannot assume all headteachers or other leaders
will possess. As other studies show, developing evidence-informed approaches
to leadership, management and school improvement require concomitant devel
opments in leaders' skills in handling data, colleagues (Dudley 1999; South
worth & Conner 1999; Saunders 2000) and teaching and learning (Hill 2001).

Second, because this study is based on teachers’ perspectives, the findings are
especially potent since they provide not only insights into what helps teachers to
grow, but also, what followers want and find helpful from their leaders. This
construction of instructional leadership is based on what
teachers say works for them. Third, it appears that such leadership needs to be designed as part of the
school’s organisational structures and processes rather than left to chance. This last point becomes apparent when the Blasés conclude their study by arguing for schools to become learning communities (pp. 155–167).

The second study was an investigation I recently conducted into successful leadership in small primary schools in England. The study focused on a sample of ten primary heads (8 women 2 men) working in schools with less than 150 pupils on roll and used qualitative methods. The research used a purposive sample drawing upon heads nominated by their local education authorities (LEAs) and validated by school inspection data. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with the head, two teachers and one school governor in each of the schools about the head’s leadership. I adopted a multiple perspective approach for reasons discussed in section one and because the collection of evidence from three sources was intended to reduce any bias and widen the ‘angle of observation’ (Schatzman & Strauss 1973). The interviews focused on several issues, including: interviewees’ views about the characteristics of suc
successful headteachers; how the heads led the schools’ improvement efforts; and

whether and how the heads’ influenced the quality of teaching and pupils’ learning.

The study has been reported in a number of ways (Southworth 1999a,b; Southworth 2002) and forms part of a larger project that I have been working on over the last four years. This larger project aims to develop a more differentiated view of primary school leadership by examining leadership in schools of varying size. Hence following studies of leadership in small and medium sized schools I am presently investigating leadership in large and very large primary schools to complete the research triology.

The small school study found a high level of agreement among the heads, teachers and governors as to the nature of successful headship and the findings trace the outlines of the heads’ instructional leadership. From my analysis of the three data sets (heads, teachers, & governors) I identified a number of common themes, six of which are pertinent to this discussion:

1 Working hard
2 Determination
3 Positive dispositions
4 Approachability
Teamwork

School improvers

Working hard concerns the nature of headship in small schools today. It is clear from the testimonies of the heads, their teacher colleagues and the governors that headship is very demanding. Respondents from all three groups made this point time and again. The heads acknowledged they worked hard, but did so in an uncomplaining way. They regarded it as a fact of headship, rather than something they might be able to avoid or change. As the House of Commons Education and Employment Committee of Inquiry into the role of headteachers reports, the average working week for primary heads is 55.7 hours and heads in small schools, have a teaching commitment in excess of 80% of the week (House of Commons 1998, paras. 24–25). The ten heads in my study of small schools estimated they put in similar hours and sometimes much more. However, it seems that hard work is not only unavoidable but necessary because of what the teachers and governors said. These respondents regarded their heads as having the capacity to deal with a lot of work and that this was a symbol of the headteachers’ care, concern and commitment. Hard work is not simply about being prepared to put in the hours, it is also
an emblem that the
leader is devoted to the school. INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS

Second, these heads were determined individuals. They were resolute about
the schools doing well, and appeared to work tenaciously towards increased
levels of success. When the heads gave me a tour of the school it was apparent
they had developed the quality of the school as a learning environment for the
children. Their efforts were noted by the governors and mentioned by many of
the teachers. Sometimes their ability to secure additional learning resources was
seen as another sign of their commitment to the school. Certainly the governors
and teachers recognised that their heads were ‘fighters’ because they had battled
for new or better buildings and the governors and teachers valued their heads’
perseverance and courage.

Moreover, improving the schools’ physical environments demonstrated that
the heads were not prepared to tolerate poor teaching and learning conditions
and this too had symbolic significance. Their wish to improve the learning envir
onments conveyed their unwillingness to accept second best. Many teacher col
leagues took this to mean their head had a low threshold of tolerance for poor
quality provision.
Third, all ten heads were positive people. Each believed the school could improve and achieve more because the children and the staff deserved to be successful. They were quick to acknowledge successes in the school and usually described them as resulting from the children’s or the staff’s efforts. The heads were also remarkably optimistic about the future and their schools’ prospects.

Fourth, the teachers and the governors valued the fact that their heads were approachable and accessible to them. The frequency with which this attribute was mentioned suggests that teachers in small primary schools approve of heads who are not remote, are willing to talk and listen to them and who share their ideas and plans with staff.

Fifth, the heads knew that their schools’ successes were dependent on every one pulling their weight, supporting one another and working together. This applied to all staff, including office and classroom support colleagues, but more than anything, improving the performance of the school rested on the teaching staff functioning as a combined teaching unit. Developing a team of teachers who were characterised by professional openness, a unity of purpose, clear and shared goals and educational values, consistency in teaching and planning, con
tinuity in the curriculum and agreed and implemented classroom practices were both the means and the ends of teamwork in these schools.

Consequently the heads were keen to involve deputy heads, if there was one, and/or senior teachers. The teachers too saw benefits from participating and acknowledged how effective their heads were in orchestrating teacher and staff collaboration. The heads believed that positive inter-professional relations were critical to the school’s success and that dealing with staff, parents and others were the key skill areas of leadership. In short, teamwork was a vital ingredient in improving the school.

Sixth, all of these heads were improving their schools. For some it was because the school was under-performing. For others it was a case of enhancing LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS already high levels of success. Whatever the context, none of the heads were satisfied for the school’s performance levels to remain as they were. Hence they spoke about wanting to avoid complacency within the school, of pupil results rising, of under-achievement being eliminated, the children’s attitudes to learning becoming more positive and of the school’s ethos changing for the better.

All of the heads wanted to improve on their previous best.
Although each head used a number of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, three stand out from what the heads, teachers and governors said:

- Modelling
- Monitoring
- Professional dialogue and discussion

Modelling meant the heads used their teaching as an example of what and how to do things, worked alongside staff in their classrooms, coaching staff and consciously used assemblies as occasions when they could promote and reinforce educational values and practices. As the National Primary Headteachers’ Association (NPHA) said in their evidence to the House of Commons Education and Employment Committee (1998) ‘headteachers must set standards of performance by their personal example’ (para. 21). All the heads in this study understood this and to judge from their own and colleagues’ statements, plus their school’s Ofsted inspection reports, they all did it.

Monitoring involved the heads looking at teachers’ weekly plans, visiting classrooms, examining samples of pupils’ work, observing the implementation of school policies, reviewing test and assessment information and evaluating pupil, class and school levels of performance and progress.
Professional dialogue was developed through staff meetings, preparing curricular policies together, reviewing practice, looking at pupil learning data, joint planning meetings and general teamwork. The heads also followed up visits to classrooms with informal discussions with individuals, or used questions to probe teachers’ assumptions and to promote ideas and ways forward. Sustaining teacher talk and using it as a vehicle for teacher and staff development under scored these heads’ efforts.

Complementing these three strategies were a number of school structures and systems the heads had put in place. For example, all the schools had development plans which provided direction and a focus for staff efforts. School policies and schemes of work were used as reference points for curriculum and lesson planning. Similarly, policies for teaching and learning were common and appeared to be actively used by staff. These structures and systems were both support mechanisms and different forms of media that conveyed the educational messages the heads wanted to see adopted in the schools.

Together, the leadership strategies, organisational and curricular structures and systems were the processes by which shared educational goals were INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS.
developed, high expectations established and the means by which improvements in pupils' learning outcomes and progress were realised. They were major ingredients of the heads’ instructional leadership because all of them understood headship to be about developing the quality of the pupils’ learning and enhancing pupils’ progress.

These findings complement those reported by Blasé and Blasé (1998). There is a high degree of consistency between the two studies even though they were entirely independent of one another. Professional dialogue figures prominently in both since the Blasés stress the centrality of conferencing, while within conferencing they note the importance of monitoring and modelling. The significance of organisational structures and systems is also identified in each study.

Instructional leadership can occur informally, but heads and principals also supported it with formal organisational processes. Another common thread is that there was a broad approach to instructional leadership because each study portrayed leaders influencing teachers directly and indirectly.

In the case of small schools it is reasonable to assume that heads will have stronger direct influence than those in much larger schools, where mediated
effects are more likely to be at work. However, the ten heads I studied also seem
to have been very effective in how they indirectly influenced pupil outcomes.

For example, it was noted that these heads were approachable, skilled in talking
and listening to staff, monitored classrooms, teaching and pupils’ learning, and
evaluated pupils’ achievements and progress. Given they applied these skills
consistently and continuously they may have been able, perhaps to an unusually
high degree, to bring their influence to bear on those who had to implement and
carry out planned changes and desired improvements. Expressed another way,
these heads worked directly on the indirect pathways to effectiveness. They
deployed both forms of influence knowing that when applied in combination
they were more powerful. They also ensured that in their detail they promoted
the same values, goals and end results and by co-ordinating their influencing
strategies they increased their impact in the school.

Therefore, it is possible to argue that this particular study, alongside the work
of Blasé and Blasé (1998) points to a theory of leadership effects whereby a
school leader’s success is to some degree, and possibly a significant degree,
attributable to the heads’ direct effects but particularly their mediated effects.
Also, because the heads engaged with the mediating factors, and often in a
direct and personal way, they were particularly powerful in making a difference
inside their schools. The force, frequency and effectiveness of their encounters
with staff made their influence pervasive. Their dealings with staff were
regarded as warm, fair and open and they valued individuals and groups, praised
them and worked in teams themselves. In these ways they tempered what may,
in some other circumstances, become oppressive conditions. Nevertheless, over
time, these heads appeared to be irresistible in moving, directly and indirectly,
the schools along paths they and the staff and governors wanted.
The effect of their direct and indirect effects also creates a teacher culture characterised by professional collaboration and professional learning. Such a
culture has long been associated with school improvement (Nias et al. 1989,
1992; Rosenholtz 1989; Fullan & Hargreaves 1992) and has led many
researchers and scholars to regard such a culture as enabling schools to become
learning organisations (e.g. Fullan 1993; MacBeath & Myers 1999; Southworth
2000; Silins & Mulford 2002).
Lastly, both studies point to instructional leadership requiring individuals to
be highly competent in a number of knowledge and skill areas. These include

knowledge of curricula, pedagogy, student and adult learning and skills in
change management, group dynamics and interpersonal relations and communica
tions. Also, certain personal qualities and individual attributes may be import
ant, such as high energy levels, resilience, determination, empathy and
optimism. These all have implications for the development of instructional
leaders. 4. Conclusions

The two empirical studies reviewed do not constitute a robust evidence-base for
developing instructional leadership. We therefore need many more studies of
instructional leaders to meet the demands of differentiation, as discussed in
section one, as well as those of sample size and generalisation.

In terms of the questions raised by my reflections on leadership, one was: has
instructional leadership been differentiated by context, gender or school size?

The two empirical studies show that some work has been done in this realm, but
by no means enough. Yet they do make a contribution to understanding how
instructional leadership is socially constructed by teachers in American elemen
tary and high schools and by heads, teachers and governors in small, English
primary schools. Furthermore, the studies suggest that there are many similarities despite cultural and other contextual differences.

Beyond these observations there are three other conclusions I want to highlight. One of these centres on how instructional leadership is developed. When I asked the 10 primary heads how they had developed their leadership and management practices they all said, in line with other heads, that they learned most by doing the job. Such role learning on-the-job raises two implications.

First, it may be important that anyone appointed to a headship needs to be able to demonstrate they are a continuing professional learner. That is, someone who is able to solve the myriad ‘problems’ they encounter, is sufficiently flexible to think their way around difficulties and can work things out for themselves, as well as with others. Heads need to be reflective learners who can independently work out how to deal with all the problems, issues and challenges they encounter in the course of their work. In this way, their work is a ‘course of study’ and they need to be students of their work.

Second, if leaders’ professional development is characterised by on-the-job, osmotic learning, then new heads may benefit from activities which deepen their INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS
knowledge and understanding of their context specific learning. Instead of trying
to train new knowledge into them, it may be better for them to reflect on and
analyse their implicit, even tacit professional knowledge and make their work
experiences the content of their professional learning. Such a way of creating
new knowledge might be facilitated less through content driven courses and
more through group and one-to-one activities which invite participants to share
and to develop key ideas and insights from the work they presently do and the
tasks which currently are a puzzle to them.

During the heads’ discussion of their professional development it emerged
that at least half of them had found being a deputy headteacher a frustrating role.

This is consistent with Ribbins’ research in this area (1997). Part of their frustra
tion stemmed from the lack of opportunities to exercise leadership or to develop
their skills within the school. Such feelings points toward the need for prospec
tive heads to be mentored and coached by skilled and successful leaders and for
those who are about to take up their first headship to be offered an internship
with able, instructional leaders. We can neither assume individuals are well pre
pared for their first headship, nor believe they know how to be instructional
leaders simply because they were deputy heads.

There is one other aspect of leadership development I want to highlight.

Instructional leadership requires individuals to have high levels of knowledge and understanding of curricula, pedagogy, student and adult learning. This observation has implications for the nature of leadership programmes and suggests that they include such material, alongside whatever technical knowledge they provide about management and leadership processes.

Hill (2001) has also focused on this topic stating that the ‘instructional leadership orthodoxy implies that principals should have very specific knowledge related to teaching and learning’ (p. 2). He also states that, for a variety of reasons, school leaders may lack sufficient knowledge of teaching and learning to provide adequate, let alone successful instructional leadership. Despite principals and headteachers being recruited from the teaching profession, their knowledge of teaching and learning is: Often tacit or dated knowledge, based on increasingly distant memories of a former life in the classroom. As a consequence, it is possible that the knowledge of teaching and learning possessed by many principals is more a hindrance than a help in informing the role of modern school leader. (Hill 2001: 1-2)

Also, leaders’ professional learning has frequently been directed towards a range of other management tasks. These include: managing change
and generic skills

in goal setting, planning, budgeting, marketing and human resource management

and development in order to exercise operational responsibility for tasks govern

mental reforms have devolved to schools. Hill concludes that: L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S

The last 15 years have thus been times of great change in which more and more has been expected of principals as leaders of complex organisations, but as leaders who may be less, rather than more, connected to core business of schools, namely teaching and learning. (p. 3)

However, Hill believes this cannot continue for two reasons. First, as educators

and school leaders respond to the emerging demands of knowledge societies and

learning organisations they will need to re-focus on learning. Second, as edu

cators accept and fully internalise socially constructivist views of learning, and

aim to develop in-depth learning and the acquisition of high-level, thinking

skills and problem solving abilities, new conceptions of teaching and learning

will be needed: The principal and other key members of the leadership team will need to disseminate this new knowledge and become intimately involved in rethinking the curriculum, in creating larger blocks of time for in-depth learning, in reducing the emphasis on content coverage but increasing the amount of time given to thinking skills, in promoting inter-disciplinary studies of issues and problems and in exploring ways in which new information and communication technologies can be integrated into regular classroom practices. (p. 5)

It is now imperative that school leaders develop and sustain high levels of know

ledge and understanding about teaching and learning. The implications of this
for leaders’ professional learning and development are profound. At first sight it appears to mean that even more is expected of leaders. Whether this turns out to be true will unfold over time. What is quite clear, is that leaders’ professional development needs to be very carefully examined and possibly re-conceptualised. In part, this will in England, be a major task for the National College for School Leadership, not least because the college will have to play a leading role in reviewing and, if necessary, re-shaping leadership development.

The second conclusion I want to note is that instructional leadership looks to occur when certain organisational conditions are present. These are characterised by Blasé and Blasé (1998) as those associated with learning communities. I also came to the same view in my study of heads in small primary schools. Elsewhere (Southworth 2000), I have begun to articulate what a ‘learning primary school’ involves, drawing upon research in primary schools over the last 20 years. This work has convinced me that learning schools must facilitate teachers’ pedagogic growth, since the development of their teaching skills and repertoires seems to me to be the major content area. The curriculum of learning schools should be pedagogy (Southworth 1996; 2000).
However, schools which are learning organisations are relatively advanced in instructional leadership institutions because of the kind of teacher culture they need to flourish. They require a teacher ‘culture of collaboration’ (Nias et al. 1989; Fullan & Hargreaves 1992) in which formal and informal professional dialogue is the norm and which includes challenge, debate and a willingness among all staff to address their professional differences in a calm and mature manner (Nias et al. 1992). Also, learning schools enquire into pupils’ perspectives on their learning and use these data to guide development in pedagogy and learning (Fielding et al. 1999). Such schools will also provide many opportunities for teacher mentoring, coaching and school-based professional development. There will be explicit efforts to manage professional knowledge in the school through audits of teacher strengths, skills and needs (Hargreaves 1996). The development of pedagogy will feature strongly in this and it will be both an individual and collective responsibility to enhance everyone’s teaching knowledge, skill and understanding.

Such a culture not only creates the organisational conditions for schools to become ‘teaching and learning schools’ (Southworth 2000), it should also provide
the most hospitable environment for the exercise of instructional leadership. Culture formation has to be led (Schein 1985; Nias et al. 1989, 1992). When school leaders work towards establishing a collaborative, learning culture they simultaneously create the climatic conditions for instructional leadership because professional cultures characterised by openness, trust and security appear to be the ones where teachers feel confident to become learners (Southworth 2000). Instructional leadership is, as the empirical studies show, about leading teachers’ professional learning. Finally, I want to argue that instructional leadership needs to be given even greater emphasis than previously. Given the global interest in learning organisations, school leaders as educators and leaders are uniquely placed and qualified to contribute to this development. Heads could undoubtedly teach business leaders a thing or two about running a social organisation in which staff learning is a major priority and investment. Moreover, such leadership is possibly what makes school leadership a distinctive branch of leadership practice and theorising. Far from educators being the recipients of expertise from elsewhere, now may be the time to reverse the flow and instead of being importers of expertise from outside education, we can become exporters of it as well. However, such a
development will need researchers and practitioners to forge new partnerships and alliances and for researchers to learn with and from practitioners, rather than treating schools as sites for our studies and the individuals as the objects of our enquiries. Thus, the promotion of instructional leadership has implications for practitioners, researchers and policy-makers alike and for each group to use it as an opportunity to develop and enhance their understanding, knowledge and


Coulson AA (1986) The Managerial Work of Primary School Headteachers (Sheffield Papers in Education Management, No. 48), Sheffield: Sheffield City Polytechnic.


Silins H & Mulford B (2002) Leadership, restructuring and organisational outcomes in


Southworth G (1999a) Successful Heads of Small Schools, Reading: University of Reading School of Education.


One of the most robust findings from leadership research is that context matters. Situational theories demonstrate that leaders' actions are often contingent upon environmental and contextual factors. As Leithwood, et al. (1999) say, 'out standing leadership is exquisitely sensitive to the context in which it is exercised' (p. 4).
Yet, despite this knowledge, empirical research into school leadership lacks similar levels of sensitivity to context. Writing about educational leadership too often describes or prescribes what leaders do, or should do, in a general manner without acknowledging contextual differences. Thus, some of the literature about school leadership is undifferentiated and indiscriminate. If we accept that context matters, then research must begin to develop a more fastidious and refined appreciation of the relationships between actors and their theatres of operation.

I am not saying that we cannot generalise about school leadership, nor am I arguing for uniqueness and particularity. I am, though, counselling against universality and suggesting that researchers need to take greater account of context than has so far been the case. Indeed, in my own work I have always made it plain that I have studied primary school leaders (e.g. Southworth, 1987; 1995; 1998) in order to respect school sector differences and to avoid what might otherwise be an imprecise discussion of school leadership. More recently I have embarked on a series of three empirical studies which aim to compare and contrast leadership in small, medium and large primary schools. These studies are
intended to refine our understanding of school leadership by examining differences within the primary sector.

This chapter focuses on the first of these three studies, an investigation into headship in small primary schools in England. Small schools in England (and usually elsewhere too) are largely found in rural settings and given policymakers’ pre-occupation with urban schooling, small rural schools are not given a high priority. Consequently, many staff in small schools feel overlooked and under-valued. The same is probably true in other school systems such as in the USA and South Africa. Perhaps it is only where there are very large numbers of small schools, as in New Zealand and Wales, or where recruitment to small and isolated schools is a challenge, as in parts of Australia and Scandinavia, that they are afforded a higher profile. The research had two main aims: to explore how headteachers led their schools’ improvement efforts; and to identify the characteristics and strategies the heads associated with effective school leadership.

This research was necessary for six reasons. First, no major study has been conducted into primary school headship in England and Wales. Although there
are approximately 18,300 primary schools in England and Wales, no substantial investigation has been mounted to examine the work and skills of those who lead them. Moreover, not only do primary schools comprise the largest number of schools, but they are also the most diverse in nature. However, the educational leadership research literature does not reflect this diversity. Thus, in line with my opening remarks, there is a real need to examine leadership in different settings and contexts.

Second, in the absence of any large-scale studies, our understanding of primary headship relies on two types of study. First, there have been a number of descriptive studies usually investigating how heads use time in school (Clerkin, 1985; Harvey, 1986). Yet, there is only one, close-up, observational study of a primary head at work in his school for an academic year (Southworth, 1995). Second, there are numerous prescriptive commentaries focusing on how heads should approach headship (Whitaker, 1983; Dean, 1987; Day, et al., 1998). Both types of accounts have yielded limited perspectives on headship.

The first type looks at only one aspect of the role, while the second often does not differentiate between school contexts.

Third, such studies as have been conducted into primary
headship are now dated (e.g., Coulson, 1986; Mortimore & Mortimore, 1991). Likewise, the insights into school leadership gleaned from school effectiveness research are rapidly ageing. Moreover, studies conducted during the 1990s (e.g., Southworth, 1995a; Webb & Vulliamy, 1996) tended to focus on how heads responded to implementing national reforms (e.g., the National Curriculum and the introduction of self-managing schools), but less on how heads were improving their schools. Also, these studies are based upon heads’ perceptions of their roles and while they provide valuable insights into their practical theories and experiential knowledge, they do not focus on the leadership of school improvement, nor on what this looks like to those headteachers who are accomplishing it with success.

Fourth, it is widely recognised that school leadership matters. One of the most robust findings of school effectiveness research is that purposeful leadership by the headteacher is crucial to the school’s high performance. This finding is now supported in England by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted, 1999) inspection data. In England all schools are inspected by
external teams of accredited inspectors who judge the quality of the school and the effectiveness of the leadership and management. Inspection evidence influences national policy making and has played a part in guiding central government’s work on identifying and preparing aspiring heads, the development of experienced headteachers and the establishment of a national college for school leadership. However, although school leadership is now accepted as centrally important, we lack contemporary insights into what successful primary headship involves. Nor have we investigated with any rigour what effective practitioners have to say about their leadership, or analysed the key characteristics these leaders associate with improving their schools. In short, although leadership matters, we have yet to learn from those who are effective leaders of improving or high performing primary schools how they actually conceptualise their work.

Fifth, because we have not studied primary headteachers in much depth we do not know how some heads have become successful leaders. We urgently need to know how their leadership skills were acquired and developed and which professional learning experiences were of critical importance to them.

Insights into these areas would enable two dimensions of
leadership preparation
to be developed. In the first instance, it is very likely that the accounts of suc
cessful heads' professional development will enable the identificaiton of leader
ship potential to become clearer. In terms of the second dimension, leadership
training could identify the workplace, on-the-job, professional learning experi
ences prospective heads should be offered and outline how they might be mentored, coached and their leadership repertoires extended and enhanced.
Furthermore, given the diversity of primary schools, attention to headteachers'
professional development needs to be related to the effects of context.
Sixth, only when we have undertaken and reported detailed, close-up studies
of heads and principals, which are developed cumulatively, synthesised and
related to the findings of large scale surveys, will we have robust national per
spectives. Once we have articulated national studies, conducted in the light of
research in other countries, we can then orchestrate sensible and sensitive inter
ational comparative projects. Such a systematic project is necessary because
too much of the current interest in educational leadership is based on too little
evidence. The evidence-base needs to grow, building on previous work in order
to create valid national images of leadership which can then be compared and contrasted internationally.

Given these reasons and with funding from the Teacher Training Agency, which at the time had responsibility for headteacher training and preparation, I embarked on a study of successful leaders in small primary schools. In this chapter I will report my findings and discuss the significance of them to our understanding of school leadership. However, it is not my intention simply to make this chapter a report of this research. Rather, I want to use this particular enquiry into leadership in small schools to produce an evidence-based picture from which emerging issues can be identified and grounded theories about school leadership developed. Literature review

A literature search of both national and international databases was conducted. The national search used the British Educational Index (BEI) and the international survey concentrated on ERIC and the international ERIC since the latter included coverage of Canadian and Australian sources. There were two major predetermined search parameters: the phase of schooling (primary/elementary); and school size.

The time scale for the search was set at 10 years. However, the latter parameter was
breached because the initial searches yielded so little material. I extended the time scale by a further ten years to see if there was earlier relevant work. Once sources were identified I also scanned reference lists of relevant articles. This tactic helped to identify further studies for consideration and can suggest new keywords and authors (Evans & Benefield, 2001). Key journals were also manually searched to identify articles that might have been missed in the database searches.

These searches produced studies which reported on small schools in a number of countries, including: Australia, Canada, England, Greece, Iceland, New Zealand, Scotland, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the USA (Appalachia, Alaska, Nebraska, Texas) and Wales. Other studies referred less specifically to areas of South America, the Caribbean countries and rural Africa. The searches showed that the literature on small schools is largely concerned with two sets of related issues:

- viability;
- educational effectiveness.

Viability concerns were demonstrated by articles focusing on the following topics: sustainability; school closures and survival issues; cost-effectiveness and value for money; the impact of national and/or local policies on small schools;
overcoming perceived disadvantages of remoteness and isolation (e.g., twinning, clustering, federations, networking). Educational effectiveness concerns largely covered: curricular provision (manageability, coverage, breadth, implementing national reforms), and school size effects on achievement; and dealing with mixed-age classes of pupils.

These two themes are constant in the literature and continue today. For example, following the completion of the first four year cycle of inspections of schools in England (1994–98) by Ofsted, inspectors have used the data to compare the achievements and quality of education of small schools with larger ones. Small schools were defined as those with fewer than 100 pupils on roll.

The inspectors are aware that bald comparisons are problematic since the majority of small schools are in relatively affluent areas, with above average socio-economic indicators. They note that small schools are strongly represented in the top 100 performing schools (in English, mathematics and science tests) between 1996 and 1998: A significantly greater number than might have been expected on purely statistical terms have been in the top 100 each year . . . By contrast, there was also a higher than expected proportion of very small schools in the lowest scoring schools between 1996 and 1998. (HMI,
Small schools were judged to provide the full range of knowledge, skills and understanding required by every subject in the National Curriculum. Also, with the exception of the provision for under-fives, the curriculum of small schools is generally at least as broad and balanced as that of larger schools (HMI, 1999, p. 14). As inspectors state elsewhere: Pupils in small schools are not disadvantaged in comparison with those in larger schools simply because of the size of school. Small schools are capable of providing an effective education and many are among the most successful schools in the country. (OfSTED, 1999, p. 81)

This finding is consistent with earlier research which showed that small schools are not significantly different from their larger counterparts in the content of their curriculum, nor in how they teach it (Galton & Patrick, 1993).

Inspectors also report on the quality of leadership and management in schools. Of these matters the inspectors said that headteachers of small schools provided clear educational direction for their schools, although in line with schools in general “there are weaknesses in the leadership in about one school in seven” (HMI, 1999). Furthermore: Good management and good teaching are, understandably, the two most significant characteristics of successful small schools. These two characteristics are uniquely combined in the role of the small school head so that his or her influence is a more than usually important factor in determining the quality of the school. Where the head is effective in both the teaching and the management roles, a virtuous circle of
benefits accrue to the school: change and development can be achieved more quickly, the head is able to lead by example with any new initiative and is well placed, from first hand knowledge, to assess priorities for training and spending. This circle can easily be broken, however; a weak or absent head can quickly trigger a downward spiral with consequent loss of morale and reduced quality of education. (HMI, 1999, p. 16) LEADERSHIP AND HEADS

The inspectors conclude that the head of a small school is of paramount importance to the success of the school because of her/his more than usual direct influence on the quality of teaching and standards achieved. Overall, the inspectors say of small schools that higher unit costs notwithstanding, “a good case emerges for the place of small schools in the education system as a whole when the quality of their educational performance is added to the broader contribution they make to their communities” (p. 16).

The English school inspectors’ comments are congruent with research in North America. Cotton’s (1997) review of US research into school size, school climate and student performance deals with whether small schools are better than larger ones. Although the review is complicated by the fact that researchers in the US have not agreed what constitutes a small or large school, Cotton’s summary of findings suggests that:

• academic achievement in small schools is at least equal - and often superior - to that of large schools;
• student attitudes toward school are more positive than in larger schools;

• student social behaviour is more positive in small schools;

• levels of extra-curricular participation are much higher in small schools;

• students have a greater sense of belonging in small schools;

• teacher attitudes to their work and their administrators are more positive in small schools;

• students and staff generally have a stronger sense of personal efficacy in small schools. (Cotton, 1997, p. 12-14)

Interesting and important as these findings are, they do not explicitly tell us whether and how principals of small schools influence such outcomes. Indeed, there were relatively few articles that directly and strongly focused on school leadership in small schools. Moreover, those studies I found which focused on school leadership tended to dwell on the challenges of being a leader of a small school and not what makes them, or their schools, ‘successful’. For instance, Dunning (1993) focused on the ‘double load’ problem of the teaching head. The concept of heads of small schools carrying a ‘double load’ was first expressed by the Gittins Report (CACE, 1967) which focused on primary schooling in Wales, where a third of all primary schools have less than 100 pupils on roll.

Dunning examined how educational reforms had impacted on the double load.
He observed that, as a consequence of national reforms in the 1980s and 1990s,
teaching heads in small schools had experienced an expansion of their responsibilities. Teaching heads now have to demonstrate a much more sophisticated technical competence in their teaching, while dealing with the same teaching load and new management commitments which are as demanding as those of non-teaching heads in larger schools (p. 82).

Dunning essentially makes two points. First, that neither the special circumstances of small school heads, nor those of the schools they manage have usually attracted much sympathetic attention on the part of reforming politicians or central administrators (p. 79). Second, despite the early identification of the problem of the ‘doubly loaded’ teaching head, 30 years later the bipartite role remains a characteristic phenomenon of most small primaries and little has been done to alleviate the ‘demanding task’ which Gittins (CACE, 1967) recognised teaching headship to be (p. 80). Given all the educational reforms which have occurred since then, Dunning (1993) concludes that it is questionable whether heads of small schools should still be expected to work under many of the
'double load' factors which were recognised as major encumbrances so many years ago (p. 87).

These points are echoed in two other studies. Hayes (1996) interviewed six primary heads in England and found that they were attracted to small school headship because it offered the opportunity: to go on teaching; to be their own boss; to fulfil a vision; and to ‘make a mark’ (pp. 381–3). However, the realities of headship were that the pressure of work threatened even the job satisfaction gained through continued interaction with children. After a time in post, each head accepted that it was impossible to maintain high standards in every area of the job (p. 386). Despite their common belief about what a small school headship could offer, they had to concede that they were sometimes unable to cope with its many demands.

Hayes then explored what this meant for the heads and argued that while trying to achieve success, they also had to hide their shortcomings from parents and other stakeholders outside the school, in order to avoid harming the school’s, and their own, reputations. In fact, these heads appeared to work so hard to conceal their shortcomings that they sometimes became exhausted. In turn, this exhaustion
created dissatisfaction, due to fatigue and a diminished ability to cope. They then worked even harder to restore their elusive sense of success, until they were unable to offer anything more to the job (p. 387). According to Hayes, they felt good about themselves only when they did everything well, but the strain of doing everything well reduced the extent to which they experienced a sense of self-esteem. Feeling positive about themselves as teachers became increasingly difficult; the heavy demands of being a teaching head meant they sometimes had to sacrifice a central aspect of their professional identity – being an effective teacher – in order to cope with the managerial side of the job (p. 388).

In short, teaching heads sometimes have the worst of both worlds. In trying to do both aspects of the role well, they sometimes do neither and thus experience a profound sense of dissatisfaction with their efforts. Thus, Hayes’ analysis transcends previous thinking about the ‘doubly loaded’ head. He argues that the workload pressures and expectations can be so acute that they become a source of professional strain and personal dissatisfaction with one’s professional self.

Waugh’s (1999) study of 11 headteachers aimed to examine how heads in primary schools of different sizes responded to educational changes. All of the
heads experienced a conflict between their desire to teach and the need to underL E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S take administrative duties (p. 22). Yet, this was experienced more strongly by the small school heads than those in larger schools. The heads of small schools tended to maintain that they did not have sufficient time to manage their schools properly, given their heavy teaching loads. As one respondent said: 'When I grow up I want to be a headteacher' This person did not think he was a headteacher at the moment, but rather a 'class teacher and an administrator' (p. 30).

In common with the Ofsted inspection evidence cited above, Waugh states that heads of small schools have certain advantages over large schools when implementing change, notably:

• the fact that the head is responsible for teaching a large proportion of the children means that s/he can implement curricular change directly;

• the limited size of staff means that few people need to be persuaded of the need for change and all can easily be involved (p. 32).

Waugh also acknowledges that heads of larger schools have certain advantages, for example, they share their workloads and delegate responsibilities and are better able to monitor change in the school because they do not have class teaching responsibilities (p. 32).
Together these studies suggest that although heads of small primary schools may have no unique management tasks to perform, nevertheless, their management and class teaching tasks are generally affected by factors which in combination may be unique to small primary schools (Wallace, 1988, pp. 16–17). The job of headship in a small primary school seems to be distinctive insofar as the context in which management tasks have to be carried out is specific to small schools (p. 18). This context creates the organisational conditions whereby tensions exist between heads’ teaching commitments and leading the school (Day, et al., 2000, p. 162) and these tensions can often be acute and corrosive to an individual’s sense of professional efficacy.

While these are significant findings, it should not mask the fact that remarkably little work appears to have been conducted into school leadership in small, primary/elementary schools. When this material is categorised into articles, which are research-based, and those which are commentary oriented, the amount of empirical work into leadership in small primary schools becomes very meagre indeed. Clearly, there is a lack of research into the role and work of heads and principals, particularly in terms of leading school improvements and
the systematic reporting of leaders’ perceptions and concerns.

Furthermore, as I argued in the introduction, unless and until the data on school leadership, and in this case headship and principalship, expands then we will have only a limited, if not impoverished base on which to draw comparisons between schools of different sizes within any school system, let alone between systems on an international scale. Indeed, the growing interest in comparative studies in educational leadership (e.g., MacBeath, 1998; Dimmock & Walker, 2000; Hallinger & Kantamara, 2000; Cheng, 2000; Bredeson, 2000) argues for more painstaking and careful studies, while also revealing how much differences matter. For example, Riley and MacBeath (1998) state that it was because of the international nature of their project that differences in context and culture came to the surface (p. 140). These differences sharpened their awareness of how leadership is shaped by socio-economic and political forces and explains why they are critical of the notion of leadership ‘recipes’ because there is “no one package for school leadership, no one model to be learned and applied in unrefined forms for all schools, in all contexts” (p. 141).
If there are grounds for rejecting a formulaic approach to leadership, then policy-makers and practitioners alike should find it useful to look at teaching principals in several countries and compare how their different organisational contexts influence their role conceptions and actions. For instance, do principals in, say, rural Australia, Canada, New Zealand or Norway have similar or different amounts of non-contact time with pupils? How do they use their discretionary time when not required to teach? These are obvious questions, but they may reveal significant resource issues.

However, international comparisons need to be treated with care. Dimmock and Walker (2000) argue that while internationalism in education is desirable, caution needs to be exercised to avoid superficial comparisons being drawn. As they say: “such comparisons can be fatuous and misleading without thorough understanding of the contexts, histories and cultures within which they have developed” (p. 144). They make a good case for comparative studies, noting that educational leadership lags behind conceptual and epistemological trends and events already taking place in business management and cross-cultural psychology. Also, comparative studies should reduce the “ethnocentricity underlying
theory development, empirical research and prescriptive argument” in educa
tional leadership because “Anglo-American scholars continue to exert a dispro-
portionate influence on theory, policy and practice” (p. 145). Yet they also warn
about the dangers of “cultural borrowing” (p. 147). Policy-makers are increas-
ingly adopting policy blueprints fashioned in different countries without giving
consideration to their cultural origins or fit with their intended implementation
context. In other words, we need to go “beneath the veneer of similitude” (Bre
deson, 2000, p. 3) and consider differences as well.

Much the same arguments are advanced by comparativists themselves.

Watson (1998) in his presidential address to the British Comparative and Inter-
national Education Society sets out his view of the field, describing it as a form
of “social cartography” (p. 20) and concludes that truly international studies will
not simply compare nation states with one another, but might introduce: Other categories for grouping countries and societies, for example, Buddhist, Christian (Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox), Hindu, Islamic, ex-colonial (British, French, Portuguese); federal societies; small states and island communities, and so on. (pp. 23-24)

Watson notes that what is happening at the grass roots in educational systems is
often overlooked because many comparative and international studies really
only deal with macro-level issues. Watson believes one should undertake con
textualised research at the lowest possible level by observing schools and indi
viduals within those schools in relationship to the local community (p. 24).

It seems, then, that comparativists and leadership researchers alike are
arguing for greater differentiation and more sophisticated awareness of contexts
and cultures. Furthermore, increased sensitivity to these concerns needs to take
place at the macro and micro levels. These lines of thinking not only justify
qualitative studies of leadership in different settings and types of schools, but
they also provide a rationale for developing portraits of leadership which can
then be contrasted nationally and compared internationally.

Therefore, in addition to establishing in this section that there is a shallow
pool of knowledge about leadership in small primary schools and thus a case for
conducting further empirical work, such studies should not only enhance the
knowledge-base within the country of origin, but also across national borders.

Globalisation of education and of educational leadership should increase not
diminish understanding of contexts and local settings.

Given these ideas, I now turn to my study. In the next section I outline the
research methods and sample, then I will present the main
findings and follow this up with a section discussing the emerging issues, before offering my conclu
sions. Research methods and sample

This particular study focused on a sample of ten primary heads (8 women, 2 men) working in schools with less than 150 pupils on roll and used qualitative methods. The research used a purposive sample drawing upon heads nominated by their local education authorities (LEAs) because they were seen as successful school leaders. This was validated by school inspection data. Nominated heads were invited to participate and, given their agreement, I spent one day in each of their schools conducting the fieldwork.

Fieldwork consisted of an initial tour of the school with the head so s/he could highlight any context specific issues they wished to be noted and for me to familiarise myself with the school as a setting for their leadership. The tour was followed-up by a semi-structured interview with the head lasting approximately one and a half-hours. I next interviewed two teachers and one school governor in each of the schools. Following these interviews I met with the head again to see if s/he had anything further to add, or to follow-up lines of enquiry which had emerged during the day. I adopted a multiple perspective approach because too
much of existing research has relied too heavily on heads as the primary source of data (Day, et al., 2000). Collecting evidence from three sources was intended to reduce any bias and widen the ‘angle of observation’ (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

Immediately after each visit I made detailed field notes about the school, my impressions of the head, staff and governors, the points they had made, the tone of their comments and the emphases they had stressed. As the fieldwork progressed I also drafted research memos to myself setting out my reflections and ideas. When all the data were collated I proceeded to formally analyse them.

The questions provided one framework for analysing the data and I sorted the comments accordingly. Emerging themes were identified, re-analysed and validated. In the following section I will report the major findings.

When we toured the school site and buildings the heads described the school as a context for their work and explained past and present challenges and successes.

Each school was different. For example, one was located in a very isolated rural area; one was a ‘listed’ (i.e., historical) building dating from the 15th century;
another was surrounded by high rise apartments in a densely populated urban area characterised by unemployment and poverty; while others were in suburban settings, or village locations. The sample of schools also reflected a range of socio-economic circumstances.

As the heads showed me around I saw new or refurbished entrance areas, halls, and classrooms they had created. Their attention to the physical state of the schools revealed that they wanted the best possible learning environments for the pupils. Hence I was shown alterations to teaching areas, new libraries, computer suites, playground facilities and told about imaginative uses of teaching spaces. The heads also made it plain they were keenly aware of the school as a setting for their leadership. They told me about the school’s history and how it had come to be what it was today. Each described in detail what the school was like when they started their headship. All of them demonstrated that their priorities and actions depended on the school’s circumstances. In other words, the heads tacitly recognised that leadership was contingent upon where you are and who you are working with.

During the tours the heads showed how aware they were of colleagues’ and
helpers since everyone was noticed and acknowledged. Interpersonal relations were a major feature of their work and they executed them with a transparent sense of care and consideration for others. Also, every school relied on extra contributions from voluntary helpers and the heads were plainly able at enlisting and orchestrating this additional support. This was recognised in the schools’ Ofsted inspection reports, which stated that leadership and management in the schools were good, very good or excellent, that professional relationships were positive and that there was much evidence of teamwork. Also, the heads had well-founded views about learning, clear visions for the schools’ futures and a good grasp of the critical actions necessary to improve the schools. Becoming a headteacher asked why they became heads most acknowledged that they wanted the responsibility headship offered. In common with the heads Hayes’ (1996) studied, they typically liked the idea of ‘running their own school’. They wanted to see for themselves if they could meet the challenge of being a successful school leader and whether they could implement and achieve their educational beliefs.

They saw the role as both empowering and a personal challenge. Empower
ing because they had the authority and power to determine what their schools should be like and the direction they should be heading in. Challenging because now the responsibility was theirs and they must prove to the schools' stakeholders that they really could make a difference. Equally, they also had to prove this to themselves and now operationalise what they believed in. What is headship like?

When asked about their experience of headship each mentioned at some point that headship was very hard work. On occasion they found the role tiring because of dealing with so many people and tasks. However, the most demanding feature of their work were the simultaneous and dual demands of being head and teacher: It is exhausting teaching and headteaching. Also, given their reasons for wanting to become heads, they were striving to meet their own goals, to their own standards and on two counts - when teaching and when leading the school. They had high expectations of all teachers, including themselves and wanted to be successful as heads. Given what they said and the passion with which they spoke, they were driven by their own high expectations of themselves and their strong needs to succeed. Therefore, the role may be demanding for three related reasons:
they had to meet the expectations of all they served and
led;

they were doubly loaded, being both heads and having
teaching duties to perform, which for some were very
substantial class teaching responsibilities;

they had to meet their own high expectations and
ambitions.

Thus they were under pressure from a series of sources -
the dual situation of

head and teaching, from stakeholders and themselves.

LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERS IN SMALL SCHOOLS

The best features of headship - the job satisfiers - were

seeing the children

achieve and make progress, plus working with adults and

teamwork: The best bits (of headship) are the children . . .

. Seeing children’s progress and also seeing the staff’s

satisfaction. (ht 4) The best bits are going into

classrooms, sharing the children’s successes. (ht 5) It is

all about the children, the growth of the school and the

collegiate feel in the school. (ht 6)

The job dissatisfiers were: The long hours and continuous

nature of headship - there is a neverendingness to

headship. There used to be a time when there were 'busy

periods' during the year, but now it is all year long. (ht

1) Not enough time, not enough money and the external

agenda. Dealing with someone else’s agenda is difficult. (ht

8) The fact that there is never enough time to do things

properly - you have to run to keep up - shifting the

paperwork. (ht 9)

When asked to characterise headship each offered a few key

words which graphically summarised what it felt like to be a headteacher:

Diverse - rich, varied, fragmented. (ht 1) You are in the

middle of things - at the heart of things - there is an

immediacy about it. (ht 2) Juggling time, money, and

loyalties - between home and school. (ht 3) It’s way of

life. (ht 6) LEADERSHIP IS A LIVING PROCESS . . . headship is constantly
developing. (ht 7)

These comments are consistent with other studies into primary headship and, indeed, headship in general. For example, another recent qualitative study into headship in primary, secondary and special schools found that heads characterised the role as: Highly variable, involving them in covering a wide range of issues and topics, which they often dealt with in rapid order and they had become accustomed to switching from one thing to another . . . They also understood that the work was never-ending and required dedication and commitment. The role was stressful and sometimes exhausting. (Southworth, Pocklington & Weindling, 1998, p. 105) Professional development

Asked about their professional development six stated that over their time in headship they had grown in confidence. Five of them had been provided with formal mentors, but this process was not rated as highly beneficial. Instead benefits arose from ‘informal’ mentors or professional friends, while five spoke about the value of belonging to local headteacher support groups, school clusters and membership of LEA headteacher networks.

Although all of the heads had one or more colleagues to whom they could turn for advice, or use as a ‘sounding board’, they acknowledged that most of their professional and role learning was done on the job: Most of my learning has been doing the job, living it. Meeting problems and working through them. (ht 5) I learned on my own. (ht 9)

All of them had an implicit belief in self-development. They saw themselves as
developing and valued professional learning. Many valued off-site courses and in-service programmes, but mostly their development as headteachers was through experiential learning. What characterised their growth as school leaders was how much they had learned from doing the job, meeting the challenges thrown up by their schools’ circumstances and dealing with whatever they encountered. Learning the role was very largely an osmotic process.

Perhaps then it is not surprising that for at least half of these heads, one of the significant developments that had occurred was the growth in their confidence and sense of self. The ability to cope and survive the trials and challenges of being a leader developed their self-esteem and self-image as a headteacher. School improvement

All the heads believed their schools were improving and they employed a range of strategies to achieve this growth. All spoke about using their teaching as an example: Throughout I have drawn heavily on my teaching and that has been hugely important with the staff. They know I have done in my teaching what they are being asked to do. (ht 2)

Another strategy common to all was monitoring. This took a number of forms including formal and informal approaches, headteacher and peer observation of
classrooms, examining pupils’ work and learning outcomes and scrutinising teacher plans: I go around nearly every single day. I’m monitoring a lot – informally mostly, but sometimes formally. I’m looking at what the pupils are doing. I make lots of mental notes and follow these up. For instance, today I saw an SEN group without assistance. I’ll see if that happens again on Monday. I teach on Fridays and the staff like that, they see I am still a teacher colleague. Every week I take in teachers’ plans, I check these are being implemented, or find out why not. We look at pupils’ reading ages twice a year. (ht 5) I do a lot of classroom observation. At least once a week I observe a classroom. I also get formative feedback from the teachers’ weekly plans and summative information from tests. All this helps us to detect trends and concerns. My role is listening, watching, identifying issues and taking these to the staff and deciding together what to do. (ht 10)

From much that was said it was clear the heads prized professional dialogue.

Staff discussions were viewed as valuable ways in which teacher expectations could be raised, pedagogic assumptions challenged, greater consistency between classrooms developed and a common vision for improvement in teaching and learning established and sustained. However, while professional talk was understood to be necessary to improve the school, it was not seen as sufficient. These heads claimed to have devoted a lot of time and effort to putting in place and developing a series of organisational and curricular structures and systems to support improvement efforts and to ensure quality in teaching and learning, including:
• School development planning
• Target setting
• Analysis of pupil learning data
• Evaluation of pupil, cohort, key stage and school performance levels
• School policies for learning and teaching
• Curriculum policies
• Assessment and marking policies
• Monitoring of policies
• Weekly planning by teachers who set out clear, explicit learning objectives for the pupils
• Staff meetings
• Curriculum managers'/leaders' roles

All the heads during their interviews mentioned teamwork. They were keenly aware of the importance of teacher collaboration, of the staff becoming a cooperative group in which individuals supported one another and of them acting as a combined teaching unit. As one said: Relations are critical. (ht 7)

Their comments about school improvement illuminated a number of themes. All regarded school improvement as the major part of their role. As each interview drew to a close no one suggested that the emphasis placed on school improvement during the interviews was an inappropriate one, or one which misrepresented the role. Tacitly all of these heads understood that
first and foremost

headship was about developing the quality of the pupils’
learning and enhancing
pupils’ progress.

No head relied on a single approach to school improvement, rather they
adopted a variety of strategies to influence the practice of
teachers and class
room support staff. Most commonly they monitored what was
happening in the
classrooms and across the school. They were very keen to
gather information
about what was happening inside classrooms and concentrated
on the received
curriculum, as well as the planned and the taught
curriculum. In other words, all
of the heads were using an evidence-informed approach to
improvement.

They had also put in place a range of other structures and
systems to support
school improvement. Most telling, however, seemed to be the
introduction and
adoption of policies for teaching and/or learning. These
took on central import
ance in most of the schools. Some of the heads had used
them as the foundation
for improving their schools and others had made them their
touchstones for eval

LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERS HIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS

uating quality since the policies established criteria for
effective teaching and
learning.
Integral to policy development and planning processes were staff discussions.

Sustaining teacher talk and using it as a vehicle for teacher and staff development underscored almost everything these heads were doing. Talk enabled shared understandings to be developed, levels of awareness and expectations raised and common approaches to become established. The heads presented themselves as skilful at questioning colleagues’ assumptions and in probing complacency if they encountered it.

As far as the heads were concerned much of the policy and planning work undertaken in each school was intended to help staff. What the heads described can be interpreted as putting in place a series of support systems for teachers.

Moreover, several had obtained additional teaching resources for staff, be it new classrooms, materials, or equipment, such as computers. Undoubtedly, they were very concerned to ensure that the teachers had the necessary tools to do the job well. Leadership

Their responses to being asked what lessons they had learned about school leadership fell into four categories. Overwhelmingly the most important set, in terms of the number of times the heads mentioned it was working with others,
teamwork and sharing leadership. Second, was the need for heads to be forward looking. Third, was being knowledgeable and leading by example. The fourth set was composed of a diverse range of points made just once or twice by respondents (e.g., there are various ways to lead, headship is lonely).

Asked about their strengths as leaders they emphasised the need to work hard, to be resilient and committed. They also spoke about their communication skills, including listening, as well as dealing diplomatically and patiently with adults and children. Invited to say what they saw as the key characteristics of successful leaders they said:

- Relationships [4]
- You have to be a good teacher and lead by example [4]
- Having a vision [3]
- Respected [2]
- Determination and strength [2]
- Committed [2]
- Positive [2]
- Knowing what is going on across the school
- Reliable
- Adaptable and flexible
- Good communicator
- Know where you are going
• Must think of the children
• Deal with and manage change
• Willingness to work “bloody hard”

Taken together, these points show that the respondents regarded headship as a role in which you needed to be enthusiastic, positive, determined and hard working. Yet, because they worked with colleagues and regarded teamwork as vital to the school’s success and organisational health, they were alert to staff needs. Therefore, they had learned that leaders must be sensitive to others, value and involve them, as well as encourage them to take a lead. Consequently, leadership was understood as multi-faceted because the role covered many professional and organisational issues.

What also emerged was a range of leadership ‘orientations’ which portrayed headship as being concerned with maintenance, relations, change, and survival:

Maintenance relates to the heads’ comments about being organised, using time wisely and establishing common practices, systems and structures in the school. They clearly recognised that things had to be managed and that transactional leadership mattered.

They were acutely aware that leadership was relational – it was about
working with people. Creating and sustaining productive, professional relations within a small group of staff who worked in close proximity alongside one another was always uppermost in their minds. In small schools no one could be detached from anyone else and everyone was reliant on others. Professional interdependence was vital to establish and sustain because it created organizational resilience, vitality and growth.

Yet while positive relations had to be sustained, staff also needed to change and hone their practices. Sometimes this had involved major changes; more commonly it involved incremental development. Nevertheless, continuity was less acceptable than change because the heads knew that successful schools were both moving and improving ones.

The survival image originates from headship being hard work. Words such as determination, strength, struggle, fight and battle were used by several interviewees. There was a general recognition that you had to be tenacious, as well as sometimes direct and frank with colleagues. Moreover, given that these schools did not have lavish funds, many of the heads had fought for additional resources for the school. All this effort took its toll on them and all, at some stage, acknowledged they became fatigued and needed to pace.
themselves. The survival image is both about the school struggling through to success and the heads personally coping with the many and varied challenges they encountered. Thus, there are some echoes of Hayes’ (1996) research findings about dealing with the demands of the job.

Leadership itself was largely understood as involving three interlocking aspects. First, it is about looking forward as the heads’ comments on vision demonstrate. Leaders provide a sense of direction for the school. Second, leaders manage change; they are school developers. They saw themselves and their schools as moving forward, recognised that this process had to be led and managed, and wanted the children and staff to achieve as much as they could. They knew they needed to maintain the school and manage it, but they were mostly concerned with developing and improving the schools. Third, the process of leading rested on the power of example. Leading through one’s professional example, be it as a class teacher, drawing on their knowledge of the curriculum and children, or through their attitudes to change, improvement and leadership, lay at the core of their work.
The lists of characteristics also show that leadership according to these head teachers was neither mono-dimensional nor monochrome. Leadership involved many qualities and skills and no single style was favoured by the heads, nor thought to be appropriate.

Many were aware that their leadership had to suit the circumstances they faced at any one time. Also, leadership was not only varied, but richly so. It was about working with others, which could be fun, frustrating, challenging and rewarding. It involved dealing with teachers, support staff, governors, parents and community representatives. Yet the heads were most strongly anchored by their responsibilities for the pupils. At the very heart of so much that they said was a relentless concern for the children and their progress. Teacher data

No teacher dissented from the view that their headteachers were successful school leaders. They attributed much of the schools’ success to their heads’ stewardship. They described their heads as hardworking, approachable, collaborative, determined, knew what was going on, were good listeners, organised, dedicated and led by example. The teachers’ comments also showed that they believed their heads to have influenced their own classroom practices through a
combination of:

- the heads’ monitoring and knowledge of what was happening around the school and inside classrooms;

- the heads’ own teaching practice, behaviour and attitudes towards the children, which were seen as a model of what to do;

- discussion and talk with colleagues, including the head, since this developed ideas and teaching knowledge. Governor data

The governors also believed their heads’ were doing a good job. They spoke warmly and positively about the heads throughout the interviews. They appreciated their efforts, their appetite for hard work and their achievements. While the LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS general tenor of their comments was consistent with what the teachers said, the governors laid greater stress than the teachers on two specific aspects of the heads’ work:

- how the heads had enhanced the schools’ reputations and standing with parents;

- how well the heads worked with the governors. Therefore, the governors were aware that external and community relations were important elements of running a successful school.

When asked why they thought the heads were successful leaders four governors emphasised that it was because they never lost sight of the children, others mentioned the heads’ care and concern for the pupils and how the heads put the
children first. The governors also believed that the heads’ capacity to work hard was an important factor. More than the teachers, the chairs of governors were aware of the administrative load headteachers had to shoulder. The volume of paperwork – forms, documentation, finances, correspondence etc. – was men tioned by several governors, along with their appreciation of the heads’ abilities to deal with all of this and everything else as well.

Discussion

This section is divided in two. First I identify and discuss the emerging themes.

Second, I contrast and compare these themes with the literature and current the orising about school leadership. Emerging themes

There are five interrelated themes that I will focus on in this section: 1. Working hard

The first theme concerns the nature of headship in small schools today. Respon dents from all three groups made this point time and again. The heads acknow ledged they worked hard, but did so in an uncomplaining way. They appeared to regard it as a fact of headship, rather than something they might be able to avoid or change. As evidence presented to the House of Commons Education and Employment Committee of inquiry into the role of headteachers shows, the average working week for primary heads is 55.7 hours and many heads, espe
cially in small schools, have a teaching commitment in excess of 80 per cent of
the week (House of Commons, 1998, paras. 24-25).

Indeed, it is also clear that these ten heads had an appetite for hard work.

They plainly enjoyed the responsibilities of headship. More than this, though, it
seems that hard work is necessary if heads are to be successful. For one thing, in

LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERS
HIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS

small schools, which by definition have fewer staff (in particular support staff
covering administration and finances) heads do not have many colleagues they
can turn to. They did not have personal assistants, nor many of the other trap
nings of executive life in commerce and industry. Rather, each school employed
a ‘secretary’, who often worked on a part time basis and who managed most
aspects of school administration and finance. However, what was not done by
the secretary was left for the heads to do.

The other reason why hard work is necessary centres on what the teachers
and governors said. It was very clear from their comments that when they
acknowledged the time and the effort the heads put in, they understood this to
mean not only that the heads had a capacity to deal with a lot of work, but that
the heads were committed to the schools. Dealing with all the demands and not shrinking from all the requirements of the role were indicators, indeed, symbols of the headteachers’ care, concern and dedication. Therefore, hard work is not simply about being prepared to put in the hours, it is also a powerful emblem that the leader is committed, dedicated even, to the school. 2. Positive people All of the heads shared one characteristic – they were strongly positive individuals. Their optimistic outlooks were particularly apparent in terms of their beliefs about the school, the staff and the pupils. All believed that their schools would improve and become more and more successful. Although they knew they had challenges to face and resolve, more than anything they viewed the schools’ prospects with hopefulness. Throughout the time I was in the school it was clear that these heads were positive forces in their schools. There was no sense of despondency or pessimism, even though some were stern critics of the national educational reform process and several believed small schools were under-valued. Rather, the heads were enthusiastic about their schools and the future. 3. Team builders and players Teamwork was frequently mentioned by the heads and noted by the teachers,
governors and in many cases by the Ofsted inspectors in their reports. This emphasis is no surprise given that in recent times teacher collaboration has become a norm in primary schools, along with collaborative staff cultures and ‘whole school’ policy-making (Nias, et al., 1989, 1992; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1993). Ensuring that the school is a cohesive organisation, that there is staff cooperation, that plans are co-ordinated, communications work well and staff share ideas, resources and support one another, are now common expectations of heads and those who inspect schools.

However, in small primary schools the emphasis on teamwork may be particularly important. Many respondents believed that if the school was to be successful, then staff had to work together. Collaboration was not an option in small schools, it was a professional obligation. The teachers too saw benefits from participating and acknowledged how effective their heads were in orchestrating staff collaboration. The heads viewed positive inter-professional relations as critical to the health of the school. Interpersonal relationships - dealing with staff, parents and governors - were the key leadership skills.

The heads’ contribution to teamwork followed two paths. First, the heads
were team builders. Second, they were team players. All demonstrated that they
had been active in creating teams in their respective schools. Their comments
showed that they recognised and valued individuals and encouraged participation in planning, policy-making and school decisions. The governors valued heads who were accessible to them and it appears that staff did too. The frequency with which this attribute was mentioned suggests that teachers approve of heads who are not remote, are willing to talk and listen to them and who share their ideas and plans with staff. Therefore, the notion of the heads being approachable is probably a shorthand for heads being expected to be communicative and receptive leaders, who acknowledge others and interact on a personal and professional level with them. The emphasis they placed on professional dialogue is another hallmark of their concern to develop and sustain collaboration.

They also, however, valued the staff as a group. They were quick to attribute success to the group’s efforts, rather than their own. In this way they suggested that they were also team players; success was not ‘mine’, but ‘ours’. The heads knew that while they played a leading part in the school, they could not achieve very much single-handedly and whatever success the schools
had made was the result of everyone’s efforts.

The heads believed that their schools’ successes were dependent on everyone supporting one another and working together. While this outlook was an inclusive one and applied to all staff, improving the performance of the school rested on the teaching staff functioning as a combined teaching unit. Developing a team of teachers who were characterised by a unity of purpose, shared educational values and goals, consistency in teaching and classroom practices, continuity in the curriculum and professional openness were both the means and the ends of teamwork in these schools. In short, teamwork was a key ingredient in improving the school.

4. School improvers

All of these heads were improving their schools. For some it was because they had been appointed to move the schools forward because they were under-performing organisations or in decline. For others it was more a case of enhancing already high levels of success. Whatever the context, none of the heads were satisfied for the schools to remain as they were. Hence the heads spoke about wanting to avoid complacency, of under-achievement being eliminated, pupils’ rates of progress accelerating, children’s attitudes to learning becoming more
positive and of the school’s ethos changing for the better. All of the heads wanted to improve on their previous best.

Each head used a number of strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, but three strategies in particular stand out from what the heads, teachers and governors said:

- Modelling
- Monitoring
- Professional dialogue

Each of these strategies relied on a range of tactics. For example, modelling involved the heads using their teaching as an example of what and how to do things, working alongside staff in their classrooms, coaching staff through demonstrating how they taught or approached issues and consciously using school assemblies as occasions when they could promote and reinforce educational values and practice across the school. As the National Primary Headteachers’ Association (NPHA) said in their evidence to the House of Commons Education and Employment Committee (1998): “headteachers must set standards of performance by their personal example” (para. 21). All of the heads in this study understood this and
given the evidence of their own and colleagues’ statements they all did it.

Monitoring involved the heads looking at teachers’ weekly plans and the learning objectives teachers were working towards, examining samples of pupils’ work, visiting classrooms, observing the implementation of teaching, learning and curricula policies, reviewing pupil assessment information and evaluating pupil, class and school levels of performance and progress.

Professional dialogue was developed through staff meetings, reviewing practice, looking at pupil learning data, joint planning meetings and policy formation. The heads also followed up visits to classrooms with informal discussions with individuals, or used questions to probe teachers’ assumptions and to promote ideas and ways forward.

Complementing these three strategies were a number of school structures and systems that the heads had put in place. Together, the leadership strategies and the organisational and curricular structures and systems were the processes by which shared educational goals were created, the ways in which consistency in teaching and high expectations were put in place and the means by which improvements in pupils’ learning outcomes and progress were realised. They
were the practical ways in which these heads enacted their educational and

instructional leadership. As such, they are anatomical features of successful

leadership in small primary schools. 5. Educational leaders

These headteachers were first and foremost educational leaders. In common with

previous research studies (Alexander, 1984; Nias, et al., 1989; Nias, et al., 1992; LEADERSHIP AND TEACHERS

Southworth, 1995a & 1998), longstanding traditions in primary headship (Alexander, 1992) and contemporary thinking (House of Commons, 1998) educational leadership has long been favoured. Yet despite consistent advocacy for it, the

‘street realities’ of headship can inhibit or thwart such leadership because heads can be caught up in administration and management at the expense of exercising professional leadership. These heads knew that while effective management and efficient administration were necessary, they were not sufficient for the success of the school. Certainly they would have welcomed more administrative support to free them from some of the bureaucratic tasks they dealt with. Yet despite many other calls on their time, they were most strongly focused on leading the schools’ educational development. All that they did was concentrated on enhancing pupils’ learning provision, progress and outcomes and they did this in an educative way.
In developing the quality of learning the heads often enabled staff to learn from them and from one another. Thus the process of improvement was a learning process for the staff.

The heads focused strongly and directly on improving the quality of teaching.

To this end these heads were ‘instructional leaders’, that is they looked hard at how children were being taught and how such practice might be improved and shared so that every teacher could teach to the same standard as the best. Much of this development in pedagogy occurred through modelling, monitoring and discussion. However, all of these strategies were predicated on teachers being able to learn from one another. Thus improving teaching was based on professional learning and this required the heads to be both educational and educative leaders. What this interpretation of headship, leadership and improvement suggests is that leaders in small primary schools need to be able teachers of young children and good at enabling the professional learning of adults as well.

Currently, ‘best practice’ in management outside education is pointing towards ‘liberating leadership’ with a focus on trust, integrity, fairness and belief in self and others (Turner, 1998). As Glatter (1998) has suggested, effect
ive human resource management practices contribute far
more, in statistical
terms, to company performance than do strategy, quality,
technology and
research and development combined. Also: The increasing
emphasis on people management is reflected in the growing
literature on the significance in modern conditions of the
'intellectual capital' of organisations (e.g., Allday,
1998; Stewart, 1998), with its implications for valuing,
motivating and developing staff. (Glatter, 1998, p. 11)

Judged by these criteria these heads provided effective
leadership because it was
educational. They helped staff to feel involved and valued
their 'intellectual
capital' – their professional knowledge – by treating them
as colleagues and
valued partners.

LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERS
HIP INS MALLSCHOOL S Relationship with
existing literature and theory

The first point to make is that this study is broadly
consistent with other studies
into headship and school leadership. Previous studies
conducted into primary
headship have identified how the role is demanding, tiring
and hard work
(Southworth, 1995a, pp. 13-15). There are also parallels
with other studies
which have invited heads to identify from their experience
the personal qualities
and professional skills required to be an effective school
leader (Bolam, et al.,
1993; Southworth, 1995a; Day et al., 2000). The National
Commission on Edu
cation (NCE) study (1996) found that leaders of effective schools in disadvantaged areas used similar organisational and curricular structures and systems, monitored pupil learning and teaching and paid attention to the physical environment in order to create a context ‘optimally fit for learning’ (p. 320).

The NCE study noted that the heads had ‘an abundance of energy and commitment’ and that ‘an unusually high level of human effort’ was expended ‘in a very focused way’ (p. 335). These leaders believed their schools had the potential to succeed. The heads were omnipresent in their schools, having a high profile with pupils and their progress and observing teaching and learning. They took a lead in monitoring the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils and provided feedback. The key elements of these heads’ leadership styles were: accessibility; willingness to build expertise and experience of others into the management of the school; and a desire to get the best from every member of staff (p. 339). Also: There is a clear sense in which the headteachers have an impact by setting an example to the rest of the school, providing powerful role models. (pp. 338–9)

Team building was also highlighted as important, as was developing the team. In the case of the latter, collaborative cultures and participative approaches were
developed (p. 343) along with positive reinforcement of individual’s efforts. The development of cohesive and professional relations among staff was regarded as essential.

Given the parallels between these studies it seems safe to claim that these successful heads in small primary schools are not unusual from other headteachers whose work has been investigated. However, this is not to say that they are the same in all respects. There are similarities, but also some important nuances of difference.

For one thing, the study of small schools suggests that recent thinking about effective school leadership needs to be examined with the variable of context in mind. Hallinger and Heck’s (1998) review of research between 1980 and 1995 explored the relationship between principal leadership and pupil achievement and developed a three-fold classification of principal (headteacher) effects: L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S 1 Direct effects Where the principal’s actions influence school outcomes 2 Mediated effects Where principal actions affect outcomes indirectly through other variables 3 Reciprocal effects Where the principal affects teachers and teachers affect the principal and through these processes outcomes are affected. (Hallinger & Heck, 1998, pp. 162-3)

Reviewing these three models Hallinger and Heck are critical of the first insofar as those researchers who use it do not typically seek to control for the effects of
other in-school variables such as teacher commitment, or curricular organisation

(p. 163). The lack of attention to other factors creates a simplistic view of head teacher action and effects. Indeed, in my view, it may develop the idea of head teacher causation. That is, there is an assumed one-to-one correspondence between what a head does and the school improving. On occasions this may happen, for example, where the head has a direct input into teaching. As one of the heads in the small schools’ study said: “In this school I represent 25 per cent of the teaching” (ht 1). Hence it is reasonable to expect that given s/he is an effective teacher their practice will enhance pupil outcomes, but so too will the other 75 per cent of the teaching!

The mediated effects model hypothesises that leaders achieve their effects on outcomes through ‘indirect paths.’ The model recognises that: Leadership practices contribute to the outcomes desired by schools but the contribution is always mediated by other people, events and organisational factors such as teacher commitment, instructional practices or school culture. This conceptualisation is consistent with the proposition that leaders achieve their results primarily through other people. (p. 167)

The reciprocal effects model presents heads as ‘enacting leadership through a stream of interactions’ (p. 168) through which they address the salient features of the school, such as pupil outcomes, staff morale or commitment. However, in
so doing they adapt to the organisation in which they work and change their thinking and behaviour over time. As Hallinger and Heck argue, this model regards leadership as an 'adaptive process rather than a unitary independent force' and allows for the possibility that 'causal relationships may be multi-directional, change over time and even be non-linear’ (p. 168).

Hallinger and Heck conclude from their detailed analysis of the literature that mediated effects studies yielded more consistent findings than did the direct effects studies that were popular earlier in the decade. They argue that the general pattern of results drawn from their review supports the belief that principals exercise a measurable, though indirect effect on school effectiveness and pupil achievement (p. 186). As Hallinger and Heck also note, researchers in the early years of research in this domain focused on answering the question: ‘Do principals make a difference?’ More recently they have transcended the bounds of this question to try to understand ‘not only if principals have effects on school outcomes, but more particularly the paths through which such effects are achieved’ (p. 187). In their review Hallinger and Heck conclude that a primary
avenue of influence appears to be in shaping the school’s direction through vision, mission and goals.

Of course, there is much to debate about these ideas and there are obvious difficulties in adopting the findings of research about principals in North America for headteachers in England. One particular difficulty I have with their ideas is in discriminating between direct effects and mediated effects. I can appreciate their co-existence, but it becomes difficult to attribute some head teachers’ actions as ‘direct’ effects and others as ‘indirect’. Nevertheless, Hallinger and Heck’s analysis is insightful and implies that context does matter, since contextual factors will mediate leaders’ actions. Furthermore, when the three models of principal effects are applied to this sample of headteachers they offer a valuable analytic tool and lead me to make four points.

First, all three models of effect can be detected somewhere across the head teacher, teacher and governor data. Teaching heads would have certainly have had some direct effect in their schools because of their class teaching responsibilities. Mediated effects stem from the ways the heads had influenced goals, expectations, instructional and curricular practices and so on. For those
who had been in the school for some time there were also indications that, over

time, there were reciprocal effects. Not only had they influenced the school, but

as staff changed, as trust was developed with staff and governors, as circum

stances changed and developed so too had the heads adapted some of their prac

tices.

Second, because these are relatively small schools, it seems reasonable to

assume that these heads will have stronger direct effects than heads in larger

schools, where mediated effects are more likely to be at work. Such an outlook

is plainly an assumption in the inspectors review of small schools (HMI, 1999)

and in Waugh’s (1999) study which were both reported in the literature review

above. However, what emerges from this study is the suggestion that not only

did these heads have some direct effects, but they were also very active in terms

of mediated effects. Their behaviour was typified by a keen awareness that they

were working with and through others. They knew that to improve the school

they had to influence others and did so with tenacity, determination and a clarity

of purpose.

Third, it is especially interesting that these heads appear to have been effect
ive in how they indirectly influenced pupil outcomes. Perhaps because they
worked in close proximity and interacted face-to-face with staff they could
ensure there was much personal contact. Communication and professional LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS
interaction between head and staff was processual. Such patterns of interaction
connect with Fullan’s (1991) ideas about managing change and developing
meaning. The data suggest that these heads were skilled in negotiating and
developing teachers’ understandings and subjective meanings about desired
changes for the school.
Fourth, while the impact of heads in small schools included some direct
effects and reciprocal effects, the ability and dispositions of these heads to
engage strongly with and act on the mediating factors as well, may, in part,
account for why they were so successful. Expressed another way, these heads
worked directly - through their interactions and interventions - on the indirect
pathways to effectiveness.
Therefore, this study points to a theory of leadership effects whereby these
heads’ success was to a significant degree, attributable both to the heads’ direct
effects and especially their mediated effects. Because the heads engaged with
the mediating factors, and often in a direct and personal way, they were particu
larly powerful in making a difference in their schools. The strength, frequency
and effectiveness of their encounters with staff made their influence pervasive
or, as the NCE (1996) stated, omnipresent. Their dealings with staff were
regarded as warm and open and they valued individuals and groups, praised
them and worked in teams themselves. In these ways they undoubtedly tem
pered what may in some other circumstances become oppressive conditions.
Nevertheless, over time, these heads appeared to be irresistible in moving –
directly and indirectly – the schools along paths they and the staff and gover
nors wanted.
Thus, while heads in small schools are likely to exercise greater direct influ-
ence than colleagues in larger schools, they have the potential and opportunity,
because of their smaller organisational contexts, to make their indirect effects
very powerful too. When both effects are used positively, these doubly loaded
heads can be doubly influential.
Central to leading school improvement was the assumption that leadership
itself involved a social influence process whereby “intentional influence” was
exerted by the head over the staff to “structure the
activities and relationships in a group or organisation” (Yukl, 1994, p. 3). As Leithwood et al. (1999) say: Influence ... seems to be a necessary part of most conceptions of leadership. This suggests that most of the variation in leadership concepts, types or models can be accounted for by differences in who exerts influence, the nature of that influence, the purpose for the exercise of influence and its outcomes. (p. 6)

For heads of small schools their influence was achieved by the power of their professional and personal example and their implicit belief in the ‘primacy of personal contact’ (Fullan, 1991, p. 53). They used copious amounts of effort and energy, and while each was willing to exert influence 'over' others, more usually it seems they exercised their influence through ‘positive politics’ (Block, 1987, p. 97). Positive politics refers to changing organisational cultures through personal behaviour because it is our actions which are our political statements.

These heads, with their belief in the power of example, knew that the truth of what you say lies in what you do.

It also needs to be emphasised that these heads were emotionally intelligent leaders. They were empathetic, used positive reinforcement to value staff and to steer them towards common goals. They were also able talkers and listeners and used a dialogic approach to setting targets and expectations (see Goleman,
2000). Working in such close and continuous proximity to their colleagues and
reliant upon them and their goodwill to go beyond the boundaries of the basic
job requirements, they needed to create and sustain a workplace climate which
was conductive to collegiality. This they appear to have achieved by being inter
personally skilful and emotionally sensitive as well as professionally knowledgeable
able and effective.

It remains to be seen whether this approach is similar or different to leadership in other contexts. Research is now needed to see how heads in larger
schools use direct and indirect effects and how they blend and mix the two.

What seems likely from this examination of heads in small schools is that these
heads took advantage of their close, personal proximity with their staff groups,
in settings characterised by first-hand, oral communications and collegial inter
actions. Nor should it be forgotten that these heads were also teachers. They
remained active members of the teaching fraternity. Thus, the power of their
example was based not only on the perspicacity of their knowledge and under
standing, but also on the fact that they provided concrete evidence of these ideas
in action. In other words, they were neither remote figures, nor leaders who had
left the classroom. The combination of both qualities may have made them particularly potent leaders.

The outline I have sketched here begins to provide an analytic description of a sample of heads’ leadership. While this picture shows that successful heads’ roles are polyphonic and their actions subtle and intricately woven, it also sug

gests that these heads broadly followed patterns common to other leaders. Here I have in mind Bolman and Deal’s (1991; 1992) views about there being four frames of leadership: The structural frame emphasises rationality, efficiency, structure and policies. Structural leaders value analysis and data, keep their eye on the bottom line, set clear directions, hold people accountable for results and try to solve organisational problems with new policies and rules - or through restructuring. The human resource frame focuses on the interaction between individual and organisational needs. Human resource leaders value relationships and feelings and seek to lead through facilitation and empowerment. The political frame emphasises L E A D E R S H I P A N D H E A D T E A C H E R S conflict among different groups and interests for scarce resources. Political leaders are advocates and negotiators who spend much of their time networking, creating coalitions, building a power base and negotiating compromises. The symbolic frame sees a chaotic world in which meaning and predictability are socially constructed and facts are interpretive rather than objective. Symbolic leaders pay diligent attention to myth, ritual, ceremony, stories and other symbolic forms. (Bolam & Deal, 1992, pp. 314-5)

These frames have been researched by Bolman and Deal who conclude that, while all four frames are important for success as both a manager and leader, their results suggest that school leaders rarely use more
than two frames and almost never use all four (p. 316). Furthermore, research with principals from Florida and Singapore showed that the human resource frame was dominant in principals’ critical incidents, while structural themes were the second most common (pp. 317–8).

Day et al.’s (2000) study of school leadership in England also utilised these four frames and they argued that, while there was evidence of the use of all four frames by the leaders they case studied, “it was the human resource frame which occupied most of their daily time and which created the most tensions and celebration” (p. 165). Much the same conclusion can be drawn from these heads of small schools. Their concern for teamwork, positive and productive social and professional relations, collegiality and collaboration are equivalents for Bolman and Deal’s lexicon for the human resource frame. Thus, it seems that headteachers and principals share a common concern for leading and managing staff, or as Riley and MacBeath (1998) refer to it, “the school’s inner life” (p. 148). That is, the emotional, personal and interpersonal dimensions of organisational life and growth, as well as the professional.

In line with Day et al.’s (2000) study I would also argue that this sample of
heads of small schools used the other three frames, but not with as much emphasis. There were signs of structural, symbolic and political frames being used, but without each individual completing Bolman and Deal’s inventories it is impossible to say whether this is a composite view or something common to each individual. Thus further work is needed to advance this line of enquiry.

However, what can be said is that the human resource frame appears to be a constant emphasis and the highest priority for heads and principals. This could have implications for their professional development. Heads who experience difficulties may need to hone their interpersonal skills, while others may need to attend to their structural, symbolic and/or political frames. Conclusions

Although this chapter is predicated on the idea that we need a more discriminatory appreciation of context and situational leadership in schools, there is also a

LESSONS FROM SUCCESSFUL LEADERS HIP IN SMALL SCHOOLS

good case for studying leadership in small schools in greater depth. The study reviewed here is, at best, an introductory analysis of the issues. Notwithstanding the small sample and other limitations of the research, there is more than a suggestion here that if we want to look at instructional leadership, then leaders in
small schools offer a particularly rich source of knowledge that has hitherto not been developed. Perhaps too much of the educational leadership literature has been willing to advocate particular approaches without providing detailed analytic descriptions of what such leadership actually looks like in action.

These heads were emotionally intelligent leaders because they were able to handle the intense interpersonal dynamics that come with working in small groups. Undoubtedly they were able instrumental leaders, but equally, they were also highly skilled expressive leaders. From all accounts they appeared to manage the affective domain of life in schools and were able to deal productively with the emotional costs of teaching and working with teachers. Clearly, there is more to explore here which should benefit our understanding of organisational context and teacher cultures. Indeed, it can be argued that unless the emotional and psychological dimensions of teaching are acknowledged and dealt with in an empathetic way, then developing knowledge creating schools (Hargreaves, 1998), where the intellectual capital of teachers is valued and utilised for the good of the school, may not advance very far or very fast.

This latter point relates to two others. First, what
emerged from looking at leadership in small schools was the extent to which these leaders were able to multi-task. They could switch from one issue to another and keep many things in their minds simultaneously. Such polyphonic behaviour is common to teachers and headteachers in my experience, but not to the extent suggested by these heads and their witnesses. Second, eight of the ten heads were women and all of them led female staff groups. Therefore, the issue of gender should not be discounted. I am not saying that what is presented here is a feminine model of leadership, but I do think that the presence of so many women in the studied schools was a contextual feature and that this in itself warrants further analysis.

The case for women leaders to be studied has long been recognised and advanced. Hall (1997) in reviewing 25 years’ worth of articles in the journal of British educational management and administration says that “gender only began to emerge as a discrete topic after 1980 and since then, has hovered in the wings like a wallflower at a party” (p. 309). Since Shakeshaft’s (1987) influential review which raised issues about the different world of women administrators, the literature has broadly focused on two sets of issues: why women
were under-represented in senior positions in educational administration; and


differences between male and female managers (Hall, 1997, p. 310). It is the

latter set of issues which is of relevance here. Some studies suggest there are dif

ferences between male and female leaders, while others suggest that there are no

significant differences (McGhee Banks, 2000). In recent years the favoured view

seems to be that gender does make a difference in how administrators behave

(Hall, 1999; Shakeshaft, Nowell & Perry, 2000; Coleman, 2001). I was not able to detect any such differences, but that may only reflect a weakness in the ana

lytic frame and my interpretation.

However, some current thinking is advising against taking a single issue

approach to leadership. Hall (1999) questions the appropriateness of seeing

gender as a single determining factor (p. 155) and advocates that researchers

adopt a wider viewpoint. Likewise, McGhee Banks (2000), in her review of

gender and race in educational leadership, is critical of the limited scope of

studies of educational leaders and their attention to just one key variable such as

gender, ethnicity, leadership style, or career patterns. Such studies: Do not usually examine several variables or attempt to identify the intersections among them. Future research needs to have a broader scope and to reflect the dynamics of race and gender within the changing nature of
our society. As a socially constructed phenomenon, leadership must also be examined within the changing meanings of race and gender. (p. 245)

I did not include either perspective in this study and that was clearly a weakness.

However, this study of leadership in small schools certainly points to the need to examine in greater depth how women lead staff groups composed entirely of women.

This observation paves the way for another conclusion. In the introduction I argued that small schools are relatively low status institutions. In schooling size matters and bigger schools are usually seen as more important than small ones.

This position is further compounded by the fact that small schools are almost entirely staffed by women. Yet, the picture of leadership which emerges from this study shows a sample of leaders who were highly effective, extremely hard working and capable of dealing with multiple issues simultaneously. Their capacity to use skills in combinations was impressive, as was their ability to be energy creators, enablers and empowering. These heads were perhaps the closest I have seen to transformational leaders in action. Far from according them low esteem and paying them little attention because they lead ‘small’ schools, they may well be potentially rich subjects for learning about instructional and educa
Finally, given all that I have said about context, I now want to end with one further observation. Within the primary school sector in England, at least, but possibly in elementary schools in other countries too, many of the differences which might be detected in leaders’ interests, actions and behaviours and which are associated with contextual variables, are likely to be more about matters of degree than of kind. For example, it may be that there are substantially more indirect and mediated effects used in very large schools. In small schools heads may have to be more directly involved in expressive and affective leadership than in larger ones, where other leaders may be involved and the headteacher more remote. Likewise, the effects of shared and distributed leadership will figure in larger schools and these will need to be taken into account alongside the headteachers’ effects. Clearly there is much to discover, explore and record before we can feel we have an adequate understanding of school contexts and


England and Wales. School Leadership and Management, 21(1), 75-100.


sizes responded to educational changes? Curriculum, 20(1), 18-33.


54 STAGES OF HEADSHIP Dick Weindling


1. Introduction

This chapter uses socialisation theory to re-examine the NFER longitudinal study of headteachers (Weindling and Earley, 1987; Earley et al., 1990 and 1994/5) in order to study the stages of headship transition. Previous models of leadership transition and succession in both business and schools are outlined.

Finally, the NFER findings are integrated with the earlier work to produce a stage theory of headship which can be used as a research tool and to assist the development of heads and prospective heads.

2. Stage theories of socialisation

A useful approach to understanding leadership and headship development derives from Merton’s (1963) socialisation theory. The stress here is on the two-way inter
action between the new leader and the school situation (with each trying to change and influence the other). In this view of socialisation, which is prevalent in the North American research, there are two main overlapping phases:

• professional socialisation which involves learning what it is to be a headteacher, prior to taking up the role, from personal experience of schooling and teaching and from formal courses;

• organisational socialisation which involves learning the knowledge, values, and behaviours required to perform a specific role within a particular organisation (Schein, 1968), after appointment.

A large body of work exists, drawn largely from the non-educational field, where previous writers have suggested stage theories to explain the transition phases experienced by leaders. Although various labels are used by different authors, they commonly identify three periods of organisational socialisation.

Hart (1993) provides the most detailed synthesis and critical analysis of the field and the following is adapted from her book. STAGES OF HEADSHIP Stage 1. Encounter, anticipation, or confrontation The initial arrival stage requires considerable learning on the part of new heads as they encounter the people and the organisation. Cognitive approaches focus on rational interpretations and the understandings that new heads construct, what Louis (1960) called the sense making process in an unfamiliar situation. Stage 2. Adjustment, accommodation, clarity
This involves the task of attempting to fit in. New leaders must reach accommodation with the work role, the people with whom they interact and the school culture. They look for role clarity in this new setting and may face resistance from established group members. Stage 3. Stabilisation

In this stage, stable patterns emerge but this is only visible in data from longitudinal studies. Nicholson and West (1988), using a cyclic model, treat the stages of stabilisation and preparation (for the next change) together, because they found that stabilisation did not occur for some managers who had moved on to their next post. 3. Previous research

A few studies have looked at the period as a deputy as preparation for headship.

Ribbins (1997), for example, interviewed 34 heads and found that, while some enjoyed the experience as an appropriate preparation for headship, relatively few remembered it with enthusiasm or their former heads with unqualified warmth.

Although most felt that their heads had not positively prepared them for headship, they believed that they had learned from the negative experiences, often vowing never to act like that themselves.

Gender issues and headship were explored in two important, life history studies by Evetts (1994) and Hall (1996) who found that
women heads' career
paths, and the way they approached management, differed from that of men, but
these authors did not use stage theory.

Parkay and Hall (1992) conducted a US project modelled on the NFER research. They surveyed 113 new high school principals and carried out case studies of 12 throughout their first year in post. A return visit was made after three years. The authors derived a five-stage developmental model to describe the career patterns of new principals:

1. Survival
2. Control
3. Stability
4. Educational leadership
5. Professional actualisation.

Four basic assumptions underlie the model:

• principals begin at different stages and not all start at Stage 1;
• principals develop through the stages at different rates;
• no single factor determines a principal’s stage of development. Personal characteristics, the school context and the previous principal all play a part;
• principals may operate at more than one stage simultaneously, i.e. the stage is their predominant orientation.

In this country, Day and Bakioglu (1996) questioned 196 headteachers and
interviewed a sample of 34, and derived a four-phase, developmental model:

1. Initiation: idealism, uncertainty and adjustment. This lasted about three years and involved two key processes: learning on the job and accommodating to the existing framework and structure of the school.

2. Development: consolidation and extension. Heads with four to eight years’ experience were still enthusiastic, saw this as more satisfactory and rewarding with fewer difficulties than the other phases, built new management teams as inherited senior staff left, and delegated more.

3. Autonomy. Here heads continued to be self-confident, felt they had management expertise but had less energy, a nostalgia for the past, and saw externally imposed national initiatives as causing lack of enthusiasm. ‘Autonomy’ was positive in that they felt in control of the school, but negative because this was threatened by external change and pressure to work with governors.

4. Disenchantment. A decline in confidence, enthusiasm and fatigue were the characteristics here. Heads started to ease off and their health (physical and mental) deteriorated as they approached retirement. The Education Reform Act had a major impact on many of them.

Ribbins (1998) adapted Day and Bakioglu’s phases and a stage model developed by Gronn (1993, 1999) to produce a model of typical pathways for school leaders:

- Formation – the early socialisation influences from agencies such as the family, school and other reference groups which shape the personality of a future head.

- Accession – career advancement and preparation for headship.

- Incumbency – the total period of headship, from appointment to leaving, sub-divided into Day and Bakioglu’s four phases, to which Ribbins adds enchantment as an alternative to disenchantment for some long-serving heads.

- Moving on – leaving headship which may involve divestiture for the disenchanted or reinvention for the
enchanted.

Gabarro (1987) conducted research on 17 senior management successions in business and industry in the US and Europe (including three case studies in the UK), pointing out that while there has been research on management succession, very little work has examined the activities and problems facing a new manager after they take up their post. He calls this process 'taking charge': . . . I do not mean just orienting oneself to a new assignment. Taking charge, as I use the term, refers to the process by which a manager establishes mastery and influence in a new assignment. By mastery, I mean acquiring a grounded understanding of the organisation, its tasks, people, environment, and problems. By influence, I mean having an impact on the organisation, its structure, practices, and performance. The process begins when a manager starts a new assignment and ends when he or she has mastered it in sufficient depth to be managing the organisation as efficiently as the resources, constraints, and the manager’s own ability allow. (Gabarro, 1987)

He characterised the process as a series of five predictable, chronological stages of learning and action. The timings are approximate:

- **Taking hold (the first six months).** This period involves intense learning as the manager develops a cognitive map of the organisation using processes of orientation, evaluation (an assessment of staff, understanding where the problems lie) and establishing priorities. ‘Corrective’ actions are taken to address emerging problems and ‘turnaround’ actions to deal with urgent problems.

- **Immersion (six to 12 months).** This very important period of deeper learning and diagnosis involves relatively little organisational change activity. Managers develop a much better understanding of the basic issues and underlying problems. They often question more sharply if they have the right people in place as they understand their strengths and weaknesses.
• Reshaping (12 to 21 months). This is a time of major change, organisational reconfiguration and implementation. The transition to reshaping often involves the use of task groups and external consultants.

• Consolidation (21 to 27 months). Earlier changes are consolidated. Learning and diagnosis tend to be evaluative. The manager and key colleagues assess the consequences and the unanticipated problems of earlier changes and take corrective actions.

• Refinement (27 to 36 months). A period of fine-tuning with relatively little major additional learning. The managers had 'taken charge', were no longer 'new' and had either established their credibility and power base, or not. This relative calm could be disturbed by changes in the external world.

Gabarro found that the organisational changes managers made as they worked through these stages characteristically occurred in three waves: the first wave occurs during the Taking-Hold stage, the second, and typically largest, during the Reshaping stage, and the last and smallest during the Consolidation stage. These stage and wave patterns are found in successful transitions regardless of the kind of succession (insider versus outsider; turn-around versus non-turnaround cases), the industry of the organisation involved, or the manager’s prior functional background. 4. The NFER secondary heads project falls into three stages:

1 Stage 1 began in 1982 with everybody who took up their first post as a head of a secondary school in England and Wales. Questionnaire data were obtained from 188 heads. Forty-seven new heads were interviewed towards the end of their first term in post and 16 of them were then chosen for
detailed case studies covering the first two years of headship. A total of three visits were made to each of the schools in this part of the project and individual interviews conducted with the heads, each of the senior management team, a cross-section of teachers, the chair of governors and a senior LEA adviser. A total of over 300 interviews was conducted.

2 In 1988, the cohort of 188 heads was surveyed after they had been in post for five to six years and the 16 heads were re-interviewed.

3 In 1993, survey data were collected from 100 heads who were still in post some ten-11 years after they began their headships.

This chapter concentrates on the problems the heads experienced and the changes they made in this ten year period. a. The first years

The key point to make is that new heads do not start with a clean slate (as some seem to think). The shadow of ‘headteachers past’ hangs over them for longer than they expect. The previous head had often retired, having been in post for 15 to 20 years. They had ‘shaped the school in their image’ and while this might be apparent in the form of structure, it was harder to see the school culture. New heads were often surprised, when they confronted existing routines, to be told, ‘That’s the way we have always done it’. They soon found that their approach differed from that of their predecessor and this affected the period of settling in and the kind of changes they made. Many teachers said the new heads and their predecessor differed considerably – they were like ‘chalk and cheese’.
The main problems reported by new heads were: difficulties caused by the
style and practice of the previous head, the school buildings, communication and
consultation with staff, creating a better public image of the school, coping with
a weak member of the SMT, dealing with incompetent staff, and low staff morale.

The heads differed in their approaches to change. Some deliberately chose to
make early changes, others to move cautiously, while some were delayed and
hindered by a poor SMT.

Almost all the changes made in the first year were organisational. Curricular
changes began in the second year and continued into the third year and beyond.

A few of the changes to the pastoral system occurred in the first year, but these
were mainly introduced in years two and three.

The organisational changes made soon after the new head’s arrival were fre
quently concerned with communication and consultation. Another group of early
changes was concerned with promoting a positive image for the school, some
thing of particular concern to the new heads especially where the community
held it in low esteem or student numbers were falling.

Today it is hard to remember the pre-National Curriculum and OFSTED
inspection period when these heads first took up their posts. They had to initiate curricular changes. Timetable changes could not be implemented until the beginning of their second year, but much preparatory work was undertaken in the first year. This usually took the form of a curriculum review, where each department was required to set out its aims, objectives, schemes of work and, in some cases, methods of assessment.

Of the 200-plus changes introduced in the first three years in the 16 case study schools, it was noticeable that only a handful did not originate with the new heads themselves. Once the decision to adopt a change had been made, day-to-day responsibility was usually delegated either to a deputy head or a head of department. b. Ten years on

The external changes produced by the Educational Reform Act and other legislation had only just begun when we conducted the second phase of the research in 1988. The following five years saw the heads attempting to cope with substantial changes imposed from outside. LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

One hundred of the original cohort 1982/83 returned a completed questionaire in 1993. Seventy-seven were still in their first school, while 23 had moved
to a second headship. We were not able to track down the fate of those (104) who did not return a questionnaire, but we believe that most had retired.

To gauge their feelings after ten years the heads were asked a set of questions about their current level of enthusiasm. Two-thirds said they had the same enthusiasm as when they started as heads but there were noticeable differences between those who were still at their first school compared with those who had moved to second headships. For example, 40 per cent of those still in their original school said they did not have the same enthusiasm as when they started, compared with only 14 per cent of those in second headships. This may not be an unexpected result, but it is difficult to tell whether those who moved to a second school were more highly motivated people, or whether the challenge of a new school boosted their enthusiasm. It is most likely to be an interaction of the two.

In order to explore how the problems changed over time a set of core questions was used in the first and last surveys. Table 1 shows heads’ perceptions in 1984 and 1993 on the core questions where a direct comparison is possible.

Most problems were perceived to lessen over time, e.g. getting staff to accept
new ideas; creating a good public image of the school; dealing with poor staff morale; improving communication and consultation; managing staff development and INSET; establishing discipline; dealing with finance; and issues concerning non-teaching staff. However, a few problems seemed to have increased, e.g. managing time and priorities; working with the governors. Dealing with

Table 1 Comparison of problems perceived by secondary heads in 1984 and 1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Very serious</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Not a problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting staff to accept new ideas</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a good public image</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with a weak member of SMT</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with incompetent staff</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with poor staff morale</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving consultation/communication</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing staff dev. and INSET</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing good standards of discipline</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing time and priorities</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with LMS and finance</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues concerning non-teaching staff</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with LEA officers</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with the governors</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with LEA inspectors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F H E A D S H I P
incompetent staff appeared to have continued over time. Working with LEA

officers and advisers remained a very minor problem for most heads.

These findings are likely to be due to the interaction of several complex

factors. With time, heads and staff get to know each others’ strengths and weak

nesses; the heads have made some key staff appointments; they have gained a

deeper understanding of the school and have introduced most of their intended

changes. But the world outside has also changed. During the ten-year period a

large number of external changes occurred, such as: the role of governors, LMS,

GM, NC, league tables, and OFSTED inspection.

The 100 heads were also asked to outline how they thought the school had

improved in the five years since the previous survey. It is interesting to compare

these results with the heads’ replies to the same question in 1988 when they had

been in post about five years.

Half the heads reported improved exam results in their first five years, while

29 per cent said the results had improved in the last five years. It seems possible

that some sort of ‘levelling off’ may have occurred. However, without more

detailed information it is not possible to say exactly what has happened over the

total ten-year period.
Similarly, in the 1988 study, half the heads mentioned improvements in the curriculum. Not surprisingly, this again emerged as a focal area. In fact, the comments were very similar, usually describing a more relevant curriculum, but after ten years just over a quarter of the heads mentioned the curriculum.

Approximately the same number – about a quarter – talked about physical improvements in the buildings and facilities in 1988 and 1993. At each point in the study very similar comments were also made about improvements in the main areas of staff, students, parents and the community. School improvement, in all its forms, is obviously the major quest for all heads. From our longitudinal research it seems that most of the groundwork is put in place during the first five years or so, and then further refinements are made. This involves setting up a number of working parties, curriculum and organisational restructuring, modelling appropriate behaviour, and most crucially, appointing key staff (particularly at senior and middle management).

A problem with much of the previous research in schools or businesses is the lack of a sufficiently long time-frame to see all the phases of development.
Hence the value of the NFER ten-year study.

Gabarro’s work shows interesting parallels with the NFER study where the new heads attempt to ‘take charge’. But heads are more constrained than business managers in their ability to hire and fire, and the school year and timetable delay major curricular changes. Nevertheless, the waves of changes described by Gabarro have great similarity to the way that the heads introduced change. LEADERSHIP AND HEADTEACHERS

Another common finding was that internally appointed heads/managers appear to make fewer changes and to move slowly than external appointees.

Day and Bakioglu’s final phase of disenchantment produces a new perspective, while Ribbins offers the alternative of enchantment for some long-serving heads. The NFER data shows that, as Ribbins believes, some heads are enchanted and others disenchanted by their experience of headship.

The NFER results and the work of Hart, Gabarro, Day and Bakioglu, and Ribbins and Gronn, have been used to produce the following model which maps out the stages of transition through headship. The timings are approximate. Stage 0 – Preparation prior to headship

Throughout their career people develop a conception of headship during their professional socialisation which is learned through both
formal and informal processes. As the NFER and other studies (e.g. Ribbins, 1997) show, they learn from both good and bad headteacher role models.

The NFER heads said they learned about headship throughout their career but they particularly stressed the value of the following experiences prior to appointment: the need for a wide variety of experience, especially as a deputy head; the value of a period as acting head; the importance of delegation by the head; the rotation of deputies’ responsibilities; and the need to work with heads who saw deputy headship as a preparation for headship. Some heads spoke highly of management courses that they had attended as deputies, but most agreed that off-the-job training and development complemented experiences gained as a deputy working with ‘a good practitioner’. The gulf from deputy to head was, nevertheless, seen as enormous: ‘no course or reading matter can really prepare you for the job’. It will be interesting to see to what extent the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) improves the preparation for headship. Stage 1 – Entry and encounter (first months)

The first few days and weeks are a critical period when the new head’s notions of headship meet the reality of a particular school. It is a time of ‘surprise’ and the importance of sense-making is highlighted as
organisational socialisation begins and the new head attempts to develop a cognitive map of the complexities of the situation, the people, the problems and the school culture. Stage 2 - Taking hold (three to 12 months)

The newcomer strives to ‘take hold’ in Gabarro’s terms, and the new heads begin to challenge the ‘taken for granted’ nature of the school. The NFER heads introduced a number of organisational changes. They develop a deeper understanding and their diagnosis of key issues during this stage was used to decide priorities. STAGES OF HEADSHIP

This is also part of the ‘honeymoon period’, when staff are more lenient and open to change. In the NFER study we found that all new heads had such a period, though some did not realise it! The length of time varied, from about a term to possibly a year. It was often ended suddenly by negative staff reaction to an action of the new head e.g. an internal appointment whom the majority of the staff considered the wrong person for the job. Stage 3 - Reshaping (second year)

After a year in post most heads felt more confident and were beginning to feel that they could take off their ‘L’ plates! They had experienced a complete annual cycle of school events and learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the staff. Conversely, the staff had also learned about
their strengths and weak
ness, and their mutual expectations had become more
realistic. The seeds
planted in the previous stage now produced the
implementation of major
changes to reshape the school. This was the period of major
change. Stage 4 - Refinement (years three to four)

After two years many of the structural changes were in
place. But during this
stage further curriculum changes were introduced and a
number of refinements
made. Previous innovations were fine-tuned and heads felt
they were ‘hitting
their stride’. Stage 5 - Consolidation (years five to seven)

After about five years a period of consolidation seems to
occur after the heads
have introduced most of their planned changes. However, in
the NFER study
this was affected by the introduction of legislative and
external changes. These,
as Gabarro found, required attention as their impact may
hit the school during
any of the stages. Stage 6 - Plateau (years eight and
onwards)
The NFER heads suggested that about seven years in one
school was sufficient
to see through a cohort of pupils and to have initiated
most of the changes they
wanted. This period corresponds with Day and Bakioglu’s
phase of disenchant
ment or Ribbins’ enchantment. The NFER data showed that
about a third of the
cohort felt they had reached a plateau after ten years but
that this was far less likely if they had moved to a second headship. Motivating heads who stay in one school until the end of their career can be a problem. However, many of the NFER heads said they still enjoyed their work and, despite the changes to the role, considered it to be the 'best job in education'.

The model is in the form of an ideal type and some caveats are necessary. Leadership and Headteachers

Clearly the time periods attached to each stage must be treated as approximations.

It is also likely that different heads may move at different speeds, as Parkay and Hall suggest. Also, the situation in the UK has changed considerably due to ERA and other legislation. Whereas the NFER heads were able to introduce almost all the changes internally, today’s headteacher has to manage major multiple initiatives which originate externally, and attempt to integrate themselves and shape the culture of the school. Unfortunately, the NFER study of secondary heads had too few women heads to make a comparison. This means that it is not possible to say how gender differences might affect the stages of headship.

The model is offered as a means of helping headteachers and prospective heads to understand the likely phases they will experience during headship.
Although the particular circumstances in each school make it unique there are common patterns, knowledge of which can be used to improve the preparation.


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PART 9 Learning leadership

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Source: Improving Schools 5(1) (Spring 2002): 52-66. Improving the learning experiences of pupils in schools through a work based learning approach to the development of school leaders - the experience of the Scottish Qualification for Headship

In the late 1980s and early 1990s a variety of management training initiatives were taken forward within Scottish local authorities and nationally across Scotland as a whole (SOEID 1988 MTHT). Recommendations from two
published

evaluations of the MTHT programme (Draper et al. 1995, Kerr 1992) included

the expressed wish of senior managers in schools for a move towards more use

of self evaluation within a competence and school based approach along with a

greater focus on joint training for school teams and on outcomes for pupils. At

the same time, approaches to management training in the worlds of business

and industry were being standardised around a 'competence model' within

vocationally oriented training programmes and trialed in an education setting

(Earley 1992). Meanwhile a critical literature was developing in relation to lack

of fit between this technicist/managerialist model (Paterson and Fairley 1996)

and both the broader models of professional learning emerging from the

research literature (Eraut 1994, Kolb 1984, Schon 1987) and the broader

models of professional practice written up in 'critical leadership studies' (Grace

1995).

The piecemeal character of previous training for Headship in Scotland, together

with observation of experience and practice in other systems and the theoretical

heat generated by discussion of competence models for training and development,

made more likely the development of a consensus on the need
for a more coherent, grounded pathway for leadership and management development towards Headship in Scottish schools. Development was rooted and professional consensus developed in typical Scottish fashion (Humes 1986, Humes and Mackenzie 1994) by widespread managed consultation, in this case on the purpose and characteristics of Headship as defined in The Standard for Headship (SOEID 1998). The Standard provided a framework for describing the professional practice of Headship and consequently for developing potential Heads. The Standard avoided narrow competence-based approaches to practice, although drawing from them, by developing a model which required the successful development of Professional Values. Management Competence in four key areas and Intellectual and Interpersonal Abilities and was widely acclaimed within the profession after extensive national consultation.

Scottish funding was made available for a pilot and full-scale implementation of two approved programmes which could lead to the award of the Scottish Qualification for Headship - an Accelerated Route for those who were already competent school managers and a Standard Route for those seeking further
development. Both routes were designed to lead participants to a level of professional practice equivalent to that described in The Standard and recognised by the award by the Scottish Minister for Education of The Scottish Qualification for Headship (Higher Education Institutions offering these programmes would also award a Postgraduate Diploma.)

The programmes can be summarised:

• All participants evaluate their current practice against the Standard and identify learning needs.

• The programme comprises four Units of study, designed to ensure progression in practice and reflective thinking by personalising and contextualising broader issues of leadership and management, as these emerge from current research and associated thinking, through constant direct reference to and application in the current workplace of those taking part.

• Learning takes place through the normal methods of academic coursework (reading, reflection, written assignments, class meetings, workshops and tutorials) but just as importantly through successful experience of taking forward project(s) which make a difference to the learning lives of pupils. It is a central part of the programmes that participants should not just know
about leadership and management but should be able to practise success fully in a contemporary school setting.

• To this end, work-based learning is supported by the compilation of a portfolio of evidence, assessed as a written document, but also verified through a field visit. Within the portfolio participants must demonstrate that their leadership has made a difference to the learning lives of pupils through successful management practice with and through staff.

• The portfolio is complemented by an analytical commentary in which participants reflect on their experience of management and their professional learning.

• Workplace learning is supported by the local authority employer and by the school Headteacher (who acts as the participant’s supporter through the programme) in partnership with HEIs. Quality is assured by the national programme descriptor, nationally set performance criteria, national training within the pilot phase and through University quality assurance procedures. The assessment criteria are designed to ensure that the Standard has been met in practice.

• There has been limited experimentation with using online learning support.
The commitment to experience-based professional development, set within a context of reflection on purposes and values and within a well structured standard defining good practice, offers many new ways to assess the manner and extent of the impact of professional learning on the experience of pupils. One of the links between the ambitions of the programme and the improved experience of pupils is in the framework for school improvement adopted within the programme and based on current visions of effective improvement in schools and schooling experiences (Hargreaves and Hopkins 1994, Harris et al 1997, MacGilchrist et al 1997, MacBeath and Mortimore 2000).

Indeed Unit 3 of the programme is entitled ‘Managing School Improvement’ and requires participants to begin their management activity with an analysis of the ‘capacity for change’ (Stoll 1999) of their school.

Four key characteristics of school improvement highlighted in current literature fit well with the SQH model and are used in the following discussion to illustrate and expand on this link. These are:

- Learning and teaching as the key focus for improvement
- A whole school approach
- The involvement of a range of stakeholders
• Contextual specificity of improvement factors linked to awareness and development of a school’s capacity for change

For each of these four characteristics there now follows a discussion and illustration, based on actual SQH school improvement projects. 1) Learning and teaching as the key focus

While the literature encourages practitioners to understand that there is no single model which will guarantee school improvement (Slee et al 1998) it has also led to the concept of the classroom as the main context for change in terms of the teacher as the agent of change and the pupil as the focus for change (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992, MacGilchrist et al 1997).

In the Standard for Headship in Scotland (SEED 1998) the stated key purpose of Headship is:

To provide the leadership and management which enables a school to give every pupil high quality education and which promotes the highest possible standards of achievement.

LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

Through their work based projects and development of the interrelated competences of The Standard (see diagram) programme participants are expected to demonstrate that they are striving towards the above key purpose. The detail of the programme is designed in such a way as to encourage
this in a range of ways

including:

• In Unit 1 participants evaluate themselves as leaders and managers of learning and teaching using The Standard and an extensive audit tool. The links between a corporate style development plan (MacGilchrist et al 1995) and improving pupils' achievement is explored.

• In preparation for Unit 2 participants prepare a detailed project plan for the management of learning and teaching and managing people, in which they are required to plan not only for the management tasks but also for the outcomes for pupils and for the involvement of all staff in the chosen initiative.

• Assessment criteria for the work based project on learning and teaching state clearly that participants should have successfully developed structures for the management and evaluation of effective learning and teaching. The expectation is that within the evaluation process participants are able to demonstrate successful outcomes for pupils.

• As participants progress to Unit 3 (see above) the focus on learning and teaching remains, but now within the context of understanding and demonstrating their increasing application of a wider range of factors affecting
school improvement: the school’s capacity for change, strategic planning,

Figure 1

Professional Management Values Functions Professional Abilities Key

Purpose Values Learning Knowledge Managing Learning and Teaching Managing People Managing Policy and Planning Managing Resources and Finance Intellectual Learning Intellectual Learning Intellectual Learning Leadership

policy making, involvement of stakeholders and development of partnerships, using finance and resources effectively to continue to develop learning and teaching.

• In Unit 4 in the final stages of the programme participants explore political and educational issues at local authority and national level in order to improve their understanding of and practice in strategic management, but still within the overarching purpose of The Standard for Headship.

Illustration 1

In common with many colleagues in other primary schools in Scotland, the focus for this participant in the first year of the programme was raising attainment in writing, linked to a national and local education department priority.

From rationale through to evaluation, the participant emphasised commitment to improving outcomes for pupils. During the whole cycle of the project the participant also became the acknowledged school expert on aspects
of learning and
teaching in writing: policy, programmes, pedagogy,
assessment, resources, staff
development, management and evaluation. Nevertheless it was
still a learning experience for her in terms of managing learning and teaching.

- Embarking on this project meant far more to me than simply meeting a school development necessity and using it as a vehicle to develop my leadership skills and demonstrate competency against The Standard. I am a passionate believer in the central importance of writing as being a liberating and life enhancing skill, and feel strongly that a lack of literacy has major implications for the rights of all children to receive an equal education.

- Having managed a collaboratively produced policy, programme, and assessment and recording procedures, the next task was to ensure its effective implementation . . . so that it was more than solely a curriculum development . . . but also an instrument in promoting a culture of achievement.

- Many staff changes in recent years have made it difficult to establish the kind of staff collaboration necessary to ensure consistency of approach and therefore continuity to ensure raised achievement. I had to learn how to establish collaborative working patterns. Feedback from staff about changes in methodology for teaching writing suggested that team teaching, and therefore smaller pupil/teacher ratios would be a supportive strategy for all staff. This involved me in confronting the dilemma of negotiation in order to convince senior managers that they should be timetabled and involved in the teaching of the writing programme. I now firmly believe that such ‘leading from the front’ provides a great impetus to whole school teamwork and collaboration, with clear outcomes for pupils’ learning.

LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

- I introduced a number of strategies to support high expectations and to celebrate the success of the pupils’ writing, not only for the pupils’ self esteem but also for that of staff: the ‘star writer’ of the week, exchange of audiences across the school for pupils’ writing, personal gifts of books written by older children for infants,
celebratory letters to parents. What I learned was that staff also needed to celebrate their success through open discussions together: displays of writing throughout the school were shared and enjoyed by staff, staff meetings discussed targets, progress and achievement, smaller groups of children have enabled better working relations with pupils and with other staff in the team as well as between pupils. These outcomes were not in my original plan.

- I began the project with a clear end-point in mind – the raising of attainment in writing – and thinking I had a fairly good idea of the best way to achieve that. I now know that working through the whole school team provided a richer and deeper approach, with more divergent ideas, than my possibly too rigid, clear, coherent vision did.

- Pupils’ attainment in writing has improved but real professional development has also taken place – collaborative working, improved knowledge about teaching, greater enthusiasm to engage in discussion, more positive attitude to change – school improvement factors which will have a long lasting effect.

- I do not have a clear end point as planned – the point where we are now is merely a current position.

2) A whole school approach

A whole school approach incorporates the concepts of professional leadership

(Macbeath 1998, Grace 1995, Day et al 1993), shared vision and goals, (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992) and the learning organisation (Senge 1990) which together are inextricably linked with effective learning and teaching. These concepts are also fundamental for the developing practice of participants on the programme,

particularly in order to demonstrate their competencies in managing people (see The Standard 2.2.1 to 2.2.4) and interpersonal abilities (see The Standard 3.1).

The requirement on programme participants to plan for and lead a whole
school development priority for the first time is a challenging one. The structure

and size of management teams in many primary schools is such that it is often

only the Headteacher who does not have a teaching commitment and who therefore may be the person who leads all parts of the school development plan, with

other staff having responsibility for a particular stage in the school. The other side of this coin is that in Scotland there are many small primary schools, where leading a whole school development may fall to a teaching Headteacher and a small band of class teachers who do everything together as an effective team. LEARNING LEADERSHIP

In secondary schools, which normally have larger management teams, each member of that team may have a substantial remit, but still not have a whole school responsibility for any one part of that remit.

For the first time in their professional lives many participants find themselves leading a team of colleagues through a whole school development priority, with the expectation that they will be able to make a difference on a whole school basis.

The programme supports participants towards this in a range of ways including:

• Ensuring that participants have the strength and
legitimacy of the school development plan as the context for their leadership and management of their chosen project.

- Encouraging participants to research and become the school’s expert, or leading learner in relation to the focus of the chosen development project.

- A supporter (normally their Headteacher) who can facilitate access to the whole school context and provide personal, professional support.

- Taught days, study sessions and tutorials which are both knowledge and skills based, focusing on such topics as team roles and team working, delegation, motivation, conflict management, interpersonal abilities and emotional intelligence.

- Assessment criteria which require a reflective commentary on each of the two major school based projects. In the first of these, participants analyse key issues in managing people (within a context of managing learning and teaching) through examining critical incidents at a personal level in the management of people. In the second of these participants move on to analysing key issues in their management, often of people, through examining critical incidents relating to the wider strategic and political contexts
which affect their school. Illustration 2

One participant in the programme described critical learning points in managing a whole school approach to the development of learning and teaching in a large secondary school. A whole school policy had been agreed as a working document, a guide and a spur to assess learning and teaching and work for improvement.

- This is a large organisation with a history of balkanised departments and little whole school activity. I knew I would need to initiate change in a step by step way, building on the strengths of a hard working staff, committed to their pupils’ achievements. However statistics told me there was significant potential for improvement in achievement.

LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

- To support an agreed focus on teaching and learning two experienced external consultants acted as critical friends to four departments, as the staff developed their own learning and teaching handbooks and identified and shared their successes and failures with the whole school. This was very successful and a learning point for me - I could not be all things to all people, the staff responded well to the professional attention from the critical friends and to the change in methodology used by the critical friends in an in-service day.

- Another aspect of the development was the use of staff mentors for under-achieving pupils. The first attempt at this had not been successful, due I believe to my strengths in initiating new ideas but my weakness in monitoring, supporting and evaluating the implementation. I am conscious of how very differently I have operated the process this year . . . by sharing a structured process for evaluating the mentoring I am also valuing the staff who are making it possible. There have been excellent ideas from those staff involved for improving the mentoring process. I hope to incorporate these next year - I may even delegate the mentoring process to another teacher next year.
as a staff development opportunity.

• The project has required me to reflect on and improve my interpersonal abilities: by giving all staff a regular newsletter and summary evaluations of all aspects of the project I believe I encouraged them to realise that the school was making good progress and they were part of that; I am aware that having built up strong relationships, I can trade on this to challenge pupils and teachers to achieve more, move into challenging areas and have a positive result; each critical learning point has brought me out of my own personal comfort zone and I am more aware of how the correct input will help our school grow and improve. 3) The involvement of a range of stakeholders

A recent on-line study session, using the University SQH web-site and a structured model of teaching and learning on-line (Salmon 2000), has been encouraging participants, who are just at the start of their Unit 2 project, to consider the views of pupils, parents and teachers as vital indicators of effectiveness and for improvement (McCall J et al 2001). Responses have ranged from How can pupils have a say in the school development plan? to Our parents trust us to get on with the job and I'm planning to do this but don't quite know how. (Participants had been encouraged at the earlier project planning stage to include stakeholder involvement at one or more stages of their project).

Consultation with and involvement of pupils, parents and teachers is now enshrined in Scottish legislation (SEED 2000), and one must assume that this has been influenced by the school improvement literature. More than twenty years ago
a Scottish study (Gow and Macpherson 1980) raised the awareness of researchers
and the education establishment of the importance of listening to the voices of our
pupils, as the authentic evaluators of their classroom and school experience. More
recently, pupils’ and parents’ voices were heard and listened to while planning for
improvements in teaching and learning (SBC 2001) and schools were encouraged
to identify a genuinely parental agenda and model partnership in action (Bastiani
1993).

Although stakeholder involvement is well documented as an important school
improvement strategy, it is not universally acknowledged as such, seldom going
beyond the involvement model to the model of effective partnership. How are
the participants in the SQH programme supported to develop their knowledge
and practice in this aspect of their work-based learning?

• As stated above, detailed project plans for both Unit 2 and Unit 3 are
expected to show how the participant will recognise the importance of
involving all stakeholders.

• Study sessions and tutorials are designed to include access to the literature
and the opportunity to share strategies which work (with a health warning
about different contexts).
• Participants have the opportunity to listen to and have discussions with
  expert, and generally inspirational, witnesses, who have been involved in
  research or who are headteachers of improving schools where partnership
  with stakeholders has been a key strategy.

• The Standard itself (see 1.3, 2.2.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2) and associated assessment
  criteria for the two major projects require participants to demonstrate that
  they can establish, develop and use participative management structures and
  partnerships with the full range of stakeholders.

Illustration 3

In Unit 3 in the second year of the programme, participants are required to
  demonstrate competence in the core activity, develop and maintain partnerships
  with parents, pupils, school board, outside agencies and the community. Within
  a school priority on target-setting for senior pupils preparing for external exami
  nations, one senior manager in a large secondary school successfully worked in
  partnership with an educational psychologist, whose specific role was to provide
  an objective evaluation of the initiative. The psychologist focused on teachers
  and pupils. While the participant focused on parents. The participant referred to a
  statement in a national document on school leadership. 'Leadership involves
looking beyond the school and working with others who can contribute to school improvement.’ (SEED 2000a: p5) Numerous self-evaluative comments appear in the participant’s commentary in relation to the involvement of stakeholders and experts beyond the school.

LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

• I wanted staff to see that the status quo was not an option, that it was not bolt-on but part of the monitoring of progress and assessment procedures which students deserve to achieve their potential.

• Following the outcome of the psychologist’s evaluation it was apparent my communication of the target setting procedures (agreed by all staff – or so I thought) had not been as effective as I believed. One of the ten characteristics of effective leaders (SEED 2000a) is developing and sharing a vision; obviously I needed to do some work on this.

• The responses to my letter to parents about their views of target setting made it apparent that not all of them had been involved in the process. I now realise that parents should have been consulted on the process rather than being informed about it once the policy was in place. If parents back schools and we work with each other, there is more likelihood of success - a lesson I intend to remember:

• The value of this project for me lay in allowing me to plan strategically for change, to experience the difficulties I was likely to meet in the process of managing change, to learn from my mistakes and be up front about admitting them to colleagues and parents.

• The main findings of the psychologist’s extensive evaluation report give me an agenda for future action. It states that this has been a bold venture, that the committed school management team have planned and implemented carefully, that we have been open to outside evaluation and keen to take on advice about development. The findings will be shared with staff and students and a number of recommendations are already being worked on. 4) Contextual specificity of school improvement factors linked to awareness and development of a school’s capacity for
change and improvement

Participants on the programme come from a wide variety of school contexts: depute headteachers in large urban schools, senior teachers in small town schools, head teachers of two or three teacher rural schools, a mix in any one cohort of secondary, primary, special and nursery school contexts, some from leafy suburbs, some from areas of social and economic deprivation. As well as a unique context, each school will also have its own mix of factors influencing its capacity for change.

All participants are required to meet The Standard in order to gain the SQH, but it follows that, just as there is no blueprint for school improvement (Harris 2001, Fullan 1993, Macbeath and Mortimore 2001, Lauder et al 1998) nor any consistent capacity for change and improvement, because schools are different (Hargreaves 1999, Macbeath 1999), there is also no blueprint for how a participant works towards the SQH, apart from a satisfactory performance in each of the assignments through meeting the given and transparent assessment criteria.

An issue for the programme providers then is how to ensure that all contexts are LEARNING LEADERSHIP catered for while also ensuring that those who gain the SQH do not simply gain a context specific qualification. Some of the ways in which this is managed are:
• Participants are deliberately mixed in terms of context for group sessions on taught days, in tutorials and local authority network seminars, to encourage both cross sector understanding of different contexts and also sharing of experience, expertise and knowledge.

• Through case studies and interaction with the literature, participants can consider a wider range of strategies than they might otherwise have done.

• By the second year of the programme, through analysing their own school’s capacity for change, participants are encouraged to develop their own unique package of improvement strategies within their Unit 3 project plan as well as reflect in their Unit 3 assignment on that package and its usefulness in moving their school forward.

• A comparative study placement in business or industry gives participants the opportunity to consider improvement strategies from a wider context and to consider how practice beyond their own world of education could be adapted to support change and improvement in their own or another context in which they might work.

• Participants themselves bring a wealth of experience to the programme if they have worked in different school contexts; some move schools during
their time on the programme, giving current first-hand knowledge of capacity for change and improvement in differing contexts. The programme provider can capitalise on such experience to support participants with developing their understanding of this issue. Illustration 4

The opportunity to act as Headteacher in a different school gave one of the participants an ideal opportunity to gain first-hand experience of a different school culture as well as develop an appropriate package of strategies to move the school forward.

In addition the school catered for children with special needs, each requiring special support from other professionals within the staff as well as appropriately designed teaching and learning strategies. Many aspects of the school were different from mainstream schools - the line management arrangements for the school as a whole and within the school, finance and resourcing, staffing requirements, expectations of parents.

The aim of the chosen development project was to develop partnership with parents, which involved discussion on target setting, support for the children’s work, involvement in decision making in the school and parental development in issues relating to their own children. An analysis of the
school’s prevailing
culture and the package of school improvement strategies
developed gave the
participant much opportunity for critical self-reflection
and learning:

LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

• The outcomes of the analysis were quite clear; but I
found that I needed to explain aspects of the process
clearly to staff, who felt confused about the purpose. I
will think such a strategy through more fully in the future

• Stoll and Fink’s (1996) steps, I got to know the culture
as an objective outsider, without being part of any
subcultures. I considered how the culture supported or
inhibited pupil progress, concluding that talking with and
involving the hard working, committed and knowledgeable
staff, and involving them in decision making, was a
powerful forum for sharing values. The introduction of
interprofessional meetings allowed the discussion and
sharing of values.

• Although the staff were keen to move forward on a number
of fronts, the analysis of the school’s capacity for change
and a high staff turnover persuaded me that beginning the
change process for three cultural norms would be enough of
a challenge – shared goals, collegiality/collaboration and
openness.

• This change process involved better communication with
parents. From this I soon learned that we needed to do more
than allow parents to share in the new ethos. We should
have involved parents in how they perceived the school
ethos and in assisting its selfevaluation. I will be
guarded about getting carried away with organising ‘events’
just for their own sake.

• I am now more aware of the need for accurate baseline
information against which improvement can be measured. A
related area of personal development is how to design
specific criteria, against which pupils’ achievement can be
measured, especially in this fairly unique context.

• I have found it difficult, due to the nature of the
pupils’ special needs, to be certain that parental
involvement did help pupils’ learning, but I am convinced
that building relationships between the range of
professionals within the school and parents is the key to involving parents. Summary and discussion

The experience of how professional learning relates to and supports school improvement has been illustrated through these descriptions of current experience within the Scottish Qualification for Headship. More structured but piecemeal evaluation of the overall characteristics of the Scottish Qualification for Headship experience has taken place and some of this has been published (Morris 1999, Simpson et al 2000, Malcolm and Wilson 2000). Although this does not allow a definitive assessment to be made of the impact on pupils’ learning experience of the SQH programme and of the professional learning it encourages, there are clear indications of areas where substantial contributions are being made and the summary discussion which follows is therefore based on the illustrations given above and the evaluation evidence currently available.

LEARNING LEADERSHIP

Using assessment criteria which require participants to produce evidence of improvements in children’s learning experience has acted as a powerful lever on practice. In tutorial discussion, tutors regularly comment on this set of criteria as the most powerful lever to take practice beyond ‘comfortable collegiality’ (Fullan and Hargreaves 1992). This contrasts with some previous models of pro
fessional development in which the main focus has been on
the ‘inputs’ in terms
of programme structure or those ‘outputs’ which could be
assessed from written
presentations by participants. The outputs of this
work-based CPD are evidence
based improvements for pupils in the school context.

There have however been difficulties with progression into
and within the
programme. As a new programme, and the only one of its kind
on offer in Scot
land, it has shown up the lack of a pathway for those
aspiring to Headship from
earlier in their career. Unit 2 of the programme was
designed to develop opera
tional management skills, Unit 3 is strategic management
for school improve
ment, but this has not been an easy progression. As those
delivering the
programme identify the gaps and difficulties, they have
continued to rewrite
guidance and expectations of quality in participants’ work
have increased.

The partnership characteristics of the programme ensure
that it affects those
involved in school development well beyond the participants
themselves, for
example Field Assessors (generally current serving
Headteachers) and local author
ity staff developers. In local evaluations of the
experience of Field Assessment con
ducted within the south and east of Scotland, field
assessors considered that they
had been developed professionally by the experience. In many cases, they con
sidered that this development had been significant and cited as examples the contact
with good practice in school improvement, the rigour of thinking associated with
the assessment process and the encouragement to personal self-evaluation.

Local authority experience of SQH has been varied. This is in part due to the
variety of personnel involved, the different resource bases and different approaches
taken within Scotland’s local authorities. An evaluation of the role of local authori
ties in promoting work based learning (Draper et al forthcoming) highlights the
significant role local authorities play in: selecting and supporting staff; ensuring
equality of access; ensuring that work-based contexts for learning offer appropriate
opportunities to learn and develop; providing pastoral support. The capacity of local
authorities to develop and sustain a professional environment within which this
kind of support can be offered varies greatly (Harris 2001). The clear link from this
kind of work based learning to improved outcomes for pupils suggests that this is a
capacity which all authorities should be aiming to develop and sustain.

Alongside the many positives for SQH as a new model for professional devel
opment which aims to make a difference in schools, there
are issues to be
daddressed. Part-time context based learning is proving
difficult for participants. All

those involved in part-time postgraduate study alongside
full time jobs might rea

sonably be expected to complain of workload difficulties or
problems in managing

their work-life balance. Some difficulties have been
encountered also in finding a

balance within portfolios. Candidates tend to produce far
too much evidence

LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?

without sufficiently considering issues of quality and
selection. Portfolios still do

not comfortably sit with professional expectations of
assessment. Additional prob

lems emerging for participants in SQH derive from the wide
variations in school

context which can have a dramatic effect on the character
of the learning

opportunities. Sometimes this is to do with problems in
finding suitable contexts

within school to demonstrate competence at the level
prescribed in the standard –

this applies for example in relation to the management of
budgets, for Headteach

ers may be reluctant to delegate the function or in
recruitment and selection, for

opportunities may not occur during the time the candidate
is on the programme.

This is most strikingly the case, for example, where the
Headteacher is challenged

or threatened by the SQH model and the programme design of
collegial and systemic school improvement (with the Headteacher as supporter to the management of key school improvement priorities) is replaced by a reality where participants are managing the micropolitics to do what is possible. There are also different types of social profile for the programme in schools. Where it is known that a senior member of staff is pursuing SQH this can lead to staffroom chatter about motivation, or about relative success or failure. Previous relationships in school, the ethos of the staff and the culture of professional improvement in the school can all have a significant impact on whether or not these factors help or hinder participants in moving forward professionally (Reeves 2001).

The management of a complex site-based development model also makes logistical/infrastructural demands on people and institutions. The time involved in partnership working, in dual assessment (professional and academic), in establishing systems to support site-based learning, is substantial. The variations in context, from small two teacher rural primary to separate nursery school to 1800 inner city comprehensive demand sensitive customisation both in delivery and in assessment.

The profession is still guarded in its approach to the qualification. Early concern that this was a simplistic ‘competence’ model has given way
as the programme has become embedded to worries about access and desirability of a ‘mandatory’ state. School Boards and Local Authorities responsible for appointing Headteachers continue to see possession of SQH as only one, and not necessarily the most important of the criteria to determine who is best for a given Headteacher post.

A new legislative framework for school improvement in Scotland has been devised nationally (SEED 2000) in which evidence-based improvement strategies, analysed and delivered through effective development planning, are required of every local authority and every school. At the time of writing, a national Ministerial strategy group for continuous professional development has been established by Jack McConnell, until recently the Scottish Minister for Education. These logistical concerns will loom large in the proposals this group makes to develop the framework for Chartered Teacher in Scotland, since whatever professional development structure is built for Scotland’s teachers to meet the demands of the McCrone agreement on the continuous professional development of teachers (SEED 2001), it will have to work in the wide variety of situations that characterise the Scottish school system. A sub-group of that committee is currently developing LEARNING LEADERSHIP.
proposals for a career development pathway in leadership and management and

SQH as it now stands will thereafter be absorbed into a broader framework for
devolving teachers for teaching and for leadership. In doing so, they will benefit

from evaluation of the Leadership Programme for Serving Heads (LPSH), the new

consultative framework for school leadership development (National College for

School Leadership 2001) and the SQH in Scotland. Whatever that broader frame

work turns out to be, there is much to learn from the SQH experience, and its

commitment to ensuring that professional development is measured in part by evid

cence of its impact on pupils, thus far.

In conclusion, the continuing development of SQH has offered many new

and exciting possibilities for professional development in leadership and man

ageent for those who aspire to Headship in Scotland. The use of portfolio and

commentary assessment, benchmarked against The Standard for Headship, has

stimulated an exciting range of reflection and practice on the part of those on the

programme – practice which demonstrates professional learning in new and

exciting ways and has stimulated partnership to support this learning across

schools, local authorities and HEIs. There are continuing areas for development
- both logistical and in terms of the learning experiences offered and supported,


Draper J, O’Brien J, Cowie M and Murphy D (forthcoming) Report into the Role of the Local Authority Co-ordinator in Implementing the Scottish Qualification for Headship (for the Scottish Executive Education Department)


LEARNING THROUGH LEADING OR LEADING THROUGH LEARNING?


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PREPARATION FOR THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALSHIP The United States’ story Joseph Murphy
In this paper, we trace the evolution of training programmes for educa
tional leaders in the United States, focusing primarily on activity in the
20th century. The history of preparation is divided into four eras: The
Ideological Era, 1820–1899; the Prescriptive Era, 1900–1946; The Scient
dimensions and central events are underscored in each time frame.
Particular attention is devoted to the eras of ferment that characterize the
shift from one era to another. Introduction
The study of principal preparation in the USA is of interest for a variety of
reasons. It is, of course, centrally important in its own right, i.e. to the extent to
which it is linked to the development of more successful educational leaders and
school managers. An analysis of preparation programmes also provides a
window on the development of the field of school administration writ large. Our
thoughts about relevant epistemological foundations of the field, about connec
tions between the academic and practice arms of the professions and about
appropriate anchoring values are all highlighted in the evolutionary tapestry of
principal preparation. Because formal, university-based training for school leadership positions has been relatively rare outside the USA (Willower & Forsyth, 1998), lessons learned here over the last century may prove helpful to other nations exploring adoption of the US model of preparation. Regardless of the approach they are employing, unpacking principal preparation in the USA may help others to avoid pitfalls that have been experienced here, so that they can concentrate on the more positive lessons.

In this paper, we trace the evolution of training programmes in the USA over the last century, relying heavily upon the efforts of others who have already begun to fill in some of the pieces of this historical puzzle. We review the development of the preparation of school leaders through four periods of time: the ideological era; the prescriptive era; the behavioural science era; the dialectic era. Table 1 and Figure 1 provide the frameworks that ground our discussion. The Ideological Era, 1820–1899

Although the administration of schools in the USA enjoys a relatively long history, in its early days it 'went largely unrecognized as an essential component of school operation' (Guba 1960: 115) and the actual number of administrators was quite small until after the Civil War. For example, the development of the school superin
tendency, the first administrative position in education, occurred during the latter part of the 19th century (Gregg 1960). The Department of Superintendence, precursor of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), was not organized until 1866 (Button 1966). Moreover, because early schools were simple organizations, their administration was not an arduous task. As Gregg (1969) notes:

Under such circumstances, the administrator could learn his profession effectively on the job by trial-and-error processes. Little, if any, formal specialized preparation was needed, and none was provided. The minimal formal education which was designed for teachers was deemed sufficient for those who would become administrators. (993–994)

In 1875, William L. Payne, then a school superintendent in Michigan, wrote the first book in the USA dealing with school administration, *Chapters on School Supervision*. After receiving a faculty appointment in education at the University of Michigan in 1879, Payne also taught the first college level course in school administration (Callahan & Button 1964). Although other 'departments of PREPARATION FOR THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALSHIP

1820–1899 Ideological Era First Era of Ferment (1900–1915)

1986+ Dialectic Era

Figure 1 Eras in the history of school administration.  
(Source: J. Murphy (1983) Preparing Tomorrow’s School Leaders: alternative designs p. 4.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era of Era of Prescriptive Educator</th>
<th>Capitalist Era</th>
<th>Era of Management</th>
<th>Era of Businessman</th>
<th>Era of Conventional School Executive Wisdom</th>
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<td>1900–1912 Executive of Education</td>
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education' were also established in the 1870s, professors of educational leadership and programmes specific to school administration 'were unknown until the early 1900s' (Cooper & Boyd 1987: 16). Thus the earliest: . . . formal training for administration included some basic pedagogy and a lifelong search for the 'ideal' education, but not much self-consciousness or thought about their own roles as leaders, statesmen, or administrators. Hence, they attended no courses, received no credits, and applied for no licenses in educational administration. (16)

What broad education departments such as that at Michigan did offer students was subject matter 'relating to school management as well as to philosophy' (Moore 1964: 11) and pedagogy. The 'first teachings to prospective administrators were “theories” about exemplary school leaders which were then rarefied into “great man” and “trait” theories' (Cooper & Boyd 1987: 7).
Callahan & Button (1964) and Button (1966) have isolated two doctrines of school leadership before 1900 that, at least to some extent, exerted influence on thinking about the content to which administrators were exposed from 1870 to 1905 in these newly forming departments of education. Under the doctrine of administration as the teaching of teachers (1870–1885), ‘administration was very simple, really; administration was supervision’ (218). Because the proper role of education was instruction, much of the limited education administrators did receive was in the areas of curriculum and instruction.

The doctrine of administration as applied philosophy (1885–1905) asserted that truth, concerning all things and all matters, was eternal and to be discovered. As in all other fields, this was necessary in education. It therefore followed that the learned administrator, who could discover relevant truths, was the best authority on all matters concerning education, and that the problem of administration was the application of philosophical knowledge to schools. (218)

This new doctrine, ‘with its emphasis on eternal wisdom and moral judgement, made the administrator into something like the clergyman and borrowed from him some of the clergyman’s status’ (219). It also
reinforced the emphasis on philosophy and theories about outstanding school leaders in the rudimentary subject matter being offered to students of school administration. The Prescriptive Era, 1900-1946

The 20th century ushered in the beginning of the prescriptive era in school administration (Campbell et al. 1907), a nearly 50 year period of expansion in training programmes for school leaders. In 1900, no institutions were offering systematic study in the area of school management. By the end of World War II, 125 institutions were actively engaged in preparing school administrators (Silver 1982). A first generation of educational administration professors was actively engaged in laying the foundations of the field and in training a second generation of professors to take their place. Many states were requiring formal course work in educational leadership for administrative positions and were certifying graduates of preparation programmes for employment (Moore 1964). As these elements of the profession began to find acceptance, more and more principals and superintendents embarked on their careers with university training in the practice of school administration.

This shift from an era of teaching, ideology, character and philosophy to one of prescription represents the first era of ferment in
school administration, one

marked by a number of trends that we see repeated during both the second

(1947–1957) and third (1986–) periods of ferment in the profession (see Figure 1). All three periods witnessed much critical analysis about the health of educational administration in general and the status of preparation programmes in particular. There was considerable muckraking literature about the way practicing administrators were managing schools (Cooper & Boyd 1987). In addition, new views of leadership (the captain of commerce role from 1900 to 1930 and the social agent role from 1930 to 1950) that reflected dominant social and cultural forces in American society were held up as desirable alternatives for training educational administrators (Callahan 1962).

Information on the preparation of school leaders following the first era of ferment is limited and uneven, gaining in clarity as we approach World War II.

Faculty of this era were drawn almost exclusively from the superintendency. They carried heavy teaching loads and showed little proclivity for research. A similar homogeneity characterized students of this period. Most were white males holding full-time positions as school administrators while attending school on a part-time basis (Campbell et al. 1987).
The education received by superintendents and principals was largely undifferentiated from that of teachers until the onslaught and widespread acceptance of the scientific management movement throughout the corporate world between 1910 and 1915. For the next 20 years, business was to exert considerable influence over preparation programmes for school administrators: ‘Program content was consistent with prevailing emphases of science on fact gathering, inductive reasoning, and empirical generalizations’ (Culbertson 1988: 9). During this time, ‘preservice education for school executives tended to stress: the technical and mechanical aspects of administration’ (Gregg 1969: 994); ‘specific and immediate tasks’ (Callahan & Button 1964: 87); the practical aspects of the job (Newton 1934). The objective was to train students to understand the job of administration as it was and to perform successfully in the roles they undertook, what Campbell et al. (1987) labelled preparation for the role, as opposed to preparation for the school principalship studying what might need to be done differently and preparing for roles as change agents, i.e. preparing the person. While the Great Depression and World War II saw the incorporation of new material into training programmes—‘human relations in
cooperative educational

activities’ (Gregg 1969: 994), social foundations and the human factor in
general—by the end of the prescriptive era, preparation was still highly technical

in nature. Almost no attention was given to the theoretical underpinnings of the

work of school leaders:

The scholarship that informed course content throughout this era was

little more than ‘naked empiricism’ or ‘factualism’, resulting in the
development of: ‘fuzzy concepts’; ‘inadequately field-tested prin
ciples’; and a mere ‘encyclopedia of facts’ that lacked ‘the power of
unifying interpretive theories’. The knowledge base was comprised of:

‘folklore, testimonials of reputedly successful administrators, . . . the
speculation of college professors’; ‘personal success stories and lively
anecdotes’; ‘personal accounts or “war stories”, and prescriptions
offered by experienced practitioners’; ‘experiences of practicing admin
istrators as they managed the various problem areas of school administra
tion’: ‘maxims, exhortations, and several innocuous variations on the
theme of the Golden Rule’; and ‘preachments to administrators about
ways in which they should perform’. (Cited in Murphy 1992:
Beginning in the late 1940s and continuing throughout the 1950s and 1960s, pre-
scriptions drawn from practice came to be overshadowed in preparation pro-
grammes by theoretical and conceptual material drawn from the various social
sciences. Like the prescriptive era before it, the scientific era, in its emergence,
drew support because of its harsh attacks on the status quo in the area of adminis-
trative training, its critical analyses of the performance of existing school leaders
and its lure of an alternative vision (science in this case) that held forth the promise
of dramatically improving the education available to prospective school leaders.

At the onset of the scientific era, considerable criticism was levelled against
the naked empiricism, personal success stories and maxims or untested prin-
ciples that constituted the knowledge base of educational administration at the
time. It was also argued by many that the explicit values framework of the latter
half of the prescriptive era—the human relations era—was inappropriate in a
scientific world. In the first period of ferment in school leadership (1900-1915),
practicing administrators were chastised for their lack of grounding in the man-
agement principles of the corporate world, especially those developed by Fred
erick Taylor and his peers. In the second era of ferment (1947–1957), they came under attack for their unscientific, non-theoretical approach to administration.

Throughout this second era of ferment, training institutions were being exhorted to develop better preparation programmes 'to protect the public against ill prepared or indifferent practitioners' (Goldhammer 1983: 253). In addition, as has been the case throughout the history of school management, professors began to reweave the fabric of preparation programmes to mirror the high status professions in the larger society, thereby creating an alternative vision of the role of school administrators (Callahan 1962; Callahan & Button 1964). Since scientists, not business people, held centre stage at this time (Halpin 1960), a quest for a science of school administration was undertaken (Culbertson 1965, 1988; Greenfield 1988; Griffiths 1988a).

This second period of ferment in school administration was characterized by considerable enthusiasm, activity and growth and by dramatic changes in the structure and content of training programmes (Wynn 1957; Willower 1983; Crowson & McPherson 1987). It was a period which many believed would lead to the full professionalization of school administration (Farquhar 1977; Goldhammer 1983).
Four major events mark the second era of ferment. The first of these was the formation of the National Conference of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) in 1947. By linking professors throughout the country for the first time, the NCPEA exercised considerable influence over emerging conceptions of the profession and over school administration training programmes (Gregg 1960; Campbell et al. 1987). The second defining event in the transition from the prescriptive to the scientific era was the creation of the Cooperative Project in Educational Administration (CPEA), a consortium of eight universities funded by the Kellogg Foundation whose primary purpose was to institute changes in preparation programmes. Continuing initiatives charted at earlier NCPEA meetings, especially the ‘benchmark’ 1954 gathering in Denver (Getzels 1977: 8), the CPEA encouraged a multidisciplinary approach to analyses of administration and to the education of school leaders. As Gregg concludes in his 1969 review, the CPEA had a profound influence on preparation programmes and on the practice of school administration. The establishment of the Committee for the Advancement of School Administration (CASA) in 1955 and of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) in 1956 are the third and fourth mileposts.
stones that helped shape evolving conceptions of school administration during the
second era of ferment (Griffiths 1959; Moore 1964). The
CASA’s most important
work focused on the development of professional standards of performance. The
UCEA’s influence has been quite pervasive (Willower 1983). Throughout the
1960s and 1970s it ‘became the dominant force in shaping the study and teaching
of educational administration . . . [and] a major force in the advancement of
Under the pull of these forces, there was a considerable flurry of activity in
preparation programmes throughout the USA during the scientific era, especially
during the 1950s and 1960s. This was a period of rapid growth in educational
administration. While approximately 125 institutions were in the business of preparing school leaders in 1946, 40 years later over 500
were involved
(National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration 1987). The
number of doctoral degrees doubled during each decade throughout this period
(Farquhar 1977). The size, defined in terms of number of faculty, of the typical
programme increased substantially during the heyday of the scientific era, doubl
ling in size from five to 10 full-time faculty members
falling back to its original size by the mid 1980s (McCarthy et al. 1988).

The average faculty member in 1945 was most likely to be a generalist, drawn from the superintendency and oriented primarily toward the practice dimensions of the profession. By the mid 1980s that picture had changed considerably. The typical faculty member in educational administration at the end of the scientific era was likely to be a discipline-focused specialist with little or no practical experience, concerned primarily with the professorial (if not scholarly) aspects of the profession. While there was considerably more diversity among students in preparation programmes in 1985 than in 1945 in terms of gender and, to a lesser extent, ethnic background, there were still many commonalities. Most students continued to be drawn from the bottom quartile on national entrance exams, to have self-selected their programmes, attended local institutions on a part-time basis and exercised little control over their lives as students (Murphy 1990a, 1992).

Consistent with the guiding vision of the scientific era, the predominant trend during this 40 year period was the infusion of content from the social sciences into preparation programmes. The infrastructure for this activity was the expan
sion of the conceptual and theoretical knowledge base of the profession by the
devolution of a science of administration. This was a
movement intended ‘to
produce a foundation of scientifically supported
(hypothetico-deductive) know
ledge in educational administration in place of the
hortatory, seat-of-the-pants
literature already in place’ (Crowson & McPherson 1987:
47-48) and a trend
‘away from technique-oriented substance based upon
practical experience and
toward theory-oriented substance based on disciplines
“external” to education’
(Culbertson & Farquhar 1971: 9). The scientific movement led
to: (a) a concep
tion of educational administration as ‘an applied science
within which theory
and research are directly and linearly linked to
professional practice [and in
which] the former always determine the latter, and thus
knowledge is superordi
nate to the principal and designed to prescribe practice’
(Sergiovanni 1991: 4);
(b) the acceptance of a heavy reliance on social science
content ‘as an indicator
of a high quality program’ (Miklos 1983: 160); (c) ‘the
borrowing and adopting
of research techniques and instruments from the behavioural
sciences’ (Culbert
son 1965: 7); (d) a multidisciplinary (if not
interdisciplinary) approach to
preparation (Culbertson 1963; Hodgkinson 1975). The
Dialectic Era, 1986
Educational administration today is in the throes of a third era of ferment, one that appears to be accompanying the shift from a scientific to a post-scientific or LEARNING LEADERSHIP dialectic era in school administration (Murphy 1993; Murphy & Forsyth 1998).

As was true in each of the preceding two eras, the present ferment is being fuelled by devastating attacks on the current state of preparation programmes, visions of what programmes should become. If anything, the rhetoric in this third period of ferment seems both more strident and more comprehensive than that found in earlier eras of reform (Hallinger & Murphy 1991).

The most fruitful sources of support for current reform efforts are critiques of existing training programmes. While the current era of ferment was foreshadowed by scholars such as Harlow (1962) and Culbertson (1963) 35 years ago and began to pick up momentum starting with Greenfield’s (1975) insightful critique, it was not until the mid 1980s that the scale was tipped toward a critical analysis of educational administration in general and of preparation programmes in particular. Subsequently, every facet of the education of school administrators has come under serious scrutiny in the last decade. Almost every programme component has been found wanting: (a) few recruitment
efforts are undertaken
and selection standards are low; (b) programme content is
irrelevant, connected
neither to the central mission of schooling nor to the
practice of leadership; (c)
instruction is dull; (d) ‘faculty are only marginally more
knowledgeable than
their students’ (Hawley 1988: 85); (e) standards of
performance are largely con
spicuous by their absence (Murphy 1990a, 1992).
Also contributing to the current ferment is the
increasingly voiced opinion
that existing school leaders are responsible for the
current crises in education
and that they are incapable (or unwilling) of solving the
array of problems that
plague schools (Murphy 1990b). It is argued that school
administrators are mere
managers, nurturing a dysfunctional and costly bureaucracy
(Murphy 1991).
Concomitantly, their perceived inability to address
fundamental educational
(Evans 1991) and value issues (Greenfield 1988) in schooling
is dissected with
increasing frequency. In turn, the cry for leadership is
being heard on all fronts
(Murphy 1990c).
While there is an emerging consensus about the deficiencies
of current
preparation programmes and the leaders they anoint, there
is less agreement
about an alternative vision that might shape the existing
ferment into a new
model for preparing tomorrow's leaders. Some of the most frequently heard sug-
gestions these days include: (a) greater attention to matters of practice in the
design and delivery of educational experiences (including enhanced cooperation
between the two arms of the profession); (b) movement toward a professional
school model; (c) recognition of the importance of craft knowledge (and the
legitimacy of practice-based learning experiences); (d) additional emphases on
values, social context, core technology, inquiry and new forms of leadership.

It is difficult to anticipate what future historians of educational administration
will designate as the major events during the current era that helped form this
ferment into strategies for improving preparation programmes—assuming, that
is, that some consensus emerges about redefining the profession. One market
that will most likely be highlighted is the set of activities comprising the work of
the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration
(NCEEA). Growing out of the deliberations of the Executive Council of UCEA,
the Commission was formed in 1985 under the direction of Daniel E. Griffiths.

The NCEEA has produced three influential documents that have promoted con
siderable discussion both within and outside educational administration: (a) their 1987 report Leaders for America’s Schools; (b) Griffiths’ highly influential address to the American Educational Research Association (AERA), which was subsequently published as a UCEA paper (Griffiths 1988b); (c) a UCEA sponsored, edited volume containing most of the background papers commissioned by the NCEEA (Griffiths et al. 1988). These three documents have helped crystallize the sense of what is wrong with the profession, extend discussion about possible solutions and, to a lesser extent, provide signposts for those engaged in redefining preparation programmes.

Following up on these activities, the UCEA Executive Director, Patrick Forsyth, initiated discussions with foundations and set about mustering support for one of the NCEEA recommendations, the creation of the National Policy Board of Educational Administration (NPBEA). After considerable work on the part of the UCEA to forge a union among the executive directors of 10 groups with a deep-seated interest in school administration, the NPBEA was created in 1988. Its care was entrusted first to David L. Clark, then to Scott D. Thomson.

The NPBEA has undertaken a series of activities designed to provide direction
for the reconstruction of preparation programmes and for the institutions that

house them (see Thomson 1998 for a full review). After a year of work sup

ported by the UCEA, chaired by the UCEA’s Executive Director, Patrick

Forsyth, and facilitated by the NPBEA’s Executive Secretary, David L. Clark,

the NPBEA released its first report (National Policy Board for Educational

Administration 1989). The report outlines an extensive overhaul and strengthen

ing of preparation programmes. Its recommendations were later adopted in

slightly modified form by the 50-plus universities comprising the UCEA.

Following release of The Reform Agenda, the NPBEA published a series of

occasional papers that were designed to inform the reform debate in educational

administration. It also began to sponsor national conferences, in conjunction

with the Danforth Foundation, to help professors discover alternatives to deeply

ingrained practices in training programmes.

In the midst of this ferment, and building on earlier-noted documents, two

national efforts to redefine the knowledge base of the field have been completed.

In 1990, the National Commission for the Principalship (NCP), under the leader

ship of Scott Thomson and funded by the National Association of Elementary
and Secondary Principals (NAESP), published a report entitled Principals for Our Changing Schools: Preparation and Certification (National Commission for the Principalship 1990). The document represented an attempt to unpack the functional knowledge base required by principals. Subsequent to the release of that report, the NCP assigned working teams to flesh out each of the 21 functional domains listed in its report. The resulting document (National Commission for the Principalship 1993) was published in 1993. A year later, the UCEA authorized six writing teams under the overall direction of Wayne K. Hoy to update the knowledge bases in educational administration preparation programmes.

In addition to the reform reports described earlier, efforts to strengthen preparation programmes were shaped by a series of volumes devoted to the analysis and improvement of the profession. Each of these books helped focus attention on the problems of the field and provided alternative visions for a post-theory world as well as solution paths to guide programme reform. Some of the most important of these volumes are: the first handbook of research in the field, an AERA-sponsored volume edited by N. T. Boyan (1988); two volumes on the
professoriate authored by Martha M. McCarthy and colleagues (McCarthy et al. 1988; McCarthy & Kuh 1997); the edited volume growing out of the NCEEA project (Griffiths et al. 1988); the 1990 National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook (Mitchell & Cunningham 1990); a volume resulting from the National Center for Educational Leadership conference on cognitive perspectives in school administration (Hallinger et al. 1993); a volume on school administration published by the Politics of Education Association and edited by Hannaway and Crowson (1989).


The initiatives of the Danforth Foundation will no doubt be seen as an important marker in this decade of programme reform (McCarthy, 1998). In addition to its sponsorship of the NCEEA and its core support for the NPBEA, Danforth has underwritten four significant efforts designed to assist self-analyses and improve self efforts in educational administration, all of which capture multiple elements.
from the various reform volumes and documents of the late 1980s: (a) a Principals’ Program to improve preparation programmes for prospective leaders; (b) a Professors’ Program to enhance the capability of departments to respond to needed reforms; (c) research and development efforts, such as the Problem-Based Learning Project under the direction of Philip Hallinger at Vanderbilt University, that are designing alternative approaches to understanding the profession and to educating tomorrow’s leaders; (d) a series of conferences and workshops created to help the professoriate grapple with important reform ideas in the area of preparing leaders for tomorrow’s schools.

Two standards-defining activities are also likely to be heavily referenced in future reports of events shaping the evolution, and perhaps the transformation, of preparation programmes as the profession moves into the 21st century. The first initiative was the development by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education of their curriculum guidelines for school administration. This work, completed under the aegis of the NPBEA over a 3-year period, brought the best thinking of the Policy Board, via Principals for Our Changing Schools: The Knowledge and Skill Base.
ship 1993), and the various professional associations into a comprehensive framework to reshape preparation programmes for school leaders (Thomson, 1998). A second initiative, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), conducted under the auspices of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and in cooperation with the NPBEA, produced the first universal set of standards for school leaders. Approved in late 1996, Standards for School Leaders (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium 1996) sets about strengthening preparation programmes primarily through the manipulation of state controls over areas such as licensure, relicensure and programme approval (McCarthy 1998; Thomson 1998).

Finally, it is likely that two additional triggering events from the AERA and UCEA during this last decade will stand the test of time when the history of preparation programme reform is written. For the AERA the important event was the establishment of the Special Interest Group on Teaching in Educational Administration (Willower & Forsyth 1998). For the UCEA it was the development of an annual convention (Forsyth 1998). Both of these catalysing initiatives have helped create sustained work in the service of reshaping the
education of school administrators. Note

1 The material in this article is taken from Murphy (1992, 1993) and Murphy & Forsyth (1998). For a comprehensive analysis of the evolution of educational preparation pro

grams, see The Landscape of Leadership Preparation: Reframing the Education of


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For three consecutive years, opinion polls in the US have placed education as the top national issue (USA Today, 1999). ‘Education, Education, Education’ has been the personal mantra of UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. These responses are not unique, governments across the globe are engaged in the education reform business, motivated by a range of concerns. Drawing on the experience of a number of countries, this article explores the context for education reform, offering insights into the reform process and questioning some of the conventional orthodoxies about the nature of education change.

The author argues that the structural reforms which have been the pre-occupation of governments over recent years have been limited in their impact because of their lack of connection to learning – teacher learning and student learning – and because of the ways in which policy-makers have embarked on the change voyage. She argues that governments need to move away from a compliance models of educational reform, towards an approach which reflects the aspirations of schools and communities, and which is supported by forms of leadership.
Education has always been a contested issue, and the extent to which the State should or could control it, the topic of debate, dispute and compromise (Riley, 1998). Two decades ago, education systems in most industrialised countries functioned in the belief that teachers were competent and needed to be left alone to teach (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982). For good and ill, teachers are no longer left alone to teach. In many countries and contexts what is to be taught, where, by whom, how, and with what outcomes have become issues for politicians to decide about, and teachers to act on. The professional voice is muted, the pupil voice silent and the parental voice limited.

Governments around the world are now engaged in the education reform business. Improving the micro-efficiency of the schools has come to be seen as a vehicle for addressing some of the macro-problems of the state and society.

Rising national expectations about schools have been accompanied by reduced teacher autonomy and increasing demands for higher performance – by teachers, as well as by pupils (MacBeath, Moos & Riley, 1996).

There are no certainties, however, in the education reform business and the
debate is bedevilled by controversy. There are claims and counter claims about

the impact of reform: growing evidence that some education reforms are

working, but a declining public confidence in education; claims that we know

what works in education and counterclaims that the generic solutions which are

being pedled simply do not work. There are perhaps even more claims and

counter claims about the financing of education: a belief that there has been

soaring spending in education and equally strong assertions that there has been

little real increase in spending, except in specific areas; a view by some (including some leading economists) that governments are throwing money away in

education - and yet a counter argument that we are now discovering ‘how

money matters’; a focus on value for money but few evaluations of reform initiatives (Boyd, 1998). Despite these controversies, the arguments for investment

in education are powerful. Investment can help reduce poverty; contribute to the

accumulation of human capital; strengthen national capacity and good governance; and add to the well-being and development of individuals, but the gap

between investing in education and achieving all, or some of these goals is wide

for a number of reasons. Although arguments have been made about the need to
provide coherence to the reform process (Fuhrman, 1993) reform initiatives are

more likely to be characterised by disconnection than connection, and to be

divided into two mental black boxes: one called structural reform and the other
called cognition and learning. Typically, reform initiatives give insufficient
weight to the perceptions and experiences of those caught out in the reform
process - administrators, teachers, parents and pupils - who not infrequently
feel pressurised and confused by reform.

Figure 1, The External Combustion Engine, was drawn by a Scottish head

teacher (one of a cohort of headteachers and school principals in an international
project on school leadership in which I have been involved). It depicts his
experience of trying to manage the reform process. 1 The headteacher is in the
driving seat. The external ‘fuel’ which drives the engine is a mixture of national
and regional policies and legislation, as well as pressures from trade unions and
employers, but in his view, the ‘wheels’, the foundations of reform, are in teach
ing and learning (teacher learning, as well as student learning) and are reflected
in the core ethos of the school. The wheels are lubricated by humour, integrity,
trust and goodwill and maintained by good communications (MacBeath, Riley
& Kruchov, 1995). The image reflects a crucial point: that educational reform is LEADERSHIP, LEARNING, and GRAND SYSTEMIC REFORM as much about leadership and learning within the local context, as it is about national policy. Although the headteacher who drew the combustion engine put himself in the driving seat, as the image suggests, external forces are taking the vehicle to an unknown destination. The reform imperative is strong and emanates from a range of sources. For developing countries and countries in transition, the provision of basic education as a primary route to social transformation has been the pressing concern. For most industrialised countries, maintaining a competitive edge in the globalised economy has been the strong reform driver, even though the link between educational attainment and economic performance is a disputed one (Robinson, 1998). Whilst the economic driver is common to many countries, national reforms give different weight to the parallel issues of social justice and equity.

I was serving as an elected member of the Inner London Education Authority when, in the summer of 1987, Margaret Thatcher’s third Conservative Administration turned its attention to education. The charge against education was that producer domination, combined with the pursuit of
egalitarian goals, had created

a poor performing system (Riley, 1994). The political solution was to introduce

a range of market-orientated reforms which were characterised by choice,

competition and accountability through a range of performance mechanisms. A L E A R N I N G L E A D E R S H I P

Figure 1

heavily prescriptive national agenda was introduced which co-existed uneasily

with greater devolution to schools and governing bodies. These reforms created

winners and losers (Riley, 1994, 1998). Although some aspects of these reforms have been tempered by the 1997 Labour Government, a standards-based agenda (with its emphasis on school accountability for student performance, and local education authority accountability for school performance) now stands centre stage. 3

Although governments of many different persuasions are driven by the reform imperative, the focus of reform inevitably reflects national concerns, as in the UK example. In the US, reform has been a familiar part of the education landscape for over half a century, yet disillusionment with public education remains high (Mathews, 1996). The current phase of reforms, described by Murphy and Adams as the ‘excellence era, a generation of
educational policies

intended to enhance student learning’, encompasses a range of strategies, each

of which reflects a different conceptualisation of the nature of the problem.

According to their analysis:

Intensification reforms . . . target the problem of low expectations.

Restructuring addresses the problem of outmoded school organization.

Systemic reforms attack the problem of fragmentation and uncoordinated state policies. Similarly, standard setting confronts the problem of unspecified or inadequate student learning goals and measures of success, while privatization focuses on the problems of entrenched bureaucracy and weak incentives. (Murphy & Adams, 1998, pp. 1, 7)

What these different strategies have in common is a belief that the US education system is not working.

Education is also a pressing issue for countries in transition. The United Arab Emirates, for example, is embarking on a comprehensive reform programme, Education Vision 2020, which aims to enhance the skills and capacities of the indigenous population, reducing reliance on external labour, whilst also sustaining economic development and affirming cultural and social values (UAE,
1996). Other countries in transition are focusing on specific aspects of reform.

Vietnam, for example, is concerned about the quality, training and management of its teaching force and is developing a package of reforms aimed at enhancing the skills and competencies of teachers. Poland is seeking to address the relatively low levels of literacy of many of the 16-25 year olds who have completed formal schooling.

For many developing countries, the problems may appear to be intractable. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, one out of three males, and one out of two females is illiterate. One out of three primary age children is out of school and in ten countries, less than half of the school age population is enrolled in primary school. In many parts of Africa, the spread of AIDS is having a profound impact on education, depleting an already limited teaching force, undermining parents’ ability or willingness to pay for education, and generating social upheaval (World Bank, 1999). Enrolment and student drop-out have become critical reform issues.

The context for educational reform is a global one, adding to the complexities and creating a strong external imperative for change (Riley, 1998a). The emer
gence of the knowledge-based society, coupled with the technological revolution
takes us into unchartered waters. ‘The free access to information on the scale
offered by the Internet and inter-active technology promotes the flow of both
information and disinformation, knowledge that is both educational and anti-edu
cational: anti-social, as well as beneficial to society’ (MacBeath, Moos and Riley,
op. cit., p. 225). Teenagers can buy cheap jeans on the net, research homework
assignments, but they can also access pornographic images and engage in net van
dalism, by sending viruses to unsuspecting recipients. Technology may also widen
divisions: between the confident middle class net-surfers and the working-class
children who do not have the access of their peers. Its impact is complex and
messy. Within schools, many teachers are uncomfortable with interactive techno
logy, and acknowledging the technological skills and capacities of many their stu
dents, as well as the potential power of interactive technology, challenges
traditional notions of how teachers teach and pupils learn.
The external context is also shaped by the changes in social and public policy
which have taken place over recent years in many countries, and by shifting
international influences and power allegiances. The collapse of the Berlin Wall,
the end of the Cold War, the global spread of capitalism and the emergence of
new poverty in Western countries erode many previous distinctions between
countries (Albrow, 1994). Societies are changing at a rapid pace. The reconfig
uration of nation-states, increased inter-ethnic conflict and the emergence of the
new ‘moral’ globalisation, reflected in the threat and actuality of intervention by
external powers into these conflicts, add to the uncertainties. The change voyage

The education challenges are considerable and the path to
reform is neither an
easy nor a uniform one. Educational reform, policy and practice are shaped by
political, structural, individual and social dynamics (Murphy & Adams, op. cit.),

many aspects of which are context and culturally specific. The legislative frame
work and the cultural context create the expectations and boundaries about what
can and should be achieved - and how (Fitz, Firestone & Fairman, in press).

How the reform ‘problem’ is identified and characterised, the political possi
bilities and policy options, and the final choices and priorities are a product of
national circumstances and historical arrangements. The number and range of
players who try and influence that framework continue to expand. Businesses
are taking a larger role: trade unions are seeking to
Affect both the nature of educational reform, and how it is implemented on the ground. 

Approaches, as well as priorities to reform differ significantly. Some governments have pursued the path of decentralisation, giving greater autonomy to schools, although often (as in the case of the UK) retaining significant degrees of central control, with both anticipated and unanticipated outcomes (Riley, 1998a; Whitty, 1997). Others have embraced privatisation, deregulation and choice. Others still have placed greater emphasis on quality control, evaluation and testing, as part of a general accountability thrust. Whatever the rationale for change, the question of how to introduce reform in ways that will maximise its impact is one which governments share.

From a national policy-maker’s perspective, the central task is to get the policy right, but whilst national or state polices are important, this is only a small part of the jigsaw. Reform initiatives are not received by schools in a uniform way. The national context may set the scene, but the local context – the municipality, school district, or local education authority, as well as schools themselves – influences how reform is interpreted and implemented. Key actors construct their own meanings about the nature of reform and
their perceptions may resemble, or differ from those of policy-makers. A school’s history, leadership and community context will affect how a national reform initiative is perceived. School principals, teachers, parents and governors may have their own views about the nature of the reform or change initiative, about priorities, and about how the local and national agendas come together.

Managing change at the school and local system level is about responding to competing demands. It is about managing the political/professional interface within the locality, and between the locality and national and state governments.

Roles and relationships have to be negotiated between schools, trade unions, local agencies, the business and local communities, as well as with governments.

Boundaries have to be established. Schools have to manage competing sets of realities: not only the policy context set at the national or state level; but also the community location i.e. the neighbourhood context and the social needs in the locality; and the internal workings of the school itself (Silver, 1994). Characteristically, schools are in a state of flux as new staff, pupils or governors enter the school, or as the school responds to the latest crisis: fire, pestilence, or loss of funding. Rational and planned models of change fail to
capture the realities and complexities of the school context, or to recognize that:

School development is a process that occurs as a result of the interacting influences of three sources of change – that which is deliberately planned; that which is naturally occurring in the life cycle of organisations; and that which is unforeseen or unknowable in advance. (Riley & Louis, in press)

Embarking on education reform and creating and sustaining significant levels of improvement are not one and the same thing. School reform is about change.

Change in its turn depends on the will, capacity and actions of many players at LEADERSHIP, LEARNING AND SYSTEMIC REFORM different levels in an education system. The degree of alignment between any reform initiative and the personal goals and aspirations of individuals and organisations engaged in the reform process is a powerful force in school reform (Murphy & Adams, op. cit.). There have to be incentives for reform (Hunushek, 1994), although not necessarily financial ones. There has to be capacity building and opportunities for professional learning (Fullan, 1991).

However, much thinking and research about the change process is predicated on assumptions about certainty, yet change is not linear. It is unpredictable, stuttering and drawn out, requiring the identification of
existing constraints and obstacles, as well the capacity to design new strategies and embed these within existing policies and practices (Riley, Docking & Rowles, in press). Change is an intractable beast and, as a number of researchers have argued, reform and school change is a never ending process (see for example, Sarason, 1990; Cuban, 1990).

For those embarking on the reform voyage, there is much preparation work needed before embarkation. The route and final destination will need to be planned. If all the different vessels are to arrive safely at port, then the lead ship will need to understand the capabilities of the different craft on the voyage, as well as the skills and enthusiasms of the captains and their crew. Much will have to happen during the journey itself to keep the flotilla together, but whilst there may be treacherous waters ahead, there are also some landmarks to guide the way. Navigating the waters Identify what needs to be changed during the voyage.

Education systems across the globe will need to tackle the significant problems of failure, drop-out, under-performance and student disengagement. OECD studies have estimated that between 15-30% of school age children are susceptible to school failure (OECD, 1996a). Student performance
varies by country,

gender and location and, regardless of the source of difficulties experienced at

school, there are large differences in the attainment levels of the weakest 25% of

pupils and the strongest, generally, the equivalent of two years of schooling, but

as much as five years in some countries (OECD, 1997).

Educational attainment at age 16 is the most important predictor of future

participation in learning, and of labour market prospects (Pearce & Hillman,

1998). Young people without upper secondary qualifications are between 3-5

times more likely to become unemployed than their peers (OECD, 1996b).

Those who leave school before the standard ‘graduation’ date in their country

are at particular risk of unemployment and long-term social exclusion (OECD,

1996c). Annually in the UK, 8% of young people leave school without any quali-

fications (House of Commons, 1998). In some of the most difficult and deprived areas in the US, as few as 1 in 16 students graduate from high school (Kozol,

1996).

The scale and level of student disaffection is considerable. A longitudinal

Swedish research found that for 1 in 3 young people, school was a profoundly

disappointing and largely unhappy experience, offering little creative or intellec
tual stimulation. If schooling was perceived as a negative experience, this per
ception tended to be carried through into adulthood, influencing views about
future learning, as well as parental attitudes to schooling (Bengt-Andersson,
1997; Lindblad, 1997). The consequences of an unhappy school experience can
be far reaching. Take account of all the passengers and crew

School reform is an inherently political process. Notions of what constitute a
‘good’ school are bound in culture and context and, as Harold Silver has argued,
change over time:

Good schools have been ones (in the past) which have trained girls to
be good wives and mothers, or which trained boys to serve the com
mercial ethic of the Empire. ‘Good’ has been an infinitely adaptable
epithet, used of schools of many kinds, by interested parties of many
kinds. (Silver, op. cit., p. 6)

To reach a consensus on issues which are profoundly value-laden is unlikely
in a pluralist society. However, identifying the needs and aspirations of the
major stakeholders in educational reform, and respecting their concerns is crit
ical. Findings from a major study on the role and impact of local education
authorities – intermediary systems – suggest that
stake-holders in a typically
diverse educational community, can come to respect even
controversial policies
(such as the inclusion of children with special educational
needs into main
stream education), if decisions have been reached after
genuine and wide consul
tation process, and if there is clarity about what is to be
achieved, and how
(Riley, Docking & Rowles, 1999). 4 Respect is not the same
as agreement but it
is a key ingredient in making reforms work.
Teachers, of course, are key players in the reform process
and government
approaches to teachers and teaching can have a significant
impact on teacher
recruitment, teacher morale and teacher retention (Riley,
1998b). However,
many governments seek compliance to their reforms and the
‘compliance men
tality’ generated by large-scale reform (David & Goren,
1993) can foster institu
tional inertia and stifle professional creativity. Reforms
will be limited in their
impact if teachers are denigrated and disengaged from the
process, seeing imple
mentation as a hoop they must jump through, rather than as
a central activity
which will improve their professional practices. LEADERSHIP, LEARNING AND SYSTEMIC REFORM

Teachers are motivated to change their practices, if they
can see the benefits
for their pupils. Investing in the sustained professional development of teachers
and providing them with a wide span of opportunities (such as work-shadowing,
shared classroom observation, access to relevant web-sites and teacher networks
which cross schools and localities) are key elements in the change process.

Research evidence suggests that teachers who are part of professional develop
ment networks have higher standards, a stronger service ethic in their relations
with students, and a greater commitment to the teaching profession than other
colleagues (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994). The strategy is a twofold one: engage
the hearts and minds of teachers (Hargreaves, 1998).

Parents have to be brought on board and recognised as co-educators, and not
viewed as hindrances to learning. Where the partnership between schools and
parents is genuine, ‘parents play an active part in their children’s learning and
are confident that problems will be dealt with and feedback given’, according to
Scottish researcher John MacBeath, and ‘the school provides for the special, cul
tural and linguistic background of pupils. Parent-teacher meetings are useful and
productive and pupil progress is shared with parents on a regular basis’
(MacBeath, 1999, p. 58).

The other key partners in learning are the pupils. Pupils’
perspectives give us fresh insights, not only into what schools are, but what they might be. Young people in Greenwich in South London helped set the local reform agenda by contributing to a video, which I coordinated, Young Voices of Greenwich. They describe what in their view, makes a good teacher:

- You can talk to the teacher and ask them questions and they won’t get the hump, and they have a sense of humour.
- Someone who listens to the children and knows what it is like.
- Someone who trusts us and knows our point of view.
- They try and understand that there are things going on in a child’s life outside school.

Young people thrive in a climate of mutual respect and trust. They attach great weight to school policies which help to maintain that climate and which tackle issues such as bullying and racism. They recognise the ways in which bullying, racism and name calling impede learning, or ‘cause depression’, as one young woman from Greenwich explained to me. They want an environment which is conducive to learning. ‘The school should have an anti-bullying policy, written by the pupils, for the pupils and which is followed carefully’, a member of the local Youth Council commented.
Whilst the young people from Greenwich had much to say that was positive about their school experience, they also identified what needed to change. In their view, schools do not give sufficient attention to pupils who are struggling.

A young Somalian refugee, striving to make sense of a new country, culture and language, had felt this acutely. Greenwich students wanted access to the curriculum for all young people and a recognition that a physical disability is not an impediment to learning. ‘I think that some schools believe because you are disabled you don’t need to learn’ a wheelchair-bound young woman argued. They wanted a broad curriculum which included technology, ‘to link us to the real world’, sports and the arts, personal relations and sexuality. They wanted a curriculum which offered enrichment through out of school experiences, such as opportunities for travel. ‘It’s great to have experience of foreign countries and so on, it helps the person to have more confidence’, explained a young man whose first experience of foreign travel was through a school trip. The young people who contributed to Young Voices of Greenwich, made it clear that they wanted to be considered as active partners in their own learning.

In our project on school leadership referred to earlier, we looked at the ways
in which teachers, parents and pupils, as well as
headteachers themselves,
thought about leadership (note 1, Riley, 1998b). We found
that perceptions dif
fered between countries. English parents, for example,
viewed ‘assertive or
strong leadership’ as a key component of effective
management of the school: a
concept which was alien to Danish parents who valued
‘co-operative and collab
orative’ leadership (Moos, in press). Pupils had very clear
views about school
leaders. Older students in our study valued an inclusive
leadership style which
demonstrated care and respect for students and which
contributed to a school
environment that was conducive to effective learning.
Younger children
emphasised safety, security and relationships. One group of
nine-year-olds
worked with me to construct a job description for a
headteacher which power
fully demonstrates the importance which young people attach
to trust and rela
tionships (Riley, 1998a, p. 122).
We asked some of the young children in our study (5–6
year-olds) to answer
some questions about school leadership by drawing pictures
for us, with cap
tions. The question ‘How do you become a headteacher’
elicited a range of
responses, including, ‘You read a book about being a
headteacher and you take
an exam in kindness’. Some thought you become a headteacher by ‘buying a school’, by ‘reading a book about it’, by ‘going to a school and seeing whether you like children’ or, ‘by years of hard work and kindness’. With some pre

science in the UK context, one thought that, ‘the Government lets you’ become a head (ibid.).

In responding to the question ‘What does a headteacher do?’ the children captured many facets of the job. ‘The headteacher comes to see the children and says very good.’ ‘The headteacher sings and she tells you if you are naughty.’

Some of the complexities of the job are shown in Figure 2, the caption for which reads, ‘The headteacher writes letters about discos and she keeps old books. She teaches the children songs and she talks on the telephone.’ Most of the images were positive, although not all, as Figure 3 shows. Here the head teacher is a tall angry figure who looms over a small child who is crying. What the headteacher does on a daily basis can contribute in significant ways to both the immediate and overall school experience of children. The messages they give as they ‘walk their vision’ (as one of the headteachers in our study described it) are profound. In one large secondary school
In the UK, I asked a
group of 12-year-olds, ‘what makes a good headteacher?’ One replied, ‘Mr X is
really good, he queues up for his (school) dinner’. The others agreed. What they
experienced from their headteacher was a simple but profound mark of respect
for them. Be clear about the purpose of the voyage

The call for a renewed focus on teaching and learning is becoming a familiar
one. In a ‘blue print’ for reform, American educator Linda
Darling-Hammond

**Figure 2** The headteacher writes letters about discos and she keeps old books. She teaches children songs and talks on the telephone.

quotes from Civil Right’s activist W.E.B. Du Bois, to remind us of the power of
learning.

Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought, the
right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental. . . . The freedom to
learn has been bought by bitter sacrifice. . . . We should fight to the last
ditch to keep open the right to learn, the right to have examined in our
schools not only what we believe; not only what our leaders say, but
what the leaders of other countries have said. We must insist on this to
give our children the fairness of a start which will equip them with such
an array of facts and such an attitude toward truth that
they can have a real chance to judge what the world is and what greater minds have thought it might be. (Du Bois, quoted in Darling-Hammond 1997, p. 1)

The notion of an entitlement to learning is a powerful one, but if classrooms are to become 'intellectually rigorous and exciting' places to be, schools will need to put learning at the centre. The extent to which schools provide active support for learning can be assessed by the following indicators:

- pupils see themselves as independent learners;
- teachers believe that all pupils can learn and gain success;
- the main focus of school activity is related to making learning more effective;
- learning in and out of school is seen as a coherent whole;
- pupils are involved in reviewing progress, recording achievement and target-setting. (MacBeath, 1999, p. 136)

Radical changes will also need to be made in the organisation and delivery of education services. Avenues to learning will need to be accessible to a wide community, creating a stronger focus on distance and self-directed learning, with a much wider definition of who learners are (Duguet,
If young people are to become autonomous and self-regulating learners', able to cope with uncertainty and change, rather than ‘diligent’ workers who have a ‘sense of duty and discipline’ (Posch, 1996, pp. 6-8), a transformation from teaching to learning will need to take place. Despite the growing research focus on learning, the evidence across many countries is that the structural reforms which have been the major pre-occupation of many governments over recent years have had insufficient impact on the substantive core of teaching and learning, and what actually goes on in class rooms. The prevailing notion of teaching and learning remains one in which, according to an OECD study, knowledge, competencies and values are predefined and stored in curricula, tests and accredited textbooks (Posch, ibid.).

There are many reasons why this is the case. The pace and speed of change has often meant that headteachers or school principals have had to focus much of their time and energy on administration, rather than on pedagogical effectiveness, class room innovation and improvement. Similarly, teachers have had limited time and opportunity to review the effectiveness of their practices, or to think about new modes of learning. A UK study found that 9 out 10 of
primary school teachers felt

that they had insufficient time to do their job as it should be done, and 8 out of 10,

that their job did not make good use of their skills and ability (ATL, 1998). The

pressures of testing (which have led to an overemphasis on examinations which test

the ability of students to recall a body of knowledge, rather than assess whether they

are able to understand the concepts which underpin that knowledge, or are capable

of solving problems based on that knowledge) have compounded the problem. 6

In refocusing on teaching and learning, assessment clearly has to be

addressed. British academic Caroline Gipps has argued that there is a need to

move away from an ‘examination-as-hurdle’ model, to an assessment model

in which ‘we try to give all the candidates a real opportunity to show what

they know, understand and can do’ (Gipps, 1999, p. 1). As she goes on to

argue, there are many demands on assessment systems: L E A R N I N G L E A D E R S H I P

[Assessment] is now required to achieve a range of purposes. It has to

support teaching and learning; provide information about pupils,

teachers and schools; act as a selection and certification devise; as an

accountability procedure; and drive curriculum and teaching. [There are
increased demands] for testing at the national level which must offer

some comparability [but equally some recognition that we] need assess

ment to map more directly onto the processes we wish to develop,

including higher order skills. (ibid.)

Assessment needs to be more closely aligned to learning, but in some coun

tries and contexts assessment of student performance and evaluation of institu

tional effectiveness have become the drivers in the system. The UK national

school inspection system, for example, has been criticised for its cost (estimated

as being £26,020 for an average primary school, 4.5% of the school’s budget

and £65,893 for an average secondary school, 3.2% of its budget); for its failure

to focus sufficiently on pupil achievement and the ‘non-school’ factors which

contribute to this; and for the punitive and adversarial culture which it has

generated (Rowntree, 1999). The Chief Inspector of Schools, Chris Woodhead,

has been criticised by a Parliamentary Select Committee for ‘his intemperate

approach’ and his reliance on ‘conjecture rather than evidence’ (House of

Commons, 1999). Although there have been some gains from the ‘culture of

review’ which has been created (particularly in those schools which have been
most resistant to change), the current system is flawed and is in serious need of revision (Riley, 1998a). A more developmental system which offers the opportunity for a more professional and reflective dialogue is needed. Avoid the treacherous waters and the sirens.

Once reform is on the agenda, politicians want results, but there is a fine line between maintaining momentum and generating reform overload. In June 1999, headteachers from England and Wales welcomed Prime Minister Tony Blair to their annual conference, but also complained vociferously about reform overload and were adamant in their opposition to Government proposals on performance related pay (TES, 1999b, p. 4). In the school year 1998–1999, schools and local authorities in England and Wales had to implement 29 new policies. In 1999–2000, a year in which government pledged to reduce the overload, they still had a further 19 polices to implement (TES, 1999c).

If reform is experienced as a constant round of ‘flavour of the month’ initiatives, it will create cynicism and frustration amongst headteachers, teachers and administrators. We have ‘more pilots than Heathrow’, was how one teacher characterised her experience of the reform process in the UK (Riley, Docking & Rowles, 1998).

The context in which policy-makers make their choices about reform prior
ities is, of course, an international one. Ministers, researchers, civil servants, LEADERSHIP, LEARNING AND SYSTEMIC REFORM

Ministers, researchers, civil servants, trade union leaders meet to discuss developments in education. International projects (such as The Third International Mathematics and Science Study – TIMMS – which compares the performance of different countries) add a competitive edge to these discussions. A range of international organisations, such as the World Bank, the OECD, UNESCO and Education International provide fertile ground for the transmission of new ideas. Technology provides instant access to information, but there are no ‘quick-fix’ solutions, no uniform structural changes which will inevitably create specific changes, no reform panaceas. ‘Packages for Improvement’ do not arrive by mail order. Research traditions such as school effectiveness and school improvement, which have much to offer to the reform process, cannot be applied as ‘laws of science’, appropriate to all teachers and all schools (Glickman, 1987). Whilst much can be learned from the experience of others, what matters is clarity about goals, understanding of the context, and attention to the process of reform and change. Let us take the example of decentralisation. Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes (Beware Greeks bearing gifts)
Decentralisation has been a popular policy option over recent years, stimulated as much by business trends and the collapse of large centralised states, as educational arguments (Fiske, 1996). To some countries, the appeal of decentralisation has been that it has offered the potential to improve the quality of services and maximise resources. Other countries have pursued decentralisation primarily as a way of dispersing power and widening decision-making. In some cases, community financing has been an attraction, either because it offers the prospect of sharing the financial burden of education (by getting alternative financing from local communities, or private sector organisations), or because it emphasises the importance of partnership and joint responsibility in the education enterprise (Bray, 1996). Enthusiasm for community financing, however, has not always been accompanied by enthusiasm to relinquish control. Too often, decentralisation is seen as a panacea for all the ills of an education system, rather than as a tool which if properly used can aid reform. There is no empirical or statistical evidence to suggest, for example, that school-based management (which is not of course synonymous with decentralisation) has increased student achievement (Summers & Johnson, 1994). Authors of a recent
review of the impact of decentralisation in Nicaragua entitled, ‘What’s Decen
tralisation Got to do with Learning?’ argue that
decentralisation on its own will
not improve student performance (King & Ozler, 1999). As I
have argued
earlier, substantial changes are needed in teaching and
learning, and in the
culture of schools themselves.
Decentralisation can create fragmentation, loss of
expertise (in areas such as
support for pupils with special educational needs) and
reduction in professional
development opportunities and networks. School autonomy
when linked to LEARNING LEADERSHIP
choice is as likely to exacerbate differences, as lead to
school improvement. In
the UK for example, an analysis of ‘failing schools’ 7
suggests that a combination
of factors, including decentralisation, competition,
reduction in the role of the
local education authority (i.e. the municipality or school
district) have combined
to engender a climate of isolation and insularity, turning
schools into themselves
in ways that reduce professional reflection and challenge
and contribute to
failure (Riley & Rowles, 1997). On the other side,
decentralisation can help to
challenge inertia and unlock a frozen system.
Undoubtedly what matters is the approach and the focus. Nicaragua, for
example, has embarked on a major programme of
decentralisation, motivated by

the twin objectives of extending democracy and widening the financial base for education. According to researchers in the field, how school-based actors have interpreted the new ‘school autonomy’ has had a significant impact on the degree, and success, of implementation. Responses have been ‘quite divergent,’ especially in schools that lack[ed] cohesion and a shared mission, prior to the onset of decentralization’ (Fuller & Rivarola, 1998, pp. 5-6). Teachers have tended to see the ‘new autonomy’ as being about increasing their pay and giving them a greater say in what happens within their school; headteachers, as enabling them to have more control over their school; parents, as offering them a greater voice in what is happening. Where perceptions differ radically – and are not reconciled in some way – then the impact of reform will be limited.

The Nicaragua experience is that school principals have been much more positive about the decentralisation programme than teachers (ibid.). The same has been true for the UK (Bullock, Thomas & Arnott, 1993). Much depends on how schools are led and managed. Decentralisation puts school principals centre stage and they can choose to adopt a more hierarchical and directive model of
leadership, or a more inclusive model which brings teachers into the frame (Fuller & Rivarola, op. cit.). Where school principals in Nicaragua have adopted the latter model, and brought their staff into decision-making, then teachers have been more supportive of the reform initiative overall.

Decentralisation needs to be linked to learning: pupil learning and teacher learning. Key questions need to be asked. Have teachers been prepared for a decentralised context? Are schools able to think about the long-term, as well as the short-term development of teachers? In an overview of the literature on parental choice and school autonomy in Britain, New Zealand and America, Geoff Whitty has argued that attention needs to be given to developing ‘mechanisms of regulation, and to the most appropriate ways of deciding these’ (Whitty, op. cit., p. 36). In other words, in thinking about decentralisation, we need to consider what checks and balances are needed to ensure equity, and to support the achievement of other education goals.

A UK study on teachers’ professional development, found that devolution of budgets to schools, in the context of erosion of much of the provision previously offered by the local educational authority, had created unequal access to professional development, as well as inequities of funding.
between schools. **Leadership, Learning and Systemic Reform**

and opportunities varied within schools, as well as between schools and the attitudes of individual heads of department and of senior management were key.

Training and development opportunities tended to be targeted towards immediate school-based priorities at the expense of the longer-term development needs of teachers (McMahon, 1998).

Before embarking on decentralisation, policy-makers need to clarify their objectives. The decentralisation process needs to be regulated to reduce inequalities, as well as create opportunities, for teachers and pupils. As decentralisation usually includes a broadening of the base for school governance, then developing the capacities of school governors to be involved in decision-making is also key. The shift in the vertical partnership – the powers and responsibilities of central and local government and of school governors and headteachers themselves – will mean that the roles and responsibilities of each will need to be redefined and ways found to ensure that teachers, and teachers associations are involved. Finally, as Bruce Fuller and Magdalena Rivardo ask in the review of education in Nicaragua referred to earlier, if decentralisation creates greater
parental involvement but does not raise pupil achievement—is it a victory? (op. cit.). Think about the ships’ captains—and their crew.

Amongst other things, the discussion on decentralisation illustrates the importance of leadership in the change process. But as Chris Hodgkinson has asked, ‘Is leadership a matter of seduction, a bewitchment of the led?’ (Hodgkinson, 1999, p. 25). From a policy-maker’s perspective, school leaders can perhaps be seen as holding the key to resolving many of the ‘problems’ which appear to be facing schools. Increasingly, leadership is accepted as a key constituent in the ‘effective’ school (Sammons et al., 1995), but equating leadership with principalship, or headship creates a narrow definition of the term.

The conceptualisation of leadership which Karen Seashore Louis and I have begun to develop is much broader (Riley & Louis, op. cit.). It sees leadership as a network of relationships among people, structures and cultures (both within and across organisational boundaries), not just as a role-based function assigned to, or acquired by, a person in an organisation, who then uses his or her power to influence the actions of others. This notion of distributed leadership extends beyond the immediate school community, embracing other actors on the leader ship stage—such as trade unions and school districts.
Leadership is seen as an organic activity, dependent on interrelations and connections (Riley, Docking & Rowles, in press).

But how do school leaders contribute to leadership? Authors of a major compendium on leadership have argued that the search for a general theory of leadership is doomed to failure (Leithwood et al., 1996). However, there are a number of conceptual understandings about leadership which offer some relevant insights into the management of change. To explore these, I want again to draw on the research project Effective Leadership in a Time of Change (note 1, Riley & MacBeath, 1998; MacBeath, 1998; Riley, 1998a and b). A number of core issues emerged from that study:

• That there is no one package for school leadership: no one model to be learned and applied, regardless of culture or context. However, leadership can be developed and nurtured.

• That school leadership is beyond the heroic undertakings of one individual.

• That school leadership is not static. School leaders do not learn how to ‘do’ leadership, polishing their style to perfection. Effective school leaders are often rule breakers and are willing to change in response to new sets of cir
cumstances, and the differing needs of children, young people and teachers.

The paradigm of school leadership which we found is one of mobility and fragility. It is a model which rests on the assumption that schools are constantly changing and that the challenge for the school leader is to respond to the school’s inner life, as well as to the demanding and constantly changing external context. It is a paradigm which recognises that constructions of school leadership are profoundly value-laden and bound in national and local context. It acknowledges that schools have to serve internal and external constituencies which are often in uneasy coexistence with each other, and that school leaders have to manage contested notions about achievement, as well as multiple interests and demands, and complex ethical dilemmas. The headteacher or school principal of today is expected to be a significant player in a whole galaxy of sometimes separate, sometimes interlocking spheres: governing bodies, local authority, central government, parents, teacher unions and of course, teachers and students. This involves managing conflict and competing expectations.

Effective school leaders exercise both their professional and political leadership. Political leadership is about being able to recognise patterns, draw on past
experience and note the unique elements of a situation (Riley, 1998b). To some extent, headteachers have always had to exercise political leadership, seeking alliances; deciding on courses of action about the fate of individuals; and drawing on their own beliefs and judgements to make decisions about the use of resources. What has changed in the UK and elsewhere, is the extent to which headteachers have to exercise those skills.

The evidence from an international review of research on the effectiveness of school principals is that they exercise a measurable, although indirect influence on the effectiveness of a school, and on school achievement, and whilst the effect is relatively small – it matters. The reviewers, Hallinger and Heck (1999), concluded that there were four areas in particular, in which the leadership of the principal, influenced the school. The most obvious was through establishing and conveying the purposes and goals of the school. This was achieved through the selection and motivation of teachers. A second area of leadership influence was through the interplay between the school’s organisation and its social networks. **Leadership, Learning and Systemic Reform** Highly effective principals tended to promote participation in decision-making, networks and interactions between staff, and the
involvement of parents. A third, and some would argue, the most critical area of influence was through people.

Effective principals fostered group goals and modeled their desired behaviour for others, by providing intellectual stimulation and support for staff, both personally and through staff development. The fourth and final area was in relation to organisational culture. School leaders operate within an environment but also influence how others perceive that environment and interpret events.

Moving the reform process forward and working to influence the school community is difficult. Figure 4 depicts a headteacher who is trying to lay out a path for change. The path is steep. The headteacher sees her job as pulling people up the hill. The image has a number of other components. It depicts the ‘trailblazers’ who have already made it to the top, the ‘defeated’ who have lost their hold, and the ‘refuseniks’ who are turning back (MacBeath, Kruchov & Riley, op. cit.).

Leadership is about learning, yet many schools are structured in ways that are antithetical to teacher learning (West et al., ibid.). Successful school leaders model professional values and aspirations, supporting teachers in meeting professional challenges and in managing the change process.
Good leaders are learners themselves. School teachers in Canada rated school principals as effective if they worked hard; had lots of energy; were genuine in their beliefs; modeled openness and had good people skills; and, most importantly showed evidence of learning by growing and changing themselves (Leithwood et al., 1997). Whether it is managing a decentralised reform process, or implementing specific aspects of reform, the evidence is that: **LEARNING LEADERSHIP**

Figure 4

Teachers appear more willing to participate in all areas of decision making if they perceive their relationship with their principals as being more open, collaborative, facilitative and supportive. They are less willing to participate . . . if they characterise their relationships . . . as being closed, exclusionary and controlling. (Smylie, 1992, p. 23)

Trust is key. A UK study found that less than 50% of primary school teachers felt that they could usually believe what their headteacher told them (ATL, 1998). Was the voyage worth it?

Education reform hinges on trust and a recognition of what each of the different partners in the process can contribute to the reform journey. There are many
expert voices which need to be heard: children, parents, and teachers, as well as politicians, administrators and officials, but if this is to happen, then the reform process needs to be an open and inclusive one. Sergiovanni (1998) 10 has argued that there are two discredited theories about how schools should be run: the pyramid theory (which assumes that the way to ensure that schools achieve their goals is to put one person in charge to control the others), and the railroad theory (which assumes that teachers can be controlled by standardising their work). The same two approaches seem to characterise many national and state approaches to reform. Such approaches are outmoded. As societies become more complex, education systems will need to move away from maintenance and control, towards quality and development, which in its turn will require new ways of monitoring and evaluating performance (Cassidy, 1999). Given the complexity, government ministers will need to recognise that they cannot direct what happens in individual schools and classrooms. Successful reform initiatives are those which recognise that not everything may need to change - some things might actually be working - and that reforms have unintended, as well as intended consequences. Strong connections are made
between the two black boxes of structural reform and
cognition and learning, and

the voices of the often overlooked stakeholders in the
education community are

heard. Such initiatives aim to develop education leaders
(policy-makers, local

systems and schools leaders) who are wisdom seekers,
committed to developing

their own thinking and capacity, as well as that of others.
Pupils are recognised as

co-learners, not as passive recipients of the reform
process, parents as educators,

and teachers as co-agents of change. Reform depends on
three interlocking ele

ments: the skills, capacity and commitment of educators
within school and at the

local system level; the enthusiasm and commitment of pupils
and parents; and the

ability of politicians to create the right legislative
framework. In the last analysis,

however, its success will be judged by the ways in which
real changes in teaching

and learning take place. LEADERSHIP, LEARNING AND SYSTEMIC REFORM

Notes

1 The project, Effective Leadership in a Time of Change,
included school leaders from

England, Scotland, Denmark and Australia. Members of the
Research Team were:

Associate Professors Chresten Kruchov, Lejf Moos and Johnny
Thomassen (The

Royal Danish School of Educational Studies, Copenhagen);
Professors Kathryn Riley

and Pat Mahoney (The Roehampton Institute, London,
England); Professor John MacBeath, Joan Forrest and Jenny Reeves (University of Strathclyde, Scotland);

Associate Professor Nell Dempster (Griffith University, Brisbane) and Lloyd Logan (Queensland University, Australia). Findings from the project are reported in MacBeath, Kruchov & Riley, 1995; MacBeath, Moos & Riley, 1996; MacBeath, 1998; Riley, 1998a and b; Riley & MacBeath, 1998.

2 Peter Robinson has argued that there is no evidence that boosting national attainment in maths will improve national economic performance. He derives this conclusion from an examination of the relationship between student attainment in international tests of literacy, numeracy and science and the economic performance of countries which have participated in the tests. Taking, for example, the scores for 13 year olds in 16 countries which took part in the Second International Mathematics Study in 1992-1993, he examines the economic growth in those countries over the subsequent decade, and concludes that the ‘impressive’ economic growth rates of countries such as Hong Kong and Thailand, in the decade up to 1997, are not a product of past superior attainment in mathematics. The relative improvement in the mathematical attainment of Hong Kong students, for example, followed economic growth, rather than precipitated it.
For example, the ‘opt out’ provision which allowed schools to vote (through a parental ballot) to become independent of the local education authority, and to be nationally funded as a grant-maintained school, has been rescinded by the 1997 Labour Government. The ‘assisted places scheme’ which provided state sponsorship for a small number of children to attend private education has also been withdrawn. However, the private sector now seems set to play an increasing role and the pace of education reform has accelerated. A swathe of reforms have been introduced which Ministers argue offer ‘new’ solutions to old and intractable problems: a claim which, in the case of one particular initiative, Education Action Zones, has been disputed (Riley & Watling, 1999).

The Research team members for the project, The Changing Role and Effectiveness of the LEA, are Professor Kathryn Riley, David Rowles, Dr Jim Docking, Ron Letch, Elle Rustique-Forrester and Ian Monk from the Centre for Educational Management, the Roehampton Institute, London. Findings from the project are published in Riley, Docking & Rowles, 1998, 1999 and in press.

The video Young Voices of Greenwich was produced for the London Borough of Greenwich in 1998 by Susie Grant Productions, as part of a local education reform
initiative. Professor Kathryn Riley from the Roehampton Institute, London was the
lead adviser and co-ordinator of the project.

6 Cognitive psychologists in the UK have concluded, for example, that the General
Certificate of Education (the external examination taken by the bulk of 16 year-olds)
is largely a test of memory (TES, 1999a, p. 1).

7 That is, those schools which have failed the national inspection carried out by the
Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted).

8 In 1997, grant-maintained secondary schools received an average of £32,000 for pro-
essional development, compared with £12,000 for locally maintained schools
(McMahon, 1998). With a change of government in 1997, there has been a conver-
gence of funding between grant-maintained and locally funded schools (note 3).

9 Paul Begley (1999) has argued that, as school principals increasingly encounter value
conflict, they need to develop a sophisticated understanding of the interaction
between personal values and the collective valuation process.


and Lecturers.


ers.


Paul Chapman.


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conducted by the Centre for the Evaluation of Public Policy and Practice, Brunel University and the Helix Consulting Group. London: Brunel University.


Times Educational Supplement (1999a). IQ has no impact on exam success. 18th June, p. 1.


West, M., Jackson, D., Harris, A. & Hopkins, D. (in press). Learning through leadership:

leadership through leaning. In K.A. Riley & K.S. Louis (eds), Leadership for Learning: International Perspectives on Leadership for Change and School Reform.

London: Falmer Press.


This report describes the evolution of a technology-mediated leadership development network from its origin as a local e-mail discussion group to a loosely-coupled international leadership web. The report includes a description of the components of the network, which include face-to-face and online cross-role discussion groups, annual seminar series, graduate degree programming, an online refereed journal, summer institutes, university partnerships, and cross-cultural research. In addition, an explanation is offered of the challenges that the network poses for understandings of what counts as professional development, university regulations for planning and delivering instruction, communication of research, and teacher-student roles. Then the paper offers a profile of the leadership development network in terms of its professional, role,
environmental, and emotional dimensions. Finally, a set of questions is offered for readers interested in planning leadership development networks.

Introduction

The use of technology in leadership development programs pervades university, school district, and professional organizations. Examples of technology-mediated leadership development initiatives abound online. For instance, see the University of Calgary distance-delivery graduate programs[1] the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development online training opportunities[2] and the Australian Council for Educational Administration’s Educational Leaders Online services[3]. Significantly, these online leadership development programs are not stand-alone projects but parts of well-integrated networks. Further, online leadership development provides readily accessible information and networking opportunities for large numbers of school leaders worldwide.

What is the actual function of technology in these networks? It could be said, perhaps naively, that technology is but a tool that allows individuals and groups who share common interests to communicate and learn together. However,

Macpherson (2000) cautioned that technology is not a neutral force but one that
can fundamentally reshape how individuals interact and think. Bates (2002, p. 141) went further to say that “there is little doubt that innovations in technology are facilitating many of the processes of globalization” and pointed to what he claimed are associated challenges of privacy loss, distribution of misinformation, and even criminal behavior. Similarly, Winsboro (2002, p. 42) warned of potential problems associated with intellectual dishonesty, content compatibility with electronic formats, and ability to deal with sensitive issues such as race and multiculturalism.

Other perspectives suggest that we be wary of the “uncritical acceptance of the status quo” and consider that technology may provide opportunities for individuals and groups to envision new possibilities for how they might live their lives (Harris, 2002, p. 38). For instance, organizational structures that once supported traditional educational environments are being reengineered, because of technology, to facilitate student-centred learning that includes both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Figure 1 Change Agency network linkages. The Change Agency Listserv: An International Cross-Role Electronic Discussion Group

Research

Studies | International University [ Partnerships
and asynchronous learning (Macpherson, 2000) that may allow learners to acquire deeper understandings and increased problem-solving capacity.

Glickman (1998) claimed that Western democracy is based on the idea that we all are capable of educating ourselves if we are able to participate actively with knowledge. This complements Harris’ (2002) suggestion that if technology is to benefit our communities then it “must enhance rather than reduce the public space in which people discuss, in an ethical manner, matters of communal interest.” In fact, the features of Glickman’s (1998) “pedagogy of democracy” suggests that leadership development networks, electronic or otherwise, might best be characterized by active engagement, choice, responsibility for others, public demonstration of learning, and both individual and group work.

In short, technology has emerged as a major factor in leadership development programs worldwide and this is reshaping how educational leaders learn, interact, act, and conceptualize their professional practices. Indeed, the traditional venue for formal educational leadership development programs—the university—
being challenged to reengineer both conceptual and physical infrastructures in
order to cope with increasing demands from the field to become “dual-mode
organizations” (Macpherson, 2000, p. 276) that provide both face-to-face and
technology-based learning opportunities. Therefore, it is important that the
impact of technology use in leadership development initiatives be examined
carefully so that pitfalls can be avoided and benefits maximized. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to describe the evolution of one technology-mediated leadership development network from its origin as a localized e-mail discussion group based at a single Canadian university to a loosely-coupled international leadership web (see Figure 1). The components of the network are described, which include face-to-face and online cross-role discussion groups, ongoing seminar series, graduate degree programming, an online refereed journal published by a major academic press, summer institutes, university partnerships, and cross-cultural research. In addition, an attempt is made to explain the challenges that the network poses for understandings of what counts as professional development, university regulations for planning and delivering instruction, communication of research, and teacher-student
roles. The paper closes by offering a profile of the leadership development network and by speculating on the broader educative possibilities for this and similar networks. Limitations

The content of this report is subject to several limitations. First, it is written from the perspective of an active participant who may be too closely associated with the network to assess critically all of its dimensions. Second, this report is meant only to highlight possibilities and cautions for others who are interested in TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS technology-supported leadership networks, rather than to present a framework that could or even should be replicated in other contexts. In addition, the learning network exists primarily, though not exclusively, in Western nations and, therefore, its strengths and limitations may be specific to Western culture. Finally, limits to the length of this report demand that this report offer mainly an overview of the learning network and that a description of how and why the various network components emerged be offered elsewhere. Therefore, readers are directed to earlier and forthcoming descriptions, cited throughout this report, of specific network components. The Change Agency Listserv: a catalyst for educative leadership

The electronic mail discussion group called the Change
Agency Listserv[4] origin

ated in 1994 with a request made by a small group of teachers and junior school administrators from a large Canadian urban school district for an online discussion group that would promote dialogue about their educational practices. Use of the resulting listserv quickly spread from the original group to members of other local educational organizations. Shortly afterwards graduate students were offered the opportunity to participate in the listserv for partial course credit. Over time the Change Agency evolved from a small listserv for teachers to a virtual discussion group for teachers, principals, graduate students, parents, school trustees, and department of education personnel. As well, some colleagues and their students from North America and abroad began to participate in the listserv.

Over the next few years, the Change Agency became a catalyst for several related local and international leadership development initiatives:

• Online academic refereed journal. As the Change Agency gained strength, several individuals associated with the listserv decided to create a free online academic refereed journal that focused on educational leadership.

The journal was named the International Electronic Journal for Leadership
in Learning (IEJLL) [5] and it began publication in 1997. Recently, the
journal became the University of Calgary Press’ first online academic
journal, after a rigorous cross-disciplinary review process. Significant
numbers of the Change Agency Listserv’s international subscribers particip
ate in editorial activities associated with the IEJLL, while the Change
Agency occasionally is the forum for discussions among IEJLL readers.

- Centre for Leadership in Learning seminar series. Change Agency sub
scribers participate annually in an online needs assessment that is used to
plan a face-to-face seminar series sponsored by the Centre for Leadership in
Learning (CLL), an educational consortium housed at the University of
Calgary. The same needs assessments also have been used successfully to
plan and conduct international online seminars that parallel the face-to-face
CLL seminars. LEARNING LEADERSHIP

- Summer institutes. Participants in an annual University of Calgary summer
institute use the Change Agency Listserv to conduct pre- and post-seminar
online discussions that involve international participants in addition to
summer institute registrants.

- Travel studies. Graduate students at the University of
Calgary who participated in recent travel studies to New Zealand and to the United Kingdom used the Change Agency network prior to arriving at their destinations to dialogue with their hosts about the issues they were to discuss later in face-to-face formats. The information that was shared and the bonds that formed online meant that travel study participants and their international hosts were able subsequently to engage in face-to-face exchanges that were richer and more productive than they might otherwise have been. Indeed, the online and face-to-face academic activities resulted in professional relationships that continue to the present.

- **Online graduate courses** - In 1999 two online graduate courses in educational leadership were designed with the help of a colleague. One course provides an overview of school reform in Western nations and the other course addresses school-based management issues. Students in both courses use the Change Agency Listserv to gain insights from dialogue with individuals who represent several different educational roles. In fact, students in the school reform overview course plan and host an online seminar series that in the past has drawn over 300 participants from a
A wide variety of countries. As this paper is being written, a colleague and co-researcher from New Zealand is teaching the University of Calgary school reform course while still based at the University of Waikato.

Several of the leadership development initiatives described above have been the focus of ongoing studies that have informed the growth of the leadership development network linked by the Change Agency network. For instance, a four-week discussion on the Change Agency Listserv among graduate students in educational leadership from the University of Calgary in Canada and the University of Waikato in New Zealand led to the development of the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model (Webber and Robertson, 1998). A CLL seminar series in 1998 led to a set of provocative questions and insights into public education garnered during a period of rapid change in education in Alberta (Spencer, 1999). An analysis of a Canada-New Zealand cross-cultural travel study program for graduate students allowed the Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model to be clarified and expanded (Robertson and Webber, 2000). These reports and others (Robertson and Webber, in press; Spencer and Webber, 2000; Webber, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c,
2000, in press;

Webber and Robertson, in press) document the evolution of the virtual and face
to-face network components linked by the common thread of the Change
Agency and they underscore the centrality of research in the evolution of the
web of leadership development projects.

TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

International influences have pervaded the leadership development activities
described previously. Graduate students, professors, and other educators from a
wide range of countries have been actively engaged in Change Agency dis
course. In turn, some of the international participants have formalized their link
ages to the Change Agency’s host university by updating or entering into official
partnerships between the University of Calgary and others such as the Uni
sity of Waikato in New Zealand, the University of South Australia, and the Uni
versity of Amsterdam. Such partnerships allow for cross-institutional
recognition of graduate programming for credit toward the attainment of degrees
at students’ home universities. Less formal internationalization is clearly evident
in the composition of the IEJLL editorial committees and the countries of origins
for IEJLL authors[6], speakers’ lists for CLL programming[7], travel study des
tinations[8,9], emergent cross-university staffing and student registrations, and co-sponsorship of international summer institutes[10].

Network challenges

The challenges that students, colleagues, and the author himself faced as they created the leadership network framework fell into four interrelated areas: structure, procedure, access, and power. Structure

The structural challenges were in many respects the least interesting parts of the work associated with developing the leadership network. However, ensuring a dependable structure was also perhaps the most critical work, at least on a practical level. Even the first phase of the network, which was the creation of a listserv for a small number of individuals, depended on our access to a stable server that was operational 24 hours a day. Dependable computer access grew increasingly important as the network expanded to include the international online journal and Web-based graduate courses. After a variety of possible servers were tried, we came to rely on the university’s computer network for reliable listserv software, e-mail accounts, and archival space. Besides access to a computerized infrastructure, software and Web site main tenance quickly emerged as a significant issue. Graduate students, university
technical staff, and contracted designers all have supported the network by coordinating listserv subscription lists, designing and updating Web sites, assisting with the creation of support materials such as CDs, and formatting online materials. In addition, enough had to be learnt about maintenance to be able to update Web sites and manage listserv software independently.

In the early phases of the network, the speed of Internet access was not an important issue. Telephone lines and computer modems provided satisfactory service for listserv subscribers using simple e-mail software to exchange text-based messages. However, as the network began to include, for example, WebL E A R N I N G L E A D E R S H I P based graphics and audiovisual components, high-speed Internet access became more important. Some network participants still rely, at least at home, on low-speed connections but it is expected that very soon network participants will find that high-speed access is a necessity.

The implications of the structural challenges of technology-mediated leadership networks for equity and social justice are clear. Simply because of cost, network access is extremely limited at this point for individuals in remote areas and in developing nations. Equally limited access is clearly the case for the poorer members of even wealthy societies.
Interestingly, women are well represented as Change Agency Listserv subscribers, IEJLL editorial committee members, IEJLL authors, and participants in both online and face-to-face seminars. The strong representation of women may be due in part to the demographics of the graduate student population at the university and others such as the University of Waikato in New Zealand whose students regularly participate in Change Agency-related programming.

Related to graduate student participation in online dialogue, summer institutes, seminar series, and travel studies, several additional structural challenges emerged that will be profiled in a forthcoming paper (Webber and Robertson, in press). These include, among others, registrar’s offices deadlines, immigration rules that restrict who universities can hire, course approval procedures, institutional “ownership” of students, legal requirements for cross-university partnership agreements, prolonged university governance procedures, and tuition fee regulations. Procedure

As discussed earlier, the Change Agency Listserv linked a large number of related programs. Despite its connective capacity, however, several of its limitations should be noted. First, Change Agency conversations, for which
students sometimes receive graduate credit, occasionally become pedantic as critically analyze broad issues. Interestingly, the more formal tone of Change Agency postings contrasts with the more informal, practice-oriented conversations on the Leaders’ Net[11] a parallel listserv for school leaders in New Zealand that was modeled on the Change Agency Listserv. Second, the online discussions are influenced heavily by the credential-driven interests of some student participants so readers should not assume that every posting is based on heartfelt interest in the discussion topics. Third, Change Agency participants are likely completely unaware of the unseen influence of, for instance, instructional designers whose technical backgrounds do not prepare them for the learning styles, information needs, or time limitations of current and emerging educational leaders. The result is that the assumptions guiding Web site design, for example, may conflict occasionally with the realities of users. A continuing challenge arose in the form of the academic schedules of TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS educational institutions in the northern and southern hemispheres. School terms that overlapped in varying patterns, conflicting due dates for grade submission to
registrars’ offices, asynchronous vacation and work schedules all mitigate against cross-hemispheric collaboration in technology-mediated learning networks. Even the loss of one shared workday a week because of the international date line reduces the ease with which North Americans and Australasians can collaborate online.

A surprising early challenge arose in relation to the widespread need for many teachers in Western nations to submit an annual professional development plan. When a Canadian teacher submitted to her principal a professional growth plan that included participation in online seminars, her principal returned it for revision noting that online dialogue was not acceptable as professional development. The teacher persevered with the online seminars but was required to participate in complementary face-to-face programs so that her school administrator could perceive her professional development plan as “real.”

In summary, the procedural challenges that we have faced to this point in the evolution of the Change Agency-related network demonstrated that only some professional development activities “count” for at least a few of our colleagues.

Further, the cost of participation in technology-mediated programming, the uni
versity-driven dialogue, and the unseen influence of technicians on, for example

Web design and interactive capacity, mean that there are limits to what we can

expect of online networks as we currently know them. Access

As stated earlier, access to participation in the Change Agency or other techno

logy-supported vehicles for professional and academic discourse is limited for

some. The reasons for limited access fall into several domains: cost, role

responsibilities, urban and rural network inconsistencies, time, and culture.

First, the issue of cost is not insignificant. Although participation in an e-mail

discussion group is not reliant on highly sophisticated equipment and a high

speed Internet access, some of the information that is discussed on the change

news briefs, government policy documents and databases that are accessible

only with the help of a relatively recent Web browser, a high-speed Internet

service provider, and a computer with high-speed processing capacity. Partici

pating in an online discussion with no access to the material that informs the

conversation could not be particularly useful or gratifying for anyone. For many

Change Agency participants the cost of access is borne by their employers while

others are able to afford access costs on their own. Clearly, cost is a factor that
excludes the voices of many both in Western and developing nations.

Role responsibilities reduce access for others to the dialogue associated with participation in the Change Agency and its associated seminar series, summer institutes, travel studies, and research projects. For instance, some women with \textit{learning leadership family responsibilities have little or no time outside of their workdays to engage in professional dialogue. Therefore, it is surprising that the majority of Change Agency subscribers, for example, is comprised of women, although it should be noted that most are relatively privileged women with at least middle-class incomes or, in the case of graduate students, the capacity to earn such incomes. Another group that has reported a reluctance to participate is made up of senior educational leaders (Webber, 1995c). They attribute their online and face-to-face discretion to their fear that their leadership capacity could be limited if they are perceived to be less than articulate or informed. It should be noted that limited time to participate is also an access issue for senior educational leaders. Inconsistent access to electronic networks for rural and urban dwellers influence whose voices are heard in the Change Agency. Initially at least, subscribers
were mainly urban professionals who had Internet access through their work environments. As residents of rural communities in many countries gained access to at least telephone-based Internet access, their voices began to appear in the online dialogue. As a result, postings now regularly include reference to issues that are either specific to rural and isolated communities, or they are shared concerns.

Perhaps less conspicuous are the ways in which network conversations are culturally specific, to the extent that subscribers from non-Western countries tend to drop into the listserv only for short periods and to limit their participation. Offered explanations refer to astonishment at how Western participants can lament their access to resources when their counterparts in developing nations can only imagine some of the educational resources that are available in Western contexts. In contrast, cultural limitations seem not to apply to 416 subscribers (as of October 4, 2001) to the online journal affiliated with the Change Agency.

Online subscribers to IEJLL represent an extremely wide array of nationalities and languages.

Despite the different ways that access to network dialogue can be limited for some, it is also important to note how the network has
increased access for

others. The layered participation in the Change Agency, seminar series, and

summer institutes means that some educators participate for professional devel

opment purposes, some parents and community members participate in order to

gain access to knowledge and opinions held by other educational stakeholders,

and some graduate students participate because they can gain partial university

course credit as a result. The result is an unconventional participatory mix that is

not possible in many other formats. Power

It has been informative to observe the ebb and flow of dialogue among network

participants and to note that power is often an important part of what people say

and how they say it. It has been observed that many components of the online

discourse could be described as reactive rather than proactive. Examples include

TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

participants who use the electronic context to lament the growth of technology

mediated learning environments at the perceived loss of meaningful human

interactions, to argue that educators should not be subject to shared governance

mandates, to suggest that public accountability mechanisms are meant to control

teachers or students, and to decry the expansion of private, home, and charter
school options for students and parents. Many of these arguably reactionary stances could be attributed to a defensiveness that arises from an apparent loss of control or status, while others could be seen as a normal human reaction to unsought educational change.

Less common but as powerful are the postings and presentations from individuals who wonder about possibilities, question current policies and practices, and pose challenging alternatives. Examples include the enterprising principal who markets her school to international students so that she can generate revenue to subsidize the rest of her school’s operations, and the international schoolteacher who challenged participants in North America to understand that there are numerous successful alternatives to traditional Canadian or American public schools. Similarly, an American home-schooling parent instigated a strong debate about the ways public schools deny voice, access, and success to disadvantaged students and their families.

Power or, more precisely, the desire to have more of it may have been a motivator for the occasional participant who has used the Change Agency, for example, as a vehicle to try to accumulate disciples of one kind or another. One
example, was a Canadian school trustee who used the listserv to gather information and vocabulary to assist in her re-election bid. Another example was an American participant who seemed to be an itinerant sessional instructor who wrote from a postsecondary institution address that changed every few months.

This person used the Change Agency to espouse his Marxist beliefs about education to all. Other power plays have been less obvious and perhaps more acceptable: the teacher who wished to increase his visibility within the educational community while applying for leadership positions, and the teacher education student who thought that a Change Agency and seminar series presence would help her applications that had been submitted to some of the school superintendents who also participated in these activities.

Interestingly, the Change Agency has served to level the power often associated with role. For instance, a beginning graduate student unwittingly challenged a renowned American academic over the latter’s theoretical stance. The student was aghast when informed by her peers that she had just told someone they regularly cited in their papers that she was misled in her thinking. Importantly, the student-guru exchange that resulted was a dialogue between equals and the
debate-limiting deference that graduate students too often give to senior academicians was not evident (Webber and Robertson, 1998).

The challenges of the Change Agency notwithstanding, the network that it fostered has created numerous educative possibilities. The increased participant diversity, the potential to promote alternative thinking, the identification of voices that are noticeably absent in most educational debates, and new understandings of professional growth. Participant diversity

Perhaps the most useful insight gained from my participation in the Change Agency and its larger network is the power of so-called “low tech” software to connect individuals, groups, and institutions. The result is a “boundary-breaking” network (Webber and Robertson, 1998) that crosses the borders normally imposed by role, politics, and institutional regulations. Without the support of the Change Agency Listserv, much of the associated network activities could not happen. For instance, the seminar series’ needs assessment is conducted primarily on the list; summer institute participants grapple online with professional challenges before and after the institutes; and travel study registrants “bond” before and after their face-to-face meetings. Further, the international university partnerships that
support the network are a direct result of individuals “meeting” on the Change Agency or through colleagues who are Change Agency subscribers. As well, most of the editorial board members associated with the International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning are current or occasional Change Agency subscribers or associates of subscribers.

A second important observation mentioned earlier and highlighted here is that, contrary to usual expectations, most of the participants in the network described in this paper are women. This network feature is worth closer examination. That is, what are the factors that led to this gender imbalance? Are the numbers of participants who are women and the voice of women in network activity proportional?

Another aspect of diversity that warrants further examination is the impact of cross-role participation. That is, what are the benefits and limitations of participation by teachers, principals, students, parents, community members, department of education staff, graduate students, and professors? Participants regularly report that they appreciate cross-role dialogue but the impact on practice and, importantly, on the lives of students is not entirely clear.

The promise of the network to promote discourse among
diverse individuals

and groups notwithstanding, there is no easy or obvious solution to the problem of socioeconomic limitations to participation in network activities. One possible solution may grow from the proliferation of cellular telephones in both developed and developing nations. That is, nations such as Kosovo, Romania, and China appear to have abbreviated the transition from limited access to telephone communication, to relatively widespread telephone access through the TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS installation of a nation-wide grid of overhead telephone lines, to heavy use of cellular telephones. Therefore, one wonders if Internet access will follow a similarly shortened transitional period as a result of advances in wireless technology and high-speed processors in hand-held and portable computers. Alternative thinking Further to the tendency noted earlier in this paper for network participants to voice conservative or even reactionary stances, it also is entirely possible that we are in the stage of the social change process where we lament the passing of the familiar and resist the effort required to engage change. Perhaps we need to go through the lamentation phase before we can begin to consider how familiar structures and organizational frameworks can be altered or
discarded as new and
more promising possibilities emerge.

Promising signs of a shift to engagement with possibilities are manifested in
some network programming. For example, a recent online exchange among stu-
dents taking the same graduate course while residing in several different nations
suggests that there is increasing recognition of the utility of network activities for
educators working in rural or remote communities, for professionals with young
children whose study time during regular business hours is extremely limited, or
for individuals who either cannot afford or will not tolerate long treks in urban or
rural communities to participate in more typical evening graduate classes. Absent voices
Students both in and out of school-sponsored activities constitute one group whose
voice is seldom heard in educators’ professional growth activities. Therefore, the
Change Agency network programming has provided some but insufficient
opportunities for educators, policy makers, and community makers to talk directly
with students who are currently in school and those who have elected to leave
school early. These student-related events easily have been among the most
powerful of all Change Agency network programs. For instance, a seminar several
years ago featured a troupe of high school actors who, with
the help of their
teacher, had written a play that addressed the construct of
teacher professionalism.

Their powerful play moved the audience to levels of
discussion that had not
occurred in previous seminars. Due entirely to the profile
they gained at the
seminar, the student actors subsequently performed their
play at several confer
ences for school principals, superintendents, and school
trustees.

Besides the self-reported endorsement by network
participants of cross-role
dialogue, there are some groups that participants have not
called on adequately
to join the discourse. These include representatives of
business and industry, the
military, and church-affiliated organizations. The Change
Agency and its
network affords a unique opportunity for these previously
unheard voices in
conversations about education to become more actively
engaged.

Until recently, professional growth was thought, at least
by educators, to be their
domain and to include traditional in-service activities
such as professional devel
opment days, specialist conferences, and curriculum
development committees.

However, the Change Agency network has allowed for the
acceptance of alterna
tive activities, such as online professional growth,
shared cross-role learning,
and graduate studies to be considered equally legitimate. This type of “layered participation” is unique to the Change Agency network and merits additional study.

Similarly, technology-mediated programming has allowed network participants access to professional growth that is less dependent on space and time (Webber, 2000) than traditional professional development. Therefore, it now is possible and in fact extremely beneficial for participants to engage in joint discussion and research while living and working around the globe.

Finally, the ability of network participants to learn across roles, space, and time, suggests that the educative possibilities of technology-mediated programming are largely untapped. Therefore, it is important that we successfully engage, for example, with the cognitive dissonance that comes from talking with those who conduct their learning and lives differently.

Educative network profile

The preceding sections describe how a relatively unsophisticated communication tool – the Change Agency Listserv – was a catalyst for the formation of an international leadership development network. The network was informal in many respects, loosely-coupled, and fragile. Nonetheless, there was a discernible profile
Perhaps the most significant observation within this section of the network profile is the focus on learning possibilities rather than on technology per se. That is, although the network was supported by technology, learning and learners are the primary foci. Moreover, network activities focused on leadership issues such as accountability, globalization, governance, organizational frame works, school reform, and instructional leadership, and not on technology concerns like bandwidth, processing capacity, or software upgrades. Obviously, technological capacity was necessary for the network activities to occur and, in fact, the network formed primarily because of technology; however, the technology tended to exist in the background with most network members either unaware of its impact or not particularly interested in discussing it.

Role flexibility emerged as a significant characteristic of the leadership network. That is, traditional leadership roles such as professor, superintendent, and principal were less clearly defined than in participants’ previous experiences with leadership development. That is, teachers, school students, parents, and
community members emerged as information providers and discussion facilitators in both face-to-face and online activities. This meant that participants representing traditional leadership roles were able to move in and out of the role of learner, information gatherer, and decision challenger. Further, the open access to many of the network programs, for example, the Change Agency Listserv and the seminar series, meant that individuals were able to dialogue about significant educational issues with other stakeholders with whom they do not normally interact. To a much lesser extent, participants were able to communicate and learn with individuals from both developing and Western societies.

It should be noted that although network initiatives allowed and in fact encouraged participants to draw on learning derived from their professional practices, theoretical and empirical reports were highly valued and used regularly, e.g. Hargreaves (1997), Levin (2001), and Macpherson et al. (1998). Moreover, the participants’ preferred literature suggested a strong inclination toward future-oriented leadership development rather than to past practices. Role dimensions

The most pervasive and most productive feature of the leadership development network was that it challenged virtually every standardized policy and practice.
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<tr>
<th>Professional Role dimensions</th>
<th>Environmental dimensions</th>
<th>Emotional dimensions</th>
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<td>Focus on possibilities, Challenger of Tension between Passion</td>
<td>not technology standardization seeking equity and positioning for equity</td>
<td>Learning Scholar Learning from but Creativity moving beyond the past</td>
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<td>Role flexibility Explorer Layered participation Competition</td>
<td>Content Entrepreneur Flexible time and Sensitivity space</td>
<td>Empirical evidence Politician Globalization Trust</td>
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<td>Future-oriented Responsible failure Technological leaps Collaboration</td>
<td>Open access Public performer Serendipity Curiosity</td>
<td>People Practitioner Compassion</td>
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<td>Collegiality Translator Caring Networker</td>
<td>of the individuals and organizations it served. For example, the awarding of</td>
<td>graduate credit for participation in various components of network program</td>
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<td>ming, the required collaboration across decision-making bodies in universities</td>
<td>and professional organizations, and even event timetabling to accommodate</td>
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<td>participants from different time zones and hemispheres, all challenged how</td>
<td>leadership development has been done in the past. Successfully challenging</td>
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<td>these and other standardizations meant that participants</td>
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filled a large number of roles at different times that could be characterized by these descriptors: scholar, entrepreneur, politician, practitioner, and networker. Further, participants had to translate network practices into a format that colleagues in their respective organizations could understand and accept.

As expected, all network initiatives were not highly successful. Fortunately, program failures, such as a poorly attended conference that unfortunately coincided with drastic budget cuts to schools and universities in Alberta, Canada, were viewed as productive so long as reckless risks were not taken and if significant lessons could be learned and applied to future planning. This network attribute could be described as “responsible failure.” Environmental dimensions

Network participants discovered that pervasive school reform over the past decade in Western nations reduced in stature and utility much of their knowledge about how best to cope with educational change. Therefore, lessons from the past were useful but only minimally so and a future-oriented perspective was required, especially among program planners.

For example, network participants and planners resisted their tendency to want to wait for a time when educational stakeholders from more demographic
groups and from developing nations could participate, for example, in online seminars and travel studies. They resisted because they found that if they did not gain experience in delivering online seminars for relatively privileged participants with high-speed Internet connections, then they would not be ready to make the most of the online multimedia capacity of new software programs like Centra[12] and vClass[13] that can be used to good effect with lower-speed Internet connections.

The capacity of learning-related software, such as WebCT[14] and First Class[15], led to the discovery of the effectiveness of “layered” participation in network programming. In addition, very powerful learning occurred when the benefits of “layered” participation combined with the positive impact of individuals who were able to participate in learning groups regardless of their time zone or geographic location.

Finally, network programmers learned to take advantage of serendipitous opportunities. Some of the strongest and most productive network linkages to date were the result of a misdirected telephone call, a brief introduction while one of the network planners was on vacation in The Netherlands, and a response
TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

to a general call for a North American contact that was sent from the United Kingdom to one of the listservs sponsored by the American Educational Research Association[16]. Emotional dimensions

The emotional dimension of the leadership development network was in evidence in all of its components. Passionate debates on the Change Agency Listserv and during summer institutes cemented ongoing professional exchanges between participants from Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, and the United States of America. Also, a healthy competition between professional organizations was balanced by the need for them to collaborate in order to deliver high quality seminar series, online publications, Web-based courses, and travel study opportunities. Furthermore, the productive competition-collaboration tension was characterized by creativity, sensitivity, and trust. Indeed, it could be said that the emotional dimension of the leadership development network was one of its strongest features. Conclusion

To close, the Change Agency network provides some evidence that technology mediated learning has a large educative capacity. To realize that potential, practitioners and theorists alike might consider the following questions:

• How can the Change Agency network components – online
dialogue,

research studies, seminar series, travel studies, and
electronic publication -

be adapted to other contexts in useful, defensible ways?

• What are the benefits and disadvantages of participation
  in networks that are

concurrently local, national, and international in scope?

• Is the apparent dominance of the privileged in
  technology-supported net

works defensible?

• How can absent voices be recognized and invited to
  participate?

• Is there the will to change organizational structures and
  procedures to allow

for technology-supported networking?

• Can educational institutions successfully and effectively
  incorporate techno

logy-supported learning or will it simply occur without
them?

• What is the future of a learning network that fails in
  the long term to

involve both genders, at least the majority of community
voices, and the

less privileged among us?

All of these questions apply equally to more traditional
learning institutions and

networks. However, the incorporation of a

technology-supported component

changes the focus, magnitude, and audience for these
important issues. L E A R N I N G L E A D E R S H I P
Notes

1
distance-delivery graduate degree programs

2 http://www.ascd.org/trainingopportunities.html
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development online training


4 http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~cll/CAN/frameset.htm Change Agency Listserv

5 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~iejll International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning

6 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~iejll International Electronic Journal for Leadership in Learning

7 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~cll Centre for Leadership in Learning

8 http://www.waikato.ac.nz/education/ New Zealand travel study destination

9 http://www.shu.ac.uk/ United Kingdom travel study destination

10 http://www.ucalgary.ca/~cll/semevnt.html#event international summer institutes

11 http://www.soe.waikato.ac.nz/elc/leaders.html Leaders’ Net

12 http://www.centra.com Centra

13 http://www.elluminate.com/ vClass

14 http://www.webct.com/ WebCT

15 http://www.firstclass.com/ FirstClass

of educational leaders”, Educational Management and Administration, Vol. 3 No. 2, pp. 139-56.


Hargreaves, A. (Ed.) (1997), Rethinking Educational Change with Heart and Mind”, in Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Arlington, VA.


TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NETWORKS

Spencer, B.L. (1999), An Analysis of Attitudes and Beliefs about Public Education in Alberta, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta.


Webber, C. (2000), “The future of educational leaders in a context of disruptive information and communication technology”, in Macpherson, R.J.S.


Further reading


Source: School Leadership & Management 17(2) (1997):
This paper argues that for schools to be able to respond to fundamental changes in their environment a profound re-conceptualisation of leadership is necessary. Using Sergiovanni’s notion of a mindscape, the article argues that the current formulations influencing the language of leadership are archaic and inappropriate. Drawing on a range of sources, alternative models are proposed using concepts such as intellectualism, artistry, moral confidence, etc. The article argues for a closer linkage between the language of leadership and the language of learning, in contrast to the vocabularies of management and the curriculum. The overarching theme of the article is that it is only through changing language that we can change conceptualisations and so behaviour.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the extent to which the language that is used in talking about leadership in schools is compatible with the notion that learning is the core purpose of schools. The semantics of leadership are fundamental to the creation of meaning and so to perceptions, expectations and behaviour. For Sergiovanni (1992) this has to do with the mindscapes, or theories of practice, that leaders
develop over time, and with their ability, in the light of
these theories,
to reflect on the situations they face. (p. 7)

He quotes Diana Lam:

I believe leadership is an attitude which informs behaviour
rather than a
set of discrete skills or qualities, whether innate or
acquired. (p. 1)

Attitudes and 'theories of practice' are constructs derived
from a prevailing
culture and expressed, reinforced and elaborated into
practice through language.
The vocabulary, definitions and metaphors of leadership will
be powerful forces
in formulating attitudes, expressed, as they are, through
the symbolism of
schools, the content of training and development activities
and the discourse that
is employed in all the events that inform the culture of a
school.

If schools are to respond to the fundamental changes that
are taking place in
social and economic terms then it is necessary to
re-conceptualise leadership. In
British society in particular much of the formulation of
the concept of leadership
is essentially 19th century in origin. People in Britain
are subjects, not citizens,
and this has a profound impact on how the language of
leadership has developed
and the way in which associated behaviour is accepted. In
essence leadership is
expressed in terms of individuality, hierarchy and essentially masculine lan
guage.

This has produced a culture of formal accountability, control and depend
ency. However much this is mitigated by personal characteristics, the fact
remains that most schools are essentially archaic in organisational terms, resem
bling classic bureaucracies which, by definition, lack flexibility, adaptability and
the potential to be transformed. If a school, or any organisation, is to be capable
of transforming itself then it has to be led by people who are capable of personal
transformation. If schools are to reengineer themselves, then one of the starting
points has to be reengineering the perceptions of leadership.

One of the most powerful determinants of the mindscape or attitude of leader
ship is experience. The experience of leadership in many schools is expressed
through a number of key concepts, e.g. Headteacher; Senior Management team;
Line management; Head of department; etc. Although the practice can and does
vary, the underlying mindscape is one of hierarchy, control and linearity. Some
what paradoxically, this language is combined with that of professionalism. Saul
(1992) characterises the situation thus:

The myth of salvation through efficient management is now so
that no one pays much attention to the premise upon which the new elites are being educated.

Efficiency, Professionalism. A belief in ‘right’ answers, which can only be produced by professionals.

One of the results of this has been a tendency to express leadership as ‘super management’; leaders are more competent at a wider range of tasks. Thus the model of headship is one of omnicompetence: the skilled classroom practitioner plus curriculum leader, plus technical expert, plus all the manifestations associated with being the figurehead. It is no wonder that so many headteachers seek early retirement or suffer a range of work-related illnesses. The job as historically constituted is almost impossible.

An implication of this view is the formulation of the role of the teacher and the status of the curriculum. Both in terms of content and delivery, the National Curriculum is predicated as a control culture based on the right answers. This is manifested in the often significant confusions between the functions of teaching and learning: the inference, for example, that there is a logical correlation between the two and that efficiency in the former will necessarily lead to the
latter taking place. The consequence of a hierarchically based mindset for leadership has a number of implications for the implementation of learning in schools: automatic cohort related chronological progression; time constrained compartmentalisation; assessment based on ‘right’ answers; emphasis on the recording of information.

What emerges is a picture of uniformity, dependence and an implicit definition of learning that is generic and essentially passive. Of course, this is a stereotype and caricature, but the absence of appropriate definitions of leadership and learning, at the very least, allow the possibility of elements of what has been described to be found in schools. However, even if the reality is much softer than implied, there are still serious doubts that the underlying culture described is an appropriate one for the changing context in which schools will have to operate.

Schools are moving into an era which has the potential to challenge every existing premise on which current notions of leadership and learning are posited.

Four key trends can be identified.

Firstly, as the self-managing school movement reaches maturity, notably in England and Wales, the level of significance attached to
institutional leadership

and management will increase. This is a direct function of prevailing models of accountability, which are both personal to the headteacher in terms of legal and contractual issues and specific to the institution in terms of inspections, league tables, etc. Schools are increasingly vulnerable in that the historic support mechanisms and limited public exposure have been replaced by direct answer ability. The quality of decision making at school level is becoming increasingly important as mistakes and failures are visited directly on the institutions and its members. Errors or omissions in planning, budgeting, staff deployment, etc. have direct, immediate and specific consequences.

Secondly, and directly related to the first point, is the increasing emphasis being placed on performance at institutional and personal levels. The need to demonstrate value added, value for money, year-on-year improvement, target achievement, etc. has fundamentally altered the view of the school as one stage in a life long process where outcomes may not be manifested for many years.

The growing importance being attached to results, usually in a quantitative form, calls into question the view of learning as an iterative process.

Thirdly, these first two trends are taking place in the
context of exponential

social, economic and technological change. Caldwell and Davies have explored

the implications of these trends in more detail elsewhere in this volume; the issue

for schools is the extent to which they can legitimatise

the way in which they

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING - REENGINEERING MINDSETS

function in the context of rapid environmental change. It may be that the current

formulations of leadership and learning are correct and appropriate, but if educa

tion is a function of society and society is changing, then

the a priori conditions on

which schooling is based at the very least has to be

visited and re-affirmed. There

is the possibility that schools will become increasingly dysfunctional because they

are working to mindscapes which owe more to 19th century maps of Africa (vast

tracts of land labelled ‘unexplored’ and then turned into colonies with straight line

boundaries totally ignoring local realities) than to the latest satellite images.

Fourthly, and perhaps most significantly, is the growing awareness that the

world is not linear, but is rather complex and chaotic. Most prevailing orthodox

ies in management and learning assume a linear and controllable universe,

But chaos theory has proved these assumptions false. The world is far
more sensitive than we had ever thought. We may harbour the hope that
we will regain predictability as soon as we can learn how to account for
all variables, but in fact no level of detail can ever satisfy the desire. Iter
ation creates powerful and unpredictable effects in non-linear systems. In
complex ways that no model will ever capture, the system feeds back on
itself, enfolding all that has happened, magnifying slight variances,
encoding it in the system’s memory—and prohibiting prediction, ever. (Wheatley, 1992, p. 127)

Almost every teacher will recognise what Wheatley is describing—it is the
dynamics of the classroom and staffroom, meetings and lessons, interviews and
plans. Most importantly, Wheatley is describing the learning process, where
each child in the class is a variable and each child is made up of a complex
range of variables that determine how they might learn. Equally, every school
leader spends most of her/his time managing unpredictability—yet this is rarely
reflected in role descriptions, the deployment of time, organisational structures,
etc. One of the reasons why schools can be such demanding places to work in
(for children and adults) is that people have to live in a state of permanent
tension between the superficial simplicity of management and the deep complex
ity of learning and leading.

If schools are not to become asynchronous, then the way that a school is led

has to become a macrocosm of the learning process, in design terminology, form

has to follow function. The language that is used to talk about leadership has to

be changed to reflect the world in which leaders can lead and learners can learn.

This is an incredibly complex task, but it is one that we regularly engage in:

joining the staff of a new school, a club or even getting married all involve

developing (or re-aligning) our vocabularies which determine our understanding

of the way we are to function, to be together. As Sergiovanni (1996) puts it:

The heart and soul of school culture is what people believe, the

assumptions they make about how schools work, and what they consider to be true and real. These factors in turn provide a theory of

acceptability that lets people know how they should behave.

. . . Efforts
to change school cultures inevitably involve changing theories of

schooling and school life. (p. 3)

Theories are mental constructs and as such are the products of our choice of

formulations to describe the reality we wish to create. Much of our social under
standing is created by ostensive definitions—relating a name to an object or process. The terms leadership and learning continue to be applied to processes which are no longer valid or appropriate. The process of creating meaning is described by St Augustine in the Confessions (quoted by Wittgenstein, 1968): . . . Thus, as I heard words repeatedly used in their proper places in various sentences, I gradually learnt to understand what objects they signified; and after I had trained my mouth to these signs, I used them to express my own desires. (p. 3)

The rest of this paper is concerned with identifying which words should be used, what are the ‘proper places’ and how everyone in the school can be helped to express their own desires. In the context of (a) the changing world that has already been described and (b) the need for leadership to be reformulated to make it logically consistent with the learning process, the following concepts are proposed:

- intellectualism;
- artistry;
- spirituality;
- moral confidence;
- subsidiarity;
- emotional intelligence.
There are two important points to be made about this list. Firstly there is a danger

with any list that a hierarchy of significance will be imposed on it. This is not

intended, indeed, the important thing is to see the six elements as interdependent

and contributing to a holistic view of the nature of leadership. Secondly these are

all elusive concepts, subject to a variety of interpretations and applications.

A helpful metaphor is provided by Valerie Stewart (1990) in The David Solu

tion

When Michelangelo looked at the block of marble he was to carve, he

looked beyond the outside and saw the shape of the statue he was to

create. He could see the real beauty hidden within the waste. (p. 1)

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING — REENGINEERING MINDSETS'

The process of personal growth, development and change has to start with a

visualisation of how we want to be. David was a unique personal creation which

can be understood by all who see it. A parallel metaphor for the school might be

the building of a cathedral. The patron’s vision had to be interpreted by the

architect whose drawings had in turn to be interpreted by a wide variety of

skilled workers. The minutae of specific tasks were held together and made
meaningful by an overarching vision which had to be understood, interpreted and translated into action. In both cases, David and the cathedral, the vision had to be made meaningful through specific intent ‘you just chip away the bits that don’t look like David’ (p. IX); each mullion, gargoyle and piece of stained glass had to be put in place.

If the primary purpose of educational leadership is to facilitate learning, then what follows is an attempt to describe the appropriate components—even the most spectacular flying buttress is eventually rooted in the foundations and secured to the main body of the building. There is a danger in describing the six elements separately—they might be interpreted as being discontinuous whereas the argument here is that they are inter-related elements of a holistic model. Intellectualism

One of the most depressing outcomes of the self-managing schools movement coupled with the introduction of a national curriculum and its associated testing regimes is the increasing emphasis on school leadership and management as a technical skill. Increasing levels of definition, specification and imposed goal setting have served to diminish the creative and critical components of leading and managing. Prescription of the right answers and associated models of accountabil
ity may have contributed to the creation of an accepting and conformist culture.

Giroux (1988) argues for teachers as ‘transformative intellectuals’ because

The category of intellectual is helpful in a number of ways. First, it pro
vides a theoretical basis for examining teacher work as a form of intel
lectual labour, as opposed to defining it in purely instrumental or

technical forms. Second, it clarifies the kinds of ideological and prac
tical conditions necessary for teachers to function as intellectuals.

Third, it helps to make clear the role teachers play in producing and

legitimating various political, economic and social interests through the

pedagogies they utilise. By viewing teachers as intellectuals, we can

illuminate the important idea that all human activity involves some

form of thinking. (p. 125)

The assertion of the role of teacher as intellectual is essential if the educative

and transformational role of schooling is to be refined and strengthened. At no

point in the development of educational practice—whether at national policy L E A R N I N G L E A D E R S H I P

level or decisions about learning strategies in schools and classrooms—are there

uncontentious decisions. The process of being an educator is the process of
making decisions, of choosing and interpreting the outcomes in ideological and practical terms. Policies may be prescribed at a variety of levels, but the implementation of those policies involves 'forms of knowledge, language practices, social relations and values that are particular selections and exclusions from a wider culture' (p. 126). Decisions as to modes of practice involve the conscious legitimisation of specific options; that legitimisation has to be an intellectual process if it is not to be reductionist, bureaucratic and a denial of the social purposes of education as opposed to training.

A further dimension to the concept of the 'teacher-as-intellectual' is that it is very difficult to see how the notion of the 'reflective practitioner' can be developed except in the context of an intellectual perspective. Reflective practice implies the ability to conceptualise, analyse, establish causal relationships, draw conclusions, etc. These qualities are at the heart of effective pedagogic practice, just as they are central to the learning process and therefore have to be axiomatic to any notion of leadership.

Said (1996) argues that one of the greatest barriers to the true functioning of the intellectual is the 'attitude' of professionalism:

... thinking of your work as an intellectual as something you do for a
living, between the hours of nine and five with one eye on the clock,
and another cocked at what is considered to be proper professional
behaviour—not rocking the boat, not straying outside the accepted
paradigms or limits, making yourself marketable and above all pre
sentable, hence uncontroversial and unpolitical and ‘objective’. (p. 74)
He goes on (pp. 76–83) to identify four characteristics which mark out the true
intellectual:
• love for, and unquenchable interest in, the larger picture;
• making connections;
• refusing to specialise;
• caring for ideas and values.
Said argues that the most appropriate counter to the imperatives of special
isation, expertise, power and authority is that
The intellectual today ought to be an amateur, someone who considers
that to be a thinking and concerned member of a society one is entitled
to raise moral issues at the heart of even the most technical and profes
sionalised activity . . . (p. 82)
For leaders in schools Said’s four points offer a powerful
parallel between the qualities of leadership and the overarching educative purpose of the school. If leaders function as intellectuals then they are more likely to create a culture in which others are able to function in the same way, even though this might be extremely uncomfortable at times. However, given the moral nature and social significance of the educational process, the development of a critical and creative perspective as an essential component of leadership seems axiomatic. Artistry Stewart’s (1990) metaphor of Michaelangelo’s David provides a helpful model of the distinctions to be drawn between aspects of leadership and management. What makes the statue so distinctive is the artistry that transforms the physical material into a powerful image. Management can only function within the context of the vision of the completed work. Equally, the traditional management skills are unable to cope with the complexity of the creative process, they are the tools to facilitate it. Schemes of work, school timetables, etc. are literally pointless if they are not set within the context of a vision of the school as a learning community.

The leader as artist is thus a central notion to the process of realisation—translating ideals into concrete outcomes. Leaders need three qualities that are
found in artists—vision, creativity and the ability to communicate. Much has been written on the centrality of vision to quality, school improvement and school effectiveness. However, it is unlikely that any school can have a vision per se, it has to be a school understanding which is initially individually articulated.

The process that leads to the articulation of the vision is a complex one. In discussing the origins of the creative process Gardner (1993) argues:

At first accepting the common language or symbol system of the domain, each creator finds soon enough that it proves inadequate in one or more respects . . .

. . . because the creative individual is dissatisfied with an ad hoc solution or because the particular problem can only be solved by a fundamental reorientation . . . (p. 33)

Given the context that schools are increasingly having to function in and the complexity of creating a learning organisation, it is essential that leaders are capable of the ‘fundamental reorientation’: conceptualising a new paradigm.

This process is well known in the arts and sciences—Michaelangelo, Beethoven, Darwin, Einstein, etc. Similar qualities may well be appropriate to respond to
the changing demands on schools. Reference to the intellectual giants of

Western culture may be intimidating, each is unique (and male) and there are LEARNING LEADERSHIP

25,000 schools in Britain! However, it is possible to argue for artistry and cre

ativity to be given higher significance in our understanding of what constitutes

the elements of leadership. According to Henry (1991)

Change is occurring too fast for quantitative extrapolation, rather we

will have to re-open the part of us that ‘knows’ in some other way; the

sure judge with the courage to risk, the imagination to challenge, the

sensitivity to know when to act and whom to involve. (p. XI)

For Henry creativity is

. . . a thinking process associated with imagination, insight, invention,

innovation, ingenuity, intuition, inspiration and illumination. (p. 3)

What is highly significant about this listing is that it has much in common with

what happens when people learn—the creative process is one of understanding a

new phenomenon and this applies equally to student, teacher and headteacher.

However, if the latter is managing rather than leading, the outcomes are more

likely to be replication, reiteration, reinforcement and resignation.

There is an obvious tension between the creative individual
and the needs of

any organisation—the need for some stability in order to support innovation.

Kao (1996) uses a musical analogy, jazz improvisation, to examine the potential conflict:

A well-managed enterprise can’t survive without some sheet music. It allows the management of complexity, without which the modern symphony orchestra . . . would degenerate into cacophony. Most large-scale human interactions require their specific blue-prints, rituals, road maps, scripts, whatever, but they also require improvisation.

A detailed examination of the process of creativity is outside the remit of this discussion. The essential points to make are its centrality to appropriate models of leadership for learning and reengineering and the fact that it can be developed in individuals.

The real reason why we have done so very little about creativity is very simple. We have not understood it at all. We have not understood the process of ideation. We have not understood creativity because it is impossible to do so in terms of the passive information universe . . . . No matter how hard we try in the wrong universe, we shall not understand
creativity. (de Bono, 1991, p. 218)

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING—REENGINEERING ‘MINDSETS’

If we are in the ‘wrong universe’ with regard to creativity then the chances are that we are inhabiting the wrong universe with regard to leadership and learning.

A very high warp factor may be needed to bring about the paradigm shift required.

The final element of artistry is the ability to communicate the new insight or vision. This assumes a sophisticated level of competence in order to bridge the gap between vision and understanding. The first performance of Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring produced a riot in the audience. Stravinsky’s vision was not understood and so not accepted. Many innovators have experienced a similar response—although riots in staff meetings are mercifully rare. Any product of a creative process will challenge existing norms and force new ways of thinking. In an educational context the issue of effective communication cannot depend on the passage of time to gain acceptance. The leader as artist has to educate her/his audience, to help them learn and understand and in this respect is no different to the effective teacher. Spirituality

One of the limitations of competence approaches to management is that they miss the holistic view of the ‘person’. Any discussion of
the qualities of leadership has to address what is usually described as the 'spiritual', although this is an unsatisfactory word as it is not proposed to advocate a metaphysical or transcendental component per se. What is important is the recognition that many leaders possess what might be called 'higher order' perspectives. These may well be, and often are, represented by a specific religious affiliation. However, these perspectives may come from a range of sources—Covey (1992) refers to them as principles and characterises them thus:

Principles are deep, fundamental truths, classic truths, generic common denominators. They are tightly interwoven threads running with exactness, consistency, beauty, and strength through the fabric of life. . . . we can be secure in the knowledge that principles are bigger than people or circumstances, and that thousands of years of history have seen them triumph, time and time again. (p. 122)

Such principles are necessary for self-understanding, they are the means by which the individual is able to contextualise herself or himself in a chaotic, complex and often bizarrely contradictory world. A personal 'world view' is the basis of self-awareness, interpretation and an essential prerequisite to the process of reflection that is the key to personal learning
and so to growth
through transformation.

Most educational leaders will experience failure, disappointment, frustration,
rejection and hostility at some time during their professional lives. The lack of a LEARNING LEADERSHIP
set of fundamental principles makes such reverses almost impossible to bear and
may actually give rise to acute dysfunction. When faced with personal rejection
we can either seek to reaffirm the principles by which we work or become reac
tive, pragmatic and expedient. As Gardner (1995) puts it
The creator must in some sense embody his story, although he need not be saintly. . . . The individual who does not embody her messages will
eventually be found out, even as the inarticulate individual who leads
the exemplary life may eventually come to be appreciated. (p. 293)
Terry (1993) affirms this emphasis
Faith in authenticity must undergird our actions. To be faithful, we
must believe that any authentic act, no matter how small or seemingly
insignificant is upheld by the universe as worthy and honourable.
Leadership is spiritually grounded. (p. 274)
In terms of leadership development this area has often been seen as too
'personal' or too elusive to be regarded as a significant factor. Yet this is not a
matter of seeking to establish religious faith (although a significant number of
schools do require that information), but rather 'what do you believe in?' and
'how do you translate your beliefs into action?'.
This implies a degree of sophistication in being able to articulate a belief
system and use it as a benchmark in a variety of personal and professional con
texts. Given the sensitivity of personal beliefs systems this is an obvious area for
development through reflection-in-action and mentoring.

Moral confidence
This quality is clearly closely related to spirituality in that a moral code is often
the most overt manifestation of any personal belief system. However, because of
its significance in the context of school leadership it requires specific discussion.
The term 'moral confidence' is used to stress the importance attached to the
capacity to act in a way that is consistent with an ethical system and is consistent
over time. This requires confidence in terms of acceptance and understanding of
the ethical system and the ability to interpret it in a wide range of situations.
Schools are highly complex communities—there are no value-free decisions
where the learning of young people is involved. Equally, schools are understood
through the actions of individuals—what in the Total Quality movement are
known as ‘moments of truth’, actions which are the direct and immediate reflection of a moral code. As Etzioni (1995) expresses it, schools
LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING—REENGINEERING MINDSETS
... provide experiences that tend to have deep educational effects,
either positive or negative. Thus the first step towards enhancing the
moral educational role of schools is to increase the awareness and
analysis of the school as a set of experiences. (p. 104)
Two issues emerge from this assertion. Firstly the role of leaders in creating
the ‘awareness and analysis’, i.e. a morally competent community. Secondly the
importance of leaders being able to validate their own actions in explicit moral
terms. Sergiovanni (1996) reinforces this when he tells of the need
... to accept as part of our role responsibilities the necessity to practice
leadership as a form of pedagogy. Aristotle would suggest that nothing
could be more natural for schools since he defined pedagogy as a good:
as a virtue. (p. 96)
‘Leadership as pedagogy’ (or practice what you preach) captures the essence of
leadership for transformed schools. At a time of social and
moral uncertainty the

need for leaders to exemplify not so much a specific code
but rather the exist

ence and understanding of a personal ethical framework and
the ability to trans

late it into validated and justified outcomes would seem to
be essential. If the

school qua organisation is going through turbulent times
then its moral purpose

needs to be clear so that it can be debated, understood and
applied. There are

numerous issues in schools (child protection, equity,
health and safety, access,
etc.) which do not permit ambiguity in terms of practice.

The morally confident leader is someone who can:

• demonstrate causal consistency between principle and
  practice;

• apply principles to new situations;

• create shared understanding and a common vocabulary;

• explain and justify decisions in moral terms;

• sustain principles over time;

• reinterpret and restate principles as necessary.

These attributes might appear to be a ‘counsel of
perfection’ and they are

undoubtedly demanding. However they relate very closely to
the concept of the

leader as intellectual discussed above. In essence, moral
confidence is the

product of a learning process which makes direct use of
higher order cognitive

skills. The process of becoming and developing as a leader
is the process of learning to think and of learning to learn. L E A R N I N G L E A D E R S H I P Subsidiarity

It is impossible to dance if every joint is locked rigid, it is impossible to have a conversation if those involved only talk in monologues, it is impossible to lead if control is seen as the necessary condition. One of the problems with hierarchies is that they are manifested through increasing accountability, which appears to require increasing capacity to control. At a time of complexity, chaos and rapid change, leadership through control will inevitably produce brittle organisations and brittle people.

The relationship between leadership, hierarchy, power and control is endemic to British organisations. If nothing else it is reflected in the symbols of status—in schools it is manifested in time and space. This apparently endemic view has been powerfully challenged by Charles Handy (1989), who quoted a papal encyclical:

It is injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of the right order for a large and higher organisation to abrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies. (p. 100)

This statement is a fundamental and profound challenge to the semantics of leadership in education and in particular the mindscapes.
which inform the

behaviour of headteachers and principals. Subsidiarity
confronts the status of

headship, the validity of hierarchy and the notion of
delegation as the basis of

effective leadership. Control and delegation, and the
cultural manifestations of

seniority, are inappropriate models for organisations that
have to change

rapidly and that are primarily concerned with learning.
Central to the concept

of subsidiarity is the notion of trust—willingly
surrendering power rather than
delegating it and structuring organisations to
institutionalise and reinforce trust.

As Fukuyama (1995) puts it

If people who have to work together in an enterprise trust
one another

because they are all operating to a common set of ethical
norms, doing

business costs less. Such a society will be better able to
innovate organ

isationally, since the high degree of trust will permit a
wide variety of

social relationships to emerge . . . By contrast, people
who do not trust one another will end up co

operating only under a system of formal rules and
regulations, which

have to be negotiated, agreed to, litigated and enforced, sometimes by

coercive means. (p. 27)

The purpose of leadership in the context of a culture of
subsidiarity, or what
Handy calls a federal organisation, is not to manage but rather to enable, facili
tate, interpret, create meaning and to develop through trust.

LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING — REENGINEERING ‘MINDSETS’ Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a problematic concept—to many it is an oxymoron.

Goleman (1996) has argued persuasively for the importance of emotional intelli
gence as a balance, if not an antidote, to the implicit supremacy of cognitive
intelligence in the language that is used about individual and organisational life.

The concept is introduced in this paper because schools are places in which
emotions play a highly significant role. Relationships between student and student,
teacher and student, teacher and teacher, parent and teacher, senior manager and
teacher, etc. are often expressed in emotional terms. For institutions so founded on
cognition and rationality, most people’s experience of schools is in fact in terms of
fear, joy, apprehension, worry, love, hate, grief, jealousy and resentment.

The process of transformation that we are arguing schools will have to go
through is likely to increase the range and intensity of emotions. It therefore
seems appropriate to argue for an understanding of the place of emotions in the
repertoire of qualities desirable in a leader. Goleman
Many people with IQ’s of 160 work for people with IQ’s of 100, if the former have poor intrapersonal intelligence and the latter a high one.

And in the day-to-day world no intelligence is more important than interpersonal. (p. 42)

Goleman (p. 43) argues that emotional intelligence is made up of five main domains:

1 knowing one’s emotions;
2 managing emotions;
3 motivating oneself;
4 recognising emotions in others;
5 handling relationships.

Developing capability in each of these domains is an intimidating prospect,

but as Goleman argues

The underlying basis for our level of ability is, no doubt, neural, but as we will see, the brain is remarkably plastic, constantly learning. Lapses in emotional skills can be remedied. (p. 44)

The development of emotional intelligence in leaders is perhaps the most complex of all the qualities raised in this paper, but

Imagine the benefits for work of being skilled in the basic emotional learning leadership competencies—being attuned to the feeling of those we deal
with,

being able to handle disagreements so they do not escalate,

having the

ability to get into flow states while doing our work.

Leadership is not

domination, but the act of persuading people to work

towards a

common goal. (p. 149) Conclusion

This paper has set out some of the possible variables in
developing a new

vocabulary for leadership in schools, so influencing the
prevailing mindscapes

and thus behaviour. If schools are to change in order to
respond to a changing

world, then a disjointed incremental approach is not
appropriate, if for no

other reason than the toll it takes. The response to
profund externally

imposed change (such as the 1988 Education Reform Act in
England and

Wales) has usually been based on piecemeal approaches
derived from profes

sional commitment, e.g. ‘working harder’. This is reflected
in the level of

demand for early retirement, levels of stress-related
illness, etc. Profound and

fundamental changes in what has to be done have to be
replicated in an

equally significant shift in how it is done—and this has to
start with the con

ceptualisation of leadership.

There is, of course, a need for the technical managerial
components of leader
ship to be addressed through appropriate training. However, that training has to be contextualised, set within a mindscape that is responsive to a complex and chaotic world, schools that are focused on learning, individuals that are capable of personal transformation and growth and so able to lead schools for the 21st century.


LEADERSHIP FOR LEARNING - REENGINEERING MINDSETS


PART 10 Middle leadership


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The question addressed by this article is: ‘What is to be done with leadership?’

This question represents an extension of what has become an ongoing concern

for the future of leadership, which was first articulated in an invited keynote

address to BEMAS in 1995 (Gronn, 1996). In that state-of-the-art paper, I syn

thesized current trends and developments in leadership and considered whether

the field was on the cusp of a fundamental rethink–driven mainly by the need

to accommodate new organizational change and restructuring imperatives–

which would supersede all that had gone before it, and
which would alter

forever our view of leadership. Implicit, always, in these kinds of speculations

about shifts or switches in perspective is the lurking spectre of historicism.

There is a cautionary tale here, therefore, for anyone who wishes to make pro

ouncements about alleged turning points, movements to higher stages, water

sheds, paradigm shifts and the like, as any of us who have been spectators of the

debate (or furore?) following the publication of Francis Fukuyama’s (1992)
influential The End of History and the Last Man will be aware. I have no wish in

what I say now to stumble into the pitfalls of end-ism raised by that particular

episode. Rather, my intention is to connect with some of the threads of my 1995

address in an effort to move forward our understanding about the phenomenon

of leadership with which we, practitioners and commentators alike, are dealing,
because I believe that most of us still labour under serious misapprehensions

about its nature. My purpose is to identify some of those deficiencies and then to

sketch the framework of what I believe is a much more promising possibility.

One of the developments which I summarized in the 1995 paper was a bifur

cation in leadership thinking around two broad polarities: the one, stimulated
principally by Bernard Bass’s (1985) ideal type of transformational leadership,

representing a kind of apogee of individualism, and the other, typified by Elliott Jaques’ (1989) managerial leadership, a vigorous reassertion of systemic proper ties and role structures, but devoid (virtually) of any identifiable sense of agency. In my review (Gronn, 1996: 17) I pointed to some of the more obvious shortcomings in the work of both writers. That said, it has to be conceded that individual or structural perspectives on leadership are not entirely devoid of merit. Thus, work which, on the one hand, permits a better understanding of the psychological and ethical dispositions of leaders is as welcome as, on the other hand, any elucidation of the structural dimensions of the roles and contexts in which various leaders lead. But what I now want to assert is that the way of the future lies with neither of these perspectives, for the choice posed by these or other similar approaches which privilege agency ahead of structure, or vice versa, rests on a false ontological dualism. The dualism is false because neither constitutive element of social reality, agency nor structure, reduces to the other; rather, the relationship between the two is always one of interplay through time:
each element is analytically distinct from, but is ontologically intertwined with,
the other. Thus, while an existing social structure is always a precondition for the actions of future cohorts of agents, it also represents the outcome of the purp

positive, generative (as well as unintended) actions of previous sets of agents and is potentially modifiable by agents yet-to-be-born (Archer, 1995: 66-79).

In answer to the question of what is to be done with leadership, therefore, I shall be bypassing both of these two broad conceptions of leader-follower relations. Instead, I intend to go straight to the heart of the agency-structure interplay and will focus my remarks on activity. Activity is the bridge between agency and structure. The structural patterns taken by various social or organizational formations are activity-dependent and an analysis of the activities engaged in by particular sets of time-, place-, space- and culture-bound sets of agents permits an understanding of agential-structural relations through the process of structuring. The structuring actions of agents may serve two possible ends: the reproduction or the transformation of existing sets of institutional relations. My point of departure from prevailing conceptions of leadership, particularly those which accord generous dollops of voluntarism to key individuals (acting either within or without formal positional roles),
will be to emphasize the centrality of conjoint agency. That is, the satisfactory completion of discretion tasks is attributable to the concertive labour performed by pluralities of interdependent organization members. Leadership and influence comprise part of that labour within those structured relationships, but I shall argue that the properties displayed by leadership are more likely to take a distributed, rather than a concentrated, form, a claim I have already rehearsed elsewhere (Gronn, 1999a and b).

Unlike some critics in education and beyond who plead for the abandonment of leadership altogether, therefore, I shall be maintaining that leadership can, and should, be salvaged, albeit in a distinctly different form. To achieve this end, I will develop the argument that, if our perspectives of leadership are to continue to serve useful analytical and practical purposes, then they must be grounded in a theory of action. This possibility, I hope to show, requires those of us with an interest in leadership to rethink current organizational practices, and the ontological properties of the activities which aggregate to constitute those practices. The reason is that a distributed view of tasks and activities implies the existence of a new form of the division of labour at the
heart of organizational work. Such a development has important implications for traditionally defined individual roles and for crude dualisms such as leader-follower and leadership-followership. For these and other reasons, an attribute like distribution needs to be incorporated into a reconceptualized view of the appropriate unit of analysis if we are to ensure that leadership is to retain its credibility, viability and utility.

One promising approach for rethinking leadership which I consider briefly is activity theory (see e.g. Engeström, 1999a). My aim is to show that leadership will retain its relevance provided that it is reconceptualized as part of a model of jointly performed and tool-mediated activity.

The article begins with a brief recapitulation of the shortcomings of prevailing views of leadership, and next considers two recent claims: the first is that leadership should be abandoned because there are other more appropriate factors which can be shown to substitute for it, while the second is that there are, indeed, no other factors which can be substituted. The article then develops the notion of distribution and appraises some recent approaches to organizational work (including activity theory). Finally, the significance of distributed leadership ship systems will be spelled out before I consider some of
the issues raised by

the discussion and their implications for future research. The trouble with existing dualisms

Of the two broad polarities mentioned above, the individualistic view of leadership dominates the field (and for that reason, and for purposes of economy, I confine most of my discussion to it). This individualism may be typified as naive realism or the belief in the power of one, and it is grounded in the assumption that ‘effective performance by an individual, group, or organization is assumed to depend on leadership by an individual with the skills to find the right path and motivate others to take it’ (Yukl, 1999: 292). Implicit in this kind of reasoning is a crudely abstracted leader-follower(s) dualism, in which, inter alia, leaders are superior to followers, followers depend on leaders and leadership consists in doing something to, for and on behalf of others. Space limitations preclude a detailed consideration of the difficulties with this exaggerated sense of agency attributed to leaders (but see Gronn, 1999c: 1-20), save what in my view are the most serious deficiencies to which it gives rise: an undertheorized view of task performance and accomplishment, and a neglect of the division of labour. These shortcomings were first highlighted in claims about substitutes for leadership. 1
In an important article, Kerr and Jermier (1978) argued that there was ample (statistical) evidence in numerous studies of a lack of demonstrated leader effects in explaining organizational outcomes. They then showed how a number of typical, hypothetical, organizational outcomes could be accounted for without distributed properties resort to leadership as the sole or exclusive candidate, causal explanation. At least three other substitute factors made the leadership of a superordinate individual redundant: the personal attributes of organization members (e.g. their self-motivation to perform), organizational processes (e.g. autonomous work group norms) and characteristics inherent in the work itself (e.g. its routine or programmed nature). In retrospect, the timing of the publication of this argument proved to be unfortunate. Although the late 1970s yielded a number of remarkably insightful contributions to the field of leadership studies—some of which are discussed below—it was also, for some commentators, something of a ‘doom and gloom’ period (Hunt, 1999: 133) in which leadership had forfeited any claim to validity or utility as a legitimate area of study. In the 1980s, however, students of leadership discovered organizational culture, so that heroic, neo-charismatic approaches to leadership underwent a
resurgence, and the popu

larity of visionary and transformational leadership soared. In this climate, Kerr

and Jermier’s substitutes claim was virtually lost from view until its revival in

1997 in a symposium in the Leadership Quarterly. After 20 or so years, both

authors maintained that their argument about leader substitutes had never been

properly addressed by the field (Jermier and Kerr, 1997: 97).

The significance of the substitutes argument is twofold: first, it focuses our

attention on what it means to perform and accomplish tasks: and, second, by dis

counting the causal omniscience of leadership it invites a reconsideration of the

connection or relationship between leadership and task performance. On the first

point, self-evidently, the tasks confronting organization members vary in status

and are usually amply differentiated in most contexts. Thus, relatively straight

forward, well-rehearsed operations (e.g. responding to a customer inquiry, or

processing a student’s admission application) differ markedly from complex, ill

defined problems (e.g. allocating educational resources under severe financial

constraints). Kerr and Jermier are clearly right: tasks in the former case reduce

over time to learned and refined routines (and are typically encoded in pro

cedural or operating manuals) which when implemented, on
the face of it,

require nobody’s leadership at all. Here, most employees,
for most of the time,

appear to know what to do and when to do it, and can be
said to act out of habit

or, in effect, in a quasi-programmed manner. This example
leads to the second

point and invites the question of the kinds of
circumstances which might neces
sitate leadership and what form that leadership could be
expected to take. In this

connection, Robinson (forthcoming: 6) has proposed that
leadership is evident

‘when ideas expressed in talk or action are recognized by
others as capable of

progressing tasks or problems which are important to them’.
This is a viewpoint

entirely consistent with the now widely accepted
attributional basis of leadership

(see Lord and Maher, 1993), asserting, in essence, that
leadership is a phenome
non in the eye of the beholder. Thus, for Robinson,
leadership will be manifest

in the effect or effects of contributions which yield
contributions from others,

and which secure the coordination of those contributions
and accomplish the

tasks in hand. M I D D L E L E A D E R S H I P

Before pursuing this valuable lead provided by Robinson,
two possible objec
tions have to be considered. The first, which amounts to an
extreme version of

the substitutes line of reasoning (e.g. Lakomski, 1998), is
to assert, not (as Kerr and Jermier, and Robinson do) that leadership in some form counts for at least some of the time in the work of organizations, but that it counts for none of the time. That is, an enduring substitute or alternative explanation can always be found for leadership. On this view, the contributions of some organization members which produce or trigger contributions from other members need not be taken as evidence of leadership, but as evidence of something else: namely, learning. The second objection, a rejection altogether of the substitutes argument, asserts that there is no such thing as a substitute for individual leadership. Instead, what different eras reveal are alternating views about the leadership of individuals represented in either allegedly weak (1970s) or strong (1980s and 1990s) theories. From this perspective, the attraction of the substitutes argument (and even of distributed leadership) among commentators is evidence or a sign of the adoption or dominance of weak leadership theories within the field (Shamir, 1999: 50). These objections are discussed in the next two sections. Do we still need leadership? Despite the well-documented and widespread phenomenon of the romance of leadership (Meindl, 1995), anti-leadership proponents emerge periodically.
Beginning with Miner (1975: 200), who asserted that leadership had 'outlived its usefulness', a batch of them surfaced in the late 1970s (e.g. Argyris, 1979; Calder, 1977; Pfeffer, 1977) and then were submerged by a kingtide of culturally grounded theories comprising what Bryman (1996) terms the ‘new’ leadership. But with this new leadership now being subjected to the intense scrutiny of critics—which, in turn, has stimulated equally intense defensiveness on the part of its proponents (e.g. Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999)—anti-leadership arguments have begun to emerge once again, perhaps the most vocal and sophisticated proponent of which, at least in education, has been Lakomski (1998, 1999a and b; Lakomski and Evers, 1999). Briefly, the claim against leadership put forward by Lakomski (1990: 99) is that there is no natural entity or essence which can be labelled 'leadership'. This is a similar assertion to the claim advanced previously by Calder (1977: 185–7), which was that it was impossible to identify a universally agreed upon concrete referent for what, essentially, is a lay label of convenience intended to attribute personal potency to someone’s observed or reputed behaviour. Despite the best endeavours of commentators to find such a natural object, the most that decades...
of leadership research has yielded, according to Lakomski (1999b: 6), is: first, a
mass of largely inconclusive results: second, an awareness that the determina
tion of leadership effects differs from one organization to another: and, third, the
realization that leadership means different things to different people in different
contexts (the attributional argument mentioned above). Lakomski (1999a: 36) D I S T R I B U T E D P R O P E R T I E S readily concedes the point about potency—‘there is no doubt that there have
been, and are, strong individuals who by dint of their abilities and personalities
were and are able to have a positive impact on organizations’—yet she suggests
that the more appropriate generic object of study is not leadership but effective
organizational practice. Thus, if some people do seem to be able to motivate
others, to make superior or appropriate judgements and to secure performance
beyond expectations, then the really interesting questions for her are: ‘How did
they learn to do that?’ and ‘How did leaders learn [to] lead since no-one is born
to lead?’ (Lakomski, 1998: 100).

Rather than engage in a point-by-point rebuttal of the remainder of Lakomski’s agnosticism, I would simply make two brief observations. First, the fact that commentators cannot agree upon a set of behaviour that amounts to leader
ship, and that their researches have produced inconclusive results, does not con-stitute an argument for jettisoning the concept altogether. Perhaps these commentators would be advised to rethink their approaches and to continue the search. Second, if, as she claims, contextual factors keep on bobbing up in study after study, then maybe that tendency should caution against anyone maintaining universalist pretentions to knowledge applicability and, instead, invite much closer contextual analyses of leaders and their leadership. My major concern, however, is with Lakomski’s abandonment of the study of leadership for the study of learning, for no argument is offered by her for substituting the object of study, it seems to me, other than that leadership appears to ‘reduce quite readily to the study of effective administrative practice’ (Lakomski, 1999a: 48). But what does it mean to ‘reduce’? Is she proposing a simple lexical switch in terms here? And suppose that leadership did reduce in the way she appears to suggest, what would be the justification for her claiming, not merely that leadership (suitably rethought and contextualized in the manner that I have foreshadowed) was just one of a number of ingredients making for good practice, but that it was no longer a legitimate ingredient at all?
The substitution of learning for leadership proposed by Lakomski looks suspiciously like an attempt to privilege a model of an organization as akin to a cognitive economy: ‘it is much more plausible to think of organizations as constituting networks of distributed cognition’ (Lakomski, 1999b: 9, original emphasis). But why, solely, a cognitive economy? What happens to the notion of a political economy of interests proposed by Barnard (1982: 139-60), for example, who devoted an entire chapter of his classic study, The Functions of the Executive, to elucidating the argument that organizations comprised an economy of material incentives and inducements to cooperation? While I would endorse Lakomski’s claim that cognition is indeed a distributed property of organizations, and that its distributional form is networked, I would part company with her over the idea that cognition is the sole organizational attribute which is distributed and that learning is all that counts. Moreover, for reasons that will hopefully become clear shortly, I would argue that in any model of organizations grounded in a notion of distribution, leadership remains an important component. But, first, what is meant by distribution? In order to understand
this concept, it is helpful to begin with some assumptions about organizing. The idea of distribution

If, following Weick (1995: 85), the notion of organizing can be seen as an evolving response to the various flows comprising the flux of phenomenological experience, then a minimalist view of an organization is to understand it as an assemblage of individuals or, in Burns’ (1996: 1) colourful phrase, ‘congeries of persons in more or less autonomous arrays’ engaged, continuously through time, in acquired and learned modes of practice. At some point during the evolution of those practices, typically when those involved desire to represent themselves to themselves and to the wider world as a formally constituted membership unit, an emergent process (organizing) begins to harden into an entity (organization).

Entitative status entails patterned and reproduced activity-based conduct, enshrining varying degrees of tightly or loosely coupled relations between the agents involved, and this becomes the source of organizational structure. Those relations (as I hope to show) are also tool-mediated. Through time, that emerg ing and always potentially modifiable organizational structure, in turn, acts back on or shapes the conduct of the agents. This reciprocity expresses the analytical duality of agency and structure referred to earlier. But what are some of the prin
POTENTIAL COMPONENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE?

Potentially, there is an endless number of sub-elements of structural relations.

Extending slightly an earlier summary list (Gronn, 1986: 45-6), the five most significant are: authority, values, interests, personal factors and resources. I include authority because it is always the locus of overall organizational responsibility and legitimacy, and anchors the role system of an organization.

Values provide the justifications or ends to which organization members are committed. A particular balance of interests represents the outcome of the relations between, and the material stakes among, the actors as they pursue their various ends. Personal factors frame the willingness or predisposition of members to act in preferred or required ways. Resources, finally, in all of their manifold forms, including the pattern of their utilization and deployment, are the means which facilitate organizational actions, and affect the likelihood of organizational effectiveness, success or failure. Next, suppose that I posit a continuum of the possible formations which might give material expression to, or might be taken by, these constituent components, with a distributed or dispersed form comprising one polarity and a focused or concentrated form making up the
other. According to this arrangement, then, the properties of each constituent element, solely or in combination, are relatively distributed or focused. Hence, if we have a set of attributes in mind which tend to be focused, we might talk of there being concentrations or monopolies of power, whereas if something else tends to be distributed then it is more likely to be shared or diffused. Distributed forms may be achieved by any number of modes of allocating the components, but principally by means of stratification, laterality, aggregation, webbing, net working, clustering or randomness. Thus, Jaques’s (1989) structural theory of managerial leadership, which is grounded in Stratified Systems Theory (SST) is, like other models based on a notion of hierarchy, one (albeit orthodox) form of a distributed system of leadership. The reason for this is that roles in his SST model are differentiated according to vertical stratification and are intended to be spread over seven (or sometimes eight) levels according to the principle of subsumption which is the basis of all hierarchies. Subsumption means that each succeeding layer of responsibility subsumes, encapsulates or is superordinate to all of those below it.

At any one point in time in an ongoing trajectory of organizational evolution,
therefore, particular organizational forms represent oscillating possibilities or potential differences in the degree of focus or distribution taken by the proper ties of the components. The critical questions then become ones to do with causality and timing. The first question is: which are the factors that contribute to relatively dispersed or concentrated forms of leadership? The second question is: when is the leadership of organizations likely to take a dispersed or focused form? Both questions are answered in the discussion section of this article. In short, my claim is that a distributed-focused continuum is an evolutionary constant. This position contrasts with the orthodox way in which people tend to represent organizational leadership in their minds, namely, something that is invariably individual and heroically male (Meindl, 1995). My line of argument also contrasts sharply with Shamir’s (1999) view that distributed forms represent a difference in kind rather than degree (between two evolutionary possibilities), and that the attention accorded distributed or non-distributed forms arises purely as a consequence of pendulum swings in the popularity of theoretical approaches in different eras. Likewise, the position I am defending is different from the argument of Gee et al. (1996), who also see the
property of distribution

as representing the hallmark of a different kind of phenomenon, but one which

has emerged only in conditions peculiar to the fast capitalism of late modernity.

That is, distributed systems are ‘a leitmotif of late twentieth century life’ and

arise only because of an ‘exponential growth in variety, variability and diversity

of all sorts in all areas’ (Gee et al., 1996: 51, original emphases). Yet, despite the

evolutionary possibility of distribution, discussions of it in respect of leadership

are few in number. By far the most popular area of application of the notion of

distribution in the study of organizations, and the most advanced area of under

standing distributed systems, has been cognition.

Central to the view of socially distributed cognition is the idea that mind and

mindfulness are not solely features of the interior mental life of individuals, but

are manifest in jointly performed activities and social relations. Distributed

mind, therefore, means the pattern of overall activity-based attention between

socially positioned actors, and their relations with various representational and

computational objects, tools or implements in the performance of tasks. This

definition means, in turn, that situations and contexts, and their objects, both M I D D L E L E A D E R S H I P

structure and mediate thinking. The corollary of a
distributed view of mind is

that learning—the outcome of task-focused, multi-party cognition—is also

socially structured, and is part of the overall system of collective relations

between agents, activities and objects. Distributed mind and distributed learning

are especially evident in working environments in which decision making is

heavily dependent upon the rapid processing of large amounts of information as

part of networked, computer-mediated work practices and similarly complex

technological artefacts. In these environments—which include the more obvious

examples of the flight decks of aircraft carriers (Weick and Roberts, 1993),

airline cockpits (Hutchins and Klausen, 1998) and the control rooms of mass

transit systems (Heath and Luff, 1990)—individuals perform tasks to some

extent autonomously but mostly in concert. That is, the actions which comprise

their jointly performed work are either coordinated or programmed to occur

either simultaneously—conjointly, in parallel or sequentially—sometimes in cir-

cumstances of bodily co-presence, and in others when the actors collaborate but

are separated by zones of time, space, place and culture (Gronn, 1999b). What

of leadership? In what way can it be said to be distributed?

The claim made earlier about an emerging balance between


degrees of distribution or focus is not new, for it was first raised early on in the development of leadership studies as a field by Gibb (1954), but lay dormant until its resurrection by Brown and Hosking (1986). Gibb’s (1954: 884) claim was that ‘leadership is probably best conceived as a group quality, as a set of functions which must be carried out by the group’ and that it could either be concentrated, monopolized or focused, on the one hand, or dispersed, shared and distributed, on the other. He then proposed two forms of distribution: the overall numerical frequency of the acts contributed by each group member and ‘the multiplicity or pattern of group functions performed’. The first of these conceptions is really an accumulation or aggregation model of distribution, whereas the second is a systemic or holistic perspective. Gibb’s former view of distribution is still consistent with a perspective on leadership as comprising individual behaviour in which the totality of leadership acts is the numeral sum of every single contribution. This represents a minimalist view of distribution which encompasses leadership as a shared phenomenon. The second, alternative conception of distribution, on the other hand, requires a reconceptualization of the unit of analysis.
to encompass conjoint agency and plural member work groupings (see Gronn, 1999a and the discussion below).

Gibb’s thinking was remarkably prescient. He was uncomfortable with the idea of the solo leader and adopted an interactional standpoint. He noted, for instance, that the entitative idea of an organization seemed to imply clear and fixed role differentiation, yet, in the importance he attached to formative group and organizational processes, he highlighted the fluidity of circumstances in which there was a ‘tendency for leadership to pass from one individual to another as the situation changes’ (Gibb, 1954: 902). This was an emergent view of leading, and Gibb developed it by showing how the popular idea of leaders D I S T R I B U T E D P R O P E R T I E S and followers as mutually exclusive categories was grievously mistaken.

Instead, he claimed (Gibb, 1968: 252) that ‘each of these is but a transient status’, so that ‘leaders and followers frequently exchange roles and observation has shown that the most active followers often initiate acts of leading’. The important idea was that leaders and followers were to be thought of as collaborators in accomplishing group tasks. Gibb even highlighted studies which showed formally designated leaders to be captive of long-standing traditions and values,
and as even having those traditions forced on them, so much so that as leaders
they were reactive, and ‘forced to follow the behavior of those who in the
[experimental] pre-test situation had followed’ and who simply ‘led the group in
the direction it would have taken had [she or] he not been there’ (Gibb, 1954:
898). Moreover, leaders ‘inevitably embod[ied] many of the qualities of the fol
lowers, and the relation between the two may often be so close that it is difficult
to determine who influences whom and to what extent’. Indeed, so difficult was
it in practice to monitor such influence flows that Gibb suggested official leader
designations be jettisoned and that observers concentrate instead on leader
behaviour in groups. In this way ‘no a priori assumptions are made as to the dis
tribution of those functions among members’ (Gibb, 1968: 271-2).
For these kinds of reasons, then, leadership is more appropriately understood
as a fluid and emergent, rather than as a fixed, phenomenon. This view is per
fectly consistent with Robinson’s notion that leadership is something which is
acknowledged for the purposes of successful problem solving, and that as an
attributed status it may endure (from the perspective of those doing the attribut
ing) solely for the duration of a task. From this
possibility it follows that the
pay-offs or gains from persisting with traditional, static
dualisms entrenched in
leader-follower roles are limited. The rudiments of a
theory of action

In this section of the article I consider two implications
of the possibility that the

constituent components of organizational structuring,
especially leadership, are

likely to take a distributed form. First, I argue that for
commentators distribution

requires a new conception of the unit of analysis. This, as
is evident from the

earlier discussion of distributed mind, is mainly because
account has to be taken

of various forms of conjoint agency. That is, conjoint
agency presages a new
division of labour in which the authorship and the scope of
the activities to be

performed have to be redefined to encompass pluralities of
agents whose actions
dovetail or mesh to express new patterns of interdependent
relations. Second,

the abandonment of fixed leader-follower dualisms in favour
of the possibility

of multiple, emergent, task-focused roles necessitates a
reconceptualization of

the nature of influence and its relation to activity. M I D
D L E L E A D E R S H I P

Approaches to activity

In this section I review the respective merits of two
approaches to activity in

leadership and management: first, the research of the
work-activity school:
second, activity theory. 1. Work-activity: a false start?

The ‘work-activity school’ was the name given by Mintzberg (1973: 21), author of the highly influential book The Nature of Managerial Work, to an inductive approach to research conducted in a variety of management settings. Central to this approach was the attempt to describe the content and characteristics of the day-to-day work of managers. At the time of its publication, Mintzberg’s study was distinctive because, rather than rely as his predecessors had done on data procured from diaries completed by samples of managers, he generated first hand field reports by shadowing managers while they managed. Mintzberg labelled this field strategy structured observation, rather than participant observation as conventionally understood in anthropology or sociology. This form of observation entailed the collection of what he termed ‘structured’ and ‘anecdotal’ data. Anecdotes comprised descriptive background notes on incidents observed, while structured data meant procuring for any observed event three forms of quantifiable information: a chronological record of observed activity patterns, a mail record of incoming and outgoing mail and a contact record of who talked to whom (Mintzberg, 1973: 232–3). Mintzberg’s research was influential in triggering off
scores of replication studies over the next two decades or so in a variety of managerial spheres (including education). Given the emphasis of Mintzberg and his followers on description—explicit in the research question for which they became famous: ‘What do managers do?’—it seemed possible in the 1970s and 1980s that this work-activity approach might generate an enduring scholarly tradition in an academic discipline long dominated by prescriptive, normative approaches to knowledge. This was not to be, for work-activity and structured observation studies have declined in number and significance. Their original purpose was to track the dynamics and flow of work as experienced by managers. In this regard, Mintzberg was probably the earliest researcher to document the fast-paced and interrupted flow of the work, as captured in his pithy summary of managerial activities as comprising ‘brevity, variety and fragmentation’ (Mintzberg, 1973: 51). There were some shortcomings in the structured observational approach of the work-activity school (see Thomas, 1993: 47-55). For present purposes, the most glaring of these was its assumption that the individual, free-standing, solo-per forming manager was to be taken as the appropriate unit of analysis. Yet, as
Engeström (1999b: 63–4) has pointed out, this mode of representation tends to depict managerial work as a linear or cumulative flow of discrete, task-related, individual actions. Moreover, even ethnographies of managerial work or leadership, according to Engeström, frequently lack a critical developmental dimension, even though they have the added advantage over structured observation studies of being better situated or contextualized, and sometimes provide a psycho-socio-spatial dimension for the reader’s understanding. This lacuna occurs because ‘there is no room and no language for representing horizontal interactions between various parallel tasks of an actor, or between different actors, or between actors and their artifacts’ (Engeström, 1999b: 64).

As I pointed out (Gronn, 1982, 1984, 1987) in response to the application of work-activity school research designs to the investigation of the work of educational leaders and managers, a shortcoming of the traditional Mintzbergian structured observation approach was that it left substantial dimensions of managerial work performance implicit, tacit, unsaid or invisible. Part of my rebuttal of its proponents in educational administration was that the promise of structured observation—namely that ‘through the eyes of the observer . . . the import
ant “invisibles” of principals’ administrative behaviors are at last being documented “as they really are” (Thomas et al., 1981: 70)—was a claim on which it could not deliver. That is, upon the completion of structured observational studies of educational executives, a substantial proportion of the so-called invisibles of management still remained invisible (e.g. managers’ cognitive representations of their tasks). By and large, the popularity of the work-activity school had run its race by the early 1990s, mainly because, while structured observational studies yielded superficially appealing, low-level descriptions of what managers did and how they performed their work, these ‘[did] not tell us whether what they do is management’ (Thomas, 1993: 54).

A more recent and promising approach to the study of the work of leaders and managers is activity theory or, as it is sometimes known, socially distributed activity theory. This aims to take a more holistic perspective on the study of organizational work, which is consistent with the second of Gibb’s two understandings of distribution. Central to activity theory is the division of labour (the critically important dimension glossed over by the work-activity school) and it also takes as its unit of analysis the notion of a collectively performed activity.
system. Moreover, this approach represents an explicit attempt to make visible the dimensions and properties of, and to analyse the internal relations between, the components of activities. 2. Activity theory: a fresh start?

The intellectual roots of activity theory are disparate but find their principal expression in Russian Marxist psychology, particularly in the writings of L.S. Vygotsky (1978) and A.N. Leont’ev (1978, 1981). The most vigorous recent proponent of activity theory has been Engeström (1999a and b). There have been few discussions of activity theory in leadership and management (although see Blackler, 1993), but its attraction for students of leadership is that it offers an entirely new conception of workplace ecology. Activity theory has three particular advantages. First, the components of its activity system model are sufficiently encompassing to rectify the typical contextual gaps and omissions identified previously (see Gronn and Ribbins, 1996) in discussions of leadership. Second, it provides a thorough analysis of the pragmatics of accomplishing organizational work. Third, an understanding of the contribution of leadership to learning in the workplace is facilitated by the developmental and emergent approach to practice implicit in the activity system model.
These points are discussed in turn.

Activity is a vehicle for representing human behaviour in and engagement with the material (i.e. natural and social) world. Flows of activities comprise the constituent elemental stuff of human existence (Leont'ev, 1978: 66). The key components of the model of an activity system are outlined in Figure 1.

The first features to note is that the relationships between the six components located at equidistant points around the perimeter of the equilateral triangle are always mediated rather than direct. That is, the link between actions of the Subject (S, individual or collective) and the Object (O) of her or his work oriented, purposive actions is not direct but is mediated through various Instruments (Is): that is, artefacts or tools (including symbols and linguistic systems) which purport to represent experience, accumulated learning or solutions to previously encountered problems. Instead of $S \rightarrow O$, then, the relationship is more accurately expressed as $S \rightarrow I \rightarrow O$. This idea of mediation stems from Vygotsky’s (1978: 30) contention that in child development ‘the path from object to child and from child to object passes through another person’, or, as Leont'ev (1978: 59) expresses it: ‘equipment mediates activity
connecting man (sic) not

only with the world of things but also with other people’. Likewise, that same

Subject-Object relation occurs within a Community of practice (C) in the form

S > C > O: it is subject to various culturally derived
Rules (R), expressed as

S > R > O, and it is embedded within a Division of Labour
(DoL), or S > DoL > O.

But the model does not define an activity per se. Rather, it
is a template for

facilitating the analysis of particular activities. The

critical point about the struc
ture of activities is that they always form part of a

collective labour process and,

as Leont’ev’s (1981: 210) example of the hunt indicates,

the definition of DISTRIBUTED PROPERTIES

activity comprises the three elements of motives, actions

and operations.

Motives express objects (or objectives) which meet needs,

and actions fulfil pur

poses in pursuit of objects: When a member of a group
performs his labour activity he also does it to satisfy one
of his needs. A beater, for example, taking part in a
primaevial collective hunt, was stimulated by the need for
food or, perhaps, a need for clothing, which the skin of
the dead animal would meet for him. At what, however, was
his activity directly aimed? It may have been directed, for
example, at frightening a herd of animals and sending them
towards other hunters, hiding in ambush. That, properly
speaking, is what should be the result of the activity of
this man. And the activity of this individual member of the
hunt ends with that. The rest is completed by the other
members. This result, i.e. the frightening of game, etc.
understandably does not in itself, and may not, lead to
satisfaction of the beater’s need for food, or the skin of
the animal. What the processes of his activity were
directed to did not, consequently, coincide with what
stimulated them, i.e. did not coincide with the motive of
his activity; the two were divided from one another in this
instance. Processes, the object and motive of which do not
coincide with one another, we shall call ‘actions’. We can
say, for example, that the beater’s activity is the hunt,
and the frightening of game his action.

For any activity, operations are the means of facilitating
actions and they com
prise its content. In this example, they would include the
beating of bushes and
disturbing of habitat by this particular member of the
hunt, and the direct attack
on and killing of the game by other members (with, note, no
separation into the
familiar categories of mental and manual operations being
made by Leont’ev).

Although this description concentrates mainly on the
actions and activity of one
man as a subcomponent of a larger system, Leont’ev’s hunt
example points up the
centrality of the division of labour in human activity.
There are two points to note
here. First, the actions of each individual only make sense
from the perspective of
the overall pattern or system of labour relations between
them. Thus, ‘the beater’s
action is possible only on condition of his reflecting the
link between the expected
result of the action performed by him and the end result of
the hunt as a whole’

(Leont’ev, 1981: 212). Second, in conjoint actions such as
those comprising a
hunt, the labour relations between individuals are
interdependent. Just as the actions of others ‘give sense to the object of the beater’s action’, then so too do the beater’s actions ‘justify and give sense to the actions of the people who ambush the game’, for, ‘were it not for the beaters’ action, the making of an ambush would be senseless and unjustified’ (Leont’ev, 1981: 212–13).

The next point to notice about the model is the fluidity of relations inherent within it. This attribute is represented by the dual-directional arrows which express the interactional relationship between all of the components. The significance of this reciprocity is that it allows for the duality of constraint and enablement in respect of action—as in the structure-agency duality adumbrated earlier in the article. That is, at the same time that all Ss act within particular contexts determined by unique configurations of R, I, C and DoL, the dimensions of R, I, C and DoL and the pattern of the relations are potentially modifiable by the actions of those same Ss. Thus, in the relationship S<>I<>O, the degrees of freedom experienced by Ss in respect of potential accomplishments or outcomes are at once circumscribed by the range of existing artefacts, but also potentially widened as new technologies become available. In this way, the universe of possibilities is expanded. These dynamic relations
In his discussion of the relationship between the learning and development (or maturation) of children, Vygotsky observed that all learning has a history. As part of that history, the zone of proximal development stands for the space between two levels on a trajectory of development: the actual (or retrospective) and the potential (or prospective). In the distance between the two levels lies a series of embryonic functions yet to mature, their maturation being contingent upon appropriately structured learning.

Transposed to the activity system model, the zone of proximal development expresses the emergent, evolutionary potential of activity. Thus, the dimensions of the particular arrangement of R, C, I and DoL which obtain for an actor or actors at Time 1 (T1) may, at T2 and T3 etc., form a different configuration.

Hence, if we bring to mind the image of a series of activity system triangles randomly positioned in a roughly ordered left-right sequence, then (Engeström, 1999b: 67): The zone of proximal development may be depicted as a gray area between actions embedded in the current activity with its historical roots and contradictions, the foreseeable activity in which the
contradictions are expansively resolved, and the foreseeable activity in which the contradictions have led to contraction and destruction of opportunities.

The dynamism inherent in Leont’ev’s (1978: 50) notion of activity is expressed in his view that activity not only has a structure but ‘its own internal transitions and transformations: its own development’. What is not clear from his explanation, nor from Engeström’s discussion of Figure 62.1, however, is what provides an activity system with its dynamism, nor what happens in the case of more open-ended, less well defined and new activities for which actions are less clearly culturally circumscribed and well defined than in the archetypal instance of the hunt. For this reason, in my view, some statement about the connection between influence and action which makes allowance for the non-occurrence as well as the occurrence of activity (and, therefore, its opposite state, inactivity, an eventuality which Leont’ev (1978: 156) appears reluctant to countenance and relegates solely to the human experience of sleep) is necessary to amplify the model. Leadership and activity theory in discussions in social and political theory of what might be termed the family of power terms, commentators generally see a number of closely related concepts forming a tightly knit cluster. The principal ones
include power, influence, authority (discussed in the next section), force, coercion, manipulation and deterrence—although rarely, interestingly, leadership. Each term provides a qualitatively different description of the relations obtaining between nominated sets of agents or actors (role incumbents). I commence with some remarks on power and then influence in which, because most commentators in leadership studies treat the two terms as synonymous (see Gronn. 1999c: 7–8), I conflate leadership and influence.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, at the same time that the so-called ‘new’ leadership was superseding anti-leadership views, social and political theorists were engaged in a prolonged debate over the locus and form of power in political systems and communities, and their connection with the interests of various parties (for a brief summary see Gronn, 1986: 46–50; Hardy and Clegg, 1999).

In regard to the locus of power, the argument mainly concerned whether power was concentrated in one centre, and exercised by an individual or by an elite, or dispersed or decentred among a plurality of elite groups.

In respect of the form of power, much of this debate focused initially on the status and legitimacy to be accorded latent, as opposed to manifest, behaviour in the
political sphere and whether or not decision-making procedures could be rigged to stifle the expres
tion (let alone the representation) of interests, or even prevent their formation.

From the findings of a number of strategically conducted comparative case studies emerged a recognition that while issues might become public events in some communities, elsewhere they remained non-events. While there was evid
ence of issue-oriented action (e.g. in respect of air pollution) in community A, therefore, nothing whatsoever transpired in community B. The explanations invoked for these disparities in policies and approaches ranged from overt pre
ventative measures exercised by powerful groups, through self-censorship on the part of the disaffected (because they imputed power and influence to reputed others) to the absence of alternatives and possibilities in the minds of the disaf
ected (due to effects of their cultural socialization, prior learning, etc.). Thus, in parallel with the claim about possible substitutes for leadership in organizations, there existed a variety of candidate substitute explanations other than the ortho
doxy behavioural view that outcomes were attributable to the decisions of identi
fiable individuals or groups.

The likelihood that power and influence might be dispersed
or concentrated, that they did not have to be manifest or overt, and that their covert and latent forms of expression could result in inaction as well as action, has significant conceptual and empirical implications for organizational leadership. First of all, if leadership is an instance of influence, then, like influence, it need not be expressed in ways that are obvious to the naked eye. Consider the case of anticipated reactions, which was central in the debate just summarized. In circumstances of either the imagined or embodied presence of the members of an organization, suppose that one party surmises how another might respond were she or he to initiate an action. The particular supposition may be based on previous direct experience or on the reputation of the other party. Anticipating a possible negative outcome, perhaps, the first party refrains from doing anything. Ostensibly, then, while no action has occurred, the second party (unbeknownst to her or him, or anyone else) has been influential. That is, covert leadership has produced a significant effect, in this case negation. This example is not unlike the inferential reasoning explanation provided by causal attribution theorists of leadership (e.g. Lord and Maher, 1993: 55). Second, although the instance just given is clearly an
exception, organi
zational influence is frequently reciprocal. The explanation for this feature lies in
the division of labour. Inherent in the division of labour is a duality between
specialization and interdependence. That is, tasks are broken down into their
detailed specialist components, which are then performed by different indi
viduals. But this fragmentation of effort leaves each worker dependent on others
for the completion of an overall task. Paradoxically, then, labour (i.e. Leont’ev’s
notion of operation) has to be reintegrated at the same time as it is differentiated
(Sayer and Walker, 1992: 15–17). Influence is one means of reintegrating work
tasks to achieve cooperatively generated outcomes. In Leont’ev’s archetype of
the hunt, for example, the actions of the beaters and the shooters combine to
accomplish the activity and to attain the desired outcome because, even though
the actors perform different operations, they depend and rely on and influence
one another. But unlike the kinds of organizational activities normally associ
ated with leadership, a hunt is a set-piece, low discretionary level activity in
which people are likely to play their appointed roles automatically. Nonetheless,
in activities in which there is greater scope for discretion, examples of recipro
cally expressed influence abound. In the relations between organizational heads and their immediate subordinates, or between executives and their personal assistants, for example, couplings form in which the extent of the conjoint agency resulting from the interdependence and mutual influence of the two parties is sufficient to render meaningless any assumptions about leadership being embodied in just one individual (Gronn, 1999a).

Third, there is an emergent dimension to influence. I have already cited Gibb’s work on this point. Emergence means that in the variously connected arrays of persons proposed by Burns (1996: 1), for example, the potential for leadership is present in the flow of activities in which a set of organization members find themselves enmeshed. Thus, a person or persons within this kind of web of relations, an initiator, perhaps—‘who because of certain motivations—D I S T R I B U T E D P R O P E R T I E S of her own combined with a certain self-confidence, takes the first step toward change, out of a state of equilibrium in the web’ (Burns, 1996: 1)—may succeed in triggering a chain or cycle of multiple interactions which crystallizes into a patterned response over time. One implication of emergence is that, as the actions play themselves out as part of activities some actors are likely to be more
influential than others (their actions carry greater consequences for all concerned). It is at these points in time, perhaps, that the task-related leadership recognition process to which Robinson (forthcoming: 6) refers comes into play.

Perceptions of some individuals as being more important than others—due to current, previous, imagined or reputed performance—may eventually solidify into an enduring expectation about anticipated consequential behaviour in future activities, but they need not.

Finally, although discussions of leadership are frequently expressed either timelessly or a-temporally, influential actions are inescapably time-bound. This neglect of time is part of the failure adequately to specify the particular contexts for action. There are, of course, different senses of time. Sometimes the influence exerted is purely momentary—as in the instinctive response to an exclamation alerting us to impending danger. But influence also endures. Moreover, there are degrees of endurance. A good illustration is Meindl’s (1995) idea of the romance of leadership. This phenomenon provides evidence of the long-term persistence of hardened, culturally shared sets of expectations about the locus of influence. The significance of this enduring dimension of influence is that the
consequences of actions may only become apparent after lapses in time. The absence of evidence of immediate causal effects at any point in time, therefore, should not be interpreted as absence of influence or leadership. A useful analogy here is the accumulation of water stains on hard surfaces over time in which the gradual build-up is not necessarily evident to the naked eye while a tap is observed to be dripping. One advantage of Vygotsky’s notion of a proximal development zone in this context is that it alerts us to the transformation of activities through time, to the influential actions which contribute to that transformation and to the possible future expansion or contraction of activities (Engeström, 1999b: 67). Discussion I turn now to the two earlier questions which were concerned, respectively, with the factors which might explain the emergence of distribution as an organizational phenomenon and those factors which might permit us to hypothesize about the likelihood of leadership being either focused or distributed. Determinants of distribution The first point to note is that some version of distributed leadership has always been in evidence, not merely in the aggregated sense distinguished by Gibb but in his second holistic sense as well. Apart from the leadership couplings just
cited, the more obvious instances are the typical kinds of collaborative decision making forums common to most educational settings such as teams or committees. In respect of the activity system model, these two are membership (Ss) units in particular settings and locales (Cs) which, drawing on specialist expertise (DoL) and utilizing various tools—such as regulations, documents, statistics (Is), endeavour to perform tasks or solve problems (Os). These units operate according to explicit and implicit conventions or codes (Rs). Team and committee deliberations can be expected to manifest all of the evanescent properties of influence distinguished in the previous section of the article. Thus, at different points in the life of these units, different members will exert influence (and therefore leadership). The patterns of influence in evidence may or may not accord with the overall status relations of the members. But there are also other less obvious instances of distributed forms. Long before the idea of distribution even became part of the lexicon of the field of leadership (with the exception of Gibb), Hodgson et al. (1965) had published a study of the role constellation formed by three senior psychiatric hospital administrators. This conjoint work unit represented more than the aggregated efforts of
three self-contained individuals enacting their own particular roles. It evolved from a process of adaptation negotiated between the three men as they intermeshed their personalities while reworking a pre-existing set of relationships following a leadership succession process. Hodgson et al. (1965: 284) describe a constellation as a ‘latent substructure’, that is, an unspoken and implicit sense of a bonded relationship. This awareness was grounded in the intersubjectively shared knowledge that each constellation member possessed his own unique set of specialist attributes, predisposing each one to rely on the other two. And the fact that each individual’s specialist expertise was clearly differentiated from but still complementary to, that of their colleagues, and that each person trusted his two executive peers, worked to the mutual advantage of all three men and provided a sound grounding for their interdependence. Complementary specialization enabled each man to engage in actions and operations of his own choosing for which he was best fitted within a jointly agreed-upon framework of activities, in pursuit of the interests and well-being of the hospital.

In other less obvious examples, distributed leadership is even manifest in what appear to be the most self-evident and uncontestable
instances of stand alone or focused leadership. In the sphere of politics, consider the cases of tyranny, dictatorships or coups in which a military general takes charge. While the individuals in each case may exercise naked, supreme or virtually untramelled power, they generally act on behalf of or with the blessing of an army council, a junta or a cell group. They institutionalize new organs of state, thereby creating a new regime of authority that they may seek to manipulate at will but on which they are also heavily dependent. Likewise, in more familiar democratic arrangements, there are often vast networks of specialist advisers, minders and officials that form an apparatus of shared responsibility and distributed influence surrounding heads of state and government. In each of these instances the division of leadership labour, I would argue, can be demonstrated to be shared or dispersed. Why, then, does this attribute appear to be unacknowledged or unnoticed? The reason lies with the word 'head'. As a close reading of Gibb (1968) will show, when people use ‘leadership’, more often than not they really mean ‘headship’. Whereas leadership denotes influence, headship, on the other hand, denotes authority and describes the exercise of authority by the most
senior role incumbent in an executive hierarchy. The confusion is caused, therefore, by the slippage in usage from the person who heads becoming cast as the person who leads. Authority overlays the actual division of labour so that the head individual who exercises overall responsibility becomes vested with a monopoly of influence. Thereafter an expectation solidifies that the chief authority figure or head is also, by definition, the leader.

The key component in the activity system which accounts for organizational leadership taking a distributed form, as I have been arguing, is the division of labour, despite the appearance of concentration, as in some of the above examples. The division of labour is the principal driver or generative mechanism for the structuring of work and workplace relations. This is because it defines the overall amount of work originating in the task environment to be performed, and the nature and extent of the specialization into which the totality of that work is subdivided. Yet the acknowledged form taken by the division of labour in a particular context, in respect of the allocated work, will always be determined by the structuring elements distinguished earlier: authority (whose effects we have just witnessed), the values, interests and personalities of the members concerned.
and the resources at their disposal. Incidence of distribution

Given my claim that, appearances to the contrary, leadership invariably takes a distributed form, there are two questions which demand answers. First, why have commentators seemingly only just begun to accord explicit recognition to distributed leadership? Second, has the character of distribution changed over time? And, if so, why?

In regard to the first question, all of the indications are that distributed leadership is an idea whose time has come. The term is appearing in discussions of decision making in schools, although mostly only in Gibb’s minimalist sense or as a euphemism for collaboration and spreading the burden of decision making (e.g. Clift et al., 1995). Another reason for its appeal may be the dawning realization that the roughly two decades-long preoccupation with visionary champions is flawed, particularly in respect of their demonstrated accomplishment of direct effects on organizational effectiveness (Hallinger and Heck, 1999: 185-6). Another, perhaps, is that organizations and systems are reaping what they have sown. That is, having diminished dramatically the overall number of (especially middle) managers through processes of downsizing and demiddle leadership.
layering—with all of the negative consequences of the erosion of culture, loss of collective memory and so on—the justification for traditional manager-managed and leader-follower distinctions begins to weaken. Suddenly, the possibility opens up of all organization members becoming managers (Grey, 1999) and of all followers becoming autonomous leaders (Miller, 1998: 18), a consideration I have discussed elsewhere (Gronn, 1999b). Another, clearly, is the rise in popularity of organizational learning and the learning organization. The attractiveness of these two notions is accounted for less, perhaps, because of any prima facie connection between learning collectively and the notion of distributed cognition, than because of the awareness that the (tacit and codified) knowledge required to solve complex problems is dispersed throughout organizations. Hence, perhaps, the recent rise in the popularity of teams as vehicles for harnessing collective expertise.

The second question is the more difficult of the two. A trite answer would be to say that the character of distribution is likely to alter substantially whenever there are dramatic changes in the division of labour, particularly when the volume and complexity of problems and tasks increase. Despite the enduring
attachment of commentators to an individualistic leadership paradigm, as a
normative option in such circumstances distributed organizational leadership
has, prima facie, much to commend it. Distribution entails maximizing sources
of information, data and judgement, and spreading the detrimental impact of the
consequences of miscalculation and risk. Because of the pooling of expertise
and sources of advice, it also affords an increased likelihood of detecting errors
in judgement and more attention being accorded feedback. These things amount,
in short, to an overall widening of the net of intelligence and resourcefulness.
But quite apart from what may be the inherent attraction of these features, the
division of labour in human service organizations has been changed recently
beyond all recognition by the availability of networked electronic communica
tions technology, namely, the tools, artefacts (or Is) of the activity system tem
plate. Reliance on networked office computers, for example, now facilitates the
transcendence of previously insurmountable barriers of time, place and space by
opening up entirely new possibilities for the performance of collaborative work.
New arrangements for scheduling and programming tasks simultaneously,
sequentially or in parallel with one another by
geographically separated work

units, for example, have suddenly become tangible options. The inherent advan
tages of distribution can be realized on a scale and in a form previously not con

templated.

At the same time as the creation of these new possibilities, existing routines
and operating procedures cease any longer to provide ready-made answers. The
search for new solutions begins as part of the ongoing dialectic between design
and adaptation in the workplace. Strauss's (1985: 4) term for these new
configurations of tasks is trajectory. The creation and re-creation of task traject
ories requires the labour of articulation. Articulation and rearticulation work is

central to what it means to manage, and is crucial for resolving the paradox at the heart of the division of labour. That is, coincident with the process of differ
tentiating tasks into their subcomponents is the simultaneous requirement that
these be reintegrated by means of coordination and control mechanisms (Sayer
and Walker, 1992: 17). Task integration is a precondition of cooperative effort
and effective conjoint activity, yet 'none of this work is called into play auto
matically', remarks Strauss (1985: 5). It is for this reason that proposals that
organizations can be reduced to networks of distributed cognition should be treated with caution. Cognition, clearly, is important but not so important that it is a substitute for everything else. Conclusion

In this article I have sought to revise orthodox thinking about leadership. Building on the early work of Gibb, and in the face of a resurgence of anti-leadership arguments, I have argued for the retention of leadership, but in a form which accords more with the realities of the flow of influence in organizations, and which disentangles it from any presumed automatic connection with headship. I have discussed the merits of activity theory, as a means of tracking distributed influence and leadership, and have suggested that the activity system model at the heart of this approach forms a helpful and useful bridge between organizational structures and the actions of agents. The particular attraction of activity theory is its model of a work context, principally because of the way this foregrounds the division of labour. Provided leadership commentators and researchers focus their analyses on the actual divisions of labour obtaining in systems and organizations, especially on the ways in which the specialization-integration duality is resolved or plays itself out, rather than applying traditional
stereotypic dualisms like leader-follower(s), then realistic portrayals of leadership should be attainable. This kind of outcome should result in more accurate knowledge of the causal connection between leadership and the outcomes of action, which was the original trigger for the substitutes of leadership argument.

It should also generate more realistic hopes for leadership, including a less widespread lay romanticism of the concept, and a revised set of role expectations among future cohorts of aspiring educational leaders.

Those in education who insist that the achievement of sound and effective practice, and ascertaining the factors which contribute to that practice, should be the overriding goals of commentators and practitioners alike are right. My approach, however, has been to show that leadership (albeit in a considerably different form) still has a significant role to play in accomplishing good practice.

But if the perspective outlined here is to have an enduring impact then there remains much to be done. Having cast doubt on learning as a sole substitute or replacement for leadership, I have said very little about its connections with leadership (although see Gronn, 1999b). On this point, activity theory has much to contribute to understanding learning and its impact on the division of labour.
through such processes as visibilization (Engeström, 1999b; Star and Strauss, M I D D L E L E A D E R S H I P 1999). I have also relied on a relatively undifferentiated notion of tasks and have tended to treat these as synonymous with problems. Tasks and problems and their connection with the kind of distributed, conjoint agency view of leadership propounded here, needless to say, warrant much closer attention. The disarming implication of my argument for those with a vested interest in defending leadership as the vital ingredient in the success of organizations, however, is that attending to both of these matters of unfinished business entails foregrounding organizational work and labour more and more as the focus of analysis and discussion, with leadership being relegated to a contributory role. On the other hand, the argument of this article will have succeeded provided it demonstrates that removing leadership altogether from the stage is premature. Note 1 There are, of course, numerous other potentially fatal weaknesses likely to be triggered when an exaggerated sense of agency is attributed to leaders. Grandiosity is one. At the time of writing (late 1999, early 2000), the ruling Liberal-National Coalition government in Victoria has recently been ejected after seven years in office in what was widely tipped to be an unlosable election. The Liberal Party’s campaign strategy
(based on what its spin doctors believed was the Premier’s extraordinarily high public profile and popularity rating) was to embargo all its ministers from public comment,

and to confine every policy announcement and public statement to the party leader and Premier, the Hon. J.G. Kennett. The Premier even established his own website (www.jeff.com)—since abolished—and produced radio advertisements with voices exclaiming ‘Jeff f****** rules!’ and the like. Following a complete electoral debacle (loss of 13 seats and government), the Coalition agreement collapsed, and Kennett has since resigned as premier, party leader and member of state parliament. The subsequent by-election held for the former premier’s seat was then won (for the first time ever) by the new minority Labor government with a massive voting swing of about 10.5 per cent. The resignation of the leader of the National Party is imminent, thereby


<http://www.academy.umd.edu/scholarship/casl/klspecs/jburn_pl.htm>


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Middle Leadership


Hodgson, R.C., Levinson, D.J. and Zaleznik, A. (1965) The Executive Role Constellation: An Analysis of Personality and Role Relations in Management. Boston, MA: Harvard University, Graduate School of Business Administration.


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Headteachers are interesting: deputy headteachers, it seems, are not. The former have routinely, and over many years, attracted the attention of biographers, dramatists, novelists and stage and screen directors (Ribbins, 1997); the latter have been, virtually, ignored. While many headteachers have written about themselves and about headship, I could discover no substantial autobiography and few published accounts of deputy headship written by deputies. As I write, there is now a BBC television serial, Chalk, programmed after the late evening news, which has as its central character the deputy headteacher, Mr Slatt, of Galfast High Comprehensive. It is billed as a comedy and Slatt is more anti-hero than hero. No doubt, there are real deputy headteachers up and down the land who might be described in similar terms, but my reading of the literature and research suggest that many more should be regarded as victims not villains.

In developing this theme I will attempt two things. First, to say something about how deputy headship is depicted in the literature in general and the journal in particular. Second, to draw selectively on research into heads and headship in
which I have been involved, with Michael Marland, Christine Pascal, Steve Rayner and others, to consider the views of heads on deputy headship. This took the form of 34 substantial, face-to-face conversations with 11 heads of secondary schools, 12 heads of primary schools or units, and 11 heads of special schools/units or schools with substantial numbers of pupils with statements of special need. Some of these conversations are in print (Ribbins, 1997; Ribbins and Marland, 1994) and the rest will be available shortly (Pascal and Ribbins, 1997; Rayner and Ribbins, 1998). For many, their experience of deputy headship is remembered with, at best, mixed feelings. In this there is a match in the extant literature, a good deal of which has been produced by heads or former heads. II. Deputy headship in the literature

There is a published corpus of work on deputies and deputy headship in the primary and secondary school, if not in the special school, which might just about be characterized as a literature. I recall reading Peter Lawley’s book on Deputy Headship in the secondary school, which claimed to be the first book of its kind (1988). More recently, Gareth Thomas has published Primary School Deputies Handbook, which describes itself as the first dedicated text
for primary deputies (1996). While I am not sure what a 'dedicated text' is, I
do know that the literature on deputies and deputy headship is far more modest
than that available on heads and headship. A comparative examination of the
space devoted to these two themes in Educational Management & Administra
tion over the last 25 years illustrates the point. No other theme has received
anything like the same attention as has headship. During that time the journal
has in 38 editions published 50 article and 14 reviews on headship (several
other contributions have dealt with aspects of school leadership at a senior
management level more generally). Of the articles, 17 focus on headship in
secondary schools, 9 in primary schools, 2 in middle schools and just 1 on
special education: 10 of the articles and 5 of the reviews were by heads, with
most of the rest from academics. Only one article and one review on headship
was from a deputy head. As well as many articles on headship in the UK, there
have been contributions from Africa, Australia, Canada, France, Germany,
Israel, Kuwait, Malta, Thailand, South Africa and the United States. The first
articles on headship, a debate on training between Harry Gray and Alan
Barnes, were the opening contributions to the first issue. More significantly,
the third issue contained a paper from the founding editor, Meredydd Hughes (1973), on ‘The Professional-as-Administrator: The Case of the Secondary School’, which has proved to be one of the most influential, and most often quoted, in the field.

The journal’s record on deputy headship is far slimmer and much less impressive. To date it has published in five issues, five articles and one review.

Of the articles, three focused explicitly on deputy headship in the primary and one in the secondary school. More than a decade passed before the journal published an article on deputy headship. A paper from Owen, then a deputy head, and his colleagues on ‘The Role of the Deputy in the Secondary School’ has the distinction of being the first, as well as the last, article specifically on this theme (Owen et al., 1983). That edition also contained the first review of a book on (primary) deputy headship. This cannot be described as an embarrassment of riches. But things may not be quite as bad as this account may make them seem.

This is so because some of the most thoughtful studies on deputy headship which the journal has published are not explicitly labelled as such. One of the best, from Alan Coulson (1976), is entitled ‘Research Report: Leadership Func
tions in Primary Schools'. It has much to say on headship, deputy headship and the relationship between the two. *Middle Leadership*

This is not the first substantial examination of deputy headship in recent times. Burnham, some years before, undertook a study of deputies for his M.Ed.

His thesis (1964) and a chapter (1968) in a book by Allen offer the fullest available account of the origins of deputy headship within the English educational system. The role is an ancient one. Its genesis has two main strands. The first dates back to 'the position of the usher in the Endowed Grammar Schools of the fifteenth century. At that time the concept was the simple one of substitute for the Headmaster, acting as a stand in when the head was absent' (1968: 169).

But, 'by the end of the eighteenth century the usher was being given full charge of the Lower School, his authority including the right to hire and fire staff' (p. 169). Later still, 'the usher’s deputyship became associated with a struggle for top-man leadership in the school' (p. 170). The second strand, that derived from the notion of the first assistant in the elementary school, developed in the late 19th/early 20th century. These studies establish that from its origins the role of the deputy has depended crucially upon how the role of the
head is interpreted

and on what headteachers wish to make of the position of their principal subor
dinate.

Coulson (1976) examines 'the conceptions of primary school heads and
deputy heads for the role of the deputy head . . . in order to discover how, and to
what extent, staff leadership functions are divided between the head and the
deputy’ (p. 37). He reports: In general, heads and deputy heads agreed that instrumental leadership (behaviours concerned with organizing, directing and evaluating) is more appropriate to the head and that administration is more appropriate to the deputy. However, the conceptions of the two groups diverged in regard to the expressive or socio-emotional (behaviours indicative of friendship, integration, personal concern) leadership of teachers; whereas heads perceived this as mainly their concern, deputy heads considered it more appropriate to themselves. In most schools, delegation to the deputy head appears to be limited, mainly involving the performance of routine tasks on the head’s behalf

Coulson concludes that, as things stand: ‘deputy headship often appears to be

neither intrinsically satisfying, nor an adequate preparation for headship, since

the aspiring deputy rarely has the opportunity to make the type of decision

which will face him after promotion’ (p. 46).

So much for the primary sector, what of the secondary school? Todd and

Dennison (1980) have a similar tale to tell. They argue that the job of: deputy headteacher has not been clearly defined, and in part this has arisen from a similar lack of role definition for headteachers, who have tended to exercise the powers of a paternalist autocrat. As a result headteachers have viewed their deputies as extensions of
themselves, and in H E A D S O N DE P U T Y H E A D S H I P doing so have deprived them of an authentic role... many (complain) they were frequently reduced to carrying out a few minor technical or clerical duties which did not encourage, or even allow, the use of initiative and expertise. In addition the 'man in the middle' position—between the headteacher and his staff—was a major source of difficulty and dissatisfaction. (p. 304)

In the light of all this it is hard to deny Coulson’s claim that 'as things stand,'

deputy headship appears to be neither intrinsically satisfying, nor an adequate preparation for headship'. On this last point, Gross and Herriott (1965) have also concluded that 'some school systems promote individuals to the principalship only after they have served an apprenticeship as an assistant or vice principal,

apparently in the belief that it is a valuable training' (p. 68); ‘our findings suggest that they should not’ (p. 156).

Curiously and despite such evidence, it seems that a belief in deputy headship as an effective preparation for headship is now even more strongly entrenched than it was when Burnham, Coulson, and Gross and Herriott were undertaking their research. At the time many more made the jump to headship, without having been a deputy, in both primary and secondary schools than is the norm now. Research by Hilsum and Start (1974) undertaken in 1971–2, involving a national sample of 881 schools and 6,722 teachers in those schools, suggested
that promotion to headship from lower levels within the teaching profession than deputy headship was commonplace at that time. They found that 51 percent in primary schools and 53 percent in secondary schools had not been deputies when appointed to their first headships. Much has changed since the early 1970s and it is high time for this fine study to be replicated. New research would show that the figures now, especially in the secondary sector, are much lower. Thus, for example, of the 34 heads we interviewed only four had not been deputies.

What else has changed?

A reading of recent studies of deputy headship, still an undemanding task, encourages a short answer to this last question—not much! But this may over simplify. Some contemporary authors do strike an optimistic, or, at least, a hopeful, note. Edith Jayne (1996) talks of the roles of head and deputy (or, as she would prefer, ‘associate’) head as ‘varily described as complementary, yin and yang, or the leader partnership’ (p. 317). In employing the term ‘associate head’ rather than ‘deputy head’, Jayne cites West (1992), who uses it to mean deputy as in deputy-head-of-school rather than as head’s deputy. Developing this idea West talks of the head as pilot and the deputy as co-pilot of the
school. Even so this notion is based upon a partnership model in which both
head and ‘associate head’ share a responsibility for ‘the art of headship’. These
and related ideas have been developed by others. Southworth (1994: 6) suggests
‘assistant heads should be responsible for at least one aspect of the school on
their own’. He concludes that the future of middle management (M I D M A N S H I P) primary deputy heads seems to lie on the role being rethought and enhanced. If a dynamic partnership can be formed between head, deputy and staff, and if the position can be regarded as that of assistant head . . . who are managerial partners with their headteachers . . . (this) will ensure the old adage is true: two heads are better than one.

I have two problems with this thesis. I doubt if it is particularly novel and do not believe we have the evidence to judge the extent to which it represents a reality in practice. Burnham’s ideas on deputy headship, advanced some thirty years ago, were not dissimilar, nor did they lack theoretical force, but they failed to be heard by, or, if they were, to persuade many headteachers to change their ways.

In taking this view I rely upon evidence from two of the best of ethnographic studies of headship published in the United Kingdom. I do so, not least, because some of the most revealing observations about deputy headship are located in research which focuses on headship or has been conducted by heads or former heads. Elizabeth Richardson (1973) has, to the best of my knowledge, never been a
headteacher or a deputy headteacher. Even so, her study of Nailsea (Secondary)

School remains one of the most illuminating studies of a deputy headteacher of a

secondary school. This notwithstanding the fact that it was undertaken 25 years ago

and despite the fact that its treatment of the role of Robin Thomas, the deputy head

teacher, and of Joan Bradbury, the senior mistress, is very much slighter than that of

Denys John, the headteacher. She admits that, before she began her research at

Nailsea. I had previously thought of 'top management’, in so far as I had used this term at all, mainly in terms of a pair . . . of a head and his or her deputy . . . What I saw at Nailsea was something a great deal more complex than . . . my image of the head/deputy-head partnership, for I had to begin by looking at a trio, not at a pair, and then found myself having to shift my perspective again in order to look at a small (leadership) group of six. (pp. 207–8)

In introducing this aspect of her discussion, Richardson remarks that 'the role

of deputy head was a difficult one to sustain in a school where other leadership

roles seemed to be overshadowing it’. This despite the fact that 'Denys John’s

deputy, both because he himself had the necessary inner strength and because of

the head’s trust in him, could and did take over his role, if necessary for quite

long periods’ (p. 210). However, if a deputy’s relationship with his head is a key

dimension of his evolving role, there are others, each of which have a

contemporary relevance. First, there are the implications
for the role of individual deputies when, as in most secondary schools, there are two or more of them. This, in effect, was the situation at Nailsea. Thus, for Richardson, ‘the experiences of Robin Thomas and Joan Bradbury during the years of expansion cannot be studied in isolation . . . these two people felt themselves to be equally trapped in straight jackets—the one as “the administrator”, the other as “the carer”’ (p. 218). In developing this theme she stresses the extent to which role stereotyping of this kind reflects ‘ancient assumptions about masculinity and femininity’. In such a context in an expanding school the increasingly heavy administrative task is liable to be identified more and more with the deputy head, however strenuously he may resist this . . . so (he) may find himself having to cope with their [the staff’s] unwillingness to acknowledge that he has any skills that are not purely administrative. (p. 220)

Second, there are problems in regarding deputyship as essentially a preparation for headship. If most secondary schools have more than one deputy there are practical difficulties. Not all can achieve headship. But there may be other problems. As Richardson puts it, Robin Thomas lived with a good deal of uncertainty about how far the school, and particularly the headmaster and the governors, were committed to him. He had been told at interview that he would not be expected to stay for more than four years or so. Now an observation like this could be interpreted in two ways. Did the governors (and the headmaster himself) mean to imply that they would hope to get rid of him after about four years? Or did they mean that they would not wish
to stand in his way if, after about that time, he had the chance of being appointed to a headship? (p. 222)

What Thomas had not heard was Denys John’s uneasiness about . . . subjecting an experienced and skilled teacher and a potential headmaster to what might well turn out to be a role tied to dull administrative chores, relieved only by occasional opportunities to deputize for himself and so to have periodic experiences of being, in effect, the headmaster. (p. 222)

Ironically, these well-intentioned concerns led Thomas to be uncertain about his tenure and whether his colleagues believed ‘Denys John trusted him, as deputy head, with responsibilities in the leadership of the school’. He also wondered if he was seen ‘as a yes-man [to the head], who at best could only step into the head’s shoes and do what he had been told to do?’ (p. 224).

Richardson concludes that M I D L E L E A D E R S H I P lacking any continuing leadership role [other than, presumably, ‘dull administration’] . . . it was, it appeared, very difficult for Robin Thomas to imagine he could ever appear to them as anything more than [‘admin-man’ or] the occasional stop-gap headmaster. In his own mind, the real task leader, the ‘ideas man’, the inspirational head was Denys John. It was hard for him to convince himself he was any more than the organizational assistant who might help to get ideas implemented, the ‘man on the ground’, the person whom colleagues might bring their confusion and anxieties. (p. 225)

If this was the case with a head as concerned for the well being of his colleagues as was Denys John and with a deputy as able as was Robin Thomas, then we might expect problems of this kind to be commonplace. We certainly found echoes of them in our discussion with many secondary headteachers. What of
deputy headship in the primary school?

In thinking about this I turned to a study by Geoff Southworth (who has been a headteacher) of Ron Lacey, head of Orchard Community Junior School (Southworth, 1995). In the context of his belief in the need for a ‘dynamic partnership’ between the head and deputy in which ‘two heads are better than one’, Southworth was ‘intrigued’ that Dave (the Deputy) should figure in such a pale form, even though they appeared, on the surface, to work as partners. They spoke to each other, kept in touch and seemed to enjoy one another’s company. Dave covered for Ron in his absence and kept him informed of developments among the staff. Yet, when Ron spoke about headship, he tended to talk about it in an individualized, as against shared way. Ron focused upon what he did, or was thinking and planning. Dave barely figured in Ron’s analysis. Nor was Dave regularly consulted about what actions to take. Ron tended to determine courses of action about which Dave was, at most, informed. In other words, the partnership of Ron and Dave was relatively shallow. Ron largely worked independent of Dave. (p. 139)

In puzzling on this, Southworth explores five possible ‘single strand’ reasons why this should be so but plumps for a single ‘multi-strand’ interpretation which suggests that Dave was a relatively weak figure in the school because Ron regarded the headteacher as the most important person in a school. Hence there was an in-built asymmetry to any partnership between himself and his deputy. . . . It shows that deputy heads are heavily reliant upon their headteachers. (p. 140)

Relating this to his earlier paper (Southworth, 1994), he concludes that ‘Deputies cannot be assistant heads . . . unless their
headteachers facilitate such a partnership’ (p. 141).

This is not to suggest that headteachers today are uninterested in deputy headship or unconcerned about the welfare of their deputy heads. On the contrary, many are. One such is Nick Butt (1997), head of St Edmund’s Community School in King’s Lynn, who fears that deputies may too often lead ‘a daug’s life’. As a result, more deputies burn out than either heads or class-room teachers, despite the well-documented concern about both these other groups. Deputies are the silent minority, the forgotten troops in the education army, suffering the most casualties, providing the most support and receiving none of the glory. (p. 10)

Deputies, it seems, can and must learn to say ‘no’ if they, like the Vulcans, another unduly stoic people, are to survive and prosper.

Butt has much useful advice to offer deputy heads but I wonder on what evidence he bases such grand claims as The majority of deputies work their socks off with very little appreciation from their heads, colleagues, parents or the local authority. It is expected that deputies will be at everybody’s beck and call, drop everything for whoever, have no agenda of their own and be a constant source of balm, encouragement, inspiration and energy.

It would have been interesting to know, for example, the extent to which, if any, his views on deputy headship represent aspects of his experience as a deputy head. If they do, he will be in good company. Surprisingly few of the 34 head teachers interviewed by my colleagues or myself recalled
their experience of
deputy headship with affection and several retain negative
views of the role. It is
to this theme that I will now turn. III. Heads on deputy
headship
In what follows I will focus on what the heads in our
studies say on three
themes: what they felt about their experiences as deputies;
what they regard as
the role of the deputy; and how they compare headship with
deputy headship. I
will illustrate the discussion with reference to the views
of heads drawn from
across all sectors. I look forward to examining the data
according to age,
experience, gender, ethnicity, etc. However, since all the
conversations will be
published within the year, others can engage in similar
analysis. My colleagues
and I would welcome this. MIDDLER SHIP
All but three or four of the headteachers in our studies
had been deputy heads;
most for relatively short periods, some at greater length.
Fewer still had been a
deputy in more than one school, several had worked for more
than one head. How
did they recall this experience? Relatively few remember
their days as a deputy
headteacher with overwhelming enthusiasm or the head(s)
with whom they
worked at the time with unqualified warmth. These are
demanding tests. I should
not paint too bleak a picture, some enjoyed deputy headship, viewed it as an appropriate preparation for headship and had a high regard for their headteachers. (a) Deputy headship as an experience

For several of the headteachers in our study, the transition to deputy headship had been a great disappointment. Some found its demands disappointingly slight, others unexpectedly heavy: [My] experience [of deputy headship] I found very frustrating. The head was a very different style of leader than the one I had worked for. She was much more autocratic . . . I found I actually had more power and decision making and responsibility as a head of infants than I now did as deputy head. (Sue Beeson) I found the step from head of department to deputy headship the biggest I ever made . . . in my eighteen years of headship, five of the seven deputies I have helped appoint are now heads and good heads. I have always told them that the step to deputy head is much bigger than that to head. I think most of them would agree. (John Evans)

Sue Beeson stresses the extent to which her headteacher was responsible for making her experience of deputy headship a ‘frustrating’ one. John Evans has a higher regard for his headteacher (or rather ‘acting head’) of the time but nevertheless suggests that he was, at least in part, responsible for making his time as a deputy so demanding. More generally we found headteachers from each of the three sectors of schooling who enjoyed their time as deputies and others who did not. More often than not their attitudes, both positive and negative, had been shaped significantly by their memories of one or more of the heads with whom they had worked. (b) Deputy headteachers and their headteachers
Several of the heads in our studies have good memories, as deputies, of their headteachers and of the part which they played in preparing them for headship. I became a deputy headteacher to a head who was six years from retirement and was very much looking forward to it. He was a wonderful man. I took on a lot of things during my deputy headship which I simply continued to do in my headship. In that respect, the deputy headship was a good grounding for headship. As deputy I seemed to do most of the organizing in school. In many respects I suppose I ran the school on a day to day basis. I was, I suppose, the curriculum leader and kind of personnel manager. I felt involved and I felt he appreciated my work. There is nothing like being appreciated is there? I think my years as a deputy served me well. I worked for somebody who viewed her role as head as being to train me for headship. I don't think I had that in mind. She groomed me for headship. The head helped to push me in the right directions. She was great because she allowed me to make mistakes, helped me to discuss situations, but also sometimes left it entirely to me and said ‘No, it’s your problem, you deal with it’. I guess it wasn’t mapped out in a clinical sense, but all of the basic areas which are involved in the organization of school were covered. I saw an advert for the post of Vice-Principal of Burleigh. I sent for the details and they jumped off the page at me. They were written in a particular style by a woman who turned out to be one of the formative influences on me. She was called Joan Gregory and was the Principal of the College. She was quite outrageous, but her educational vision was absolutely wonderful. Most importantly for me, there was a clear role for the deputy: to work as sort of lieutenant to her. It was the most brilliant experience working for her. Jumping on, when I applied for this job [his present headship] and was interviewed, I was asked why I should be appointed. What made me the person for the post? I was able to say, without hesitation, that I’d had this apprenticeship and experience of working alongside these two [Keith Foreman succeeded Joan Gregory on her retirement] remarkable, powerful people each. Their style was that they were grooming me, I knew they were. I reached a point where I found myself feeling that I could have a go at most of the things that Keith did, that Joan had done. I learned from working with them and from many conversations with them. (Bernard Clarke)
In most cases, however, such expressions of regard, tended to be qualified: M I D D L E L E A D E R S H I P I learnt a great deal from my . . . head. He had previously been a lawyer which was useful for learning aspects of headship. It certainly made me more careful. He was a good mentor . . . [But he] was not very good at talking to parents. He would try to avoid them. I felt that was a bad mistake . . . One does tend to learn what not to do rather than what to do. I learnt how frustrating it can be to work for some heads which was partly why I wanted to move on. I hope I give space and freedom. (Valerie Bragg)

Several were openly, sometimes scathingly, critical. Some expressed this discreetly. Helen Hyde, for example, notes simply that ‘I did not get on very well with my head and only stayed four years . . . Why did I want to leave? Partly because I didn’t get on with the head.’ Others made the point bluntly. Rosemary Whinn-Sladden recalls that during the appointment process: I went to look around the school with the head and thought it was the worst school I have ever seen in my life! I decided as I looked around that I couldn’t possibly work with this headteacher. His views were so unlike mine that I really didn’t want the job [but] I got the job. I went to see the headteacher afterwards to talk about what my responsibilities would be and first of all was told that I would have 38 first and second year children, the other full time teacher would have 24 and he would have 18 . . . He said I wasn’t to worry about curriculum areas or responsibilities as a deputy because he didn’t really want me, he didn’t need a deputy. If I just looked after the children in my classroom and didn’t cause any problems, after two years he would give me a good reference and I could go and work somewhere else. This was before I even started!

Even this was not the worst experience we learned of. David Haigh will never forget the first day of his second headship: At 10.15 the head called me into his office. I had only been in the school an hour, he ranted and raved, said I’d nothing to offer as far as he was concerned, it hadn’t been his idea to appoint me and so on and so on. I went out quite badly
shaken, but one of the other deputies said don’t worry, he does that to everybody. I was lucky he didn’t do it in the corridor. He . . . didn’t improve during the six years I was there . . . They were unhappy years. He used to do things like say ‘I’ll fix it so that you’ll never get another job in this Authority’. In my case it was true. I made 76 applications and got 8 interviews. I’d a first class degree and a masters in educational management, experience of everything under the sun special needwise, a history of rapid promotion . . . it didn’t help. H E A D S O N D E P U T Y H E A D S H I P

If some heads are remembered as nasty, others are recalled as lazy and unappreciative. It is still possible, however, for such experiences to offer a useful preparation for headship. Liz Paver, for example, when she ‘first became a deputy head’, was shocked to realize: you could bring your newspaper in and your electric fire and your toast and sit and be a head . . . I had no respect for [her] as a person and none as a head. [Even so] I learnt more from her than others . . . she taught me how I should never allow myself to be. Her lack of appreciation of others was a great lesson, and the fact that if we ever had irate parents she wouldn’t tackle them and she wouldn’t defend her staff . . . Furthermore, whilst you don’t have to be first on site and last off to prove you are a good head, it does help to be there at the end of the day. (c) Deputy headship as a preparation for headship

In taking this view Liz Paver is in good company. She is one among several who believe that what they had learnt as deputy heads from the example of their headteachers had more to do with ‘how not to do’ than ‘how to do’ headship.

Rosemary Whinn-Sladden is another who acknowledges that her poor experience and unsupportive headteacher ‘taught me things I didn’t want to do’.

Sue Abrol makes a similar point, there were things I learnt
not to do. I rebelled because I didn’t think that what was happening was right. One or two of my heads were very insular and their word was everything, you could not challenge it. I felt this was not on.

In contrast, while Ann Hinchcliffe’s memories of her heads are very positive she still claims that ‘I have also learnt what not to do from them, but it’s not what I emphasise in my own mind.’

Others, while not necessarily critical of the example they had received, did not feel supported or prepared for headship by their headteachers. As Sue Abrol remembers it, [My heads] did not overly prepare me for headship. I think they thought I’d never be a head anyway. Nobody expected me to be a head. Not even the head where I was deputy. I can still see his reference, it was balanced, that’s about it. Not necessarily saying I had the qualities needed for headship. He sat on the fence. Most of them did.

David Davies also felt he ‘had no support from the heads I’d worked for. That was wrong of them.’ Chris Morgan apportions blame more widely: M I D L E A D E R S H I P I progressed to deputy headship despite and perhaps even in spite of the system, rather than with any positive support or guidance. There was no real planning and certainly no preparation. [. . .] There was absolutely no formal preparation [for headship] offered by the LEA or schools I worked for, and the headteachers gave me no real help.

Conversely some believed that they had worked with headteachers who were as well disposed and supportive as circumstances allowed: I [was appointed] to a deputy headship at a small school for pupils with SLD . . . The headteacher was a very nice bloke but unfortunately he was suffering the after-effects of a serious illness. He had to take early retirement less than two years after my arrival at the school. [. . .] I thought my headteacher was a good bloke with a well thought out philosophy of education and in many ways influenced my approach to leadership and school management. I think he
would have been a greater influence upon me as a manager if he had not been unwell. (Rob Ashdown)

Finally, there were a few who believed that a spell as a deputy was a necessary preparation for headship. As Paul Craig put it, 'I do think a period as a deputy is a valuable thing. I would advocate it. It is a necessary preparation.

... if you do it for a number of years, it gives you a better insight into the job of headship. You get the chance to see if you really do want to take the next step.'

This testament would have perhaps been more persuasive if Craig had not also been one of the few who had not been a deputy!

2. Heads on the role of the deputy head

The headteachers in our study voiced a wide range of views on what they might expect of a deputy. Valerie Bragg identified three main aspects of the role of the deputy:

- First, you sometimes stand in for the head. Secondly, you are learning to be a head so you need the opportunity to try a variety of tasks and gain the necessary experience. Thirdly, the role is also a dogsbody's job. It is part of the learning process... picking problems up, filling in the jigsaw, noticing what has not been done and doing it.

Many heads, and deputies, would probably agree with this description as far as it goes but might suggest that it does not go far enough. For example, it seems to discount the possibility that deputy headship can be a worthwhile job in its own right and that deputies can be significant people within schools. We talked to
heads, from primary and secondary schools, who believed the opposite. In the HEADSONDEPUTYHEADSHIP

strongest expression of this view, it was claimed that deputies were almost

working as headteachers: I've two deputies because the school is on split sites. The deputies need to be able to manage and administer their buildings. . . . My deputies are working almost as headteachers and I delight in seeing what they are doing. (Mike Ashford) In a school the size of mine, nearly 1800 pupils, the senior managers are virtually my equal in the sense of the shared responsibility we have for the school. Each of my deputy heads has a sectional responsibility for a part of the school which in terms of pupils is bigger than most of the schools in the country. . . . They have a great deal of individual responsibility but it is crucial that we meet as a team very regularly; we co-ordinate what we are doing and we try to get the interpretation of policies consistent across the whole school. (Peter Downes)

The idea that deputies should carry significant individual responsibilities was

stressed by many other headteachers, although how they described and justified this could vary a good deal: To me, you deal with the detail as a deputy . . . One of my deputies . . . (is) brilliant at the student affairs end of things and as a project manager . . . [The] other deputy, has a background in the pastoral side . . . she does the work brilliantly. I feel comfortable about her handling the timetable, the staffing and the curriculum . . . [The third deputy] manages the budget. . . . [Its] playing to people’s strengths and looking for the gaps and seeing what we haven’t got. Then asking if there is anybody who could do it. (Bernard Clarke) The deputy headteacher . . . isn’t just a shadow of the headteacher, she has a very different set of responsibilities related to TVEI, Records of Achievement, Inset and Child Protection. There are a number of other things, too, which form her remit . . . generally I would describe the management of the school as a partnership. (Rob Ashdown)

The idea that the head and deputies, along with other senior staff, must be able
to work in partnership and as members of a team was also often identified as a MIDDLE LEADERSHIP key aspect of the successful management of the school. Several headteachers also stressed that while it should be clear who was responsible for what, a degree of shared responsibility for major aspects of the school and its management would enable ‘cross-fertilization’, continuity and a ‘consistent interpretation of policy across the school’: We do work in a partly collegiate way. I have three deputies and a senior teacher who I meet as individuals and as a group every week . . . but they also see the benefits of the arrangements in place. [They mean] that the finance resources deputy is heavily involved with the curriculum because she is working with the heads of department. That is how it should be. The pastoral deputy . . . also looks at curriculum matters. So there is a lot of cross fertilization. (Helen Hyde) The leadership of the head . . . is important but so, too, is that of the management team as a whole. It is only when my Deputy Head, my leaders in the curriculum and I are together on things that we can be at our most effective. (Joan McConnell)

Brian Sherratt, head of the largest school in the country, makes some similar points and says something about what he expects of his deputies and what the deputies might expect from him: They should expect my confidence in them and my support . . . They should expect leadership and professional guidance from me . . . In a very real sense when I am not around they are me. They are the head. They should expect that I will be happy with the decisions they make. If I am not, they would expect me to say so . . . they should expect thorough-going delegation. Because I trust them and because we are working from the same map. My deputies and I form a team . . . What do I expect of them? I expect their support, their loyalty. I expect them to work tirelessly. I expect total commitment to the school. I expect them to move things forward, to lead in their areas: they are very clearly defined areas . . . We tend to rotate roles periodically . . . and this
represents excellent career development; it provides deputys with an excellent repertoire of skills. Great Barr deputys have little difficult in moving on to headships . . . Deputies here are very much members of a team and we work together every working day. In a large school like ours there is a clear division of labour between the deputys. Where such lines of demarcation are clear, deputys tend to show a natural reluctance to trespass on each other’s areas of responsibility without invitation. Because of this it may appear to the observer that support H E A D S O N D E P U T Y H E A D S H I P between deputys is not as evident as in smaller institutions where the responsibilities are less clearly visible. (Brian Sherratt) 3. Heads on deputy headship in comparison with headship

Contemporary headship may be tough, but one of the most striking features of the conversations taken as a whole is the extent to which the headteachers in our studies share Bernard Clarke’s view that ‘being a head is the most privileged job

there is . . . I absolutely love it’. Helen Hyde also told us I really love the job (of headship)—I love coming to the school—I love dealing with the personnel side—I like dealing with my staff—I like to feel I am helpful and I like to feel my school is achieving for the girls. I love the job—I really do.

Similar sentiments were expressed by those who work in primary and special education as well. Joan McConnell said ‘I enjoy it very much. I love it very much . . . it’s still a very rewarding job. In fact I don’t see it as a job.’

Such expressions of delight are unrestrained; others are qualified in various ways: suggesting that, whatever its merits, the job does not carry a high social status, others argue that the job is much harder than it used to be. For Brian Sherratt There were people at [my] school . . . who
nowadays occupy high prestige positions, which make my job appear totally insignificant . . . I am not saying that I don’t consider being head of a large comprehensive school an enormous responsibility . . . But in the grand scheme of things I’m not at all sure society ascribes great importance to the role of comprehensive schools, does it?

And David Winkley remarks ‘so many people have said to me in the past, “Oh, you are only a primary school head, why don’t you do something else?”’. Others stress how much they love being a head and how demanding it is now.

Margy Whalley told us ‘I love it [but] I think its tough being a head in the 90s’.

Ann Hinchcliffe agreed I love my job. I’m a very happy headteacher. Not that I haven’t been pushed to the very edge, the brink of feeling I just cannot take this anymore. I love it. It’s been a marvellous joy to me to have been appointed to this job at Ash Field.

Others go even further. For John Evans M I D D L E L E A D E R S H I P [Headship is] a superb job . . . [But] some of my best headteacher friends have retired because of ill health or stress. I am talking of people I rate highly who are not just looking for a way out. To survive you’ve got to be much tougher than in the past. I’m diabetic with serious stomach problems and think this is stress related. It’s part of the job. But it’s still the most rewarding job there is . . . I cannot think of anything I would rather do than be the head of a big comprehensive school.

Some were even gloomier. Chris Morgan pointed out that Merthyr has . . . about thirty headteachers . . . and eleven of those retired this summer . . . Two . . . have died since they retired . . . [one] just dropped down dead. Everybody thought she was fit and well and were shocked. It . . . makes you think doesn’t it? A lot of my colleagues are turning to drink to help them to relax.

He was one of many who believe ‘the job . . . is going to get more difficult’.

Unsurprisingly, some warn that those considering headship should be absolutely sure it’s what you want to do because with the territory comes some very unpleasant and difficult
tasks. I think it is [still possible to enjoy the job]... everything is a bit harder earned nowadays. I do feel that more than perhaps I did that I now earn every single penny of my salary. (Rob Sammons)

Others suggest that good deputies are becoming more reluctant to consider headship. John Evans stresses ‘My current first deputy is superb but doesn’t want to be a head’ and Mary Gray warns ‘There’s definitely a group of deputies who have seen the reality of being heads and have decided not to take on the headship role.’

Many felt deputy headship was worse. For Mike Gasper the job was absolutely thankless, the worst job on earth. Once I realised that, it was inevitable that I would go for headship... I didn’t like being in the position when I was the pig in the middle between the staff and the head and didn’t have ultimate responsibility or control over where or when things were going or how they were done.

The most uninhibited expression of this view came from Rosemary Whinn Sladden: I like being in charge. I’m sure this is one of the seven deadly sins... I absolutely love being the head. I love being able to do things and see HEADS DEPUTY HEADSHIP something happen. I have always been a lousy Indian and... known I was going to be a head... I love walking round the school when it’s full and when it’s empty. I look around and think... ‘I did that’... where else can you have a job where, whatever you do, a little wave just gets bigger. IV. Final thoughts

I have examined the literature and drawn on research in which I have been involved to consider the role of the deputy head seen mainly from the perspective of headteachers reflecting upon their days as deputies. While very many of
them openly admit to ‘loving’ being a head, very few enjoyed being a deputy.

For several this more or less unhappy experience has shaped how they interpret deputy headship and relate to their deputy heads. They believe that they have learnt hard lessons from the mistakes of others. Some were passionate about this. Since we did not talk to their deputies or others in their schools or observe them in action I am not in a position to confirm or to deny such claims. I can, however, make two final comments. First, ethnographic style studies of headship, such as those by Richardson and Southworth, suggest that good intentions might not, on their own, be enough. Second, and by way of conclusion, I have been deeply impressed by something Roy Blatchford told one of my colleagues: I have worked with seven headteachers, and you do learn. I remember one of them saying to me ‘Well, you’ll watch me, you’ll watch me make mistakes and you’ll go elsewhere and you won’t make these same mistakes but remember you’ll make your own!’ I always remember that. And I can think of the people that I’ve worked with from whom I learned a great deal about what to do and what not to do, in the certain knowledge that you’re going to make your own mistakes. Notes

1 Sue Benton, Valerie Bragg, Peter Dounes, Elaine Foster, Michael Marland, Brian Sherratt, Harry Tomlinson in Ribbins and Marland (1994) and Roy Blatchford, Bernard Clarke, Helen Hyde, Mary Marsh in Ribbins (1997).

2 Michael Ashford, Sue Beeson, David Davies, Mike Gasper, Sue Matthew, Joan McConnell, Liz Paver, Usha Sahni, Margy Whalley, David
Winkley in Pascal and Ribbins (1997) and Mary Gray and Rosemary Whinn-Sladden in Ribbins (1997).

3 Sue Abrol, Rob Ashdown, Mike Clarke, Phil Craig, John Evans, David Haigh, Ann Hinchcliffe, Chris Morgan, Edna Ross, Rob Sammons, in Rayner and Ribbins (1998)


Butt, N. (1997) It’s a Dawg’s Life as a Deputy—If You’re Not Careful, Times Educational Supplement, 14 February: 10–11.


Longman.
PART 11 History and research


Endowed Schools (Masters) Act (1908) Section I (1) and (3).


USGROVE, F. (1971) Patterns of Power and Authority in English Education, Methuen.


ROYAL COMMISSION ON SECONDARY EDUCATION (1895) Report.
During the past decade there has been a substantial increase of research activity in many varied aspects of educational administration. To provide an overview of the whole field is a task which is as impossible to achieve as it is fascinating to engage in. But an overview has to be attempted, if subsequent discussions in this seminar are to be based on a commonly available stock of knowledge. This then will be my first endeavour.

I shall go on to say what I consider to be the main characteristics of the research done up to the present. Against the background thus established, I shall examine some main areas of debate and controversy.

Finally, I shall set out the various positions which may be taken in approach ing research in the hope that in so doing I can throw light on the especial role of the British Educational Administration Society. The scope
and content of research in educational administration

It is not my purpose here to enclose what follows within a carefully delimited
definition of educational administration and to set out the relationship between
the various emphases on the behavioural, the economic, the managerial, and the
political which can already be identified within the field. Nor shall I rehearse the
possible contributions of the social science and other disciplines in its further
development. These are tasks I have attempted elsewhere and there is a substan
tial amount of writing seeking to clarify the significance of the terms 'administration' and 'management'.

In this chapter I shall extend my consideration to all, or at least most, of the
articles dealing with general educational theory or with specific themes such as
curriculum development or the education of the handicapped, lists of theses and
dissertations, and reports of complete work or of work in progress compiled by
research foundations and funding bodies. In addition there is a growing amount
of factual survey material collected by professional associations, unions, and
voluntary associations.

Insofar as there is any systematic ordering of this material it is in topic form,
as in the Howell 4 and Coulson 5 bibliographies, rather than in terms of subject dis
ciplines or research methodologies. I propose to adopt a broad classification which will reveal the main themes under which recent and current researches can be grouped. In no sense, of course, can my treatment be exhaustive and no doubt opinions will differ about my choice of examples to illustrate my argument. Leadership 6 and the internal organization of schools and other educational institutions

The first theme with which I wish to deal is that of leadership in the school or college, and in particular the role of the head or principal. It is within the individual institution that educational and administrative considerations are most closely interwoven and it is within the role of the head or principal that their relationship can be at its most sensitive. The form of providing agencies at national, federal, regional, or local level may be highly diverse, as may be also the nature of the relationships between teachers, of cials, students, parents, and community, but leadership within the institution and its internal organization are the channels through which other elements in the process must express themselves in pedagogical terms. That this is generally realized is shown, I would argue, by the place occupied by the study of the principalship in North American literature and by the attention now being given to the training of principals in countries as far apart, in
In this country we have made a beginning, but only a beginning, in studies of the position of the head. Hughes 7 has drawn on role theory to relate the professional and administrative aspects of the head’s task and Cohen 8 has examined heads’ views of their role as modified by the nature and size of their schools.

There is also a study of the development and selection of secondary school headteachers by Bispham 9 and the analysis by Bernbaum 10 of a national sample of secondary school heads in terms of their social origins, experience, values, and guiding ideas. The position of the deputy head in the secondary school has been studied by Burnham 11 and this study was followed by an examination of the influence of school size on the deputy head’s role by McIntyre 12 and by another of the deputy head in the primary school by Coulson. 13 It is surprising, in view of the substantial amount of discursive and prescriptive writing on the theme of the head, 14 that, apart from the studies named and a few others, it has attracted relatively little attention from researchers. The neglect of the head teacher position in the infant and the junior school is particularly marked.

Studies in school organization are also sparse. Here again there is much discursive and prescriptive writing on the history and research...
sion and accounts of current practice, but little in the way of major research save that contained in a series of studies conducted by the National Foundation for Edu-
cational Research. But there is a wide-ranging survey by Halsall which also includes North American material and the highly distinctive study by Richardson of interrelationships within a single school. The handbook by Lyons differs from others of similar purpose by being based on empirical studies and points the way to the translation of research findings into practical terms.

Closely related to the study of school organization viewed in terms of structure and roles is the growing and important area of the administration of the curriculum. Curriculum studies have, in recent years, come to constitute a major field in their own right and increasingly they are extending their range, as indeed they must, to take into account the political and administrative context. A pioneer study is that by Marten Shipman, Inside a Curriculum Project, which gives a microcosmic view of curriculum change in a small group of schools. Also falling within the territory of educational administration as well as of curriculum studies is The Dissemination of Curriculum Development, by Ruddock and Kelly. It is in this context too that I would place the ongoing work at the University of Bristol School.
of Education described by Bolam in his paper at this seminar.

Both general school organization and the administration of the curriculum in particular are now, of course, being greatly influenced by the wave of interest in evaluation and the related concern with accountability. The Assessment of Performance Unit 21 signalled a new interest in government circles in monitoring the work of the schools and in developing, through research, sophisticated techniques and tests to make this possible. Last summer a substantial programme in studies in accountability in education was announced by the Social Science Research Council. This programme is making grants totalling £200,000 available to encourage studies seeking to clarify such concepts as democracy, professional responsibility, and parental rights; to promote legal studies in the powers and rights of the various agencies and groups concerned with the provision of education; and to make possible studies in policy formation and implementation. 22

The further itemization of research areas could, if space permitted, be extended to embrace such distinctive fields as special education, adult education, and the education of the young worker. In all of these, the translation of policy into administrative action is attracting increasing
attention. Government of educational institutions

A clearly defined area of research has emerged, as a result of the increased interest in the government of schools, further education institutions, and universities.

The first study to emerge in the schools field was my own, with D.A. Howell,

which resulted from my somewhat idiosyncratic concern with the (at the time)
neglected existence of school governing and managing bodies coinciding, by

happy chance, with the pending reform of local government. 23 It is unfortunate

that a similar research survey has not been carried out into developments in the

RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN BRITAIN
government of further education institutions since the Weaver Report. There is,

however, a well-designed study being made of the school councils set up in

Scotland following the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973. 24 This is an

interesting and important exercise which traces in detail the action taken in

every region in Scotland in response to legislation and government action. There

is every reason for a study on similar lines to be made in England and Wales in

respect to whatever changes result from the forthcoming Education Act. 25

Research on a countrywide basis could then be followed by case studies of indi
individual authorities, of the kind presented by Bacon 26 in his detailed examination of school government in Sheffield and its decade of reform. It is interesting to note that a study has been made of school councils in Australia 27 and that a major project is under way in Canada to examine public involvement in educational decision-making at all levels. 28

In view of the significance attached to local education authorities in England and Wales and to the regional authorities in Scotland the amount of work done on their internal structures and their activities is disappointing. In the United States and Canada there are a very large number of studies of school boards and of their functions and membership. Here the field is only just being opened up, through such studies as that by David 29 on local education officers as an occupational group; by Greenhalgh and Booth 30 on local education officers as an occupational group; and by Bolam 31 and others on the functions of local education authority advisory services. Individual local education authorities were studied some years ago by Peschek and Brand, 32 who dealt with Reading and West Ham; Leicester has been the subject of research theses by both Brand 33 and Mander, 34 and there is a historical account by Gosden and Sharp 35 of the superseded West Riding local
education authority. A more general and very well-informed study of politics and policy-making in local education authorities is provided by Jennings, an American student of local politics in England, and there is the substantial and closely researched examination of the local allocation of resources by Byrne. Resources and particularly their allocation is also the subject of a major project being carried out in the University of Sussex. There is need for further comparative studies across a substantial number of authorities of both pre-Maud and post-Maud committee structures, of certain roles, and community relations. Equally needed are studies comparing English and Welsh authorities and Scottish authorities. The advantage, for research purposes, of having two major and distinctive systems of educational administration in England and Wales on the one hand and Scotland on the other continues to be unrecognized.

In the main, energies devoted to the studies of local education authorities have been directed to the reorganization of secondary education, of which the most scholarly is that by Saran. This topic features largely in several of the studies already mentioned and is a popular theme for theses and dissertations.

A new factor in the situation, as far as local education authorities are con
cerned, is that the need for research or at least for scrutinizing some aspects of present practice is being felt by education of cers themselves. Thus the Society H I S T O R Y A N D R E S R A R C H of Education Of cers has published a study, Management in the Education Service, 42 which looks at programme structures and objectives and resource allocation and management in four authorities. The society also commissioned a short-term empirical investigation of the reactions of chief education of cers to the coming of corporate management. 43 Research studies of how the Department of Education and Science and the Scottish Education Department are structured, staffed, and shaped to meet new needs have not been undertaken, although there is a substantial amount of report material which has been brought together for governmental purposes. 44 Still less can it be said that research as such has been carried out into the present-day inspectorate in either country although, as in the case of the departments, there is a substantial literature of analysis and comment. 45 Teacher and other associations Beginnings have been made in the study of teacher associations which, together with the departments and the local authorities and their associations, constitute the main framework within which educational policies and their execution are
determined. Manzer opened up this area in his Teachers and Politics 46 and this study was followed by those of Roy 47 and Coates, 48 whilst Kogan 49 has carried out a far-ranging analysis of the major interest groups involved in the decision making process at both national and local levels. The field is a tempting one, with such topics to be explored as the changing roles of the local authority associations, the consequences for the teacher unions of TUC affiliation, and the rising power of unions of which nonteaching staff are members. There is certainly need for studies of strikes and other forms of industrial action by teachers, both because of their significance in delimiting many areas of administrative action and as elements in the wider arena of industrial relations.

More generally, the greatly increased weight of legislation (e.g., the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974; the Contracts of Employment Act, 1972; the Employment Protection Act, 1975; the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975; the Race Relations Act, 1976) have already revealed far-reaching implications for education. Further more, complaints against local education authorities can now be investigated by a Commissioner for Local Administration (Ombudsman). A new factor is a European presence in the shape of the European Court of Human
Rights which has shown interest in the use of corporal punishment in our schools and in the teaching of the mother tongue to immigrants. In short, the whole area of the law relating to education needs to be systematically explored and studied in terms of the consequences of recent trends for our administrative structures and practices. Education in its wider social and administrative settings.

The relationship between school and community has long been one which has lent itself to exhortation and general discussion. Specific areas have attracted political controversy, notably social class influences on education and education in deprived areas. Studies, too, have been made of the problems of immigrants and other minority groups. It is work in these areas which demonstrates the difficulty of defining what is to be classified as 'administrative' for my purpose here.

Researches into the causes of educational deprivation and handicap are clearly of great general interest for those concerned with fashioning policy and giving it expression in administrative action; but a line has to be drawn somewhere between such studies and those which direct themselves at least in part to the specifically administrative role. A beginning has been made in the examination of the school...
welfare service by Macmillan, 51 but otherwise there seem to be no research studies made of the various groups of nonteaching staff in the education service whose numbers and importance have increased so greatly in recent years. Research into the administration of higher and further education

In higher and further education there has been, certainly since the publication of the Robbins Report, with its substantial research appendices, a constant flow of descriptive, analytical, expository, and polemical writing and also extensive statistical surveys of student numbers, qualifications gained, and financial costs. An appreciable amount of this effort has gone into the examination of major policy decisions (such as that which led to the introduction of the ‘binary’ system) or of social class influences on student recruitment. For some ten years much work was done by the Higher Education Research Unit of the London School of Economics, 52 which was particularly concerned with problems of higher education and highly qualified manpower and which extended its range to the education system as a whole in some of its published studies. 53 To identify writing in this field bearing on the administrative as distinct from the economic or statistical aspects of higher and further education is a difficult task. But studies with a substantial administrative content include
that on university govern men t by Moodie and Eustace, 54 the work of Burgess and Pratt on colleges of technology and the polytechnics, 55 and the edited collection of papers by Lomax on the education of teachers. 56 These and other studies utilize research findings from a wide range of sources, including the weighty appendices of the Robbins, Franks, and Murray Reports, 57 and the statistics emanating from government departments, the University Grants Committee, and other agencies. They also draw on a considerable amount of comment, criticism, and minor research reported in such journals as the Times Educational Supplement and the New Universities Quarterly. A major piece of work, now being brought up to date by its author, is Berdahl’s study of the University Grants Committee. 58 Other research studies are Taylor’s study of teacher education 59 and Howell’s examination of the coming of the B.Ed. degree. 60 Studies for higher degrees range over a wide field. Several deal with the economics of higher education and particularly with its cost-effectiveness. 61 Others deal with resource allocation 62 and with issues of structure and government. 63 H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H Operational research at school system level 64 Any survey of developing areas of research in educational administration would be incomplete without mention being made of the detailed statistical studies essential
for the maintenance and improvement of large school systems. Such studies, in
some form or another, are carried out by government departments and local educa
tion authorities, and also by the Schools Council and examination boards. In more
specific form they are found in the context of the Local Government Operational
Research Unit 65 which has, since its inception in 1965, made studies in pupil popu
lation forecasting, in school transport costs, and in computer-assisted timetabling.
The Inner London Education Authority has its own Research and Statistics
Group which has made quantitative studies of school population projections and
sixth-form patterns, truancy and nonattendance, and of the construction and use
of priority indices of the in-service training and of the induction of probationary
teachers. 66 Somewhat similar studies are being carried out in other local educa
tion authorities. 67 Management development
Finally, I think that we should bring very much to the forefront of our minds the
major thrust in educational administration at the present time. This is the effort
being made to improve management effectiveness and to do this by staff develop
ment programmes which include carefully constructed courses built up from case
studies and field experiences, and exercises based on the needs of individual course
members. By its nature much of the exploratory work being done in polytechnics,

in some local education authority centres and others such as the Further Education

Staff College, does not easily fit into the accepted categories of academic research.

Yet, because it is advancing into unknown and problematic territories, in which the

guidelines of established disciplines and methodologies are soon found inadequate,

it can constitute research of a high order. It depends upon intensive and exacting

study of actual management situations in local education authorities, schools, and

colleges, the laborious compiling of records, and the utilization of whatever is of

use from the social and mathematical sciences. Glatter 68 has given an account of

work of this kind in connection with a programme financed by the Calouste Gul

benkian Foundation and, with Piper, subsequently described the Staff Development

in Universities Programme, financed by the University Grants Committee. There

has, as yet, been no comprehensive presentation of the developmental work done in

this area in the several polytechnics and other institutions which run their own or

CNA-A-validated programmes. There have, however, been a number of disserta

tions, one of which, by Bernard Baron, 69 has recently been published. Characteristics of research in educational administration
1 Educational administration, as a field of research, has very ill-defined boundaries. It can be taken to embrace planning, economics, and the politics of education; and also substantive areas such as the administration of the curriculum or the recruitment and supply of teachers. But central to it, at least in the North American context, is the study of the behaviour of those who carry out administrative functions. Only isolated studies in this area (among them, those of Richardson, Shipman, and Tipton, 70 throwing light on individual and group motivations) have so far appeared in Britain. In the main, attention has been directed away from the dynamics of interpersonal and intergroup relationships towards the structure and functioning of institutions, resource allocation and use, and policy-making and its implementation.

2 There has been little funding of research in educational administration from governmental or other sources, but there is increasing attention being paid to how research findings in curriculum development or educational technology are to be put into practice. Projects in such areas are thus tending to produce spin-offs for educational administration. In addition, inquiry into policy-making at
national level has been encouraged by critical comment by
the OECD 71 and at
local level by the after-effects of local government
reorganization. But there has
so far been no massive and continued research effort on the
scale made possible
by the Kellogg Foundation grants in the United States and
Canada. 72 Save in the
case of studies by the National Foundation for Educational
Research and, for a
time, some studies of the Higher Education Research Unit of
the London School
of Economics, each project has stood in isolation and has
operated through ad
hoc teams recruited from young graduates in the social
sciences, teachers on
secondment, retired heads, or education of cers. Indeed,
most of the published
research dealing specically with educational
administration has been the result
of individual part-time work by graduate students in
teaching or administrative
posts or by junior academic staff. Under present
conditions, such men and
women, although virtually our only source of research
expertise, have little
prospect of being able to carry out further and more
advanced work.

3 Factors determining the choice of research topics are
varied. Governmentally funded research tends to be supportive of projects
which can help in throw
ing light on immediate and urgent problems such as those
associated with
comprehensive secondary education and with resource use, evaluative processes,
and ‘accountability’. And generally, and this is true of the National Foundation for Educational Research and the Scottish Council for Research in Education as well as the independent foundations, interest centres on pedagogical rather than on administrative issues. For this reason we owe a debt to visitors from North America (such as Manzer, Berdahl and Jennings), Australia, and elsewhere, who can take a broader view of our concerns and whose interests lie in policy analysis and the working of our institutions.

4 Despite what has been argued so far, there are positive aspects of the present situation. There is a quickening of interest in the Department of Education and Science and in the Scottish Education Department in research designed to improve practice, an interest which, as has been seen, extends to local education authorities also. The old reliance on custom and use has been replaced by a willingness to accept that research should be able to contribute to better decision-making and administrative action in education just as it contributes to improvement in other activities of modern life. But there is very genuine uncertainty concerning what research can actually achieve, in
which areas resources should be deployed, and by what means research findings can be translated into practice. Problem areas

Rather than attempt to answer directly the questions just raised, I think it may be helpful in structuring discussion to concentrate attention on debates in which we each individually have to take up positions. These I would characterize as the academic/practitioner debate, the theory/practice debate, the systems theory/phenomenology debate, and the relationship of educational administration to the social science disciplines. The academic/practitioner debate

The conflict between academic and practitioner arises from each party necessarily inhabiting a different universe. As the researcher develops his approach to his problem, no matter how ‘practical’ its orientation, he draws on material and ideas from outside the immediate situation to help him in his analysis and his explanations. By so doing he distances himself from the administrator who, when subsequently reading the research report, is alienated by what appears to be irrelevant and extraneous material: furthermore, from his experience he brings to his reading a multitude of questions stimulated by the research but not answered by it. Discussing this conflict, Taylor writes:
The roots of the problem lie in the fact that the knowledge about education that is possessed by all the people who are labelled teachers, administrators, inspectors, researchers and so forth, is to a large and increasing extent role specific knowledge. 73

This kind of conflict is not between different kinds of people, or even between different types of mind: it is a situational conflict, which occurs even if the researcher is an experienced administrator and the reader a career academic concerned with a practical problem which is the subject of the research. More over, we each have, or may have as individuals, two or more types of role specific knowledge: for example, that which follows from being a practising teacher, that which follows from being a student of curriculum development, and that which follows from being a parent whose children are facing school leaving examinations. Conflict of this kind cannot be resolved, although awareness of its nature may enable it to be contained and lived with.

Other problems arise which can be avoided by greater competence or good

RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION IN BRITAIN

will on the part of those concerned. Shipman, in his capacity as a research
worker with the Inner London Education Authority, wrote:

From within local government the research enterprise based
in academia seems to deliver the wrong goods, at the wrong
time, without an invoice. It also produces conclusions
about education that are subject to gross
misinterpretations. The net harmful impact arises from the
combination of failure to help in the solution of practical
problems, of the promotion of dubious theoretical notions
and in the recommendations whose implementations are beyond
the dreams of even optimistic administrators. 74

In reply to this, the comment by Brian Simon on the role of
educational

research in general is apposite: The real issue is whether
scientists are to operate as scientists, educationists as
educationists, researchers as researchers; or whether all
are to become service personnel, waiting cap in hand for
orders in response to which appropriate methods will be
sorted out to produce acceptable results or conclusions. 75

The tension is further increased, of course, when it is a
governmental or

public body which is the funding agency. The argument put
forward some years

ago by Lord Rothschild 76 takes the hard line that the

funding agency says what it

wants and the researcher works within a defined brief. Against this, there is the

broader view that research in the social sciences

necessarily draws on concepts

and knowledge of which the sponsors are not aware and which

modify the

content of the problem as work progresses. 77

It is, I think, helpful that the Department of Education

and Science is now

clarifying its position, by expressing its concern with

policy-related research, by

identifying specific topics within agreed areas, and by

seeking early reconcili
ation between the interests of the parties involved. Such a stand makes possible a parallel clarification of positions by those primarily concerned with research and not directly concerned with policy matters. It is here that the Social Science Research Council has a major role to play and it is to be hoped that this seminar will assist it in establishing the place of educational administration within the total field of educational research. The theory/practice debate

To what extent should research in educational administration, whether serving the purposes of the practitioner or the academic, seek to be theory-based? This is the first question which confronts the nonsocial scientist who encounters for the first time the highly organized teaching and research programmes of American, Canadian, and Australian universities. There the place of 'theory' in educational administration is accepted, though its content and its uses and abuses are vigorously debated: here there is still, in so many quarters, a contemptuous dismissing of any study going beyond the collection of opinions and facts.

In a recent book Rosamund Thomas has boldly contrasted the American and British approaches to administrative studies. She argues that, in Britain,
doctrines [of administration] remained essentially a philosophy and not a theory of administration, embodying description, subjective attitudes and explanations rather than rigorous, systematic analysis.

On the other hand, she argues, in the United States respect for the expert in administration has led to more attention being paid to academics and more attempts being made to theorize, with the result that administration has advanced 'from miscellaneous description to an integrated body of knowledge'.

The absence of native-born theory in this country and of anything approaching 'an integrated body of knowledge' explains the fascination felt for the work of North American theoreticians as a source for conceptual frameworks into which schemes of research can be neatly fitted. This has dangers, if it results in our limiting topics to those which can be so treated, or in our setting out, once a problem has been identified, to unearth a theory to give it academic respectability. Certainly, the understanding of the researcher should be fortified by thorough acquaintance with reading in the works of the major theoreticians in his field. But it would be unfortunate if it came to be a convention that each piece of work must be related to a specific theory or theories. Moreover,
Hughes 81 has pointed out, research studies describing and analysing current administrative practice do not necessarily require highly sophisticated theoretical underpinnings to be of value.

There is a way of reducing unproductive conflict and of avoiding the reification of theory as being an entity or entities having some kind of existence independent of the world of real events. Glaser and Strauss 82 advocate the notion of grounded theory, by which they mean the gradual generation and testing of explanatory concepts as a piece of research proceeds. The emphasis is on theorizing rather than on theory. Their approach means, of course, that the researcher is not only knowledgeable about existing theories but that he has a capacity for theorizing. It follows that the training or self-education of the researcher needs to be broad and diffuse: the aim of his reading of theory is to nourish his powers to perceive and to relate, rather than to lead him to work within the confines of the formulated perspectives of others. The systems theory/phenomenology debate To some extent the issue I have just attempted to present has bearing on the far-reaching debate which followed Greenfield’s paper in the 1974 International Intervisitation Programme. This debate has been conducted with warmth by

RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTR
many better fitted than myself. I refer to it because it bears so intimately on the

uses of theory. One charge made against Green eld’s paper is that he has failed
to provide a viable alternative paradigm to that provided by systems theory;

another is that he has not shown how research can emerge from a phenomeno

logical perspective. Both charges seem to me to sidestep his argument because

implicitly, if not explicitly, ‘research’ and ‘paradigm’, in their taken-for-granted

meanings, are within the world of systems theory and the positivist approach. 83

To me, Green eld’s paper made its impact not so much because it put forward a

‘phenomenological perspective’ as an alternative to

‘systems theory’, but rather

because it was a first frontal attack on the latter and particularly on the

‘emphasis which much of social science places upon quanti

cation, more

complex mathematical models, and bigger number crunchers in

the shape of

better and faster computers’. 84 This explains, to me at least, why Green eld

incurred the wrath of the ‘establishment’ of research in educational administra

tion within which, at Stanford, Chicago, and Alberta, hypothesis-formulation

has been a prevailing orthodoxy; it also explains the welcome accorded to his
argument in Britain by academics uneasy with the formidable research apparatus of the North Americans and reluctant to acknowledge its achievements, and by practitioners happy to seize on any vindication of intuitive judgement. Educational administration and the social sciences

Some years ago, in my contribution to Educational Administration and the Social Sciences, I sought to show how the latter could contribute to our field of study.

My thinking was very much influenced by my contacts with American and Canadian scholars and with the work of Professor William Walker in Australia; and it was motivated by the political need to legitimate the study of educational administration in the university world in this country. Certainly, at the University of London Institute of Education, educational studies were and are regarded largely as the philosophy of education, the sociology of education, the economics of education, and the psychology of education. Difficulty then arises in arguing the case for fields of study, such as curriculum development, comparative education, and educational administration: in this context it is necessary and appropriate to stress the contribution of the 'disciplines'. I do not wish to quarrel with the position I then took up, although I think I would now incorporate within it the idea of 'squeezing' the disciplines, which Glatter took over from Richard
Snyder. But, when it comes
to research in educational administration, I am much more
aware than I was before
of the problems which arise when subject specialists are
recruited into the field after
their primary allegiance has been established. I think that
Brian Simon (in the paper
already quoted) expresses my concern more adequately than I
could myself in a
passage relating to general research in education. He
writes: The study of education has manifestly suffered from
subordination to disparate modes of approach and
methodologies deriving from fields H I S T O R Y A N D R
E S E A R C H
quite other than education which have simply been
transferred into the
educational sphere and which, once there, have tended to
maintain their
distinctive languages and approaches, or pursue their own
ends.
Later, he argues that:
If he [the researcher] starts from the position established
in a particular
discipline with corresponding norms of its own, the
research is likely to
be primarily directed to adding to the capital of that
discipline. Con
ducted by methods evolved within its con nes it may well
have a direct
connection with education only insofar as use has been made
in the
given way of educational materials. 87
In Britain, because of our high degree of specialization in
university studies
and the strength of the allegiance of the scholar to his initial discipline, the dangers Simon suggests are very real. But I see no justification for throwing up the barricades, even if that were possible. On the contrary, we need to seek to enlarge the field of endeavour so that all can play their part, no matter what their earlier academic affiliations. If this can be done, it may be possible to resolve some of the issues which I have put before you in this chapter. Research for understanding, research for policy development, research into administrative structure and process, evaluative research.

What are the various positions from which we can view research? I can identify four, but others may no doubt occur to members of this seminar and readers of this chapter. 1 Research for understanding

This, I suppose, is the position of the historian, who is concerned with explaining the past in terms comprehensible to the present. It is also the position of the anthropologist, concerned to explain in terms of his own culture the practices of primitive peoples. The results of such labours may be of use to the politician, the administrator, or the professional worker, but this is not their main purpose. The audience for research of this kind is composed of those with similar or closely related interests, able to cope with highly technical and esoteric language. 2 Policy-related research
I am indebted to Brian Kay for this term, which he uses for research promoting
‘the formulation of national policies on a more secure foundation of knowledge,
and of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of such policies’. 88 Such

research requires specialized knowledge combined with a readiness to work

within the frameworks established by political and administrative practicalities.

Much work on resource allocation falls within this category.

Policy-related research may precede and help in policy-formulation or it may

monitor the working out of policies already being put into operation. In either case

it is expensive, it is likely to take time, and it requires considerable adjustment of

attitudes and working habits by both the academics and the administrators

involved. Its immediate audience is relatively small, since by design it is directed

at the limited numbers concerned with policy-making at national or local level. 3 Research into administrative structure and process

In putting forward this category I am very much aware of the difficulty of distin

guishing usefully between ‘policy’ and ‘administration’. But it seems to me to

be essential to give identity to that vast area of research concerned with the

performance of administrative functions and roles, whether these be in relation
to running a school, a college, a department, or a supporting service; or with the setting up and maintenance of structures for governing institutions and regulating their relationships with their environments.

This is the area in which I would argue that the maximum effort should be made at the present time; and it is also the area in which all members of the Society are concerned in one way or another. 4 Evaluative research Evaluation is necessarily a part of any research project. But what I have in mind here is research which is able to stand outside the world of the policy-maker and the administrator and view their intentions and their activities from a variety of political, social, and cultural standpoints. It seems to me a main vehicle for research of this kind should be comparative studies, in which scholars and administrators from elsewhere would share in substantial projects in this country. A network of Commonwealth and European agencies exists to foster such exploration and we have our own affiliations with the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and the European Forum.

I have spent a little time in presenting these very tentative categories of research for consideration because I feel that it is important for this seminar to consider
what should be its focus for the future activities and
indeed for the efforts of the

British Educational Administration Society in the research
field. Clearly, we are

interested and supportive of all four categories; indeed
interest in the one pre

supposes at least some measure of involvement with the
others, since they are

interrelated. My own conclusion, however, is that we should
at this time pay

particular attention to that which I have termed ‘research
into administrative

structure and process’. It is in this area that most of the
problems which beset H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

those responsible for the conduct of our educational
institutions and those with

similar responsibilities in other countries lie. It is also
a major aim of this

* Paper given at the seminar on Research in Educational
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British Educational Administration Society, University of

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Press, 1974. For a lucid discussion of the distinctions
which may be drawn between
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2 See Association of Special Libraries and Information
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Social Science Research Council, Research supported by the
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3 Notably in the journals and publications of the Advisory
Centre for Education, the
Educational Institute of Scotland, the National Association
of Governors and Man-
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National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher
Education, and, latterly, the
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12 McIntyre, W., Size of School as a Factor in the Role of
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15 In particular the two reports (ed T.G. Monks) of the NFER Comprehensive Education Project, Comprehensive Education in England and Wales: a survey of schools and their organization, 1968, and Comprehensive Education in Action, 1970, both published by the NFER.


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21 The work of the unit is briefly described in Assessing the Performance of Pupils, DES Report on Education, Number 93, August, 1978.


24 This study, supported by a grant from the Scottish Education Department, is being carried out in the Department of Education, University of Glasgow. An interim report has been published, Foundation Facts about Scottish School Councils, 1977.

25 The omens are favourable, as the department has already made a substantial grant to the Open University for the preparation of a course for school governors and to carry out research into the ways in which the course is used and its effectiveness.


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To understand “Transformative Power,” the following question must be addressed: what are the components of an organization that can translate intention into reality and sustain it? The question itself contains a complexity and depth as well as a chronic elusiveness. The question, probably for the preceding reasons, tends to be avoided — though it is the essence of what is ordinarily meant to be organizational leadership. Even when it is obliquely touched on, the writer tends to avoid the orchestral richness which inheres in the question for the doctrinal, predictable, and prosaic clichés. Between the blur produced by trying to say too much at once and the banality produced by dismissing mysteries, there remains the possibility of articulating just what it
is that causes some

organizations to translate an intention into reality and sustain it. This is the start

ing point for an examination of what I am referring to as transformative power. The environment of leadership in the 1980s

This much can be said about leadership for the '80s: those responsible for gov

erning the enterprise will be spending more and more of their time managing

external relations. All organizations are surrounded by an increasingly active,

incessant environment - one that is becoming more and more influential - the

senior partner, as it were, in all kinds of decisions which affect the institution.

Leadership, and its companion decision-making, will become an increasingly

intricate process of multilateral brokerage including constituencies both within

and without the organization. More and more decisions made will be public

decisions; that is, they will affect people who insist on being heard. Leaders will

have to reckon with the growing role of media as a “fourth arm” of government

available for use by the people who oppose a particular decision as well as the

people who support it. The idea of a relatively small group of “movers and

shakers” who get things done is obsolete. Increasing numbers of citizens and

stakeholders (and even those who are only indirectly involved in an issue) are
interesting themselves in its outcome — and when the decision goes the “wrong way,” very noisily so. This state of affairs has led one writer to describe the organization-of-today as a “jungle of closed decisions, openly arrived at.”

The bigger the problem to be tackled, the more power is diffused and the more people have to be involved. Thus decisions become more complex and ill defined, affecting more different and sometimes conflicting constituencies.

Inevitably there will be frustration, not only among leaders but among followers who ask, “Who’s in charge here?” as more and more people and groups have to be consulted. Leaders ask, “How do you get everybody in the act and still get some action?”

The name of the game is ambiguity and surprise, and leaders have to lead under uncertain, risky conditions where it’s virtually impossible to get ready for something when you have to get ready for anything. Just as effective leaders know about and are becoming more competent in coping with the politicization of our institutions — by which I mean that institutions are becoming the focus for a new kind of politics, i.e., mobilizing public opinion or working more closely with legislative bodies at both the state and federal levels and other key con
stijuencies - they are also learning more about an enlarged concept of the “man
agement team.”

No longer can “managing external relations” be left in the hands of the public
relations department. Top leadership must be involved - directly. In short, the
political role of the organization leadership’s responsibility must be reconceived.

These trends, these changing characteristics of the organizational and manager

ial environment that we are now living with, will become even more pronounced

and problematic over the next ten or so years. The three components of transformative power The leader

There are some important clues about the nature of effective leadership that have
come out of a study I recently completed of 80 chief executive officers (CEOs)

plus ten in-depth interviews conducted over the past few months with ten suc
cessful, “innovative” leaders (Bennis, 1983). These studies provide a basis for

making some generalizations about those leaders who successfully achieve

mastery over the noisy, incessant environment - rather than simply react, throw

up their hands, and live in a perpetual state of “present shock.” In short, the

study which I am about to summarize was able to illuminate some of the dark

ness around the question earlier posed: how do organizations translate intention
into reality and sustain it? Leadership is the first component, though as we shall see later on, leadership must be held within a context of other interacting factors.

What all these effective CEOs shared and embodied was directly related to how they construed the role of the CEO/chairperson. To use a popular Transformative Power and Leadership distinction, they viewed themselves as leaders not managers, which is to say that they were concerned with their organization’s basic purposes, why it exists and its general direction. They did not spend their time on the “how to . . .,” the proverbial “nuts and bolts,” but with purpose and paradigms of action. In short, they were concerned not with “doing things right” (the overriding concern of managers) but with “doing the right thing.” They were capable of transforming doubts into the psychological grounds of common purpose.

By responding to the question which guided my study – what common set of characteristics, if any, did those leaders possess who were capable of translating intention into reality – I can clarify the role of the effective leader. In varying degrees, it seemed that all of the CEOs possessed the following competencies:

Vision: the capacity to create and communicate a compelling vision of a desired state of affairs, a vision (or paradigm, context,
frame - all those words

serve) that clarifies the current situation and induces commitment to the future.

Communication and alignment: the capacity to communicate their vision in

order to gain the support of their multiple constituencies.

Persistence, consistency, focus: the capacity to maintain the organization's
direction, especially when the going gets rough.

Empowerment: the capacity to create environments - the appropriate social

architecture - that can tap and harness the energies and abilities necessary to

bring about the desired results.

Organizational learning: the capacity to find ways and means through which

the organization can monitor its own performance, compare results with estab

lished objectives, have access to a continuously evolving data base against

which to review past actions and base future ones, and decide how, if necessary,

the organizational structure and key personnel must be abandoned or rearranged

when faced with new conditions.

In short, nothing serves an organization better - especially during these times

of agonizing doubts and paralyzing ambiguities - than leadership which knows

what it wants, communicates those intentions successfully, empowers others,

and knows when and how to stay on course and when to
The second element of transformative power refers to the “compelling vision” mentioned earlier that will now be referred to as “the intention.” The expression of an intention is the capacity to take an organization to a place it has never been before. The characteristics of the intentions that successful leaders employ include:

Simplicity: this characteristic is also known as or akin to Occam’s Razor, the Law of Parsimony. This implies that each assumption or element is independent. The word “simple” derives from the notion of oneness or unity.

Completeness: this criterion requires that all the facts that are available are included. In most organizations the bulk of the major tasks that have to be accomplished are easily and readily incorporated within almost any kind of organizational structure. It is those few remaining tasks that test or prove the adequacy of the organization. Not only should the organization be capable of incorporating tasks that need to be performed at the time it is set up, it should also be capable of adjusting to and assimilating new tasks as they arise.

Workability: does it deliver the goods? Does the context achieve the organizational goals or contribute to them? William James, as
usual, says it well: “By
their fruits ye shall know them, not by their roots.”

Communicability: this last criterion for judging contexts contains two com
ponents: the more obvious one relates to the ease in which
the context is under
stood by the organization. The robustness of the
organization, in terms of its
empowerment, depends to a large extent on the degree to
which the context is
clear and understood. The other meaning of this criterion
is alignment; not align
ment, though, of organizational members, but alignment with
other contexts
indigenous to the particular organization. In other words, to understand organi
zational structure and its significance, it is important to
keep in mind that its
effectiveness is related to the mutual relatedness of its
various contexts.

The problem with the above characteristics is betrayed by
application of one
of them, “completeness.” The list is not complete.
Originality, muting of ego,
subtlety, and an aesthetic are all important which space
limitations preclude any
thing but their mention now. The one exception to this is
“an aesthetic,” an
exception based both on its significance and neglect. Indeed, I believe that the
aesthetic of the intention plays an important, perhaps
key, role in understanding
how intention can lead to implementation, which is, after
all, the whole point of
leadership. The organization

Transformative power implies a transaction between the leader and the led,
between the leadership and some sort of participative response. If the leadership
expresses the characteristics noted earlier and if the vehicle of this expression,
the intention(s), are effectively expressed, the organization becomes a blending
of each individual's uniqueness into collective action.

Such an organization is similar to something observed in healthy individuals;
in fact, it is isomorphic to a healthy identity in an individual. More technically,
we can assume that an organization possesses a healthy identity - organizational
integrity - when it has a clear sense of what it is and what it is to do.

Achieving “organizational integrity” is easier said than done. Part of the
problem is the lack of understanding of the various substructures that all organi
zations, no matter how small, contain. One block to our understanding is perpetu
ated by the myth of organization-as-monolith, a myth reinforced almost daily by
the media and the temptation of simplicity. The myth is not only grossly inaccu
rate but dangerous as well. When the evening paper, for example, announces that

the Defense Department or the University of California or IBM (or any corporate TRA N S F O R M A T I V E P O W E
body for that matter) will pursue this or that course of action, the said action is typ
cically consigned to a single, composite body, the administration. This administra
tion, whose parts vibrate in harmony and whose acts, because we are denied a look
at the human drama that leads up to them, take on an air of superhuman detach
ment, is as mythical as the griffin. Into every step taken by the administration goes
a complicated pattern of meetings, disagreements, conversations, personalities,
emotions, and missed connections. This very human process is bureaucratic poli
tics. A parallel process is responsible for our foreign policy, the quality of our
public schools, and the scope and treatment of the news that the media choose to
deliver to us each day.

Our perceptions of organizational decision-making, based on such reports
and other stimuli, tend to emphasize the product of decision-making, never (or
rarely) the process. The result, of course, is false, at times destructively so.

Those elements of chance, ignorance, stupidity, recklessness, and amiable con
fusion are simply not reckoned with; they are selectively ignored, it seems.

Thus, the public rarely sees the hundreds of small tableaux, the little dramas,
that result in a policy statement or a bit of strategy. It
sees only the move or

hears only the statement, and it not unreasonably assumes
that such an action is

the result of a dispassionate, almost mechanical process in
which problems are

perceived, alternative solutions weighed, and rational
decisions made. Given

human nature, that is almost never the case.

In order for an organization to have integrity, it must
have an identity, a sense

of what it is and what it is to do. Perhaps an analogy
taken from personality

theory will illustrate as well as foreshadow this point.
Every person is a summa

ition of various “selves.” If those units of the person are
not in communication,

then the person cannot maintain valid communications with
others. The problem

of integrity, which is central to much of the contemporary
literature in the

mental health field, can in organizations be examined by
understanding the

various “organizational selves” or structures that exist.

Every organization incorporates four concepts of
organization, often at odds

with each other or existing in some strained coherence.
There is the manifest

organization, or the one which is seen on the “organization
chart” and which is

formally displayed. There is also the assumed organization,
or the one that indi

viduals perceive as the organization were they asked to
draw their view of the way
that things work, very much like the legendary New Yorker’s view of the U.S. in

which the Hudson River abuts Los Angeles. There is further

the extant organi

zation, or the situation as revealed through systematic investigation by, say, an

outside consultant. Finally, there is the requisite organization, or the situation as it

would be if it were in accord with the reality of the situation within which it exists.

The ideal, but never realized, situation is that in which the manifest, the

assumed, the extant, and the requisite are aligned as closely as possible with

each other. Wherever these four organizational concepts are in contradiction, the

organizational climate is such that its identity is confused and its integrity diffi

cult to achieve. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

Another useful analogy to mental health shows up in this discussion. Many, if

not all, psychotherapeutic schools base their notions of mental health on the

degree to which the individual brings into harmony the various “selves” that

make up his or her personality. The healthy person will be much the same

person as he or she is known to others.

Virtually the same criterion can be used to establish organizational integrity,

that is, the degree to which the organization maintains harmony - and know
ledge - about and among the manifest, assumed, extant, and requisite concepts.

It is not necessary that all four concepts be identical; rather, all four types should be recognized and allowance made for all the tensions created by imbalances. It is doubtful that an organization can or even should achieve total congruence.

The important factor is recognition, a heightened consciousness of the confusions and contradictions.

To achieve openness, and through it integrity, in our organizations, each individual within the organization - particularly the leader - must strive to be open.

From its embodiment in the individual, openness moves to the group level and, through individual and group interaction, infuses the organizational culture that sustains the characteristic of openness. The process is as slow as the building of a pyramid, and far more complex. The artform of leadership.

We have gone only partway in understanding leadership and transformative power by decomposing the three key elements at the political center of a complexly organized society, like an organization, into 1) a leader or governing elite or strategic core, 2) a set of symbolic forms expressing a tapestry of intentions, and 3) those constituent groups and individuals who make up the membership of the organization. The intention and its expression - crowns
and coronations,

limousines and conferences – give what goes on in organizations its aura of

being not merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the

world is built. The gravity of organizational leadership and the solemnity of high

worship spring from liker impulses than might first appear.

The extent to which leadership is truly effective is based on the extent to

which individuals place symbolic value on the intentions and their expression,

the aesthetic referred to earlier. It is the relationship of the governed to the active

centers of the social order that makes the difference between transformative

power and other forms. Such centers have nothing to do with geometry and little

with geography. Such centers have nothing to do with “humanizing the work

place,” Theory X or Theory Y, the “quality of worklife,” or “participative man

agement.” What is important is that the organizations and their members are

essentially concentrated on what appears to be serious acts. They exist at the

point or points in a society where its leading ideas come together with its leading

institutions to create an arena in which the events that most vitally affect

members’ lives take place. It is involvement, even

oppositional involvement, TRANSFORMATIVE POWER AND LEADERSHIP
with such arenas and with the momentous events that occur
in them that “trans
lates intention into reality and sustains it.” It is a
sign, not of popular appeal or
inventive craziness but of being near the heart of things.

In sum, the transformative power of leadership stems less
from ingeniously
crafted organizational structures, carefully constructed
management designs and
controls, elegantly rationalized planning formats, or
skillfully articulated leader
ship tactics. Rather, it is the ability of the leader to
reach the souls of others in a

fashion which raises human consciousness, builds meanings,
and inspires human
intent that is the source of power. Within transformative
leadership, therefore, it

is vision, purposes, beliefs, and other aspects of
organizational culture that are of
prime importance. Symbolic expression becomes the major
tool of leadership,

and leadership effectiveness is no longer defined as a “9–9
grid score” or a

“system 4” position. Effectiveness is instead measured by
the extent to which

“compelling vision” empowers others to excell; the extent
to which meanings
are found in one’s work; and the extent to which individual
and organization are

bonded together by common commitment in a mutually
rewarding symbiotic
relationship. Reference

Drawing upon his experiences as a former school superintendent and an academic, Larry Cuban examines the implications of the effective schools research for policy and practice at the district level. He focuses on the critical role played by the superintendent and by district-level policies in creating preconditions for local school improvement. Examining the issues that both separate and connect the worlds of theory and practice, Cuban describes the dilemma of school leaders who, armed with only an incomplete theory of school improvement, must make important policy decisions in the face of time pressures and political demands. He warns of some of the unintended consequences of effective schools practices that employ top-down strategies to achieve the narrow goal of raising test scores. Administrators, he argues, need a variety of policy tools and top-down and bottom-up strategies to generate significant improvement at the local level.

The current California superintendent of public instruction, who campaigned on
a platform celebrating a Norman Rockwell view of schooling, appointed as his
deputy a savvy school superintendent who had developed one of the few system
atic efforts in the state to implement the findings drawn from the effective
schools research. In 1981 Alaska Governor Jay Hammond appointed the Task
Force on Effective Schools that recommended practices drawn from the same
body of research for all of the state’s schools. According to a recent report from
the Education Commission of the States, eight other states have established spe
cific projects anchored in this literature. New York City, Seattle, Pittsburgh, Mil
waukee, Atlanta, and a score of other cities across the country have installed
programs to improve the academic performance of students. Consumer Reports,
Parents magazine, and other popular journals feature articles entitled “How
Effective Are Your Schools?” or “What makes a Good School?” Television pro
grams portray “miracle worker” Marva Collins in her private preparatory school
in Chicago as an examplar of a first-rate teacher who has established an effective
school. Finally, in the surest test of popularity, the vocabulary of effective
schools research has entered the daily language of school administrators: high
expectations, instructional leadership, an orderly
environment, a positive climate, and consensus over academic goals echo a trendy jargon. 1

The initial impulse behind the study of effective schools was to improve student academic performance in low-income, largely minority schools. Researchers in the mid- and late-1970s reacted sharply to the 1966 Coleman Report and its progeny, which suggested that teachers and administrators could have little effect on student achievement. One line of research was based on the linkage between teaching practices and improved test scores – the coin of the realm à la Coleman; another utilized investigations of schools which, given their ethnic and socioeconomic mix of students, produced unexpectedly high test score gains. Both strands of research identified teacher behaviors and school practices that intersected neatly with practitioner wisdom on what schools should do to become academically productive. Like the Coleman Report, these studies measured productivity in terms of performance on standardized tests in math and reading. 2

Practitioners seldom wait for researchers to signal that school improvement can move forward. Nor have the substantial methodological problems in the research findings on effective schools halted policymakers from converting them into programs. With a quick look over their shoulders at a
skeptical public,

many school boards and superintendents, believing that tightly coupled organi
izations can affect children’s academic performance, have moved quickly to
implement the growing body of research on effective schools. I do not suggest
that policies anchored more in faith than in statistical significance are misguided.

On the contrary, I suggest that policies are forged in a crucible that mixes polit
ical realities, practitioner wisdom, technical expertise, and whatever can be
extracted from research. The task is difficult because the empirical research
seldom reveals clear causal links to policy, and yet practitioners, who must make
decisions every day, are anxious to locate those decisions in a technical ration
ality.

When I served as superintendent of schools in Arlington, Virginia, I initiated,
with the school board’s blessing, a six-school improvement project. These
schools contained predominantly minority children, many of them from low
income families, who scored in the bottom quartile of the district’s elementary
schools. Lacking designs drawn from research or a tested formula that had
worked elsewhere, we invited leading advocates of effective schools to speak to
teachers and administrators. Resources, modest to be sure,
were set aside to purchase staff time and materials for the six schools. Enthusiasm ran high, and my successor continues to support the project. Standardized test scores in the six schools have risen. The school board has identified the improvement of elementary schools as a top priority for 1983–84 and has expanded the mission of the district team of specialists to encompass all elementary schools in the county.

My own experience and that of other superintendents and school boards who have converted research findings into mandates for improvement informs the following policy discussion. I will concentrate on those policy issues with which local boards and superintendents must wrestle when transforming research findings into different administrative and teaching behaviors. Unlike the way things happen in fairy tales, school reform requires more than a kiss to convert a frog into a stunning prince. Furthermore, productive schooling entails more than raising test scores.

I want to be clear that, as a practitioner-academic for over a quarter-century, I share the commitment of colleagues across the nation to improve schooling.

While these words may ring defensively, I write them to separate myself from the predictable academic challenge to the premature or
selective implementation

of any body of research findings. The familiar pattern of a burst of romance fol

lowed by frustration and disappointment appears to describe the trajectory of the
effective schools enthusiasm (I was about to write the word “movement”).

Notwithstanding recent criticism of the research methods, findings, and efforts
to create effective schools, there is much to be learned from an analysis of what
has and has not been done, from what is and is not known about local district
initiatives in building effective schools. Experience outstrips research in districts
implementing improvement policies; this experience may offer clues to other
local policymakers and furnish promising leads for researchers to pursue.

Several problems with the research on and practices in effective schools have
already become evident. 3

No one knows how to grow effective schools. None of the the richly detailed
descriptions of high performers can serve as a blueprint for teachers, principals,
or superintendents who seek to improve academic achievement. Constructing a
positive, enduring school climate remains beyond the planner’s pen. Telling
principals what to say and do in order to boost teacher expectations of students
or to renovate a marginal faculty into one with esprit de
corps remains beyond
the current expertise of superintendents or professors. Road signs exist, but no maps are yet for sale.

There is no agreement on definitions. Half a dozen methodologically identical studies have produced as many different definitions of effectiveness. The concept of “climate” varies with the researcher and practitioner using it. More over, some feel that the term “leadership” is undefinable. “Instructional leader ship,” for some, resides in the role of principal; for others, in the teaching staff; and for others, it is beyond definition.

The concept of effectiveness is too narrow. Tied narrowly to test scores in lower-order math and reading skills, school effectiveness research and programs ignore many skills, habits, and attitudes beyond the reach of paper-and-pencil tests. Educators and parents prize other outcomes of schooling that transcend current definitions of effectiveness. Some of these outcomes are sharing, transforming the frog in O A P R I N C E learning to make decisions, developing self-esteem, higher-order thinking skills, and a sense of the aesthetic.

Research methodologies leave much to be desired. Most of the studies that use multiple variables and regression models of analysis have failed to control
for school populations and previous history of achievement. Similarly, because

most studies sample a district at one point in time, determining which variables

cause which outcomes is a thorny, if not impossible, obstacle. Do high faculty

expectations produce higher student achievement, for example, or are the higher

staff expectations a result of improved student test scores? Furthermore, because

many studies are done on “outliers,” generalizing to the larger population of

mainstream sites is, at best, risky.

Most research has been limited to elementary schools. With a few excep

tions, effective schools research has occurred in the lower elementary grades.

Junior and senior high schools are organizationally and culturally quite different

from the lower grades.

Little attention is directed to the role of district leadership. Concentration

upon the local school site and the principal’s leadership dominates the research.

This implicitly ignores the pivotal role that school boards and superintendents

play in mobilizing limited resources, giving legitimacy to a reform effort and the

crucial interplay between central office and school site that can spell the dif

ference between implementation success and failure. Few researchers stress the
fact that schools are nested in larger organizations that constrain while permit

ing choice at the local site. Thus, the broader perspective of district administra
tors is often missing from the researchers’ analyses of effective schools. Yet,

with all of these shortcomings in the literature on high-performing schools,
school boards have mandated and superintendents have implemented effective
school programs, showing little concern for the danger of converting correla
tions into policies.

Coincident with the rising interest in these research findings has been a
gradual trend toward higher test scores among elementary students who previ
ously had registered declines. The National Assessment of Educational Progress
reports that reading scores have risen. 4 Big city districts publish tests scores that
register gains in skills. In my judgment, however, these changes reflect a steep
rise in the learning curve of boards of education and school chiefs, rather than a
causal linkage with school improvement programs. Administrators have dis
covered that forging tighter organizational linkages between what teachers teach
and the content of test items results in higher reading and math test scores.

Let me now divide the discussion into three parts. I will discuss district pol
icies to improve overall productivity (as measured by test scores), implementa
tion strategies, and unanticipated consequences. Let me remind the reader that

this is an exploratory analysis, since few effective schools studies have focused

on district-level policies or given explicit attention to implementation strategies;

the thrust of the research has been on the school site and classroom. Hence, cita
tions will be few. **HISTORY AND RESEARCH**

District policies

Districts that have embraced the mission of improving schools along the lines suggested in the literature of effective schools – that is, goal setting, targeting academic aims, establishing and maintaining high expectations, frequent monitor

ing, and so on – have assembled a roughly hewn set of policies drawn from state mandates, other districts, and previous experience. They are conceptually simple and targeted like a rifle shot on lifting test scores. These policies promote a
tighter coupling between organizational goals and the formal structure, while relying on a traditional top-down pattern of implementation. Sometimes at the behest of a school board, but more often at the instigation of a superintendent,

these policy decisions trigger a similar pattern of activities in all participating dis

ticts. 5
This pattern includes the adoption of the following policies:

1 School board and superintendent establish districtwide instructional goals, often stated in terms of student outcomes - that is, improvement in test scores.

2 School board revises student promotion policies in line with stated outcomes for certain grade levels; board strengthens graduation requirements by making course content more substantive, increasing amount of seat-time during classes, and adding extra subjects.

3 Superintendent mandates planning process for each school. Each staff produces schoolwide and individual classroom goals targeted upon student outcomes and aligned with the district goals.

4 The district curriculum for kindergarten through twelfth grade is reviewed to determine if the objectives for subject matter and skills, the textbooks and other instructional materials, and both district and national tests are consistent with what is taught in classrooms.

5 Superintendent revises district supervisory practices and evaluation instruments used with teachers and principals to align them with district goals and the literature on effective teachers and principals.

6 Board and superintendent create a districtwide assessment
program to collect information on what progress, if any, occurs in reaching system, school, and classroom goals. Information is used to make program changes.

7 Superintendent introduces a staff development program for teachers, principals, central office supervisors, and the school board. The program concentrates on effective schools and teaching, goal making, assessment procedures, evaluation of staff, and the steps necessary to implement each of these.

Few districts have installed all these policies at once or in a sequence resembling the one above. Often, superintendents begin on a pragmatic, ad hoc basis with, for example, goal setting and test analysis. They then become aware of the transforming the principal's crucial need to achieve a match among curriculum objectives, promotion policies, district goals, and test items. Or in the overhaul of staff evaluation, a school board member or central office administrator will ask if the new instruments and procedures should be keyed in to district goals for student performance, thus forging another linkage. Though serendipity plays a part, the drift toward organizational tautness is unmistakable.

From images popular in the academic journals of schools as
loosely linked,

amorphous enterprises with plenty of slack, a counterimage
now emerges from

such districts of organizations tightly coupled in both
goals and formal structure,

targeted sharply on academic productivity. District
officials pursuing policies

that fasten individual schools snugly to the central office
believe they have

found just the right hammer to pound in a nail.

There is a growing acceptance among practitioners that
these policies work.

Like a popular television show that begets clones in order
to achieve a larger

share of the audience, school boards and their executives
seek out what works

elsewhere and use exactly the same procedure in their own
districts. Findings

from the effective schools research spread through informal
superintendent net

works, national conferences of school board associations
and administrators,

journals read frequently by school officials, and other
information on what pace

setter districts do. But the fact remains that no studies
have yet shown which

policies, independently or in combination, produce the
desired effects. No

research has yet demonstrated which strategies for
executing policy decisions

yield the desired results. While improved student
performance on tests after the

introduction of such policies has created some believers,
it has not yet been established that the policies themselves have caused the improvement. Even more important, success in lifting scores exacts a price from the organization that few policymakers have yet calculated. In this brief summary of district policies aimed at improving systemwide effectiveness, I have failed to mention the bread-and-butter items, the staples of district policymaking: money and personnel. Money

Born in the backwash of the 1966 Coleman Report and coming of age during a retrenchment on a scale unequaled since the 1930s, the effective schools research implicitly asserts that money does not make a difference. People do. Spending more is less important than strategically redirecting existing funds to promote effective staff performance. Given today’s shrinking enrollments and fiscal retrenchment, the prospect of converting ineffective schools into effective ones for pennies is most attractive. This message, however, is accurate only in a severely restricted sense. In my own experience and that of colleagues, a districtwide school improvement program involves large expenditures. While there are substantial indirect costs and modest direct ones in initiating a limited school effectiveness effort, far more important is the larger
resources available to fund an entire improvement program of schooling.

Teacher salaries, recruitment of new teachers, retention of gifted senior faculty,

and the addition of instructional leaders to an administrative cadre are also

linked to district improvement.

The primary costs of initiating and implementing systemwide policies to

increase productivity arise from retraining staff, hiring consultants, and reassigning central office supervisors and administrators. Since 1979 New York City’s School Improvement Program has spent over $1 million a year in state and foundation grants on additional staff, teacher, parent, and evaluator time to introduce site-based programs in almost twenty schools. In most instances, however, far smaller sums have bought consultant and teacher time, materials, and supplies.

Most costs are hidden, with no extra dollars added to the budget. In Arlington, Virginia, for example, $20,000 was added to the budget to initiate an effective schools project involving six out of twenty-one elementary schools. The 1980 operating budget for the entire school system of thirty plus schools and over 2,000 employees was in excess of $53 million.

Far more money, however, was spent in staff time to design,
monitor, and

assess annual school plans in relation to goals and objectives; to analyze test

items in all standardized and locally developed

instruments; to review current

curriculum goals and their match with district tests and
goals; and to revise

existing evaluation tools for teachers and administrators
to bring them into line

with district goals. I estimate that for the Arlington
school system, with a student

enrollment of 20,000 in 1974 and 15,000 in 1981, the

equivalent of $75,000 to

$100,000 in staff time was spent for each of the first few

years in getting policies

in place, training staff, monitoring results, and returning

information to princi

pals, teachers, and the community. Because I had no specific

staff assigned to do

this work, I assumed a portion of the workload and directed

central office

administrators to do tasks beyond their assigned

responsibilities until school

board-approved reorganizations could realign individuals

with the thrust of new

policies on goal setting, annual school plans, curriculum

revision, and the like.

In Atlanta, Alonzo Crim, superintendent of schools,

similarly reorganized and

reassigned existing staff in order to concentrate upon

student outcomes. Donald

Steele, Seattle’s former superintendent, lacking funds yet

embracing the effect
ive schools approach, assigned central office administrators not involved in instruction to advise individual elementary schools in addition to their regular duties. 7

These rough cost estimates are for policies implemented in a top-down manner; estimates would differ for implementation efforts that begin with the school site and proceed from the bottom up or for combinations of the two approaches. A careful analysis has yet to be done of direct and indirect costs associated with adopting and implementing district policies designed to improve school effectiveness. I suspect that when such a study is done, it will reveal substantial costs in redirected staff time, a modest investment of additional money, and foregone costs in neglecting other aspects of the district's program. 8

Hiring, training, and evaluating staff, and increasing staff awareness of effective schools are the primary personnel tasks. In Arlington, a lowered budget ceiling made hiring new staff impermissible. The school board approved only new jobs supported by federal and state grants. I presume that few districts since the late 1970s have been able to hire new staff except with the help of private or public funding external to the school system.
In the literature on effective schools, establishing a staff consensus over an instructional agenda is a high priority. In each school the principal and teachers shape that agenda and consensus. A principal needs to judge which teachers will work best within that school’s culture. In the best of all possible worlds, the principal is free to choose the staff that he or she will need to make a school effective. The world that principals currently inhabit, however, offers severely restricted choices in assembling staff. Reassignment of teachers as a result of shrinking enrollment, the closing of schools, or similar events usually favors senior over junior teachers. When senior teachers come to a school involuntarily, bumping enthusiastic but junior teachers, the faculty’s commitment to certain goals, staff morale, and the continuity that is so important in constructing an effective school may suffer. Thus, teacher assignment policies, often embedded in contracts if not in tradition, may work against district efforts to implement effective schools, particularly when the system is retrenching. Although reduction-in-force policies vary across districts, I have observed that principals and personnel chiefs have developed informal ways of abiding by the letter of the policy, while eluding the policy’s intent by securing those teachers who
might be better matched for one school over another. One
tactic used by some

principals who need teachers is to scan the recall list of
teachers who have been

pink-slipped because of shrinking enrollment. Knowing which
teachers are

viewed as weak, principals keep in daily touch with the
director of personnel to

determine exactly when to create a new class of students –
the trigger for securing a teacher immediately. Invariably, the astute principal
creates the class when

a weak teacher has been assigned elsewhere and the next
teacher on the recall list is more in keeping with what that principal seeks. These informal maneuvers

are limited efforts to strike a practical compromise between conflicting policy

aims in a district.

Selection and reassignment of principals involves less
policy conflict but can

generate opposition anyway. According to the growing
literature, the principal is

central to fashioning an improved school. Most districts
allow the superintendent
to choose principals for various schools. Career
rotation, early retirement,

and similar policies generate some turnover in school
positions. But dilemmas

persist. What can the superintendent do for a school with a
high percentage of

low-income children, where test scores are unacceptably low
and no improve
ment has occurred for five or more years under the same principal. Transferring the principal shifts the problem to another school staff and parent community. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

Due process and evaluation procedures usually prevent the transfer of a principal because of low student performance; few districts have included in their selection criteria or evaluation policies the clear expectation that principals will improve student academic performance. To move a principal on the grounds that he or she has failed to improve the school’s academic performance might be viewed as capricious, unless such a standard was embedded in existing policies and remedial help was offered.

In Arlington, where administrators are unionized, the school board approved the overhaul of the administrative evaluation policy. The new policy called for joint setting of goals and objectives by the superintendent and principal, a clear linkage between district goals and the principal’s school goals, and the development by the administrator of a professional improvement plan. Leadership, instructional improvement, and managerial skills were explicitly stressed in the process. My assistants and I met with principals individually two or three times a year to discuss both their professional and school plans and to help them revise
their goals, if necessary. Workshops were held on instructional supervision,

managing teacher evaluation, assessing school improvement, and analyzing test scores. When I brought before the school board the instance of a principal whom I had evaluated twice as unsatisfactory in instructional leadership and in managing the school program, most of my evidence rested on repeated efforts to improve the principal's instructional management and the persistent erosion of student academic performance over a five-year period. The school board approved the transfer of the principal to a non-school post. Buried in the language of principals as instructional leaders and effective teachers, then, is a crisp accountability for student performance - a steel fist encased in velvet. Boards and superintendents are driven by the inexorable logic of the research findings on effective schools to wrestle with the issue of marginal and incompetent staff beyond passing them from school to school or, as one superintendent put it, “engaging in the dance of the lemons.” Because so little has been written or discussed openly about teacher and principal incompetence in terms of technical inability to improve students' academic performance, a district must often devise its own way of dealing with staff who cannot meet
the higher expectations for their roles. 9

Researchers interested in effective schools have yet to examine the cross-cutting policy conflicts that occur in selecting, assigning, and evaluating both teachers and administrators when districts embark upon an improvement program, especially when confidence in the schools is low and the climate is hostile to budget increases. Implementation strategies

Current practitioner wisdom harnessed to effective schools research cultivates the image of a trim bureaucratic organization that can get the job done - that is,

improve test scores. District policies on goals, school plans, revised curricula, TRANSFORMING THE ROGINTOAPRINCE analyses of tests, new evaluative procedures, and frequent monitoring of systemwide progress, according to the growing consensus among boards and school chiefs, will produce outcomes that satisfy both professional and community expectations. But little notice has been given to how this will occur. Announcing a decision with a bang of the gavel is not the end of a process but merely the beginning of a sequence of events, many of them unanticipated, in the complicated process of implementation. 10

A tighter coupling between the central office and individual schools along
particular lines – such as goal setting, monitoring, evaluating, and specifying outcomes – often gets translated into the familiar pattern of top-down implementation. By that, I mean a strategy founded upon the belief that a chain of command, stretching tautly from the board of education through the superintendent, directs principals to lead teachers who, in turn, will raise student academic performance. Proponents of this strategy claim that the use of formal organizational tools such as technical assistance, rewards, and sanctions, increases both compliance and productivity. Central office administrators, viewing themselves as having the largest and most accurate picture of district needs, often see top-down implementation as efficient and swift. Their thrust is to set targets, establish control, and reduce discretion. According to this view, increased uniformity in practices will produce improved results. Two key assumptions guide this line of thinking: first, that there is a body of knowledge and expertise that can be used to produce high test scores in basic skills; second, that superintendent leadership and managerial savvy can weld a consensus in a mission and drive the organization toward its achievement. School districts from Portland, Maine, to Atlanta, Georgia, from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Milpitas, California,
have used this pattern of implementation. These assumptions reflect the bind that

superintendents, principals, and teachers find themselves in when they are compelled to act in the face of acute external pressures, yet lack a complete technology to achieve outcomes.

School boards and superintendents commonly use these top-down approaches to translate policies into practice for a number of reasons. Pressure for results pinches the school board and superintendent far more than it does the teacher or principal. Community dissatisfaction with performance leads to far more turnover among board members and superintendents than among principals or teachers.

Moreover, the implicit indictment in the literature on effective schools is that if teachers and principals would only alter their beliefs and practices, student performance would improve. To expect teachers and principals, who are street level bureaucrats at the bottom of every district organizational chart, to agree that they are both the problem and solution is to ask them to become scapegoats for a district’s failure to improve academic performance. Few scapegoats have been noted for volunteering. Finally, more often than not, administrators who make the decisions believe that the top-down strategy works. Because time is often short,
cries for results are loud, pressures pinch acutely, and routines are already in place,

top-down implementation is administratively convenient. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

In contrast, implementation strategies adopting a bottom-up approach would

concentrate on each school’s determining its own agenda, monitoring and evalua
ing itself, and using district funds in the manner that staff and parents chose. In
short, each school would decide for itself how best to reach district goals. Rooted in

the literature on organizational development, the bottom-up strategy concentrates

on generating among staff a shared vision of what the school might be, creating a

team spirit, cultivating mutual trust, and building emotional bonds through collabo

rative decisionmaking on school issues. Many practitioners and researchers, con

vinced of the importance of staff commitment, local ownership of decisions, and

joint efforts at the school site, have cited instances in the effective schools research

where such implementation strategies have produced desired outcomes in test

performance. Organizationally, such strategies sustain the existing loose linkages

between central office and school; encourage more, not less, principal discretion;

and produce redundancy and, for efficiency engineers at the top of the organization,

untidy arrangements. Superintendents who find this
arrangement congenial lean

heavily on informal communication, use networks within the
district, and adroitly

handle organizational rituals and traditions. Although
infrequent in occurrence,

bottom-up approaches do appear in the literature on
effective schools. 11

So far, I have implied that a top-down strategy of
implementation means that
directions drafted in the central office will be executed in
each school across the
district. Similarly, a bottom-up approach means that
school-generated decisions
unique to each setting will vary from school to school in
the district. Mixes of
top-down and bottom-up strategies, which are not
necessarily tied either to dis

trict or school-based applications, also occur. Consider
the following diagram. TRANSFORMING THE OR
GIN INTO A PRINCE

Figure 1 Implementation strategies.

For example, a superintendent can direct principals in each
school to set
goals, plan and establish programs, and assess outcomes. By
directing from the
top a process to occur at each school without prescribing
the content of the
decisions, a variation on the familiar bottom-up approach
emerges. In short,

seeking tighter coupling of district practices to school
action does not necessar

ily mean mandating the same effort districtwide; it can be
triggered by superin
tendent mandate but proceed gradually on a school-by-school basis.

Whichever strategy is proposed, policymakers need to address critical issues concerning voluntarism, inservice training for teachers and principals, incentives, sanctions, and related points. It is still not clear which implementation strategies are most effective because few researchers have investigated the Top-Down School-Based District-Wide Bottom-Up connections between strategies and outcomes. Most researchers have recognized the tangled complexity of such diverse elements as context, roles, individuals, organizational factors such as size, history, and culture, quality of leadership at both district and school levels, timing, and other critical determinants of successful implementation. Beyond recognizing this complexity, few researchers have proceeded further than to construct inventories and taxonomies of essential points in establishing causal relationships between strategies and outcomes.

Three issues illustrate the larger complexity involved in implementing policies aimed at making schools effective. 12 Choice or mandate Many practitioners and researchers believe that volunteers bring high energy and a positive outlook to producing an effective school, while draftees only find fault and complain. What, then, do superintendents do with schools mired in low
performance for years, whose principals and faculties express great reluctance to
join in an improvement program? Mandates, as many school officials know, can
produce compliance with the letter of the order without also leading to improve
ment. Even when the superintendent, in a heavy-handed compromise between
choice and coercion, advises a principal to volunteer, some grudging level of
compliance is about all that can reasonably be expected.
The strategies adopted by various school districts offer little guidance. In
New York City, the chancellor invited Ronald Edmonds, one of the effective
schools researchers, to introduce a school improvement program based upon his
research, and in which voluntarism played a major role. Schools were invited to
participate, and from the pool of volunteers Edmonds and his staff chose a
number for the project. In Milwaukee, the superintendent designated eighteen
schools with the poorest test scores for the effective schools project. In New
Haven, Milpitas, and Seattle, all schools participate in the program. In Arling
ton, elementary schools other than the six initially selected may choose to enter
the program and receive the services. Of course, superintendents employ mixes
of choice and coercion. Generally, however, tight-coupling strategies favor man
dating involvement, whereas bottom-up approaches favor allowing staffs to choose. Although superintendents’ beliefs are strong as to which approach works, no body of evidence yet supports one tactic or the other.

Local context and superintendents’ beliefs about change, rather than actual evidence, may often determine whether requiring schools to participate or offering them a choice is the tactic to use. In Arlington, the six schools which were at the bottom in academic performance formed a natural grouping. For two of the six, for example, opting out of participation would have left the school board and me vulnerable to legitimate parent complaints that principals and teachers were insensitive to deteriorating student achievement and resistant to improving the situation.

The tradeoff in requiring all six staffs to join the program was apparent in the varying levels of enthusiasm for the initial effort and, in some cases, foot-dragging reluctance. In districts where there is a history of voluntary piloting of new approaches, tradition dominates. Thus, the issue of choice or mandate may hinge less on evidence than on local contextual conditions and on policymakers’ beliefs about which implementation approach works. The issue of choice needs explicit
attention if for no other reason than to assess the anticipated trade-offs. Inservice training in mobilizing for an improvement program, the primary means of delivering help to schools is technical assistance. The implicit theory of change embedded in inservice programs is that faculties and administrators, as individuals and small groups, need additional knowledge and skills in order to implement research findings: change individuals and the school will become effective. But consideration of the impact of the school structure upon individual behavior is often missing from any discussion or analysis of inservice training. Organizational regularities involving teachers and students, principals and teachers, school staff and district office, parents and school—not to mention how the school is organized for instruction and its use of time—are rarely included in the usual technical assistance packages offered as part of school improvement. Some researchers have suggested directions for altering a few organizational norms that shape teacher behavior. Judith Little, for example, has shown that breaking down teacher isolation and cultivating a norm of collegiality can lead to improvement in teaching practices. New work norms of teachers observing one another, talking frequently about pedagogy, and engaging in joint planning
stimulate the sharing of values that nourish school improvement.

What is offered to teachers is all too familiar. Most teachers and principals know the concepts in the research on effective teaching and schools insofar as classroom instruction and schoolwide leadership are concerned, although the language and emphasis may be unfamiliar. For teachers listening to lectures and reading articles there is little that is complex in the research or that calls for major shifts in classroom practice, although evidence that teachers practice these concepts may be lacking.

On the other hand, the literature on instructional leadership calls for extensive inservice education for principals on the components of managing an instructional program, such as establishing and communicating a mission for the school, supervising instruction, and creating a positive climate. This emphasis does not mean that principals are unaware of instructional management or that they do not perform the function. However, principals themselves report that they give such managerial activities less time because the nature of the job forces them to concentrate on noninstructional tasks, such as maintaining school stability and coping with the often competing interests of the central office,
school faculty, parents, and others. In addition to
principals’ self-reports, obser

vational studies confirm that instructional management is
structural tasks in the daily whirl of a principal’s life.
15 transforming the frog into a prince

Few training sessions for teachers or principals, however, make either aware

that the sharpened expectation for the principal to exert leadership will end the

silent agreement between administrator and faculty to honor each other’s separate

ate domain. A principal who shifts into a mode of visiting classrooms daily,

monitoring student achievement monthly, and evaluating teacher performance

quarterly may become a threat to some teachers. Similarly, few inservice ses

ions deal with dilemmas touching teachers and principals who are asked to

implement programs about which they have had little say and with which they

may disagree, such as using test results as the major standard for judging

success.

How is technical assistance delivered? Researchers agree that the one-shot

workshop in the district office, with no follow-up, is at best symbolic, and at

worst trivial. Numerous studies of inservice training state that encouraging

teachers and principals at each school site to leave their
fingerprints on the train

ing format and content – even to the point of reinventing
the obvious – is linked
to improved staff performance. While partisans of
organizational development
note such findings, others have observed that local-site
staff training permits
teachers to adapt new knowledge and skills to their unique
circumstances. Con

tinuous sessions with ample and direct follow-up activities
are commonly rec
ommended in these studies. 16

Who does the training? In New York City schools these
liaisons, as they are
called, are veteran teachers or supervisors in the system
who are familiar with
both the formal and informal structure of the city’s public
schools. They work
with staffs a few days a week in planning, implementing,
and evaluating school
improvement plans focused sharply on Edmonds’s five factors of effectiveness:
strong administrative leadership, orderly school climate,
high expectations for
student achievement, basic skills emphasis, and frequent
monitoring of pupil
progress. In the process, they line up consultants and,
whenever possible,
provide expertise themselves. Arlington uses a team of
central office teachers
and supervisors in reading, math, and writing who spend
concentrated periods at
a school on particular tasks, such as coordinating the
entire reading and writing
program across grades, providing materials, and working with the school staff
on a consulting basis for the rest of the school year. Other districts train a cadre
of teachers from participating schools so that each school has an on-site trainer
who is a resident member of the staff. Some school systems hold a series of
workshops at a central location throughout the year, with follow-up done by des
ignated supervisors. The common pattern, however, still seems to be a series of
uncoordinated workshops for principals and teachers, with pounds of reading
material circulated and a pat on the back. 17
Technical assistance attempts to increase the capacities of the participants to
do a productive job. It is the linchpin of any school improvement. Modest sums
of money are needed. For programs aimed at delivering the training during the
year at the school site, $3,000 to $4,000 a year per school is probably sufficient
to purchase the consultant time, materials, and substitute teacher time involved in getting a program solidly started. For programs using liaisons split between
two or three schools, the cost would be higher initially, unless those liaisons are
reassigned supervisors or other central office personnel who have themselves
received some training. Incentives and sanctions
In top-down implementation, formal and informal incentives and sanctions are organizational tools available to superintendents to shape what happens and to introduce managerial control into an ambiguous set of arrangements. With test scores as the coin of the realm, public recognition of school improvement—by such means as certificates of achievement awarded by the board of education or school-by-school scores published in newspapers—acts as an inducement for principals, teachers, and students. School board recognition of the academic achievement of both schools and individuals—such as higher test scores or winning of academic olympics—attracts media and citizen notice; far more important, however, is the fact that the top authority takes the time to acknowledge and honor academic excellence. Principals who behave in a manner consistent with descriptions of instructional leadership and produce higher test results become candidates for promotion. Similarly, teachers who develop reputations for consistently turning out classes with high test scores are sometimes viewed as potential principals.

Securing parental support becomes easier when a school’s performance is anchored in standardized test data that reveal promising achievement. For indi
individuals who derive pleasure from a heightened sense of professionalism, attending workshops, reading materials unavailable to other staff, and participating in an effective schools program are rewards in themselves. For others, improved student performance at either the school or the district level encourages a sense of belonging and involvement in a larger, worthwhile effort. The last two are among the informal rewards associated with bottom-up implementation. An important incentive is the powerful feeling that can grow in a staff that works together and succeeds in producing higher test scores. The sense of shared purpose and pride in group achievement fuels further effort, increases participants’ self-esteem, and enhances their confidence in tackling tough jobs. Wise superintendents, aware of the influence of their positions and sensitive to the power of both formal and informal rewards, also know that their participation in teacher and principal work sessions tells staff and parents what is important in the district.

Sanctions also exist. When test scores plunge without recovering, the implied, if not actual, consequence for teachers and principals may well be criticism that escalates into warnings or even threats of removal. The effective schools research points inexorably to the conclusion that
children can achieve.

When test scores fail to rise or continue to decline, teachers and principals receive the blame. Although such severe penalties as removal seldom occur, the unspoken threat remains. Union contracts and due process requirements protect instructional staff from swift termination on the basis of test results, but the pattern of long-term class or school deterioration has been used to institute charges of incompetence.

The issues of choice, inservice training, and incentives and sanctions are a few of the thorny questions that arise when embracing and executing policies presumably anchored in research findings. Another element missing in the literature on effective teaching and effective schools is the role of district leadership. Leadership Most studies of effective schools stress the pivotal role of the school principal.

The research says that no school can be labeled effective (again, using the criterion of test scores) unless its principal exerts - and here the words vary - a strong administrative presence, an active style, or some other trait demonstrating leadership. But no study that I have seen lays out empirically-derived principal behaviors that produce the desired outcomes. Instead, there are recipe-like pre
scriptions stemming from personal experience, case studies of principals, or inferential leaps based upon theories or data drawn from other organizations.

Thus, the connective tissue, the set of behaviors that principals engage in to develop a school climate that supports academic achievement - to gain staff commitment, to engender high expectations, to supervise individual teachers and the entire instructional program, while carrying on the varied and complex duties connected with maintaining order in the school - none of these complex, interacting behaviors has been linked in the literature to the production of higher test scores. So far, only a general notion of leadership is a correlate of high student achievement. Practitioner faith and folk wisdom sustain the conviction that school-site leadership makes a difference. Research has yet to catch up with this lore to either inform, shape, or contradict practice. 18

Faith and folk wisdom also suggest that the superintendent exerts a critical role in establishing the district agenda, communicating the mission of the district to both the staff and community, creating a systemwide climate favoring achievement, target getting essential personnel and funds, and monitoring and assessing the overall program in order to implement school board policies directed toward school
improvement. As with the principal, experience-based knowledge about superintendents as instructional leaders exceeds the present state of research-produced knowledge. The accounts by or about superintendents embracing an effective schools approach describe attitudes and activities typical of an earlier generation of superintendents - teacher-scholars who were deeply interested in the instructional process and active in schools and classrooms. A century ago, superintendents had to teach teachers what to do in classrooms; they inspected what was taught, listened to children recite, taught classes, and, in general, were unmistakably visible in the school program. That model of superintendent as instructional leader gave way to a managerial approach that has dominated the superintendency for the last three generations. With the mounting interest in using effective schools research, the older H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H model of a school chief knowledgeable about both curriculum and instruction and visible in the schools beyond the symbolic tour is reasserting itself. Given that the literature on effective schools suggests that no school can become effective without the visible and active involvement of a principal hip-deep in the elementary school instructional program, then it also seems likely that no school
board approving policies aimed at systemwide improvement can hope to achieve

that condition without a superintendent who sustains a higher than usual involve

ment in the district’s instructional program. Of course, there will be districts that

have some effective schools regardless of the superintendent’s familiarity with

instruction, just as in a school with a principal who is uninvolved with the instruc
tional program and sees his or her task as keeping the ship afloat, there will never
theless be first-rate teachers who maintain high standards of instruction. Moreover,

the superintendent can delegate many tasks to subordinates; he or she cannot be
everywhere at once, anymore than a principal can.

The size of a school system is also a factor. Can the Chicago superintendent

with a half-million students perform as an instructional leader in the same way

as her colleague in Alexandria, Virginia, who deals with fewer than ten thousand

children? Yes, but large districts require far more symbolic and shrewd instruc
tional leadership targeted upon principals rather than teachers. The superinten
dent’s personal, active involvement in the district instructional effort seems to be

a necessary condition. I state the above as a proposition derived from the logic

of existing practice in improving school productivity. No facts yet exist on
superintendent behaviors that cause district improvement. Because of the

absence of studies investigating the superintendent’s role in improving schools,

the literature leaves us with discussions of the ineffable quality of leadership.

At a time when budget, program, and staff cuts and school closings are affecting

most districts, when a crisis of confidence in schools is attracting media attention,

and when administrators are privately and publicly bewailing the lack of money

and the restrictions upon their power, policymakers and academicians are calling

for inspired leadership. If the research on effective schools has yet to produce reli-

able prescriptions tested in numerous crucibles, the literature on leadership for both

principal and superintendent reveals a similar barrenness. Long on rhetoric and dic-

tates, much of what is written leans heavily on perceptions of what school leaders

do. Within the last decade a few scholars have produced behavioral descriptions of

principals and superintendents. Yet the tasks that administrators choose to work on,

the language they use, the discretion they employ, the symbols they manipulate, the

incentives they extend, the style and commitment they project - all dance beyond

the grasp of researchers. There are also organizational theorists who argue plausibly

that formal leadership is a myth constructed by those who need to attribute influ-
ence to incumbents. Hence, what principals and superintendents do daily to create

the conditions for instructional improvement and to influence students directly

remains in the shadows of research-produced knowledge, though honored by prac
titioners and sought by parents. 20

I prefer to acknowledge that leadership is ineffable rather than to embrace TRANSFORMING THE FROG INTO A PRINCE popular recipes that worked once in someone else’s kitchen. My experience and

that of other superintendents, however, presents some untested propositions that

researchers and policymakers may find worthy of consideration.

First, no superintendent can secretly improve a school district. The source of

formal authority for a superintendent’s initiative is the school board, which

needs to approve the general direction and to work in tandem with the superin
tendent. Self-evident as this may seem, the commonplace needs to be stated.

Second, the superintendent sets the agenda and develops the mission, using

his or her managerial skills to decide when to open the gate to ideas and when to

close it, when to veto and when to support – in short, how to develop policy.

Third, the superintendent establishes a climate which nurtures instructional

improvement in the district. Once the superintendent
becomes identified with the
mission of school improvement, even symbolic visibility in schools and class
rooms carries weight. Encouragement and support (without conceding anything
on expectations) for principals and teachers, such as protecting the instructional
day and nourishing professional development, are also important.

Fourth, the school chief uses a number of managerial tools to implement the
mission: targeting limited resources on activities that promise a payoff; placing
like-minded, skilled staff in key positions that will advance the district’s
mission; and actively participating in monitoring and assessing the instructional
program.

Such behavior on the part of the superintendent describes a high-profile,
active involvement in the instructional side of school operations. Will it produce
improved student academic performance? Maybe. Experience-derived know
ledge says yes, but no body of independent evidence yet exists to demonstrate
that engaging in these tasks will yield dividends. What these assertions about
superintendent behavior suggest is that some degree of direction and top-down
implementation is necessary in launching an improvement program. Once
launched, however, the improvement process can travel many
routes, ranging
from organizational development techniques employed with small groups to
tightly managed, orchestrated tasks, resembling a chess game. Personal prefer
ence and belief systems seems to determine the course adopted.

This description of superintendent behavior is narrowly targeted on the academic performance of students. The goals of schooling, however, go well beyond test scores. If the mission of a district embraces many goals, some of which may require substantial changes in teaching practice such as developing student initiative, decisionmaking, and cooperativeness, other leadership tasks may also be involved.

Since a great deal of existing pedagogy and principal behavior is shaped by the structure within which both teachers and administrators work, improved academic achievement is well within the margin of change set by organizational boundaries.

Hence, changes directed toward test scores are incremental and very different from a major overhaul of the entire district’s instructional program.

Whether or not such leadership activities as described here have, indeed, produced the higher academic achievement reported in districts across the nation has yet to be demonstrated. But it is clear that there are many unanticipated con
sequences of tightly coupling the central office to the local school and of con

centrating on raising achievement on tests. Unanticipated consequences Increased uniformity

The school effectiveness literature stresses the importance of managing the instructional program and coordinating the curriculum at the school site. Yet dis

tricts concentrating upon improving academic achievement experience a strong,

irresistible tug toward a standard curriculum and systemwide use of the same textbooks and student workbooks. Tailoring supplementary materials to student differences becomes less frequent, as does grouping of students within class rooms on the basis of achievement. The notion of a single, best curriculum and managerial style echoing the pre-1900 years of public schooling reasserts itself.

The press toward uniformity is neither good nor bad; every school district must strike some balance between uniformity and diversity in curriculum and program management. My point is simply that adopting the school effectiveness research will drive the curriculum and school management toward uniformity.

The same trend is visible in teaching. The research on effective teaching practices has singled out and emphasized particular techniques as being effective means of improving test results. The boosterism surrounding direct instructional
methods such as teaching the whole class at one time,
teacher-directed activities,
and continual monitoring of student work, presses teachers
toward these practices. What the literature has done is to certify direct
instruction as the single
best way of teaching. But uncritical cheerleading for this
brand of teaching
stamps whole-group instruction, lecturing, recitation, and
seatwork as effective,
going far beyond what the research findings promise or even
suggest. Moreover,
repetitive, low-level intellectual skills are now
surrounded by a halo of legitimacy.
Filling in blanks, getting test-wise to
multiple-choice items, and completing
ted exercises elevate tedious tasks to the status of
effective instruction. Concern
for student interest, motivation, and the life of the mind
diminishes with accelerated
use of dittos, seatwork, and pre-and post-tests.
Learning becomes a series of
repetitive tasks that need to be completed, placed in
folders, and marked by the
teacher. An increase in drill and routine is justified in
the name of direct instruction and concentration on low-order but important basic
skills. While mastery
learning, the use of individual contracts, and small group
instruction through
teams stand as alternatives to direct instruction in
producing academic gains,
such approaches remain largely at the margins of the
The result is that the ineffable elements of teaching as an art - tempo, improvisation, drama, and excitement of performance - receive little acknowledgment as important qualities and even less attention from district policymakers.

The pleasures that teachers derive from their relationships with children, the unpredictability, the unexpected, the unplanned, and the joyful, go unnoticed by partisans of effective teaching. There is a danger in smothering the craft and rewards of teaching in the rush to make instruction scientific and efficient. The dream of an efficient one-best-system of instruction of an earlier generation of reformers appears to have resurfaced with the undisguised fervor for direct instruction. Narrowing of the educational agenda in the pursuit of improved test scores, areas viewed as nonacademic - such as music, art, speaking, and self-esteem - receive less attention. Partisans of effective schools seem to take the position that if a subject or skill cannot be directly linked to student academic performance, then the burden of proof that it is a legitimate part of a school curriculum rests on those who see schooling in broader terms than spelling bees and multiplication tables.

Narrowing the agenda for public schools was a necessary
response to the ballooning expectations of the last half-century. But schools can do more than raise test scores of all children. Both citizens and educators must be concerned about shrinking the school district’s agenda to the least common denominator. Increased conflict between teachers and administrators.

Heightened interest in instructional leadership causes a shift in administrator behavior. The principal’s weekly presence in classrooms, periodic evaluations, and scrutiny of each class’s test achievement boosts teacher anxiety over potential loss of classroom autonomy. The principal’s insistence on the use of direct instructional methods may be viewed as a slur on the teacher’s ability to make pedagogical judgments. The likelihood of overt conflict increases when teachers feel that their professional domain is being penetrated by administrators who know little of the students they face daily and the craft they practice hourly.

Similarly, latent hostility between principals and the central office is produced by the differences between the view of the district from the principal’s office and the view from the superintendent’s desk. This conflict sharpens noticeably when the superintendent takes a greater interest in schoolwide test scores and holds principals accountable for meeting district goals. Revision in evaluation instruments for
administrators raises the spectre that principals’ jobs are on the line if they don’t produce. Few researchers have pursued this potential conflict as a consequence of adopting policies based upon effective schools research. 21 Lack of focus on schools with high test scores

Because the focus of recent efforts is on lifting test scores, little attention is paid to the curriculum, instruction, or organization of schools with median percentile ranks above 95 in math and reading. The presumption is that all is well, yet the analysis of sub-groups in high-scoring schools often reveals that there are students who need remedial help. The high achievers in these schools may also receive inappropriate instruction if teachers are using only grade-level materials. And teachers may resist moving them ahead to advanced lessons because of the ripple effects upon the next grade’s teachers, whose materials are geared to a certain expected level. Also, low expectations of high achievers - “they are so smart, they will get it on their own” - often pervade such schools, insulating students from improvement, since the schools look terrific in terms of percentile ranks. Misapplication of research findings while there is an intuitive and craft wisdom to many of the findings, there are sharp limits on their application to the high school. One limit is that the organizational structure of the high school resembles that of the
college more than that

of the elementary school. In terms of size, mission, the structuring of time,

student-teacher contact, previous training of teachers and their worldview of

what is important for young men and women, the high school is profoundly dif

erent from the elementary school. Certainly high schools can become more

effective, but to claim that formulas that have proved effective in the lower

grades will also be effective in the upper ones is a misuse of research. The

Charles Kettering Foundation, for example, sponsors a program that lists four

teen attributes of effective high schools. It is a melange of traits drawn from

findings on effective elementary schools and from theory undergirding organi

zational development. The U.S. Department of Education has recently recog

nized as effective high schools across the country which possess these fourteen

attributes. Principals are told that if they become instructional leaders, supervise

instruction, coordinate curriculum, and evaluate classroom teachers, test scores

will improve. Grafts of formulas used in elementary schools will fail, in my

judgment, until a more sensitive, grounded organizational analysis is made of

the high school. The misapplication of research findings is very tempting to poll
cymakers who hear shrill criticism from taxpayer associations, government offi
cials, academicians, and professional reformers. Conclusions from research
studies that demonstrate high positive correlations between certain activities and
improvement in test scores are often too seductive for district policymakers
pressed to increase productivity to ignore. Accordingly, districts tend to perform
the slippery twist that converts correlations into action agendas. 22
These and other unanticipated consequences raise the obvious question: If pro
ductivity improves and parents and policymakers are pleased with higher test results,
can we conclude that children are receiving a better education? Inner-city children
across the nation who have received a schooling built upon false beliefs in their inca
pacity to learn are clearly the beneficiaries of effective school efforts. This funda
mental first step is a moral as well as an educational one. No excuses are acceptable.
But improved test scores are simply not enough. To conclude that a school is
effective once it demonstrates test-score gains is, implicitly, to conclude that TRANSFORMING THE FROG INTO A PRINCE
students need to develop no other capacity than to answer multiple-choice items
correctly. The concern that drives many schools today - that of improving
student performance on achievement tests - is a short-term,
useful but constricting one. The framework for a response to this concern regarding elementary schools comes from research on effective teaching and schools. That framework, I am confident, is useful and will prove successful in lifting test scores. But, while it is a necessary first step, it will prove insufficient in reaching for broader, less easily measured yet fundamental goals of schooling. The dangers of confusing means (test-score gains) with ends (multiple aims of schooling) are real.

Based upon my experience and an awareness of the inevitable trade-offs in the implementation of effective school programs, I suggest that the expressed concern regarding test scores be reformulated as a question: In improving test results, how can the general, more complex and non-quantifiable goals of schooling be achieved? Such a question places test results in a ranking position in relation to such other important outcomes as problem solving, cooperative ness, independence in decisionmaking, positive feeling for learning, caring for others, an appreciation for the aesthetic, and similar aims.

To evaluate the effectiveness of such complex organizations as schools solely on the basis of a percentile rank is little better than to judge a car’s quality solely on the basis of its miles-per-gallon or a hospital’s
effectiveness solely by the number of its vacant beds. School officials who have adopted effective schools research, concepts, and language need to use many policy tools to improve school productivity, not just standardized test scores. Tightly coupled organizational procedures sharply focused on academic goals, as measured by test results, are clearly among those tools. Too often, however, those who believe their only tool is a hammer begin to treat everything like a nail. For that to occur now would be, in my judgment, a mistake for the children of the nation. Acknowledgement

This is a revised version of a paper commissioned by the National Institute of Education on district links with school sites in improving schools. A shorter version of this article, “Effective Schools: A Friendly But Cautionary Note,” appeared in the June 1983 issue of Phi Delta Kappan.

I wish to acknowledge the helpful comments of Steve Swerdlick. Notes


vides a historical critique on the current enthusiasm for effective schools in “Reflections on Metaphors of Educational Reform,” Harvard Graduate School of Education Bulletin, 25 (Fall 1980), 4-9. His objection to the lack of attention to district leadership is slowly being overcome. Purkey and Smith, “Effective Schools,” use the concept of “nested layers”; that is, the classroom is embedded in a school, which is embedded in a district, and each stratum influences the other. Louis Smith and his colleagues have used the same concept in an article describing the complex history of a school innovation.


5 I draw from my experience in Arlington, Va. (1974-1981), from my observations of
school districts in the San Francisco area that have
adopted school effectiveness as a

program, and from the following accounts: Alonzo Crim, “A
Community of

Believers,” Daedalus, 110 (Fall 1981), 145-162; Robert
Benjamin’s chapter on

Modesto, California, in his Making Schools Work (New York:
Continuum, 1981);

Bennett and Eastland, “Making a School System Work,” on
Portland, Maine; and

Wilson, “Do Seattle Schools Work?” The Summer 1982 issue of
State Education

Leader, published by the Education Commission of the
States, lists the steps that

schools, districts, and state agencies should pursue (such
as setting goals, cultivating

principal leadership, developing staff, and coordinating

curriculum).

6 “Improving Schools with Limited Resources,” Issuegram,
July 1982, Education Com

mission of the States, Denver, Colo.; “Old Debate Revived
over Money v. School

Quality,” Education Week, 30 March 1983, p. 19; Daniel U.
Levine and Eugene

Eubanks argue that “schools with a solid base of funding,
from regular taxes or

Chapter I or any other source, do not necessarily require
much additional funding for

program expenditures.” See their article, “A First Look at
Effective Schools Projects

in New York City and Milwaukee,” Phi Delta Kappan, 64
(1983), 702.

7 Crim, “Community of Believers,” pp. 145-162; Wilson, “Do
Seattle Schools Work?”

pp. 26–29. For costs of New York City’s School Improvement Programs, see Levine


8 See, for example, the description of New York City’s School Improvement Project TRANSFORMING THE FROG INTO A PRINCE

and the funding necessary to sustain central administration of the program, liaisons


9 My colleague, Edwin Bridges, is completing a long-term study of how school districts

manage incompetent staff. His search of the literature produced very little on either

teachers or principals.

10 The literature on implementation grows yearly. Case studies and theoretical contribu

tions have slightly increased our understanding of the complex process of converting

policy decisions into practice. See Richard Elmore’s “Organizational Models of Social Program Implementation,” Public Policy, 26 (1978), 185–228. Elmore’s taxonomy of implementation models is useful for differentiating the technical-rational approach, cur

rently enjoying a vogue among school policymakers, from the bureaucratic, conflict

bargaining, and organizational development models. Federal and state experience with
Title I, P.L. 94-142, and special projects since 1965 has demonstrated how legislative intent is persistently twisted into shapes congenial to local needs. The tension between securing compliance and releasing local capacities runs like a red thread through the accounts of these efforts. The projects that were judged effective, according to the intensive case studies of federal programs by Paul Berman and Milbrey McLaughlin, were ones that somehow put their unique stamp upon the federal project’s goals, activities, and outcomes. See Berman and McLaughlin, Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change, Vol. VIII of Implementing and Sustaining Innovations (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1978). In a critique of the literature on implementation of programs, Berman concludes that implementation is determined by so many factors and circumstances that it is idiosyncratic; see Berman, “Educational Change: An Implementation Paradigm,” in Improving Schools, eds. Rolf Lehming and Michael Kane (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1981). “Mutual adaptation,” a phrase extracted from the Rand researchers’ work, has become a shorthand expression for implementation strategies that embrace grassroots participation. Whereas some efforts have employed the findings of implementation researchers that staff commitment and a stake in decisionmaking are of pivotal importance to effective schools policies, most
programs implementing effective schools research employ top-down strategies.

11 The New York School Improvement Project is one instance of a top-down strategy employing a school-based approach. For an analysis of bottom-up and school-based strategies, see Jane L. David, School-Based Strategies: Implications for Government Policy (Palo Alto, Calif.: Bay Area Research Group, 1982).


13 Edmonds, “Programs of School Improvement,” pp. 4-11; and my own acquaintance with efforts in Milpitas, Calif. Levine and Eubanks, “A First Look,” p. 702, recommend mandating school participation if sufficient funds are available but do not mention trade-offs between choice and coercion.

15 For teacher staff development and new work norms, see Little, School Success & Staff Development. Among the many investigators of the role of principals, Harry Wolcott, Donald Willower, and Van Cleve Morris use ethnographic and observational techniques (drawn from the work of Henry Mintzberg) to describe the daily activities of several principals, but instructional leadership – however defined – is often missing from these portraits. See Harry Wolcott, The Man in the Principal’s Office (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973); Donald Willower, “Managerial Behavior of High School Principals,” Educational Administration Quarterly, 17 (1981), 69-80; Van Cleve Morris, Robert L. Crowson, Emanuel Hurwitz, Jr., and Cynthia Porter-Cehrie, The Urban Principal (Chicago: Univ. of Illinois at Chicago Circle, 1981), p. 14.

16 See Mary Bentzen, Changing Schools: The Magic Feather Principal (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974); for several productive discussions, see the essays in Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller, eds., Staff Development: New Demands New Realities, New Perspectives (New York: Teachers College Press, 1979); and Little, School Success and Staff Development.

18 A number of researchers have begun to investigate this critical area. Steven Bossert, David Dwyer, and Brian Rowan, all at the Far West Regional Lab, San Francisco, Calif., have undertaken a series of studies based upon their model of instructional management. So far, they have produced an explication of the model and five ethnographic studies of principals in effective elementary schools. Hallinger, in “Management Behavior of Principals,” discusses varied principal behaviors in ten elementary schools in a California district and concludes that the literature on effective schools is essential.
for improved student performance.


20 A few studies of superintendent behavior deal directly or tangentially with leadership:


21 Identification of these potential sources of conflict comes from my observations in school districts implementing effective schools research; Hallinger’s observations in “Management Behavior of Principals”; and my own experience in Arlington.

22 I obtained these materials in May 1983 while serving as a site visitor for the U.S. Department of Education’s recognition program of exemplary high schools. The issue of generalizability surfaces whenever I speak to groups of administrators on effective schools research. I do not claim that the findings of the
Kettering Foundation or the Department of Education are irrelevant. But in the few high schools identified as effective that I have observed firsthand, I saw organizational procedures and structural changes quite different from those of the typical high school.

Source: Educational Administration Quarterly 32(2) (April 1996): 209–235. Organizational analysis and studies of teacher thinking both contribute to discussion about how to professionalize teaching, but these two bodies of research have not been well synchronized. Teacher-thinking research examines teachers’ thought processes and makes recommendations for training. Organizational analysis emphasizes the importance of teacher commitment and the redesign of existing schools to increase teacher collegiality and participation. This article juxtaposes these two literatures to clarify and suggest ways to combine divergent images of the good teacher. It also suggests that recommendations for reform are incomplete and argues that these ideas need to be put into a wider framework.

The most recent interest in teacher professionalism, heralded by the reports of The Holmes Group (1986) and the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy (1986), is almost a decade old. Ongoing efforts to promote developments as diverse as professional development schools and site-based management (White, 1992; Wohlhuter, Smyer, & Mohrman, 1994) indicate that interest in enhancing teacher professionalism persists. Yet, debate about what it means to professionalize teaching and how it should be accomplished precedes
these reports and continues (e.g., Burbeles & Densmore, 1991; Sykes, 1991).

Two areas of research contribute to thinking about the teaching profession. Cognitive research provides an image of the professional teacher that can support arguments for the professionalization of teaching. Organizational analysis helps to clarify the conditions of work necessary for teachers to act as professionals, but its image of the good teacher is very different from what comes from cognitive research.

There have been a few efforts to link research on organizations and cognition (e.g., Murphy, 1991), but these have rarely focused on teaching. As a result, these two bodies of research have not been well-synchronized as they apply to teaching.

When they turn from students to educators, cognitive researchers delve deeply into the thought processes of teachers and, for the most part, have made recommendations on the training and certification of (usually new) teachers. Organizational analysis in education draws on a long, out-of-education tradition of research on organizational behavior to suggest something close to generic prescriptions to reform schools in light of a universal image of the self-motivated worker. How those prescriptions are linked to the work of professional teachers is unclear.
My intent in this article is to juxtapose these two literatures in order to suggest some implications for the reform of schools. Table 1 provides a capsule summary of how I see the similarities and differences between these literatures.

I begin by clarifying the image of the good teacher inherent in each literature.

The cognitive literature elucidates the knowledge and thought processes of teachers, whereas the organizational research stresses the importance of commitment. Then, I examine the reform proposals associated with each: teacher training and assessment in the cognitive literature, and variations on the themes of participation and collegiality in the organizational literature. Finally, I argue that both sets of recommendations are useful but incomplete and suggest some other reforms that need to accompany them.

Comparing these literatures is not easy, because both are rich and complex.

Both are moving forward on a variety of fronts with a certain amount of ferment, differences of emphasis, and debates within each. Moreover, there is a substantial asymmetry. The cognitive literature explicitly analyzes certain aspects of good teaching while largely ignoring what schools are like. Organizational work focuses on schools while making (often ambiguously specified)
assumptions about what constitutes good teaching. What follows then is

necessarily a simplification of two dynamic fields of study.

Table 1 Comparison of implications of cognitive and organizational research for teacher professionalism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive research</th>
<th>Organizational research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus of attention</td>
<td>Internal thought processes, usually students’ arrangements, including how they affect the work and attitudes of workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image of professional</td>
<td>Knowledgeable, reflective, Committed teacher practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach to reform</td>
<td>Pre-service education and Structural changes such as (to a lesser extent) entry site-based management and requirements reforms to promote collegiality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the numerous efforts to define a profession and distinguish it from other occupations, a few themes repeat themselves and appear to be especially relevant to education. One rationale is that a profession provides a service that is difficult to monitor in a situation where the client knows less than the service provider or is otherwise vulnerable (Wise, 1989). Because of the uncertainty surrounding service delivery, quality control is maintained over the professional rather than over the service itself. Because discretion is required, it is necessary to assure that professionals have both the requisite knowledge and appropriate
values (Darling-Hammond, 1989; Weick & McDaniel, 1989). The importance of knowledge is widely recognized, although the nature of that knowledge is currently the subject of considerable ferment (Schon, 1987). The values issue has received less attention. Still, professions have been defined as elites responsible for the protection of a social value (Weick & McDaniel, 1989). The importance of values becomes apparent from both the complexity of the task and the vulnerability of the client. Just as it is important (and problematic) that the medical doctor not prescribe unnecessary procedures to make money at the expense of the patient’s health or purse, it is crucial that the teacher’s primary concern be the welfare of the student, not him- or herself. The cognitive literature focuses on teacher knowledge. Organizational research gives relatively more attention to values by focusing on attitudes and commitments. Teacher knowledge research on teacher knowledge is new, perhaps 15 or 20 years old. It is partially a reaction to the process-product research that focused strictly on teacher behavior; appeared to emphasize uniform, noncontingent recommendations for the improvement of teaching; and took existing definitions of student achievement as given. This new research is based on the assumptions that knowledge and
thought are related to behavior, that teaching is contingent, and that much of what the teacher does is design and adjust teaching strategies and tactics in light of both the students and the content to be taught. It emphasizes the complexity and frequency of teacher decision making (on average one decision every 2 minutes), and it is more oriented toward developing higher-order thinking skills than is usually the case (Clark & Peterson, 1986).

This research draws on and parallels the cognitive science treatment of student learning (Bransford, 1979; Peterson, Fennema, & Carpenter, 1991). That research delves into the microparticulars of what it takes for students to understand a mathematics problem, a science lab, or a writing assignment. One analysis from mathematics suggests that understanding involves:

- **Structures**, or kinds of content, computing algorithms, principles, ways of translating word problems into computations, and other things that must be known about mathematics. These are often implicit.
- **Representations**, or ways of describing and presenting structures to oneself or others. These may be invented or include commonly accepted symbols, such as the formal symbols for addition, subtraction, and so forth.
- **Connections** between various structures and representations. Deep understanding is often characterized by rich connections among various structures. Without such connections, for instance, it is difficult to apply structures learned in school (such as long division) to real-life problems.

Active construction of knowledge. Essentially, this means
that students cannot accept or memorize structures or representations; these must be actively constructed through some kind of learning task, activity, or application.

Situated cognition, which means that understanding is intertwined with specific physical and social situations. The ability to estimate the time it takes to do a job, for instance, is a mathematical skill that comes from doing a kind of work. (Putnam, Lampert, & Peterson, 1990)

This view of understanding is a way of thinking about what higher-order thinking is. Moreover, it has important implications for instruction. For instance, the principle of active construction means that teachers cannot effectively tell students about specific structures. Depending on the particular subject area, telling can help. However, students generally have to develop their own structures through some kind of work, and they develop best what they work on.

Thus extensive drill and practice of mathematics facts does not help with the application of those facts to story problems or to problem solving in unknown situations. Another implication seems to be that it is not necessary to teach basic skills (computation) before more complex skills. The two can be learned together. Finally, because students do construct their own understanding, it is necessary to build from what they already know. A good deal of teaching then becomes making contact between the curriculum and students’ knowledge.

(Bransford, 1979; Peterson et al., 1991).
Similar analyses are being conducted of teacher knowledge. Inquiries into structures focus on what teachers must know. Shulman (1987) provides one of the most inclusive typologies of teacher knowledge. It includes content knowledge; general pedagogical knowledge, including principles of classroom management; curriculum knowledge of the materials and programs with which teachers work; pedagogical content knowledge, the blend of content and pedagogy needed to communicate with students; knowledge of learners and their characteristics; knowledge of educational contexts from the classroom to district governance to communities; and knowledge of educational ends and values. He argues further that pedagogical content knowledge is the special province of teachers, for they must know their content, not so that they can advance what is known, but so that they can communicate it to students who often lack all or part of the necessary background understanding.

Because students usually lack either the structures or the connections to understand what the teacher has to offer, representation becomes a special challenge. Teachers must find ways to bridge the gap between what students currently know and what they should know. One way to do so is
through the use of

metaphor, and the kind of metaphor the teacher uses will highlight some aspects

of what must be learned rather than others. For instance, Shakespeare’s Julius

Caesar can be taught in ways that emphasize language, history, or moral conflict

(Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987); but for some students, a teacher might

better use an episode of Star Trek to get at the latter issue because it is more

familiar.

Teachers apply static structures through complex reasoning processes that

take place both in the classroom while working with students and outside while

planning for an activity and assessing its effectiveness. For instance, teaching a

lesson on a given topic requires understanding its purposes and the subject

matter; transforming it into a set of representations and activities through which

students can understand it better; actually conducting the activities while manag

ing the presentation, interactions among students, group work, discipline, and so

forth; evaluating student understanding; reflecting on the results; and creating

new comprehension for later lessons (Clark & Peterson, 1986; Shulman, 1987).

Research on teacher knowledge helps describe the kind of teaching through

which students can actively construct their own knowledge.
Teachers must have
the deep understanding of their content that helps generate
multiple representations and activities and select those that best fit the
students taught. These must
be accompanied by a subtle ability to pick up cues
emanating from students as
the classroom activity unfolds and to adjust that activity
to student progress.

With this knowledge and ability, teacher talk becomes
limited. Although
teachers sometimes have to describe fundamental structures
and cue students to
what they are looking for, much more class time is spent in
student activity and
sometimes in dialogue than is usually the case. The art of
teaching is not so
much the good lecture or the teacher-dominated discussion
as the good activity.

Teaching is more interactive, and learning is more active
than is typical of most
present practice. Experimental evidence suggests that this
approach to teaching
effectively helps students develop higher-order capacities
in both reading and
mathematics. Moreover, where the teacher knows more about
students’ current
knowledge, those students learn more (Palincsar & Brown,
1984; Peterson et al.,

The ability of knowledgeable teachers to promote
higher-order thinking is
crucial to the argument for professionalizing teaching.
Efforts to change teachers’ status have been made previously with relatively little success. One thing that makes the current situation different is that the United States is now competing in a global, high-technology market where other countries often have the advantage. A literate, inventive, and socially responsible workforce will be necessary for the United States to hold its own in the future. As the proportion of poor, minority, and immigrant children in the populace grows, such a workforce may become increasingly more difficult to achieve. If more knowledgeable teachers contribute significantly to that end, the public may be more likely to accept the professionalization of teaching (Devaney & Sykes, 1988).

Not all the research on teacher knowledge contributes to this picture of professionalized teaching. Although most of this work examines the application of pedagogical content knowledge, there have also been analyses of teachers’ knowledge of classroom management. Carter and Doyle (1987), for instance, describe teachers’ structures for organizing their classrooms. Some structures help teachers avoid disruptions, switch topics quickly to maintain student attention, and otherwise maintain the flow of classroom events. Others encourage
teachers to challenge disruptive students rather than ignoring them or changing the flow of activity. The first structures are much more adaptive for maintaining a stream of instructional work than the second. This line of work suggests that the overwhelming imperative of classroom life is maintaining order and that teachers learn strategies of classroom management and presentation of lessons that facilitate that end. In fact, teachers may avoid the activities that facilitate deeper student understanding when they learn that such activities can be particularly disruptive. Values and commitment

The organizational research on teaching is older than the cognitive. Most of this work is guided by theories of organizational behavior, a field that highlights the similarities among schools, universities, factories, and armies in order to develop general principles about how they work. Topics of interest include power, leadership, motivation, and structural arrangements (Boyan, 1988). Thus, whereas the cognitive research focuses on classroom particulars, the organizational research looks outside of education for general patterns. This generalizing nature has advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it can lead to solutions to problems that might not otherwise be considered. On the other hand,
it can direct attention to solutions to nonproblems or to structural arrangements that better fit other situations.

Another important characteristic of the organizational research is that until recently, much of it was conducted in the service of administrators or at least to help them become more effective. The teacher variables of interest often include satisfaction, loyalty, and trust (Conley, 1991). Those characteristics make teachers more compliant and easier to work with but not necessarily more professional (because part of professionalism includes independence) or effective instructors.

Recently, however, some organizational researchers have begun to explore the characteristics of schools that facilitate or impede teachers’ efforts to act as professionals (Bacharach & Conley, 1989). One manifestation of this change is a shift from dependent variables, such as satisfaction to commitment. Although images of teaching and proposals for reform this shift is not a complete solution, it is a distinct improvement. Commitment has been defined in many ways, including as internalized motivation, a partisan attachment to the goals and values of an organization, and the attachment of the personality system to social relations seen as self-expressive. A common theme in all these definitions is a psychological bond between the
individual and the

object of commitment, a bond that takes on special meaning and importance for

that individual. The committed person should believe strongly in the goals or

purposes associated with that object, be willing to exert considerable effort on

its behalf, and desire to remain affiliated with it (Firestone, 1990).

Theoretically, commitment has two advantages over satisfaction. First, it is

more stable, developing slowly but persisting (up to a point) through the bad
times, whereas satisfaction diminishes swiftly. Second, satisfaction implies con
tentment with things as they are, whereas the committed individual should be

open to improvements in line with the underlying values to which that person is

attached (Firestone, 1990).

The effects of commitment must be understood in light of the market and
demographic forces that hold people in teaching. As people become older, the
costs of changing careers become high, even if the psychic bonds tying an indi
vidual to a line of work attenuate. Thus, especially as the teaching force con
tinues to age, loss of commitment can have a substantial effect on teachers’

plans to leave teaching for another occupation but almost no effect on actual

quitting behavior (Dworkin, 1987). As a result, many
teachers feel trapped in their work and are no longer committed to providing the skill and effort they did earlier. This may be one reason for the repeated findings that teacher effectiveness peaks at about 5 years of experience and that almost a third of current teachers report that they would not choose the same occupation again (Dworkin, 1987; NEA, 1987; Rosenholtz, 1985).

Commitment is more closely tied to aspects of teachers’ work that are under their control. For instance, the attendance of committed teachers is higher than that of their less committed colleagues. Moreover, lack of commitment has been linked to teacher burnout. Burned-out teachers tend to be less sympathetic toward students, have a lower tolerance for frustration in the classroom, and feel exhausted and anxious. They also plan less for their future and develop fewer plans to improve the academic quality of instruction. In line with thinking about professionalism, they are also less likely than their more committed colleagues to challenge authority when they experience rules that constrain them from teaching in ways they see as effective (Farber, 1984; Rosenholtz, 1989).

Because organizational research typically focused on teacher behavior and orientations rather than the ultimate outcomes of student
learning, and because attention to commitment is relatively new, there are not many studies linking it to student learning. However, the available evidence is suggestive. In Tennessee, Rosenholtz (1989) found that teacher commitment contributed to gains in elementary student achievement. In a better controlled study, Kushman (1992) also found significant associations between commitment and academic achievement. HISTORY AND RESEARCH

One problem with this line of research is that it is not always clear to what teachers are committed. Their work commitments can compete with those unrelated to work. They can also become attached more to some parts of their work than others; hence the common observation that high school teachers become especially committed to their subjects, whereas elementary teachers are more committed to their students. Most research has been about undifferentiated commitment to teaching. A few more fine-grained studies are beginning to explore the variety of teacher commitments and their consequences. Firestone and Rosenblum (1988) found that high school teachers could be committed to any combination of their place of employment, their students, or their subject matter, suggesting that the nature of those commitments shape the educational
experiences students have. Other researchers have found different organizational correlates for teachers’ sense of personal efficacy, community, and expectations for students (Louis, 1991; Neumann, Rutter, & Smith, 1989).

Although most of this research links particular commitments to teaching outcomes, Conley points out that teachers operate in an organizational context. This context may appropriately constrain (although not necessarily dictate) teachers’ educational commitments. Moreover, some of those commitments should be to their school and colleagues, because these will affect the quality of their instructional work. Such commitments also reflect the larger social responsibility of the professional (Conley, 1988).

This examination of microcommitments is important for three reasons. First, this more differentiated analysis parallels the treatment of values in discussions of professionalism. Generic commitment to teaching might not be all that different from satisfaction as a facilitator of managerial work because it contributes to a hard-working (if not always compliant) staff. Yet, the observation that professionals are committed to specific values—for example, the welfare of students—suggests the need for both normative analysis, to clarify what teachers’ commitments should be, and empirical analysis, to find out
what they actually are.

Second, the focus on microcommitments is similar to the cognitive research on teaching, with its fine-grained analysis of kinds of teacher knowledge. More over, the distinction between knowledge and values breaks down at times, especially in areas like education, where disagreement about purposes is high. Even when knowledge and values are analytically distinct, they may vary together.

Thus teachers with a deeper knowledge about their children’s mathematical skills also have a previous belief in the value of cognitively oriented instruction.

That is, their attitude is that children construct their own mathematical knowledge, that instruction should help children develop their knowledge, that ideas should be sequenced according to what children already know, and that skill instruction should not be separated from problem solving (Peterson et al., 1991).

Finally, there is more evidence about the relationships between these micro commitments and student learning than there is about the effects of generic commitment. For instance, teachers’ sense of efficacy and expectations for images of teaching and proposals for reform students are associated with conventional measures of student achievement, and
teachers’ beliefs in cognitively oriented instruction are associated with learning
more complex mathematical skills (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Peterson et al., 1991). Thus, although organizational researchers have not attended as carefully
to what teachers know and think as the cognitive researchers, the focus on
microcommitments provides an opportunity to join these two research agendas. Recommendations for reform
The research on teachers’ knowledge and thinking has been used primarily to
address problems of preparation and accreditation. This research suggests ways
to rethink the content, methods, and policies of teacher education. Some sugges
tions do not change the form of preparation, but they do lead to ways to more
effectively help prospective teachers develop their own structures for teaching
and make the connections between those structures and application situations.
Other changes, such as professional development schools that bring the class
room training of prospective teachers closer to a hands-on experience, should
substantially facilitate beginners’ efforts to actively construct their approaches to
teaching using existing knowledge as a guide (Floden & Klinzing, 1990; The Holmes Group, 1990).
The other development is in new forms of testing. These move away from
past practice, which stressed either multiple choice tests or in-class observation of generic dimensions of teaching that do not take either students or subject matter into account. Instead, a variety of simulations are being suggested that force those tested to address problems more like those in real teaching situations and to articulate not only a solution but also the process of deriving that solution. Teachers must represent the structures with which they work and demonstrate the ability to make connections among those structures using materials closely related to real teaching situations. Such tests are likely to be part of a program for advanced or board certification of teachers, if not initial licensing (Haertel, 1991; Peterson & Comeaux, 1989).

If appropriately designed and implemented, improved teacher preparation and more rigorous entry and licensure requirements can be an important part of any effort to professionalize teaching. Such requirements model more established professions, so they should help to legitimate the occupation. At the same time, they are likely to ensure that the teaching force of the future is more knowledge able in ways directly relevant to educational practice (Darling-Hammond, 1984).

Nevertheless, by themselves they are not likely to make a great difference, if
only because most teachers are old teachers. The proportion of teachers with less than 5 years of experience has fallen from 32% in 1966 to 10% in 1986 (NEA, 1987). Thus, even in times of expansion, change by regeneration progresses very slowly. Experienced teachers will establish the normative climate into which new recruits arrive. Past experiments at educational reform by bringing in cadres of fresh faces have not worked well (Corwin, 1973). Moreover, because beginners can more easily leave teaching than those with more experience, many of those who have experienced new forms of training and passed new accreditation tests are likely to depart. In fact, the best, the brightest, and the most recent are likely to be among those who leave education most quickly under the current circumstances (Vance & Schlecty, 1982).

Thus a comprehensive effort to professionalize teaching will have to reform existing schools to both create a more conducive context for new cohorts of better trained teachers and to increase the knowledge and change the commitments of those already present. In fact, a number of proposals to reorganize teaching have been made over the last decade. Most attempt to increase teachers’ participation in educational decision making, their collegial inter
action, or both. There are good reasons to believe that these kinds of changes will improve teachers’ commitment and either enhance their knowledge or allow them to use it better. However, the basic ideas of participation and collegiality also have important flaws that must be addressed.

Participatory reforms

The traditional distribution of influence in schools gives teachers substantial autonomy in the classroom but limited input to decisions made at the school or district level. The image of a profession as a self-regulating body of experts suggests that giving teachers more influence will substantially improve the quality of education (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Conley, 1991). Proposed changes in governance give teachers more influence over out-of-class decisions affecting such issues as curriculum, budget, and personnel. They go beyond past practices of delegating some decisions to departments or creating ad hoc committees.

One of the most popular approaches to increasing teacher participation is site-based management, where many decisions previously made at the district level are delegated to the school. When these decisions are not monopolized by the principal but made by a committee including the principal, teachers, and perhaps students and/or parents, and when the authority of teachers within such a com
mittee is high, teachers become more empowered. There have been numerous studies of this phenomenon in the last few years (e.g., Carnoy & McDonnell, 1987; Weiss & Cambone, 1994; Wohlstetter et al., 1994). Although there have been fewer studies of such cases, teachers can also influence district decisions through district-established procedures or those negotiated with a union.

Empirically, teachers experience a lack of participation—especially with such issues as curriculum, grading, discipline policy, and reporting procedures—as a deficit, and that deficit has been linked to reduced commitment (Bacharach, Bamberger, Conley, & Bauer, 1990). Participation can contribute to commitment in a number of ways. When teachers have genuine influence over a decision, their sense of autonomy increases, and they are likely to take more responsibility for that decision. The process leading up to the decision helps teachers understand the rationale behind it, so their purposes and those of IMAGES OF TEACHING AND PROPOSALS FOR REFORM administrators become better aligned. The course of action thus becomes more meaningful to teachers. Moreover, by providing information about how decisions fit with existing practices and potential barriers to new courses of
action, teachers increase the fit with the current context and the likelihood that necessary resources are provided. Thus the decision becomes more realistic and feasible. In effect, participation has the social psychological effect of increasing teachers’ ownership of the decision while allowing them to use their knowledge in another context. Teachers’ substantive input combined with the knowledge they bring permits a technically better outcome that should enhance their work (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Whether participation has the effects expected will depend in part on the nature of the decision (e.g., classroom, school, or district) and the particular microcommitments of interest. That is, certain participation experiences will affect some commitments but not others.

Rank differentiation and collegiality

A second set of reforms introduces rank differentiation to teaching. Included are career ladders and mentor teacher programs. The career ladder proposal of The Holmes Group and Carnegie Commission called for three ranks: novice, professional, and lead teachers. Novices would have reduced responsibility and receive extensive support and assistance from lead teachers. Professional teachers would operate much like most teachers today. Lead teachers would continue to teach but also take responsibility for mentoring novices, training and coaching all
staff, developing curriculum, devising testing and measurement systems, con
ducting action research, and even contributing to building management (Sedlak,
1987).

Although the term career ladder became quite popular and was adopted by several states, few systems encompass the differentiation of rank, remuneration, and responsibility encompassed by the original proposals. Some are little more than merit pay under a different label. Others, such as Utah’s and Arizona’s, allow for real role differentiation so that teachers can interact with and offer support or assistance to colleagues. These programs are particularly difficult to describe because they allow for local program development so that important rewards, selection criteria, and role responsibilities vary from district to district (Brandt, 1990).

Mentor programs through which experienced teachers offer advice or assistance to beginners also permit such interaction and support. California’s program paid mentors $4,000 a year for special projects that were expected to feature giving help to new teachers. Connecticut’s system offered more structure, in that mentors were expected to help teachers prepare to pass 15 competency criteria.
required for certification. Like career ladders, these programs include differentiation of ranks and build interaction among teachers, but the emphasis on helping beginners and the limited responsibility of mentors often makes them more palatable to regular teachers (Little, 1990a).

These programs are expected to have a number of benefits. By staging teachers’ careers, they presumably provide incentives for continued professional development through the life cycle. Some career ladders offer the opportunity for increased participation for teachers with higher ranks. However, the focus of attention here is on the attempt to increase interaction and collegiality among teachers. Traditionally, teachers are isolated in their classrooms. They spend much more time talking to students than to colleagues; occupational norms reinforce organizationally enforced privacy. Whatever talk goes on among teachers tends to be social rather than discussion of the craft of teaching. This isolation limits professional group control; colleagues cannot monitor and enforce standards when they do not know what others are doing. In addition, it is difficult to develop a common professional language or conceptual base without sharing (Darling-Hammond, 1989; Little, 1990b).
It has been argued that more collegial interaction among teachers around issues of teaching should make teachers more knowledgeable and effective. In principle, collaborative action could range from the casual swapping of stories through providing advice and sharing materials to joint work where some aspects of actual instruction are done together. The latter could include team teaching with more than one teacher in the same classroom, but it could also include certain forms of communal planning and curriculum development.

Advice giving and sharing can occur spontaneously where a school culture promotes interaction, but formal mentor-teacher and career ladder programs should enhance such interaction (Little, 1990b). Collegial interaction significantly facilitates program implementation. It helps teachers better understand what is expected of them and how to accomplish it (Fullan, 1991). More generally, at least through informal advice giving and sharing, collegiality is indirectly related to both teacher commitment and student learning. When a school’s staff has common goals, sharing increases teachers’ opportunities to enhance their knowledge by learning from each other. Increased learning opportunities for teachers are associated with both increased student
achievement and teacher commitment. The arguments here are fairly complex

and especially interesting because they link knowledge and commitment. To simplify, collaboration can provide an opportunity for teachers to learn from each other. As a result, their knowledge increases so they are better prepared to face the challenges of teaching. This preparation pays off directly in increased student learning. Where teachers get feedback to this effect (and feedback from their peers about their own competence), they become more committed to their work (Neumann, Rutter, & Smith, 1989; Rosenholtz, 1989; Shulman, 1989). Problems with the proposals studies and evaluations of these changes are beginning to appear; as often happens, ideas that appeared extremely promising in embryo turn out to have problems in practice. Some of these problems come from the difficulties of adapting new ideas to current practice. For instance, efforts to promote collegiality run up against strong norms of privacy and equality among teachers. To offer advice is often viewed as putting oneself above others, whereas asking for advice is seen as a sign of weakness. Sharing practice information creates the risk of becoming indebted to or criticized by others who are more skillful or simply have different definitions of good teaching (Little,
The heavy emphasis on differences of rank in programs that build collegiality add to the problem. Where special positions are distributed by administrators, there is a tendency to hoard ideas to compete more effectively for scarce rewards. Then the selection process actually works against collegiality. Where teachers play a major role in selection, they may use their power to chastise those who appear more ambitious than others by giving them low evaluations. Even after positions are obtained, teachers who have not taken on additional responsibilities may ridicule those who have as rate busters (Firestone & Bader, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1987).

Participation is also problematic. In spite of rhetoric about increasing teacher influence not reducing that of administrators, many view increased authority of formal subordinates as a threat. Even those who do not may fail to understand the implications of true sharing of influence; hence the apocryphal story about the superintendent who says “we are going to have site-based management, and we are going to do it my way.” Teachers may become embittered when opportunities to make decisions they thought were offered do not materialize. Even when opportunities to share influence prove genuine,
the time involved

often proves substantial. School- and district-level
decision making competes

with classroom demands, so teachers either become exhausted
or let something

slip. Moreover, when site-based management is mandated,
teachers often find

that the threats to existing relationships with
administrators outweigh anticipated

gains (Corbett, Dawson, & Firestone, 1984; Firestone &
Bader, 1992).

Little (1990b) raises an even more fundamental problem when
she asks, Bluntly put, do we have in teachers’
collaborative work the creative development of
well-informed choices or the mutual reinforcement of poorly
informed habit? Does teachers’ time together advance the
understanding and imagination they bring to their work or
do teachers merely confirm one another in present practice?
(p. 525)

There is considerable evidence that most teachers do not
know how to teach

in the way suggested by research on cognitive science and
teacher thinking.

Moreover, the commitments that must go with that knowledge
may also be

absent in many instances. This becomes apparent from
studies of the knowledge

and norms of teachers. In many cases, much of that
knowledge is tacit, unarticulated. Teachers often cannot represent what they know, nor
can they reflect on

the conditions under which particular strategies or tactics
are most appropriate. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

In some cases, norms of discourse actively prohibit
reference to theory or any
experience outside the classroom (Hargreaves, 1984; Little, 1990b).

Moreover, the typical pattern of educational practice is quite different from

that recommended by cognitive scientists. Cuban (1984) describes a pattern of

teacher-dominated classrooms that features whole-group instruction, teacher

monopolization of classroom talk, reduced student movement, and the preva

lence of worksheets and short exercises, a pattern that has persisted with only

minor variations since before the turn of the century.

Within this pattern,

teachers appear to emphasize getting the right answer. They do not need to know

much about how students do so and may not be able to model

more complex cognitive capacities. This pattern is robust. It persists in spite of several previous

aggressive efforts to propagate educational approaches similar to those advoc

ated by researchers on teacher thinking (Cuban, 1984).

At the high school level, teacher-centered instruction frequently takes the

form of a bargain or treaty between teachers and students. In this bargain,

teachers reduce the intellectual demands they make on

students in return for

more pleasant social relations and a more orderly classroom. Often, teachers and

students agree to engage in learning of ritualistic school knowledge that is not
particularly relevant to the world around them, but is safer or easier for all concerned. Although this pattern may be more obvious in urban schools, it appears in schools teaching students of all races and classes (McNeil, 1988; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985; Sedlak, Wheeler, Pullin, & Cusick, 1986).

There are several possible explanations for the patterns noted here. First, insofar as teachers teach the way they were taught as students, they simply lack familiarity with alternative approaches and are unable to execute them. Careful observation of efforts to implement more cognitively demanding approaches to instruction through both local restructuring and state policy reveal that teachers who think they are implementing new approaches substantially misunderstand what is expected of them and how to achieve those ends. Their knowledge of how to teach and definitions of appropriate teaching behavior are thoroughly at odds with these changes (Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis [EEPA], 1990; McCarthey & Peterson, 1991).

Second, teacher-centered instruction and bargains may be a functional response to current organizational arrangements. Teachers must both maintain order and help students learn the curriculum. The prevailing system of age
grading, self-contained classrooms, class sizes of over 25, and methods of accountability for student learning may create an imbalance in favor of main taining order. Cognitively based, active instruction can be extremely dif cult under these conditions; it may require more energy than most teachers are willing to commit, create too many problems, and offer too few rewards. Thus, many teachers may give order precedence over learning, not because of igno rance but because of a combination of physical constraints, their own values, and the values of those around them (Carter & Doyle, 1987; Cuban, 1984).

Beyond the typical schools are those most often found in urban settings, where a combination of lack of administrative support and feedback from stu dents create times when, as one teacher explains, “you think you’re really cooking and [students] say, ‘can I go to the bathroom?’ When you look into their eyes and you can see clear out of the backs of their heads” (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988, p. 285; see also Metz, 1986). In these situations, teachers become extremely alienated. To preserve their professional self-respect, some teachers blame poor performance entirely on students and administrators and refuse to take any responsibility for the results of their
work. In fact, there may be reason for some of these teacher views; Anyon (1994) graphically describes the absurdity of focusing on professional development in dysfunctional urban schools in dysfunctional neighborhoods, where just getting through the day becomes a major challenge. Under these conditions of extreme disorder and alienation, it may be futile to think about complex modes of teacher thinking or active forms of student learning until more fundamental problems are solved.

Most teachers’ knowledge and values differ substantially from those congruent with approaches to teaching that reinforce higher-order thinking, but what teachers know and believe may be quite functional for the current way that schools are organized. These circumstances limit the benefits to be expected from both participation and collegiality. When teachers do not understand alternative models of teaching, they will not use greater influence to create conditions that support those models. As an example, effective schools programs begun in the early 1980s often used a team of teachers and the principal to plan improvements. In a substantial number of programs, the focus of these group deliberations was on improving discipline and the physical plant. It was difficult
to get them to address issues more directly related to curriculum and

instruction. 1

Nor will collegial interaction allow teachers to share knowledge they do not

have. The knowledge that Rosenholtz’s collegial teachers shared among them

selves frequently consisted of particular techniques to teach a specific concept or

work with one individual within the existing framework of educational practice

and goals. In a recent case study of a career ladder that successfully increased

both collegial interaction and teacher influence within the district, a great deal of

effort went into developing new curriculum. Examination of the products that

resulted from that work show serious efforts to improve teaching, but within the

currently typical model of instruction. Typical improvements included a new

Advanced Placement course, special programs for at-risk youth, and modifica
tions of the way elementary art and music were taught. Although classroom

observations were not conducted, there was little reason to believe that major

changes took place (Firestone & Bader, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1989). Toward a more comprehensive agenda

Research on teacher cognition suggests that professionalized teachers use under

standings that are not now typical, to teach in ways that are not currently preva...
ent, to help students construct knowledge that is deeper and more interconnected than is now usually the case. Organizational reforms such as participation and collegiality can facilitate this professionalizing agenda. Such changes have motivational value; they help teachers share what they know; and they help ensure that teachers will operate in situations that facilitate their instructional efforts.

These reforms help teachers reach their current images of appropriate pedagogical practice and even bring about new images of practice. They are secondary to changing how teachers teach, but they remain crucial. That is, changing organizational arrangements without helping teachers to become more knowledgeable is not likely to lead to great change. Yet, teachers are not likely to become more knowledgeable without the motivation to do so. Teachers’ knowledge and commitments A minority of teachers are probably already committed to facilitating the active learning advocated by cognitive science, which builds from what students already know. To most teachers, however, these ideas are likely to be foreign. These ideas were not part of how these teachers were taught as students or what they learned in college or graduate school. Three changes in their knowledge and commitments are especially crucial.
• Teachers will need different images of the good student. It is not enough for students to be cooperative and produce the right answers. They must become self-motivated learners who are curious and able to regulate their own learning. They will be more active (and noisy) than current students and more likely to challenge revealed authority if only to understand the evidence and reasoning behind conventional knowledge.

• Teachers will have to know more about teaching the curriculum. In many cases, they will need a better grasp of the content they teach in order to address topics adequately. They will have to understand how students learn what they teach and how to diagnose students’ existing comprehension structures. They will also need the pedagogical content knowledge to bridge the gap between the curriculum to be taught and students’ current knowledge (Shulman, 1987; Wilson et al., 1987).

• Teachers must understand approaches to classroom management that facilitate students’ active involvement in new learning experiences and are still orderly enough to allow groups to operate in limited space (Carter & Doyle, 1987).

Because these ideas are not yet widely accepted among
teachers, they will

have to come from the outside. Most teachers are not well-placed to learn about

these ideas or share them with others. Administrators and district staff, who have

better access to such knowledge, will have to play a major role. Where they are

present, lead teachers may also contribute. If these ideas are to catch hold with

more than a minority of teachers, it will be necessary to turn to some of the

large-scale staff development approaches that have been developed for upgrading

the knowledge of whole schools. Most of these model with teachers the kind

of active learning that is suggested for students. These include the Gheens

Academy in Louisville, Kentucky, and the Schenley High School in Pittsburgh,

Pennsylvania, where large numbers of teachers have had access to new learning

opportunities. Professional development schools will also be important insofar

as they include in-service for current teachers as well as contributions to pre

service preparation (The Holmes Group, 1990; Wallace, Young, Johnston,

LeMahieu, & Bickell, 1984). State-supported professional development networks,

such as the California Subject Matter Projects may also prove important

(Lieberman & McLaughlin, 1992).
One dilemma to be faced here is that it is important for all teachers to be introduced to these ideas. However, these ideas cannot be mandated because of what we know about the importance of both teacher participation and autonomy and the need for active learning. If these ideas are to be widespread, it is important for district administrators to indicate that the ideas have top priority through (a) their own involvement in professional development activities (as both participants and facilitator); (b) the allocation of resources to the task; and (c) the creation of opportunities for teachers to discuss what they are learning and to act and reflect on their efforts (Corbett & Wilson, 1992).

Organizational arrangements

Two sets of organizational arrangements will have to be addressed: those that constrain teachers’ opportunities to use their knowledge to promote active student learning and those that undermine their commitment. Teachers may know correctly that active learning is extremely difficult in egg-crate schools where individual teachers work with classes of 25 to 35 students grouped by age and often by ability. The high school practice of moving students among courses every 45 to 55 minutes adds even further constraints. Elmore (1991) suggests that changing teaching practice will require modification in four regularities of
schools: how students are grouped for instruction, how teachers’ work is defined

vis-à-vis groups of students, how content is allocated to time, and how students are assessed. He suggests that these regularities are like a genetic code that makes schools recognizable and constrains how the activities of teachers and students can be organized. Only certain approaches to teaching are possible within specific arrangements, and some of those will be easier than others. Thus, an elementary teacher can use activity centers in a regular classroom, but it is extremely difficult (Elmore, 1991).

One difficulty for reformers is that when one moves away from the conventional structure, it is not clear what range of options exists, and whether some more effectively promote active learning and flexible teaching for higher-order thinking than others. It does appear that teachers trying to adopt these ideas find constraints the current age-grade grouping structure, the division of content into discrete topic areas, and—especially where the stakes are high—conventional approaches to assessment. Some efforts to restructure schools around the country are experimenting with more flexible grouping arrangements, but it will be some time before we know a great deal about which ones
are preferable. At this point, the experimentation itself is important and should be expanded.

More is known about the factors that affect teacher commitment, an important issue if—as it appears—these new approaches to teaching require educators to work consistently harder. To simplify a great deal of literature, these factors can be divided into those that will require more money and those that can be provided by administrators within existing parameters. The financial issues include time, salary, and materials. The absence of free periods for teachers is a recurring barrier to staff development, as are the implementation of new practices and teacher participation in decision making. Buying teacher time can facilitate these activities. Moreover, new approaches to active learning are likely to require more than current levels of teacher planning and preparation. Right now the amount of time devoted to planning varies greatly from teacher to teacher (Corcoran, 1990; Firestone & Bader, 1992; Hansen & Corcoran, 1989; McLaughlin, Talbert, & Bascia, 1990).

Salary is intimately related to professionalization. One reason teachers want to become professional is to increase their salaries. Salaries also help the field retain the knowledgeable people needed to professionalize
it. Low salaries are an important reason why teachers leave the occupation, and higher salaries contribute to the retention of the more academically talented teachers needed to implement these new instructional strategies. Treating time separately from salary raises questions about whether it is more effective to buy more time for teachers to increase their income or to raise their salary with the expectation that their working year and day will be routinely longer than that of students. However one addresses the issue, it is clear that teachers work fewer days and hours per year than most professionals. It is reasonable to link increased salary to the expectation that teachers put in more time. Finally, especially in urban schools, the absence of necessary books and materials can be a significant impediment to teaching (Corcoran, 1990).

Administrative contributions come through maintaining an orderly environment, providing additional support, and respecting teachers. Generally, teachers expect teachers to maintain an orderly environment in a building so they can concentrate on their own teaching (Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988). The meaning of order in a school where students’ active construction of knowledge is the norm has not yet been fully worked out. Although it
probably does not mean
eempty hallways (students may have to move into hallways to
work on projects),
silent classrooms, and students always under direct teacher
supervision, it cer
tainly does not mean a setting where students or adults
feel unsafe. Given the
typical space use of most American schools, there will also
have to be some
adjustment so that various groups of active learners do not
disrupt each others’ I M A G E S O F T E A C H I N G A N
D P R O P O S A L S F O R R E F O R M
work. Administrators are likely to be involved in
negotiating the new meaning
of order in schools characterized by active learning. The
major responsibility for
maintaining an environment conducive to learning in the
public spaces between
classrooms is likely to fall to administrators.

Teachers also expect that administrators will support them
by trouble shoot
ing on special problems and protecting them from
bureaucratic and parental
interference. Finally, teachers are often discouraged by
what they see as a lack
of respect that is apparent in informal interactions with
administrators, isolation
from those administrators, and failure to recognize (even
informally) good
performance (Corcoran, 1990, Firestone & Rosenblum, 1988;
Louis, 1991). Conclusions and questions

The image of the professional teacher that is developing
through the cognitive
and organizational research on teaching is of an individual who is committed to helping all children understand more challenging content. To meet this objective, professional teachers must be more knowledgeable about their subjects and their students and about how to make the connection between the former and the latter. A substantial body of research is helping to clarify what this knowledge is, but that work could be expanded by considering as well the microcommitments of expert teachers. It is already becoming clear that knowledgeable teachers will use approaches that move away from the adult-centered pedagogy that dominates American schools today; such approaches may require substantially more effort than the bargains that many teachers now strike with their students.

Recommendations to make schools more professional workplaces by increasing teacher collegial interaction and participation in decision making are important, but they only address part of the agenda for professionalizing teaching. These recommendations make inadequate assumptions about teachers’ present knowledge and only address relationships among adults, not those between teachers and children.

A more complete agenda will include several additional
elements. Provision

must be made to improve the training, recruitment, and selection of new
teachers, an issue to which much attention is currently being given. More atten-
tion, however, must be given to upgrading the knowledge and changing the
commitments of current teachers. In addition, it is necessary to attend to the reg-
ularities of schooling that affect the joint assignment of teachers, students, and
content and the assessment of student progress. Finally, it is important to address
some more mundane aspects of school organization having to do with time for
planning and interaction, salaries, material, discipline, support, and respect for
teachers.

Juxtaposition of the cognitive and organizational literature raises a number of
theoretical and practical issues. Perhaps the big theoretical question is how to
synthesize these two literatures into a more coherent theory of schooling and school administration. The premise that organizational
technology should deter
mine organizational design suggests that a major effort is needed to deduce prin-
ciples of school structure and operation from new research on student learning;
the cognitive literature should be in the driver’s seat. Rowan (1990, 1995) has
taken important steps in trying to link these literatures, and too few are following his lead. Nonetheless, there are likely to be a number of problems with a simplistic cognitive-technological determinism. For instance, in people-processing organizations such as schools, technologies are socially constructed and therefore malleable. Although cognitive approaches dominate thinking about teaching for the moment, there is a strong body of process-product research suggesting a rather different approach to instruction from what comes out of cognitive science research and constructivism (see Rosenshine, 1983). As far as I can tell, the process-product research was never “disproven;” it seems to have gone out of style for esthetic and normative reasons that to my knowledge have not been clarified. Thus the selection of a theory of instruction to guide organizational design is problematic and should not be made casually although the intellectual winds are clearly blowing toward constructivism and active learning at the moment. 2

Moreover, instructional strategy and organizational structure may turn out to be loosely coupled, in that organizational form may not clearly preclude or facilitate certain approaches to teaching and learning. Observers of current restruc
turing efforts seem to disagree as to whether the current way of organizing

schools really precludes significant instructional change (compare Prestine & Bowen, 1993, with Peterson, McCarthey, & Elmore, in press). Moreover, the
technology problem of schools is more than cognitive; there are also motivational dimensions. My discussion of teacher commitment raises the problem of obtaining the cooperation of staff; the more challenging problem may be getting student concurrence. Although there are indications that more active approaches to student learning are more intrinsically motivating than teacher-centered instruction, it remains to be seen what range of students will take to these new approaches.

In addition, classical analyses of organizational structure suggest that it mediates between technology and environment. If, as Thompson (1967) suggests, organizations buffer their technologies from an uncertain environment, structures will have to reflect these external uncertainties. In institutionalized sectors such as education, organizational forms are likely to be adopted as much for their cultural and political relevance as for their technological rationality (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991). Thus the task of combining cognitive research with organi
zational studies to rethink how schools should be redesigned is extremely chal-

ging.

At a more practical level, this analysis raises questions about the contribution

of administrators to the professionalization of teachers. As schools and districts

are presently constituted, it is clear that administrators can play a major role by

arranging for and emphasizing the importance of appropriate staff development, IMAG

AGES OF TEACHING AND PROPOSALS FOR REFORM

obtaining resources, and supporting teachers in a variety of ways. On the other

hand, schools and districts now assume a hierarchical relationship between

teachers and administrators that is not easily reconciled with professional status

for the former. In particular, many administrators feel threatened by efforts to

expand teachers’ influence through greater participation.

In fact, there are two important questions about administrators. First, what

should be the division of labor in schools designed to facilitate knowledgeable

professional teachers—how should present administrative functions be assigned?

Because structure should follow in large part from technology (Mintzberg, 1983),

the current arrangement is likely to change. Second, how can administrators help

schools and districts move from the present configuration to one more conducive
to professional teaching, and what will motivate them to do so?

Although these and a number of other questions need to be addressed, it is fairly clear that attending to the knowledge base of teachers without considering organizational arrangements is likely to lead to a situation where new ideas are only adopted by a minority of practitioners and are weakly institutionalized.

However, changing organizational arrangements without a clear sense of what teaching and learning should be like can lead to goal displacement, where these arrangements become ends in themselves and do not contribute to the educational outcomes they are expected to produce. An adequate program to professionalize teaching must address both sides of the coin.

Notes

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and are not necessarily shared by the U.S. Department of Education, CPRE, or its institutional partners.

1 For the description of effective schools programs, I draw upon private conversations with Thomas Corcoran, former director of the Research for Better Schools program, and Matthew Miles, who did a national survey of such programs.

2 I do not have normative problems with this constructivist revolution. I find both the vision of what students should learn and the ideas of instructional processes embedded in it very attractive. I do, however, question the process by which the current cognitive


Schooling for tomorrow (pp. 311–329). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.


Longman.


School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 3, 45-68.


Devaney, K., & Sykes, G. (1988). Making the case for
professionalism. In A. Lieberman (Ed.), Building a professional culture in schools (pp. 3-22). New York: Teachers College Press.


commitment in urban high schools.


ful or problematic. Phi Delta Kappan, 73, 673-677.


HISTORY AND RESEARCH A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP Kenneth Leithwood and Daniel L. Duke


Educational administration scholars have devoted considerable time over this century trying to understand school leadership and leaders. They have done so for several reasons. Some assumed that a concept of leadership would be of assistance to them in describing the behavior of individuals in the roles of
leaders. Others apparently were prompted to conceptualize leadership in ways that could help explain school outcomes or effects. Still others seemed intent on developing concepts of leadership for such prescriptive purposes as guiding the preparation of future administrators or the further education of incumbent administrators.

This chapter explores two major sources of insight about school leadership.

Concepts of leadership found in the educational literature are the first source of insight. In order to facilitate the empirical study of schools as organizations, school leaders, and school effects, a number of scholars have tried either to conceptualize leadership in general and school leadership in particular or they have endorsed an already existing concept of leadership. To appreciate work of this kind, the next section of this chapter describes the results of a review of all articles dealing with leadership in four major educational administration journals over approximately the past decade. These results suggest that six major categories of leadership dominate contemporary writing about school leadership.

A second major source of insight about school leadership, explored in the third section of this chapter, is the historical and theoretical sources to which
alternative conceptions of school leadership appeal for their authority. These sources—tradition, religion, and elds of inquiry such as psychology, sociology, social psychology, and philosophy—help to explain why each leadership concept at some point during the century has had a dominant influence on both the understanding and practice of school leaders. They also explain why that dominance eventually was overshadowed by an alternative.

Educational leaders have both changed and expanded the number of such sources as the century unfolded in response to changing social forces impinging on schools.

It is important to be clear at the outset that what has been learned about leadership in schools over the century has not depended on any clear, agreed-upon definition of the concept, as essential as this would seem at first glance.

Indeed, Yukl argues that: It is neither feasible nor desirable at this point in the development of the discipline to attempt to resolve the controversies over the appropriate definition of leadership. Like all constructs in social sciences, the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no correct definition. (1994, p. 4-5)

This observation, echoed by other respected students of leadership (Bennis, 1959; Burns, 1978; Bass, 1981), might be viewed as casting a pall over the central purpose of this chapter. Clark and Clark, for example, argue that you cannot talk
about leaders with anyone until you agree on what you are talking about. That

requires a definition of leadership and a criterion for leadership acts that can be

agreed on (1990, p. 20). In the same vein, Rost begins his analysis of leadership

and leadership literature in non-school organizations by arguing that lack of

attention to definition has been one of the main impediments to progress in the

field. Indeed, he notes that over 60 percent of the authors who have written on

leadership since about 1910 did not define leadership in their works (1991, p. 6).

One wonders how so many smart people could have overlooked such an

obvious issue. Or did they? More likely, we think, they were at least in implicit

agreement with Lofti Zadeh, the father of fuzzy logic, who framed the Law of

Incompatibility: As complexity rises, precise statements lose meaning and mean-

ingful statements lose precision (McNeil & Frieberger, 1993, p. 43). As these

authors go on to point out, the Law of Incompatibility captures a feature common

to most complex disciplines, that is, they teem with complex concepts. Respond

ing to worries over the lack of precision in defining the meaning of strategic man-

agement, for example, Thomas and Pruett (1993) ask: “how much more precise

are economists when they discuss ‘innovation’ or ‘regulation,’ or psychologists
when they talk about ‘intelligence’?’ Whereas simple concepts are typically open to crisp definition, complex concepts are usually defined vaguely. Persevering on the development of a precise definition of a complex concept like leadership is likely to be counterproductive, following this line of reasoning.

Although Yukl pointed to lack of consensus about the precise meaning of leadership, he did discern a core of agreement across definitions very similar to what Bass (1981) detected a decade earlier. “Most definitions of leadership,” Yukl claimed, “reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization” (1994, p 3). Influence then seems to be a necessary part of most conceptions of leadership. It suggests, as Yukl does, that most of the variation in leadership concepts, types, or models might be accounted for by differences in who exerts influence, how influence is exerted, the purpose for the exercise of influence, and its outcomes. In the conclusion to this chapter, we begin to develop a relational conception of leadership by identifying the “elements” potential...
ially interacting to generate influence and the different types of influence that may be generated. Models of contemporary leadership practice are described in this section. These models were identified through analyses of a representative sample of contemporary literature concerning leadership in schools, a sample intended to reflect the result of this century’s quest. The sample consisted of all feature length articles concerned with leadership published in four representative English-language educational administration journals. These journals were reviewed at least as far back as 1988, the year in which the Handbook of Research in Educational Administration (Boyan, 1988) was published. The chapter in that text by Immegart entitled “Leadership and Leader Behavior” provided a point of departure for the present chapter.

Two of the four journals selected for review in this section, Educational Administration Quarterly (EAQ), and the Journal of School Leadership (JSL), publish work largely from North America. Papers in the Journal of Educational Administration (JEA) reflect perspectives from Australia, New Zealand, and other countries, as well as North America. Educational Management and Administration (EMA) primarily reflects contemporary thought.
on leadership in
the United Kingdom, but some other countries as well. Because of the reputa
tions of each of these journals and the relatively broad
theoretical perspectives
they reflect collectively, it seems likely that most signi-
cant contemporary con
ceptions of leadership would find some expression in their
contents.
Table 1 notes the total number of volumes reviewed in the
case of each of the
four journals and the total number of articles included in
each volume. Approxi-
mately eight volumes were reviewed for each journal,
several less in the case of
JSL because it was not established until 1991, and several
more in the case of
EMA so as to balance the almost exclusively North American
perspectives
re ected in EAQ and JSL.
Table 1 also shows how many articles were concerned
directly or indirectly
with leadership and were therefore used as the basis for
helping answer the
questions of interest in this section of the chapter. These
articles, totaling 121,
were of several types, including descriptions of leadership
theories, reviews of
literature, empirical reports, and critical analyses.
Table 2 lists 20 different leadership models or concepts
explicitly mentioned
in the 121 articles (the category label “participative” was
not explicitly
A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Table 1: Leadership articles in four journals 1985 – 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Leadership Articles</th>
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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
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<td>32319</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>33319</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 Educational Administration Quarterly 2 Journal of School Leadership 3 Journal of Educational Administration 4 Educational Management and Administration

HISTORY AND RESEARCH

mentioned). We applied it as a category label to include “group,” “shared,” and “teacher,” leadership). Noted, as well, are the number of articles from each journal, and the total number of articles from all four journals mentioning each concept. Based on Table 2, the three most frequently mentioned conceptions (versus categories) of leadership over the past decade were instructional leadership (13 mentions), transformational leadership (11), and contingent/leadership styles (9). Instructional leadership appeared almost exclusively in the North American journals or in papers written by North Americans published in the non-North American journals. Although most often mentioned in North American journals, all four journals also contained papers
about transformational leadership. Mention of leadership styles was distributed across the journals. The next most frequently mentioned leadership concepts were moral leadership (8), managerial leadership (8), and cultural leadership (6). The remaining 14 leadership concepts were found in five or fewer articles. Some articles explicitly

A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Table 2: Categories and concepts of educational leadership mentioned in four journals

Leadership category Journals and concept 1 EAQ JSL JEA EML Total
1. Instructional 4 7 – 2 13
2. Transformational 3 4 2 2 11
charismatic – – – 1 1
visionary – 1 1 2 4
cultural 2 1 – 3 6
empowering – 1 1 – 2
3. Moral 3 2 1 2 8
democratic – 1 – – 1
normative-instrumental 1 – – – 1
symbolic 3 – 1 – 4
political – – – 2 2
4. Participative – – – 0
group – 1 – – 1
shared - 2 2 1 5
teacher 3 - 1 - 4
5. Managerial/Strategic 1 - 1 6 8
organizational 2 -- 2
6. Contingency/Styles 5 - 2 2 9
problem solving 3 1 -- 4
craft/reflective -- 3 2 5
No Explicit Concept 6 13 19 16 54

Note

1 The number of articles listed for each “category” (such as transformational or moral) refers to the
number of articles that explicitly used the category label. Subcategory citations are independent.

For example, charismatic leadership was the explicit focus of one article (in EML) and this is in
addition to the 11 articles explicitly concerned with transformational leadership, the superordinate
leadership concept.

discussed as many as three or four such concepts (such as Cusack, 1993;
Walker, 1989; and Gronn, 1996). This is why the number of mentions of leader
ship concepts exceeds the total number of articles reviewed.

In the case of 54 articles, the focus was on leadership but no attempt was
made to label leadership or to conceptualize it as a particular form of leadership.

Some of these articles supported multiple perspectives on leadership, while
others treated leadership as a generally understood
phenomenon without specific discussion of its meaning. There were also many instances in which an implicit leadership concept was evident, such as Hayes’ (1995) study of collaborative relationships (or “shared leadership”) in a British primary school, and Goldring’s (1990) examination of principals’ boundary spanning activities (or “organizational leadership”).

Finally, as is also evident in Table 2, each of the 20 separate leadership concepts has been assigned to one of six broad categories. These categories cluster together leadership concepts sharing the same primary focus and key assumptions. The remainder of this section describes the central focus and assumptions of each of these categories and summarizes what the review articles had to say about each. Where one was available, a relatively well-developed exemplar of each leadership category also is described as a means of further clarifying the features of each leadership category. The sources of these exemplars are not con ned to articles included in the four journals.

Instructional leadership

This concept of leadership was mentioned in 13 of the 121 articles selected for review. Instructional leadership, a single, separate category, typically focuses on the behaviors of teachers as they engage in activities...
directly affecting the
growth of students. Many versions of this form of
leadership focus additionally
on other organizational variables (such as school culture)
that are believed to
have important consequences for such teacher behavior. This
has led Sheppard
(1996) to distinguish between “narrow” and “broad” views of
instructional
leadership. Most conceptions of instructional leadership
allocate authority and
influence to formal administrative roles (usually the
principal), assuming as well
considerable influence through expert knowledge on the part
of those occupying
such roles.

Lack of explicit descriptions of instructional leadership
(Foster, 1986) makes
it difficult to assess the extent to which such leadership
means the same thing to
all those writing about it. Geltner and Shelton (1991) modified the term, refer
ring to “strategic instructional leadership,” but offering
no notion of what non
strategic instructional leadership might mean. Stallhammar
(1994) used the term
differentiated between “direct”
and “indirect” instructional leadership, noting that
principals alone cannot fulfill
all of a school’s need for instructional leadership. Others
argued that original
beliefs concerning the principal as the primary or most
leader required rethinking. Davidson (1992), for example, argued for the value of teachers serving as instructional leaders, while Floden et al. (1988) focused on district-level instructional leadership. Achilles (1992) challenged the idea that instructional leadership (or any form of leadership for that matter) was necessarily a substitute for capable management.

Examples of extensively elaborated contemporary models of instructional leadership include Duke (1987), Smith & Andrews (1989), and Hallinger and his colleagues. In each case, this orientation to leadership is described along multiple dimensions, each of which incorporates a number of functions or behaviors, and evidence is reviewed concerning the effects of these practices on important outcomes. The most fully tested of these models, the one developed by Hallinger and his associates (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger & McCary, 1990, for example), consists of three broad categories of leadership practice: defining the school mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting school climate. Associated with these broad categories of practice are a total of 21 more specific functions (such as supervising instruction). Using a
teacher survey developed by Hallinger (1992), considerable empirical evidence has accumulated in support of the contribution these leadership practices and functions add to student achievement as well as other types of outcomes (see Sheppard, 1996, for a review of this evidence).

Transformational leadership

In addition to writing that refers explicitly to transformational leadership (11 articles), included as part of this leadership category are writings about charismatic, visionary, cultural, and empowering concepts of leadership. Mentioned in a total of 24 articles, the focus of this category of leadership is on the commitments and capacities of organizational members. Higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity. Authority and influence are not necessarily allocated to those occupying formal administrative positions, although much of the literature adopts their perspective. Rather, power is attributed by organization members to whomever is able to inspire their commitments to collective aspirations, and the desire for personal and collective mastery over the capacities needed to accomplish such aspirations.

In the literature reviewed for this study, the concept of transformational
leadership was subject to varying interpretations. Kowalski and Oates (1993),

for instance, accepted Burns’ (1978) original claim that transformational leader

ship represents the transcendence of self-interest by both leader and led. Dillard

(1995, p. 560) preferred Bennis’ modified notion of “transformative leader

ship—the ability of a person to ‘reach the souls of others in a fashion which

raises human consciousness, builds meanings, and inspires human intent that is

the source of power.’” Leithwood (1994) used another modification of Burns,

this one based on Bass’ (1985) two-factor theory in which transacational and

transformational leadership represent opposite ends of the leadership continuum.

Bass maintained that the two actually can be complementary. Leithwood identi
ed seven factors that make up transformational (and transactional) leadership.

Hipp and Bredeson (1995), however, reduced the factors to five in their analysis

of the relationship between leadership behaviors and teacher efficacy. Gronn

(1996) noted the close relationship, in much current writing, between views of

transformational and charismatic leadership, as well as the explicit omission of

charisma from some current conceptions of transformational
leadership.

The most fully developed model of transformational leadership in schools has been provided by Leithwood and his colleagues. This model conceptualizes such leadership along seven dimensions: building school vision, establishing school goals, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, modeling best practices and important organizational values, demonstrating high performance expectations, creating a productive school culture, and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (Leithwood, 1994). Each dimension is associated with more specific leadership practices and the problem solving processes used by transformational leaders has also been described (Leithwood, Steinbach, & Raun, 1993).

A recent review of empirical research on transformational school leadership offers modest amounts of evidence for the contributions of such leadership to student participation in school with a variety of psychological teacher states mediating student learning (such as professional commitment, job satisfaction), as well as organization-level effects such as organizational learning, and the development of productive school climate (Leithwood, Tomlinson & Genge, 1996).

Downton’s (1973) study of rebel leadership is often cited
as the forerunner of systematic inquiry about transformational leadership in non-school organizations. However, charisma, often considered an integral part of transformational leadership, has substantially more distant origins, typically attributed to Max Weber’s (1947) efforts almost five decades ago. James McGregor Burns’ (1978) prize-winning book first drew widespread attention to the concept of transformational leadership. Based on a sweeping historical analysis, Burns argued that most understandings of leadership not only overemphasized the role of power but held a faulty view of power, as well. There were, he claimed, two essential aspects of power—motives or purposes and resources—each possessed not only by those exercising leadership but also by those experiencing it. The essence of leadership is to be found in relationships between motives, resources, leaders, and followers: “the most powerful influences consist of deeply human relationships in which two or more persons engage with one another” (p. 11).

Burns’ distinction between transactional and transformational types of leadership hinges on this appreciation of power-as-relationships. In contrast to transformational leadership, transactional leadership occurs when one person takes initiative in making contact with
others for the purpose

of exchanging valued things (economic, political, or psychological “things,” for example). Each person in the exchange understands that she or he brings related motives to the bargaining process and that these motives can be advanced by maintaining that process. But because of the nature of the motives at issue, those involved are not bound together in any continuing, mutual pursuit of higher purposes. With this form of leadership, motives or purposes may well be met using the existing resources of those involved in the exchange. Neither purposes nor resources are changed, however.

Transformational leadership entails not only a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship, but an elevation of both—a change “for the better.” With respect to motives or purposes: “transformational leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus has a transforming effect on both” (Burns, 1978, p. 20). This form of leadership, according to Burns’ view, also aims to enhance the resources of both leader and led by raising their levels of commitment to mutual purposes and by further developing their capacities for achieving those purposes.
Burns’ seminal work provided a solid conceptional footing on which to build the distinction between transactional and transformational types of leadership, and it also illustrated the meaning of these forms of leadership in many different contexts. Not to be found in this work, however, was a testable model of leadership practices or any empirical evidence of their effects. The prodigious efforts of Bass and his associates have responded to these limitations. Bass’ (1985) book Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations provided an impressive compendium of survey research evidence about the effects of one model of transformational leadership. Among the most important features of this model are the dimensions of leadership practice it includes and the proposed relationships among these dimensions.

Referred to in more recent publications as the four I’s (Bass and Avolio, 1993, 1994), Bass and his colleagues consider transformational leadership to include idealized influence or charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. In addition to these dimensions of transformational leadership, three dimensions define the meaning of transactional leadership: contingent reward, management-by-exception, and a laissez
faire or a “hands off” form of leadership.

Whereas Burns considered transformational and transactional practices as

opposite ends of the leadership continuum (essentially more and less effective

forms of leadership), Bass offers a quite different conception, a “two-factor

theory” of leadership; transactional and transformational forms of leadership, in

his view, build on one another (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Waldman, Bass & Yam


Transactional

practices foster ongoing work by attending to the basic needs of organizational

members. Such practices do little to bring about changes in the organization,

however. For this to occur, members must also experience transformational

practices. Enhanced commitment and the extra effort usually required for

change, it is claimed, are consequences of this experience.

A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Transactional practices were the traditional focus of attention for leadership

theorists until the early 1980s. Disillusionment with the outcomes of that focus,

however, gave rise to a number of alternative approaches, among them transfor

national leadership. These approaches are referred to collectively by Bryman
(1992), Sims and Lorenzi (1992), and others as the “new leadership paradigm.”

Empirical studies of transformational leadership, reflecting this pessimism with transactional practices, often give them minimum attention. This is the case with Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990), for example. Although Podsakoff and his associates adopted a quite limited conception of transactional leadership for their research, they offered arguably the most comprehensive set of transformational leadership dimensions available to that point, dimensions based on a synthesis of seven prior perspectives on transformational leadership. Moral leadership

As a category, moral leadership includes those normative, political/democratic, and symbolic concepts of leadership mentioned in a total of 16 articles included in the review. During the 1990s, the normative dimension of leadership has been one of the fastest growing areas of leadership study (Duke, 1996). Those writing about moral leadership argue that values are a central part of all leadership and administrative practice (Bates, 1993; Evers & Lakomski, 1991; Green eld, 1991). Indeed, Hodgkinson, one of the best known proponents of this orientation to leadership, claims that “values constitute the essential problem of leadership” (1991, p.

... If there are no value conflicts then there is no need for leadership” (1991, p.
11). The focus of moral leadership is on the values and ethics of the leader, so
authority and influence are to be derived from defensible conceptions of what is
right or good. Nevertheless, much of the writing about moral leadership, as in
the case of transformational leadership, adopts the perspective of those in formal
administrative roles.
Many of those writing about moral leadership over the past decade take, as
their point of departure, Herbert Simon’s claim that values have no place in
administrative decision making as well as positivistic conceptions of knowledge
assumed by the “Theory movement” in educational administration. Attempts to
cast the study of administration in purely rational terms unconcerned with values
are seen as dangerously misguided because, as Hodgkinson points out, “The
intrusion of values into the decision-making process is not merely inevitable, it
is the very substance of decision” (1978, p. 59).
The papers reviewed from the four journals illustrate quite different
approaches to moral leadership. For example, Duignan and MacPherson (1993,
p. 10), in discussing their concept of “educative leadership,” contended that
leadership should be concerned with right and wrong, not attitudes, styles, or
behaviors. William Green (1995) maintained that leadership entails five
“role demands” or “situational imperatives,” including the
general, instructional,
political, managerial, and social/interpersonal. Reitzug
and Reeves (1992) argued that cultural leadership involves defining,
strengthening, and articulating
values but warned that leaders may manipulate culture to
further their own ends.
Reitzug (1994) argued further that leadership is moral, but
only under certain
conditions. Lees (1995, p. 225) argued that leadership in a
democratic society
entails a moral imperative to “promote democracy,
empowerment, and social
justice.”

Among the issues of greatest concern to those exploring
moral perspectives
on leadership is the nature of the values used by leaders
in their decision making
and how conflicts among values can be resolved. A brief
synopsis of the well
developed positions of Hodgkinson, Evers and Lakomski, and
Slater help illustrate
the range of views on these issues evident in
contemporary literature.

At the heart of Hodgkinson’s position on the nature of
administrative values
is an “analytic model of the value concept” (Hodgkinson,
1978, 1991). This
model includes three categories of values, distinguished
from one another by
their adequacy in justifying administrative choices. In general, the model recom-
mends that leaders choose higher over lower level values when confronted with
value conflicts. Related to this general position, however, are refinements allow-
ing for difficult cases to be addressed in authentic and morally responsible ways.

The least adequate set of values are “subrational” and encompass the leader’s
ible are a set of “rational” values. Leaders using this set of values justify their
choices based on either consensus among those effected, or an appeal to some
future consequences of choice held to be desirable. The most defensible set of
values on which to base decision making, according to this model, are “trans-
rational.” No particular set of values is associated with this category. Rather,

Hodgkinson refers to such values as having a metaphysical grounding: they are
principles that “take the form of ethical codes, injunctions, or commandments
... their common feature is that they are unverifiable by the techniques of
science and cannot be justified by merely logical argument” (1991, p. 99).

Evers and Lakomski (1991) offer a thoughtful analysis of Hodgkinson’s position
on moral leadership and go on to develop their own. A fully adequate description
of their position is beyond the bounds of this chapter.

Central to their position,
however, is the claim (after the importance Dewey attributed to the virtues of problem solving as a means of improving the human condition) that “the basic normative framework for educational administrators is provided by the general requirement that decision and action should be, in the long term, educative; that the growth of knowledge be promoted” (1991, p. 106). Because administrative structures are not morally neutral, Evers and Lakomski advocate forms of educational leadership that enhance organizational learning. In these respects, the views of Evers and Lakomski are essentially similar to those of Willower (1994).

A third position on leaders’ values and how value conflicts are to be resolved is political in its origin. In addition to a concern for specific sets of values, this aspect of moral leadership focuses on the nature of the relationships among those within the organization and the distribution of power between stakeholders both inside and outside the organization. This form of leadership assumes that even though the formal organization may clearly specify power relationships, lines of communication, and procedures for carrying out the organization’s work, the informal organization may be quite different, as well as
providing a more authentic explanation for organizational activity.

Forms of leadership referred to as “symbolic,” “democratic,” or “political” can equally well be placed in either moral or participative categories of leadership because the central argument for participation is justified by democratic theory. Slater (1994) illustrates this orientation to moral leadership. Because democracies value freedom, he argues, they are opposed to traditional sources of authority and encourage “fresh examination and scrutiny” (p. 98) of almost everything. But for reasons related to lack of time, energy, or capacity, this examination does not often happen and there is a tendency for majority opinion to prevail and for the meaningfulness of community values eventually to be eroded. Under such conditions the purpose of leadership is to correct the tendency to rely only on majority opinion “which in very large groups tends to be lowest common denominator” (p. 98). Leadership should also “help restore meaning and common purpose to daily life” (p. 99). School leaders, from this perspective, should be committed to the democratic ideal and work toward replicating that ideal in the life experiences of students in school organizations.

As Slater makes clear, political and symbolic versions of
value wide participation as a reflection of the society in which we live. Public institutions, such as schools, cannot be governed or administered in ways that violate democratic principles no matter how cumbersome some might think.

Participative leadership

The term “participative leadership” was adopted from Yukl’s (1994) description to encompass a total of 10 articles concerned with “group,” “shared,” and “teacher” leadership. Participative leadership stresses the decision-making processes of the group. One school of thought within this category of leadership argues for such participation on the grounds that it will enhance organizational effectiveness. A second school rests its case for participation on democratic principles, such as those discussed above in relation to moral leadership. Additional reasons for participation emerge in the context of site-based management approaches to participatory leadership. In the case of this form of leadership, authority and influence are available potentially to any legitimate stakeholder in the school based on their expert knowledge, their democratic right to choose, and/or their critical role in implementing decisions. A majority of the 10 articles associated participative
leadership with enhanced organizational effectiveness. For example, evidence from Hayes’ (1995) study in a single primary school demonstrated that the head’s success in managing the government-driven change agenda depended on forging mutually beneficial relations with all significant groups of internal and external stakeholders. Johnston and Pickersgill (1992) as well as Vandenberghe (1992) argued that the substantially increased demands placed on school leaders by changing contexts and expectations could best (or only) be met by moving toward forms of shared or team leadership. Citing such changes as increased complexity, uncertainty, ambiguity, workload, and expectations for innovation, Murphy and Hallinger (1992) conclude that school leaders will need to adopt more participatory forms of leadership, forms of leadership that are more consultative, open, and democratic and that involve teachers and parents much more in school decision making. Savery, Soutar, and Dyson (1992) illustrate approaches to participatory leadership driven largely by arguments for democratic processes. The framework for this study included seven categories of decision making (such as school policy and student discipline), each of which incorporated
from two to ve more

for five different types of participation in each decision category ranging from

the principal making the decision herself to staff deciding themselves. This

study began to illustrate what would be required to develop a fully specified

model of participatory leadership in a school, viewed from a democratic

perspective.

The centerpiece in a majority of the past decade’s school restructuring initiatives, site-based management (SBM) is arguably the most fully developed and

widely advocated conception of participatory leadership available. Murphy and

Beck (1995) suggest that SBM usually takes one of three forms: administrative

controlled SBM, professional-controlled SBM, and community-controlled SBM.

Much less in evidence but still visible is a fourth type of SBM in which power is

exercised equally by school professionals, parents, and other community

members.

Administrative-controlled SBM is aimed at increasing accountability to the

central district or board of ce for the ef cient expenditure of resources on the

assumption that such ef ciencies will eventually pay off for students. These ef

ciencies are to be realized by giving local school administrators greater authority
and influence over such key decision areas as budget, personnel, and curriculum.

Advocates of this form of SBM reason that such authority, in combination with

the incentive to make the best use of resources, ought to get more of the

resources of the school into the direct service of students. To assist in accomplishing that objective, the principal may consult informally with teachers,

parents, students, or community representatives. Site councils are typically established to advise the principal.

When teacher-controlled SBM is advocated, the goal is to make better use of

their knowledge in such key decision areas as budget, curriculum, and (occasionally) personnel. Basic to this form of SBM is the assumption that professionals closest to the student have the most relevant knowledge for making such decisions (Hess, 1991) and that full participation in the decision-making process

will increase their commitment to implementing whatever decisions are made.

Participatory democracy, allowing employees greater decision-making power, is

also presumed to lead to greater efficiency, effectiveness, and better outcomes

(Clune & White, 1988; David, 1989; Mojkowski & Fleming, 1988). Site coun
cils associated with this form of SBM typically have decision making power and although many groups (parents, students, administration) are often represented, teachers have the largest proportion of members.

Increased accountability to parents and the community at large along with “consumer satisfaction” are the central purposes for establishing community control forms of SBM (Lee, et al., 1993; Malen, Ogawa & Kranz, 1990; Wohlstetter, 1990; Wohlstetter & McCurdy, 1991; Wohlstetter & Mohrman, 1993). The basic assumption giving rise to this form of SBM is that the curriculum and the local community (Ornstein, 1983; Wohlstetter & Odden, 1992). School professionals, it is claimed, typically are not as responsive to such local values however, when the authority to make decisions about curriculum, budget, and personnel is in the hands of the parent and other community constituents of the school. School councils in which parent and other community constituents have a majority of the membership are the primary instruments for the exercise of such authority.

Community-control SBM aims to increase the authority and influence of parents and community members. There is, however, another focus of commun
ity control in which parents are given a choice of schools, the most direct form of accountability by schools to the community. Although analysis of such choice is beyond the boundaries of this chapter, it is part of some forms of community control found, for example, in England. It has been suggested that, as SBM evolves and schools become unique, choice will eventually be an integral part of the SBM approach to participatory leadership.

Finally equal participation forms of SBM attempt to accomplish the purposes of both community control and professional control forms: making better use of teachers’ knowledge for key decisions in the school and being more accountable to parents and the local community. Unlike the pure community-control version of SBM, the equal control versions assume that professionals are willing to be ity under conditions in which parents are in a position to act as partners with schools in the education of their children. Both parents and teachers, it is assumed, have important knowledge to bring to bear on key decisions about curriculm, budget, and personnel. Site councils associated with this form of SBM have decision-making power and their membership is balanced between school staff and parent/community members. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H Managerial leadership
In addition to explicit concepts of management, this leadership category sub
sumes a form of leadership referred to as organizational in a total of 10 articles.

Managerial leadership focuses on the functions, tasks, or behaviors of the leader
and assumes that if these functions are carried out competently the work of
others in the organization will be facilitated. Most approaches to managerial
leadership also assume that organizational members behave rationally. Authority
and influence are allocated to formal positions in proportion to the status of
those positions in the organizational hierarchy. The terms “management” and
“manager” frequently appear, especially in papers originating in the U.K., but
without explicit attempts to conceptualize their meaning.

Several studies included in the review characterized management as a form of
leadership to be replaced or supplemented in the face of present organizational
challenges and the need for change (Cusack, 1993; Hallinger, 1992). Lesourd,
Tracz, and Grady (1992) contrasted “managerial leadership” with “visionary
leadership,” for example. Others assumed the utility of managerial tasks and
inquired about how they had been intensified by recent changes (Dunning, 1993)
or how they affected the quality of teachers’ work lives (Rossmiller, 1992).
Other articles continued the long-standing debate over the relationship between the concepts of leadership and management. The majority of these articles (Achilles, 1992; Atkinson & Wilmore, 1993; Bolman & Deal, 1992; Bolman & Deal, 1994; Reilly, 1993; Whitaker et al., 1991) treated leadership and management as distinct and, to some extent, as competing concepts. But two articles (Leithwood, 1994; Reitzug & Reeves, 1992) regarded leadership and management as complimentary concepts that should not be considered separately.

The distinction between leadership and management found outside these papers usually entails allocating management the responsibilities for policy implementation, maintaining organizational stability, and ensuring that routine organizational tasks are “done right.” Classical management theory (March & Simon, 1958; Massie, 1965) assumes that these purposes are likely to be accomplished through such functions as planning, organizing, supervising, coordinating, budgeting, and staffing. Leadership, in contrast, is assigned the challenges of policy making, organizational change, and making sure “the right things get done” (Zaleznick, 1970; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Hodgkinson, 1991).

The exchange relationship between leaders and followers, which Bass’ con
ception of transactional leadership is based on, points to one of the central psychological mechanisms through which this view of managerial practices provides the organizational stability on which transformational leadership builds. “Transactional leadership,” according to Bass, “is contingent reinforcement. The leader and follower agree on what the follower needs to do to be rewarded or to avoid punishment. If the follower does as agreed, the leader arranges to reward the follower” (1985, p. 121).

In school contexts at least, justifying a conceptual distinction between A C E N T U R Y ’ S Q U E S T T O U N D E R S T A N D S C H O O L L E A D E R S H I P management and leadership is difficult. For example, Duke’s (1995) historical analysis of one school’s struggle for survival over a 63-year period provides vivid evidence that maintaining organizational stability in a turbulent environment requires the same types of responses on the part of organizational leaders as does organizational change. Furthermore, close analysis of the actual activities of formal school leaders (Kmetz & Willower, 1982; Harvey, 1986; Davies, 1987) indicates that whatever influence they exercise in their schools takes place through their responses to a host of often seemingly mundane tasks that they
face from day to day. As a minimum, school leaders need to adopt a “bifocal” perspective (Deal and Peterson, 1994) in carrying out their tasks.

To what does management refer, however, when it is treated as a unique form of school leadership in its own right? Those studies explicitly responding to this question illustrate a range of possibilities. For example, Rossmiller identified two broad functions: buffering the technical core (curriculum and instruction) of the school from excessive distractions and interruptions, and smoothing “input or output transitions [such as organizing support groups for students experiencing stress]” (1992, p. 143). This study also described a number of subdimensions, specific ways in which principals carried out each of the two broad functions. In a second example with private sector origins, managerial functions in Myers and Murphy’s (1995) study included six “organizational control” mechanisms: supervision, input controls (such as teacher transfers), behavior controls (such as job descriptions), output controls (student testing), selection/socialization, and environmental controls (community responsiveness).

Goldring (1990) inquired about the “boundary spanning” function of school principals. Caldwell (1992) argued that leaders of
self-managing schools should engage in a cyclical process “of goal-setting, needs identification, priority setting, planning, budgeting, implementing, and evaluating in a manner which provides for the appropriate involvement of staff, and community” (1992, p. 16–17).

Duke and Leithwood’s (1994) review of five different types of leadership literature identifies a relatively comprehensive set of school management dimensions. Two of the five sets of literatures addressed managerial issues most directly; these included 21 original studies of principal leadership specifically in the context of school restructuring and an additional 19 studies describing principals’ practices and effects across varied contexts. These studies provided evidence of many aspects of leadership encompassed in other categories. As well, there were 10 sets of managerial tasks or functions described in these 40 studies as a whole:

- Providing adequate financial and material resources;
- Distributing financial and material resources so they are most useful;
- Anticipating predictable problems and developing effective and efficient means for responding to them;
- Managing the school facility;
• Managing the student body;

• Maintaining effective communication patterns with staff, students, community members, and district of ce staff;

• Accommodating policies and initiatives undertaken by district of ce in ways that assist with school improvement goals;

• Buffering staff so as to reduce disruptions to the instruction program;

• Mediating conflict and differences in expectations;

• Attending to the political demands of school functioning.

These 10 functions summarize most of the explicit as well as implicit concepts of managerial functions in schools as they have been portrayed in writing over the past decade, separated from those leadership dimensions associated with other models. As Rost (1991) suggests, there is evidence of considerable support in the literature and among practicing leaders for managerial approaches to leadership, but this support and the meaning of such leadership often has to be inferred. As a whole, these functions convey an orientation to leadership similar to the orientation found in the classical management literature. This is quite different from the relatively entrepreneurial, creative, and change-oriented view of leadership referred to as “strategic management” in the non-school literature (Thomas & Pruett, 1993; Spencer, 1993). Those writing about
Educational leadership in the past decade appear to have incorporated such orientations in other, non-managerial models. Contingent leadership/leadership styles included as part of this category are leadership “styles” and “problem-solving” concepts referred to in a total of 18 articles (including “reflective” and “craft” views of leadership). The focus of this approach is on how leaders respond to the unique organizational circumstances or problems that they face as a con work, and tasks to be undertaken. This approach to leadership assumes that there are wide variations in the contexts for leadership and that to be effective these contexts require different leadership responses. Also assumed by this approach to leadership is that individuals providing leadership, typically those in formal positions of authority, are capable of mastering a large repertoire of leadership practices. Their influence depends, in large measure, on such mastery. While sharing the same focus and assumptions, the “styles” and “problem-solving” orientations to contingent leadership are otherwise quite distinct. Leadership styles have been the stimulus for extensive empirical investigation in both school and non-school organizations. Examples of earlier research include
the Ohio State studies, which led to the widely used
Leadership Behavior
Description Questionnaire and subsequent work by
investigators such as Blake
and Mouton (1964) and Hersey and Blanchard (1977). Nine
studies included in
this review made explicit reference to leadership style.
Dimensions of leadership

Style investigated in these nine studies varied
considerably: task versus relation
ships (Heller, Clay & Perkins, 1993), managerial versus
visionary (Lesourd,
Tracz & Grady, 1992), initiating structure versus
consideration, autocratic
versus facilitative (Cheng, 1991; Fenech, 1994; Hoy &
Brown, 1988; Johnston,
1986; Uwazurike, 1991), and male versus female (Coleman,
1996). Bredeson
(1993) inquires about the relationship between an
individual’s leadership style
and the role strains resulting from restructuring efforts
in schools.
The literature on leadership styles focuses on overt
leadership practice,
attempting to define a relatively small number of coherent,
effective patterns of
such practice. In contrast, the literature on problem
solving focuses on the
internal cognitive and affective processes engaged in by
leaders as they ponder
the challenges facing them and decide how best to act. From
this perspective,
there is a virtually unlimited universe of leadership practices. Leaders choose or invent those patterns of practice that appear to make most sense to them in response to the challenges they are addressing. What leaders do depends on what they think.

Problem-solving orientations to leadership, reflected in nine studies included in the review, are of two types. Those describing leadership as a reflective or craft-like enterprise stress the importance of leaders’ internal processes without attempting to explicitly model such processes. For example, Sergiovanni (1989), Battersby (1987), and Clark (1988) use Schön’s (1983) concept of reflective practice, or knowing-in-action, to explore the limited utility to practicing leaders of formal, scientific theory. Bredeson (1988) advocates the use of metaphors as stimulants for administrators’ thinking and problem solving, whereas Willower (1994) invokes Dewey’s method of inquiry as a frame to use in developing habits of reflection on the part of school leaders.

Also focused on leaders’ thinking were four articles explicitly framed by contemporary cognitive science models of such processes. Three of these studies appeared in a special issue of EAJ entitled Cognitive Perspectives On Educa
tional Administration (see also Hallinger, Leithwood and Murphy, 1993). Leithwood and Hallinger (1993) and Leithwood (1995) argued for the usefulness of cognitive perspectives on leadership and outlined what inquiries guided by such an orientation would entail. Allison and Allison (1993) invoke schema theory in their comparison of the domain-specific knowledge structures of novice and experienced school principals. Elsewhere, Allison (1996) reviews the literature on cognitive processes associated with problem interpretation and its application to the thinking of school leaders. Leithwood, Steinbach, and Raun (1993) describe the problem-solving processes of superintendents within a framework that attends to those cognitive processes entailed in problem interpretation, goal setting, anticipating constraints, the use of personal values and principles (see also Moorhead & Nediger, 1991), solution processes, and the mood or affect. Based on this framework, Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) offer the most comprehensive set of research results to date, exploring the nature of expert school leaders’ problem solving processes and their consequences for leadership practice. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H Summary

What have been the results of a century’s quest for a conception of school leadership? The six different categories of leadership described in this section
one answer to this question. These approaches include instructional, transforma

tional, moral, participative, managerial, and contingent forms of school leader

ship. Although they have been presented as distinctly different leadership

models, they are by no means pure types. The six approaches are most distinct

with respect to their basic foci and the key assumptions on which they are

premised. Significant differences also exist with respect to the nature and locus

of leadership power.

But there are many aspects of these approaches that are quite similar, depend

ing on whose version of an approach one adopts. For example, although moral

leadership was the approach most visibly concerned with leadership ethics and

values, there is a value position at least implicit in all six approaches. And trans

formational and participative approaches are quite explicit about the centrality of

specific types of values to leadership. Additionally, whereas transformational

approaches are arguably most explicit in their concern for organizational culture,

many forms of instructional and moral leadership show evidence of a similar

concern.

In sum, then, approaches to conceptualizing school leadership in contempor
ary literature offer eclectic and overlapping perspective on what should be the focus of leaders' attention and how leadership manifests itself in practice. Five of the six approaches (instructional leadership excepted) have well developed counterparts in the non-school literature and this literature figures prominently in how school leadership is conceptualized. This is probably both good and bad, good because there is an extensive academic and popular leadership literature that in our view has too often been ignored when it could have enriched thinking about leadership in schools, and bad because most of the literature included in our review that relied on a concept of leadership developed outside school contexts failed to address sufficiently the significance of that context for how leadership ought to be conceptualized. Historical and theoretical sources of school leadership authority

Described in this section are the sources of authority that those writing about leadership in schools have appealed to over the century. One purpose of the section is to show how those sources have evolved and multiplied. A second purpose is to explore the extent to which contemporary models of leadership, summarized in the previous section, depend on one or more of these sources including tradition, religion, psychology, sociology, and a combination of social
psychology, philosophy, and critical theory.

After Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (1967), authority is

A C E N T U R Y ’ S Q U E S T T O U N D E R S T A N D
S C H O O L L E A D E R S H I P
de ned as “the power to in uence.” Herbert Simon (1965) de
de ned authority as

the power to make decisions that guide the actions of
others. Extending Simon’s
de nition to focus more clearly on the consequences of
decision making, Daniel
Grif ths, in his theory of administration-as-decision
making, argued for an
understanding of authority as: the willingness of some to
accept the power of another. That is, members of the
organization acknowledge the legitimacy of the decisions
made by some to control the decisions of others. (1959, p.
88)

Conceived of in this way, the meaning of authority is
essentially the same as

Weber’s concept of domination, “the probability that a
command will be
obeyed” (Roth & Wittich, 1968, p. 53).

Although status in the organizational hierarchy is the
source for authority

most readily evoked by Weber’s de nition, he argued that
there were actually

three “pure types of (or grounds for) legitimate
domination,” in addition to any

other “less pure” grounds, such as habit, persuasion, and
the like. These included

rational or legal grounds (essentially the commonly evoked
grounds mentioned
above), traditional grounds (rooted in widely shared beliefs of the sort that allowed males to be the taken-for-granted heads of the households in many Western cultures until quite recently, for example), and charismatic grounds (the authority that flows from the perception that a person possesses exceptional or exemplary characteristics).

The meaning associated with the term “authority” as it is explored in this section includes but is not limited to the control-oriented views of authority offered by Simon, Griffiths, and Weber. Also included is, for example, the authority or power that a person or group is awarded as a consequence of special or highly valued knowledge (about the nature of human learning, for example), expert levels of skill in the execution of a task or performance considered important by others (such as the facilitation of group problem solving), and exceptional capacities for appreciation (such as understanding the hostile behavior of a student at school). Kenneth Benne’s concept of anthropological authority, “a teaching authority who seeks to both mother and wean the young relative to the wider life in a community” (cited in Maxey, 1991, p. 9) is relevant as well. This section demonstrates that the historical sources for understanding the
authority that contemporary leadership models rest on include but extend con
siderably beyond Weber’s “pure types.”

This section also demonstrates that the history of educational leadership and administration in North America, as it has been told in the most frequently cited and widely respected sources (Tyack, 1976; Tyack & Cummings, 1977; Tyack & Hansot, 1982; Callahan, 1962; Campbell, 1972; Campbell et al., 1987; Culbertson, 1981, 1988; Griffiths, 1959), does not fully reflect the variety of grounds that have been appealed to historically as sources of authority by practicing school leaders. Rather, with the notable exception of Beck and Murphy’s (1993) recent text, the story captured in these scholarly sources appears to have been influenced to a fault, by efforts to establish and maintain a distinctive discipline of educational administration within the university. Tradition, one of Max Weber’s three “pure types of legitimate domination” (Roth & Wittich, 1968, p. 215), is defined by Weber as “belief in the everyday routine as an inviolable norm of conduct . . . (and as) piety for what actually, allegedly, or presumably has always existed.” He further argued that: Patriarchalism is by far the most important type of domination the legit
imacy of which rests upon tradition. Patriarchalism means the authority of the father, the husband, the senior of the house, the sib elder over the members of the household and sib; the rule of the master and patron over bondsmen, serfs, freed men . . . of the patrimonial lord and sovereign prince over the subjects. (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 296)

The system of norms associated with traditionalism is typically considered sacred and there is an element of arbitrariness associated with enforcing these norms on the part of the leader who judges primarily in terms of personal as distinct from functional criteria. Traditional authority is in this sense irrational (Gerth & Mills, 1946).

Traditional authority is, of course, an important instrument for cultural trans

mission and the preservation of community. As Slater points out, in the absence of tradition “old attachments to family, neighborhood, and community, attach

ments upon which and out of which one’s sense of self developed, lose their vitality” (1994, pp. 98-99). Evidence available concerning the effects of using tradition as a source of leadership authority in schools suggests that those effects have been largely negative, however.

Traditionalism based on patriarchy has manifested itself in prejudicial hiring
practices applied to women in favor of an “old boys network” (Miklos, 1988),

widely shared, male-dominated, leadership stereotypes that result in perceptions

that women lack critical leadership skills and dispositions (Riehl & Lee, 1996)

and ostracism from informal leadership networks (Shakeshaft, 1987). Factors

such as these help explain the continuing disproportionate number of males

occupying formal, especially senior, leadership positions. Tallerico and Burstyn

(1996) cite evidence indicating that between 1928 and 1993 the percent of all

U.S. superintendents of K-12 school districts who were women changed from

1.6 percent to only 5.6 percent. Cummings (Appended to Tyack, 1976) reported

that 99.4% of American superintendents were male in 1952; typically, they also

have been overwhelmingly Protestant, white, middle-aged, and from a rural

A C E N T U R Y ’ S Q U E S T T O U N D E R S T A N D
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

background with no experience in a job outside of education (Tyack, 1976). In

1993, Montenegro reported that in the U.S., 71% of all K-12 teachers were

female, whereas only 7.3% of superintendents, 24% of assistant superintendents,

and 34% of principals were female. In addition to gender biases, tradition also

has introduced bias into the ecology of school leadership
based on culture, language, and race (Anderson, 1996; Mitchell, Ortiz, & Mitchell, 1987).

The influences of tradition on the development of contemporary leadership models appears to have been neither direct nor clear. Religion

Protestant religious values were the source of authority appealed to by pre-1900 public school leaders, especially in the United States. These were men, not frequently ministers, who preached both the value of public schooling and aims for such schooling based on their interpretation of the virtues required to lead a “good” life. These values were considered both absolute and equally appropriate for all students, even though a very high proportion of such students were not of the Protestant faith.

In these early years, religious values served as the base for determining the more exalted aims of education, but they were considered values that school leaders should themselves live by and model as well. Based on a reading of superintendents’ own writings from that era, Tyack suggested that: “superintendents in the nineteenth century conceived of their task in part as an evangelical enterprise, a search for organizational means to realize the goal of creating a ‘redeemer nation’” (1976, p. 258).
Certiﬁcation of superintendents, Tyack also concluded, was based not so much on possession of some body of professional knowledge as by their church membership and a shared earnestness. Superintendents in homogeneous small communities personiﬁed and enforced the ofﬁcial morality of the village. Tyack refers to the image that many superintendents of this period had of themselves, which was as “aristocrats of character” (1976, p. 258) who helped create an ideal of heroic leadership.

That school leaders of this period should look to religion as the basis for their legitimacy is not surprising. Many Victorian Americans believed that their country had been chosen as the preeminent Christian nation and that good citizens acted in accord with Christian values. The public school was viewed by these people as a key instrument for institutionalizing their beliefs and so they were among the most vigorous in the development of such schools (Smith, 1967; Tyack, 1970).

The inﬂuence of religious values as a source of public school leadership authority persisted well into the 1920s (Beck & Murphy, 1993) during which time it was invoked alongside “scientiﬁc management.” But as the Protestant
church and its values gradually relinquished its hold on the public school, the leadership of those schools turned to other sources of authority. By the 1930s, religion was rarely seen as a source of authority among public school leaders.

During the 1990s, public schools have been reintroduced to the political power of religious values as a source of leadership authority. This has occurred as the “religious right” has challenged the leadership provided by local trustees and senior administrators to set outcomes for student learning that appear to usurp domains of children’s development traditionally assumed to be the responsibility of families and the church (Spady, 1994). In many instances, these challenges have been successful with majority representatives from the religious right elected to local school boards.

Throughout the twentieth century, religion consistently has been a critical source of leadership authority in a significant proportion of North American schools established with the express purpose of transmitting the values of specific religions. Catholic schools are the most conspicuous examples, attracting 5.4% of the student population in the U.S. (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993).

Although Catholic school leaders are the largest single group of North American
educational leaders continuing to use religion as a significant source of their
authority, many in North America were established to transmit the values of
some other religion. It is safe to infer that religion remains a strong basis for the
authority of leaders in these schools as well.

Contemporary approaches to moral leadership, as described in the previous
section, rarely consider religion a source of values, preferring instead to draw on
democratic traditions and values. Nonetheless, in making the case that leader
ship authority should be based on concepts of what is right and good, religion
provided one of the earliest roots of today’s concept of moral leadership. Psychology

The contributions of psychology, both positive and negative, typically are under
estimated in the most frequently cited accounts of the evolution of sources of
school leadership authority. However, developments in psychological theory and
research begun in the 1880s have informed and helped legitimate the decision
making of school leaders about both students and teachers throughout the twen
tieth century. These developments also have assisted in the understanding of
school leadership practices directly. Students

As Campbell et al. (1987) argue, “science” as a source of leadership authority
was founded originally on the early work of Cattell, James, Thorndike (in particular), and others who extended and applied the ideas of these pioneers beginning in the 1880s:

Thorndike’s work, perhaps more than any other single factor, imbued the scientific movement in education with its psychological and statistical

A C E N T U R Y ’ S Q U E S T T O U N D E R S T A N D S C H O O L L E A D E R S H I P character . . . In 1902, Thorndike offered a course in the application of ‘psychological and statistical methods to education’ . . . [this course] outlined what would be the emphasis and content of educational research for at least the next three decades. (Campbell et al., 1987, p. 30)

As tools for the measurement of intelligence, aptitude, and achievement were further developed, school leaders were provided with a basis for managing students: grouping, sorting, and advancing students, as well as screening them for subsequent levels of schooling. The birth of quantitative student testing arising from this early work in psychology persists with many refinements and modifications as a major influence on decision making in schools to this day. Debates also continue to rage about issues such as the validity of information collected through standardized achievement tests for decision making (Worthen, 1993), the meaning of “intelligence” and its educational role (Sternberg & Wagner, 1986), and the effectiveness and equity of tracking
decisions based on pupil
achievement and aptitude tests (Oakes, 1985).

During the 1940s the emphasis in psychology began to move
from its interest
in human traits and their measurement toward the
development of formal behav
ioral theories of human functioning. Due in no small
measure to the seminal
work of B. F. Skinner (1938), educators found themselves
being admonished to
approach curriculum, instruction, and student discipline
using theories of contin
gent reinforcement.

These contributions by psychology to student testing
practices, along with the
implications for instruction flowing from behaviorism, were
perceived to establish
a highly “scientiﬁc” basis for managing the technical core
of schooling. In combi
nation with those methods of job analysis initially
developed outside schools and
associated with the scientiﬁc management movement, these
developments in psy
chology provided considerable impetus for managerial
approaches to leadership.

During the past 20 years, developments in psychology with
clear relevance to
education have rejected behaviorism in favor of attempting
to better understand
mental processes (Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1997).
Cognitive psychology has
made considerable progress in developing constructivist
(Bereiter & Scar...
damalia, 1996), connectionist (Rumelhart, 1989), and social cognitive (Vygotsky, 1978) understandings of the nature of student learning. These more recent understandings have resulted quite directly in the development of such student-related educational innovations in North America as discipline-based curricular frameworks (Robitaille, et al., 1993) and curriculum guidelines, as well as content and performance standards (National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, 1989) developed by many states and provinces. Such developments demand high levels of professional expertise and judgment on the part of teachers to implement. So, while a potential source of leadership authority, they do not justify highly control-oriented approaches to such leadership. Depending on the amount of discretion left to school leaders in implementing such changes and the extent to which further local development of these changes is required for actual use, these sources of power nourish a view of school leaders as either middle managers or instructional leaders. Teachers At least four lines of psychological research and development have been especially influential as sources of authority for school leadership. One line of research was the extension of tools for student testing, initially developed in the
early 1900s, to the evaluation of teachers. This practice became especially pro-
nounced in North America in the context of the behaviorally-guided “process
product” era of research on teacher effectiveness (Brophy & Good, 1986).

Research with this focus produced lists of discrete teacher behaviors that corre-
lated positively and significantly with student achievement. These behaviors, in
turn, became the basis for summative evaluation instruments, often checklists,
used by administrators while observing classroom teaching (Popham, 1987).

These contributions of relatively behavioristic forms of psychology to the super-
vision of teaching have been widely criticized, for example, as assuming a labor
or craft-like view of an activity and role better conceived of as a profession or an
art (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1985) and providing no information to assist in
the explanation for observed practices (Stiggins & Duke, 1988).

Widespread use of these approaches to the evaluation of instruction was fos-
tered by the parallel work of Madeline Hunter (Hunter, 1976) and her associates,
along with the calls for a simple, managerial, and control-oriented form of
instructional leadership emanating from the effective schools research of the
1970s and early 1980s.
Results of psychological research describing the career stages of teachers is a second source of leadership authority with respect to teachers (Fuller, 1969; Huberman, 1989). Evidence from this research indicates that teachers pass through a relatively predictable set of stages over the course of their careers.

These career stages intersect in crucial ways with broader life stages and cannot be separated from them. Furthermore, early career stages are formative and administrative decisions concerning teaching assignments and the like make an enormous difference to long-term career success and satisfaction. This evidence also suggests that, during the middle stages of a career, teachers are highly motivated to experiment with change initiatives. Most teachers become especially interested in their own classrooms as distinct from the school or district as a whole during the later stages of their careers.

This research is a rich source of understanding about the motivational predispositions of teachers, helping to match expectations for improvement efforts in the school, with the interests of individual staff members (Leithwood, 1989). As a source of authority most consistent with transformational approaches to leadership, it also offers useful guidelines to educational leaders for the continuous
professional development of teachers (Oja, 1979).

A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

As a third source of leadership power with respect to teachers, psychology has provided theoretical tools for better understanding forms of leadership that are appropriate in influencing a host of teacher variables considered to be critical mediators standing between leaders’ practices and the effects of these practices on students. Throughout the century, research about school leadership has inquired about forms of leadership that influence, for example, teacher job satisfaction (Conley, Bacharach, & Bauer, 1989), teachers’ commitment to change (Leithwood & Menzies, in press), and willingness to participate in school decisions (Kushman, 1992). For the most part, this line of research is a source of power for participative and transformational approaches to school leadership.

A fourth and final line of psychological research serving as a source of leadership authority with respect to teachers is to be found in applications of cognitive psychology to a better understanding of the nature of teachers’ thinking and decision making (Clark & Peterson, 1986). Although the results of this research had a considerable impact on some teacher preparation programs, there
is little evidence of their application as sources of leadership authority. This is in spite of their considerable potential to help those providing transformational leadership to develop a better understanding of the thinking of their teacher colleagues and to inform them about how to exercise influence with their teacher colleagues in ways productive to them both. Expert leadership.

Research on teacher thinking, however, did provide a well-developed set of theories and methods to help guide parallel research on the nature of school leaders’ thinking and decision making (Leithwood & Steinbach, 1995; Hallinger, Leithwood & Murphy, 1993; Allison, 1996). This quite recent research, a source of authority for contingent approaches to leadership, offers insights concerning the nature of leaders’ expertise (Leithwood and Steinbach, 1995) as well as experiences useful in the development of such expertise (Bridges & Hallinger, 1992).

In addition to the work on teacher thinking and decision making, current research on expert leadership thinking can be traced back to a much earlier preoccupation with administrative problems and decision making. Allison (1996) dates the beginning of this line of work to Strayer’s 1925 volume Problems in Educational Administration and describes an ongoing
interest in the use of case problems in textbooks for the purpose of helping to teach conceptual material throughout the subsequent 70 years (Hoy & Tarter, 1995; Culbertson, Jacobson & Reller, 1960). Griffiths’ (1959) theory of administration as decision making provided the pre-cognitive framework for a substantial research effort by Hemphill, Griffiths, and Frederiksen (1962) to understand the nature of administrators’ problem interpretation. Curiously, in spite of its scope, the work begun in this study does not seem to have been pursued by others between its completion and the quite recent spate of cognitively-oriented research on leadership expertise and its development. \textsc{History and Research Sociology}\n
Two distinct lines of theory and research have been appealed to by school leaders as sources of authority for their practices during the twentieth century:

theory and research about organizational change and about organizational design. Organizational change One of the main sources of school leaders’ power in implementing change can be traced to the seminal works of Everett Rogers (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) and Ronald Havelock (1971). In both cases, the primary focus of attention was on what would now be called the pre-adoption and adoption
phases of the change process. During the 1960s and 1970s, this phase of change also was the object of attention by those interested in school leadership. Carlson’s (1972) study of the processes used by superintendents in the adoption of innovations in school districts exemplifies this work. In this work, roots can be found leading not only to a middle manager view of school leadership but also aspects of participative, instructional, and transformational approaches to leadership.

Although knowledge about pre-adoption and adoption processes offered some useful guidance, especially to senior school leaders, it soon became apparent that adoption decisions by such leaders did not have much to do with actual uses of whatever was adopted in classrooms. Charters and Jones’ widely influential paper, On the Risk of Appraising Non-Events in Program Evaluation (1973), made this point from the perspective of those evaluating the impact of changes on classroom practices and student achievement. John Goodlad’s widely cited study, Behind the Classroom Door (1970), also made this case in an especially compelling way for school practitioners. His League of Cooperating Schools focused attention on implementation processes within the school as
the unit of change and on the principal as a key agent of change.

The Charters and Jones and Goodlad papers were among the more visible early stimulants for a line of sociological research about implementation processes. This research acquired considerable currency as a formal source of authority for how leaders should approach change in their schools during the 1970s and 1980s. Early stages of this research entailed mostly case studies of failed change initiatives in schools. For example, Gross, Giacquinta & Bernstein (1971) described the troubled path of an elementary school staff faced with implementing an activity-based curriculum without adequate material support or consistent, supportive leadership; Smith & Keith’s (1971) ethnography documented the gradual “normalization” of a much-publicized, newly constructed public school built around the ambitious and innovative open education visions of the district superintendent and the school’s first principal, both of whom exhibited strong transformational and participative leadership features.

This early work contributed in turn to a line of research and development about educational change and school improvement.
processes that had become a dominant source of authority for many school leaders by the mid-1980s. This source supported a more decidedly “change agent” view of school leadership than had any other prior source. In relation to the six categories of leadership concepts outlined in the previous section, this source provided support for some elements and versions of participative, transformational, instructional, and managerial orientations to leadership.

Among the more noteworthy large scale research efforts aimed at providing a data-based set of prescriptions for practice were the Rand Change Agent studies (Berman et al., 1975) and the “DESSI” study (Loucks et al., 1982). Michael Fullan had begun his career-long effort to synthesize research on educational change and to make it accessible to educational practitioners (Fullan & Pomfret, 1977; Fullan, 1982; Fullan & Steiglebauer, 1991).

Also by the mid-1980s, Gene Hall and his associates had fully developed their Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM). Used widely in the U.S., as well as in parts of Canada, the Netherlands, Belgium, Australia, and elsewhere, CBAM provided school leaders with tangible tools for diagnosing key aspects of their organization and specific strategies for implementing innovations (Loucks,
Newlove & Hall, undated). Although clearly one of the best researched and dis-
seminated, CBAM was but one example of a genre of R&D products, school
improvement procedures, of which there were many others. Indeed, one out
growth of the effective schools movement was a set of models specifi-
designed to implement the correlates of effective schools.
Common among all these products was an attempt to simplify the complex
processes of school change and make them more manageable for school leaders.
Usually this meant conceptualizing the change process as a series of temporally
sequenced stages, each focused on a key set of functions or tasks such as diag-
nosing readiness for change, developing goals for change, choosing programs to
achieve the goals, and the like. School improvement models served as the basis
for considerable in-service training of school leaders and became for a while the
of cial approach to change not only in many school districts (Stoll & Fink,
1994) but in whole states and provinces as well. (Matthew Miles [1993], a
appearing figure throughout this 40-year period of research and development, pro-
vides a much more extensive and re ective analysis of the evolution of
approaches to change).
Approaches to change described to this point, emerging largely from sociological inquiry and serving as major sources of power for several different approaches to school leadership, evolved through three stages. The first stage documented failure and drew general implications or guidelines for success; this stage assumed that the seeds of success are evident in failure, a risky assumption. The second stage found examples of successful practice and recommended they be used by others; this gives little weight to the importance of the context for change, also a risky approach. At a third stage are efforts to prescribe a set of sequenced tasks to be carried out in order to manage the change process in an orderly fashion; the obvious flaw in this approach is the assumption that an invariant set of tasks is useful for all changes and for all points of departure.

These shortcomings, among others, gave rise to school restructuring, an elastic concept often including many components of change (Murphy, 1991) but usually including at least some form of school-based management (Murphy & Beck, 1995). School-based management brings together sources of school leadership authority based on knowledge of change processes and knowledge about organizational design, largely in support of participative and transforma
tional models of leadership. Organizational design

Throughout the twentieth century, organizational design
theory has provided

another, primarily sociological, source of authority for
educational leadership.

The story of how this source of authority evolved in
schools begins with Freder

ick Taylor and the scientific management movement,
transforms itself into a pre

occupation with bureaucracy, and then moves on to an
interest in open systems

ty. The atheoretical correlates of effective schools’
research then supplants

formal open systems theory, although the correlates
themselves contain an open

systems perspective. During the past 10 years, a resurgence
of interest has

occurred in a more complex, open systems theory that has
yet to be synthesized

into a formal theory. This more complex design
characterizes the school as a

learning organization or a learning community.

Managerial leadership has its genesis most directly in
scientific management.

This approach to organizational design emerged as a signifi-
cant source of

leadership authority in the second decade of the twentieth
century (Tyack, 1976; 

Campbell et al., 1987; Callahan, 1962). At the core of this
form of organizational design was the time and motion study, a procedure
to be used by super
visors to find the best way for carrying out a task and then telling the workers responsible for the task how to do it. The initial attractiveness of scientific management was as a response to two problems. First, traditional forms of control, authority, and communication, as well as existing methods to measure productivity, had proven ineffective in dealing with modern industrial problems.

Second, industry was marked by intense labor unrest stemming from substantial changes in the nature of the work; there was an absence of effective supervisory procedures and uniform production standards required in a modern industrial organization.

Within education, scientific management offered itself as a solution, particularly for superintendents of large city school districts, to managing rapid growth in facilities, school staffs, and increasingly diverse student populations. The immense growth in school systems during this time also prompted growing concerns among the public about the costs of education and the need for greater financial accountability. These were problems scientific management seemed to have the potential to solve. Callahan (1962) argues as well that the high social
status of business leaders who were promoting efficiency through the use of scientific management in their own organizations, in combination with the low status and public vulnerability of school leaders, made it inevitable that such practices would be adopted in schools for purposes of self-preservation, whether or not they had any effect on the quality of education. Pajak (1993) claims, however, that although scientific management was the focus of considerable writing in education, it had very little influence on the actual practices of educational leaders at the school level.

Although explicit interest in Tayloristic versions of scientific management (Taylor, 1947) had dissipated by 1930, it continued less explicitly as a part of the classical approach to administrative study into the 1940s that was reflected, for example, in the work of Fayol, Gulick, Urwick, and Mooney (Campbell et al., 1987). It also was reflected in analytic approaches to administration, part of the Theory Movement in educational administration during the '50s and '60s.

As originally conceived by Weber, bureaucracy provides the organizational basis for one of his three pure types of authority (rational grounds) and another key source of power for managerial approaches to leadership. According to
Weber, this source of authority rests on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands (Roth & Wittich, 1968, p. 215). Conceived of as an especially enlightened form of organization, Weber described it in terms of rule-governed systems of relations defined by a hierarchy of roles and duties (Gerth & Mills, 1946, p. 196).

The translation of Max Weber’s work into English (Gerth & Mills, 1946) prompted considerable attention outside of education to the study of bureaucracy between the mid-1940s and mid-1970s. Particularly influential were the extensions and critiques of this work by the influential sociologists C. Wright Mills, Talcott Parsons, and Amatai Etzioni. Bureaucracy became a popular focus of study within education especially after 1960 “when students of educational management began to work within the framework of general administration and began to employ behavioral science approaches to organizational study” (Campbell et al., 1987). Its attractiveness can be partly explained by its following on the heels of the Human Relations movement in school leadership, which gave no attention to structure and organization.

At the same time, post-war expansion of the educational
levels of administrative complexity that added to the hierarchical character of school systems; in the U.S., for example, the number of school districts went from 100,000 (Campbell, et al., 1987, p. 86, originally reported by the National Commission on School District Reorganization) to 16,000 between 1948 and 1980.

Bureaucracy is rarely viewed today as the enlightened form of organizational design conceived by Weber. Nevertheless, the work of Eliot Jaques (1989), a scholar and consultant to governments and private enterprise, continues as a powerful justification for hierarchy in organizations. This work is presently an important and growing source of leadership authority outside education and may be instrumental in fostering renewed interest in bureaucracy in school organizations (see Gronn, 1996). Other aspects of Weber’s work also served as important elements in the attack led by Greeneld (Greeneld & Ribbins, 1993) on positivistic and rational approaches to educational administration and, ironically, managerial approaches to school leadership.

From the late ‘50s to the mid-’80s, considerable effort was made by organizational theorists inside and outside education to formulate a clearer conception
of the place of the wider environment in the functioning of schools and other
types of organizations. Interest in the development of open systems theory was
stimulated in part by growth in skepticism on the part of the public concerning
all social institutions, changing social values, and a general questioning and
reexamination of the traditions and cultures of North American society. Consid
erable efforts were made to rid social institutions of racism, for example, includ
ing school desegregation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights
Act of 1965. Also evidence of the emergence of a newly dominant set of values
was the youth revolt against the Vietnam war, rise of a new individualism, and
the women’s movement.
These social forces created a substantially changed milieu within which edu-
cational leaders had to work. Changing the context of leaders’ work even more
directly was a loss of consensus about the purposes of education in the U.S.
(Ravitch, 1983). Collective bargaining for teachers was widespread by the mid
1960s and there emerged a strong trend at this time toward federal intervention
into education: PL 94–142 (education of students with special needs) and PL
92–318 (end of sex discrimination in schools and colleges) are just two
examples of such intervention.

During this period, schools also experienced a rise in the number of special interest groups trying to influence their programs. Educational administrators now had to work not only with parents and trustees, but the wider community as well. Increased demand for parental choice helped create alternative schools (Raywid, 1985) and gave rise to experimentation with voucher systems (Hertling, 1985).

Many of these pressures on schools to envision themselves as more integrally connected with their wider environments continue to evolve unabated to the present. Rooted directly in these earlier pressures are current efforts, such as altering the governance of schools to give greater control to the local community (Malen, et al., 1990) to develop “full service schools” and to redesign secondary education so that it is more sensitive to the needs and demands of business and wider public interests (Hogan, 1992).

Open Systems theory stresses the complexity and variability of component parts of the system (both individual and subgroups) and the looseness of the connections between them. The interdependence of the organization and its environment shifts attention away from structure and purely
managerial orientations to leadership, as in the case of bureaucracy, to process in organizations.

A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

(Campbell et al., 1987). Outside of education, the theory is illustrated in Talcott Parsons’ (1960) concept of formal organizations including three levels, systems, or functions, the technical, managerial, and institutional or community systems.

According to this conception, no organization is wholly independent, especially in the relationships between the managerial and institutional systems. Three types of institutional control stand over the managerial system—generalized norms, interstitial organization (trustees, for example), and governmental structure to oversee the interstitial and managerial levels (such as state education agencies).

Another example of Open Systems theory, one providing sources of power for political versions of participatory leadership, can be found in the work of David Easton (1965). Schools are viewed as political subsystems, the larger social environment providing input to the subsystem. The idea of systems, including schools, operating in a “loosely coupled” fashion (Weick, 1976) is also part of the Open Systems’ rationale that has received
considerable attention

in the literature aimed at school leaders (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). Conceiving of

schools as learning organizations (Watkins & Marsick, 1993) or professional

learning communities (Louis, Marks & Kruse, 1996) can be considered a con-

tinuation of the interest in Open Systems’ theory. Knowledge generated from

research about this design is a source of power for transformational approaches

to school leadership.

The so-called correlates of effective schools were and in many places con-

inue to be unprecedented in the extent of their use as sources of authority for

instructional approaches to school leadership created by the academic commun-

ity. Research to discover these correlates was initiated more or less in parallel in

U.K. secondary schools (Rutter et al., 1979) and in U.S. inner city elementary

schools (Edmonds, 1979). By 1980, the original empirical work from this

perspective had accumulated to a corpus of at least a dozen studies. Reviews and

critical analyses of these studies were being widely published and explicit

efforts were underway to bring results of this research to the attention of school

leaders (Duckett, et al., 1980).

For academics conducting the original effective schools research, controver-
sial evidence presented by James Coleman (1966) concerning the small propor-
tion of variation in student achievement accounted for by schools, as compared
with other factors, was the main stimulus for their inquiry. They viewed schools
as a primary instrument for the achievement of social and economic equity and
were alarmed that Coleman’s findings would be used by policy makers as a
reason to allocate fewer resources to public education. Thus it was crucial from
their point of view to find evidence to dispute Coleman’s claim and to embark
on efforts to recreate as many schools as possible in conformity with this evid-
ence.

For school leaders, the attractiveness of effective schools research as a source
of authority could be accounted for by its accessibility and the straightforward,
“implementable” nature of its findings. Creating a safe and orderly environment, H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H
providing strong leadership, monitoring student progress, and engaging in active
instruction, while not simple tasks to carry out in schools, were at least on the
surface clear and familiar. Furthermore, the inner-city, economically-disadvan-
taged context in which much of the research had been carried out was the same
context in which many school leaders were experiencing their greatest chal
Diffusion of effective school research also was speeded up considerably by the unusually well-targeted communication channels used for disseminating the research results; the emergence of a widespread perception that education was in crisis; and the fact that effective school research does not require fundamental revisions in the way schools are run, which rather works on improving existing practices; and the amount of effort devoted by districts, states, and professional associations to creating in-service programs for school leaders built around effective schools correlates (such as the Harvard principal center, and so on).

By the time Louis and Miles were ready to undertake their study of effective secondary schools in the U.S. (1990), they were able to select their sample from a population of schools claiming to be implementing effective school research results, estimated to be approximately 279. Philosophy, social psychology, and critical theory

These three sources are discussed together because, although independent in their genesis, they combine in giving rise to and sustaining interest in participative and democratic forms of school leadership. These forms of school leadership came to prominence first in the early 1930s, and interest in them in their
original form was sustained into the 1960s, especially in the teacher supervision literature (Pajak, 1993; Lindsay & Schwarcz, 1960). Support for these forms of leadership initially arose in response to the dehumanizing aspects of scientific management, greater community involvement in schools because schools were increasingly situated in suburban areas and in closer proximity to parents, and a trend toward administrative decentralization. During the early development of participative and democratic concepts of leadership, “educational” philosophy was an important source of authority. In this context, educational philosophy refers to a position initially developed by Dewey (1916, 1929, 1946) concerning democracy and scientific inquiry. In Dewey’s view, the challenge to democracy lay in extending the spirit of participation at the heart of the American political system to the economic world of men and women at work. The long standing goal of political and social equity was to be reflected in participatory forms of organizational governance, allowing the benefits of production and decisions about work to be shared by all. These decisions would be arrived at through consciously reasoned, cooperative problem solving (reflective inquiry).
This position was further developed by others in education and promoted as

an ideal form of school organization and leadership. As Kilpatrick explained,

**A CENTURY'S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

“education will not contribute to the reconstruction of the social process until it

seriously experiments with the reconstruction of its own procedures” (1933, p. 210). Although somewhat dormant for several decades, this basic position has

been resuscitated more recently by critical theory, as we explain below.

Although democratically-oriented educational philosophy promoted participatory forms of leadership on essentially moral grounds, parallel developments

in social psychology provided evidence that such participation was an effective

means of achieving organizational goals. The Hawthorne Studies carried out by

Mayo, Lewin, and others (Mayo, 1933) are typically cited as the genesis of this

work. The ideas of Mary Parker Follett (Metcalf & Urwick, 1940) concerning

the nature of power and decision making were almost identical to those

expressed in the current literature on educational restructuring and teacher

empowerment (Dunlap & Goldman, 1991). Reflecting these ideas, the 1943

ASCD Yearbook portrayed leadership in schools as an educative force. Its aim,
according to the authors, was to expand the horizons of the group by encourag

ing group members to think beyond the level of existing opinion and practice.

This perspective is remarkably similar to Argyris and Schön’s (1978) concept of “double loop” learning.

Although early interest in participatory and democratic forms of leadership were promoted by Dewian philosophy and social psychology, the emergence of critical theory, along with post-positive orientations to the philosophy of science, has resulted in them being attributed renewed relevance in response to contemporary problems. Evers and Lakomski (1991) characterize critical theory approaches to administration as complex and covering ethical, political, social, linguistic, and personal dimensions. This analysis is limited to features of both post-positivism and critical theory stimulated in response to three features of the theory movement in educational administration: a positivist orientation toward knowledge, a structural-functionalist conception of organizations, and a control oriented, managerial, view of leadership. Critical theory, arising in objection to these features, among others, is defined for our purposes by the positions it has developed as alternatives.
Structural-functional assumptions about the nature of school organizations

are rejected by critical theory. Such “system-based functionalism” in Foster’s terms (1986, p. 3) includes assumptions about a high level of consensus in respect to existing school goals, the appropriateness of such goals for all stakeholders, and the non-political nature of defensible processes for arriving at an agreement about such goals. These assumptions also treat as unproblematic contemporary developments in science and technology, as well as the hierarchical nature of relationships traditionally found within the school organization.

According to Maddock (1995), the task of critical theory is to subject such contemporary developments and relationships to continual scrutiny on their own terms and to demonstrate the contradictions and limitations of these ideas and practices.

Critical theory also offers a more decisively normative, socio-cultural analysis of schools. This analysis points out how structural-functional assumptions have encouraged schools to establish structures of authority and control, both mirroring and reproducing systematic inequalities in the wider society. These inequalities arise from differences among groups of people in race, class, reli
gion, gender, and geography. Cultural analysis, explains Bates:

insists that the culture of a society cannot be understood unless the

nature and organization of the relationships and struggles between

dominant and subordinate cultures are taken into account. Indeed, it is

the struggle among such cultures that constitutes the major
dynamic of

cultural change. (1987, p. 90)

Structural-functional views of the school organization
remove the possibilities

of schools serving as agents of democracy and social
justice.

This basic objection to how school organizations have been
conceptualized in

the context of the theory movement in educational
administration has given rise

to a view of leadership that, although somewhat distinct in its emancipatory

emphasis, supports at least three of the leadership models described in earlier

sections of this chapter. Critical theorists argue that a managerial conception of

leadership has dominated the field over the past several decades (Smyth, 1989;

Bates, 1993; Foster, 1986). This conception of leadership

assumes dominance or

control over organizational members and separates educational from administra-
tive concerns, privileging the latter (Ortiz & Marshall, 1988; Bates, 1993). The
genesis of critical theorists’ orientation to leadership is its responsibility to develop educational organizations whose fundamental purposes are to nurture not only equity among organizational stakeholders but also the freedom and autonomy of individual members. A control orientation to leadership and administration flies in the face of these emancipatory intentions. Foster (1989), as a consequence, argues that leadership must be critical, transformational, educative, and ethical. Critical leadership assumes that because existing conditions of social life have been constructed by people (rather than simply received), they can be reconstructed to be more equitable, democratic, and just if they are found wanting in these respects. One of the key responsibilities of leaders is to engage colleagues in self-reflection on and analyses of existing social and organizational conditions, along with the social cultures of both the school and the local community. When these analyses reveal room for improvement in social and organizational conditions, leadership also entails assisting colleagues to envision more suitable social and organizational conditions appropriate to the social culture. Foster (1986) refers to this visioning process as “educative leadership,”
A process that enables colleagues to consider alternative ways of ordering their lives and raising their level of consciousness about social conditions.

Leadership also entails ethical commitments. Building on Burns’ (1978) conception of how transformational leadership functions, such commitments are the elevation of colleagues’ moral consciousness about the social conditions in which they find themselves. As part of their ethical commitments, leaders should be advocates for principles of democracy, respect for others, social justice, and equality. According to Foster (1989) and Bates (1987), leaders always have a moral agenda.

Given a vision of a more desirable set of social and organizational conditions, transformative leadership entails assisting colleagues in making judgments about suitable courses of action to achieve these conditions (Bates, 1987; Foster, 1986) and implementing these actions. Judgments about suitable courses of action require: a balancing of theory and empirical understanding, of political and ethical factors, and of traditions and customs. It is in this way that administrators approaches go beyond the scientific without becoming arbitrarily subjective. (Maddock, 1995, p. 66)

The contributions of critical theory to conceptualizing leadership have been
quite significant. As the exercise of critical theory matures, its potential contributions promise to be far greater, not least because of the balance it provides to the neo-conservative philosophy presently raging through most Western political systems and posing unprecedented threats to equity and social justice as goals of education systems.

We are much less positive, however, about the contemporary contributions of philosophy in educational administration to the development of concepts of leadership. Clearly this is a contrarian view, one that flies in the face of judgments by many presently writing in the field. We refer here to the extensive literature in educational administration devoted to post-positive or post-empiricist conceptions of epistemology and the role of science in informing leadership practice. green eld is generally acknowledged as having initiated (green eld, 1975) and nourished this literature along (green eld & Ribbins, 1993), in concert with scholars who joined him in debate (Grifths, 1979; Willower, 1985). And Evers and Lakomski (1991) have offered cogent overviews, analyses, and extensions of their own.

What this line of theorizing in educational administration adds up to, stripped
follows:

• Agreement with and understanding of knowledge as personally constructed;

• Claims that organizational behavior is often not especially rational, not only because people lack information but also because organizational members pursue their own goals and values; H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

• Most decisions faced by administrators are value-laden;

• Human systems are by definition less predictable than physical systems;

• What passes for “scientifically objective knowledge” in human organizations is more adequately characterized as “socially shared” knowledge;

• The meaning people give to events is shaped by their goals, values, feelings, existing knowledge, and past experiences.

Perhaps there is more to it than this, but not much. And what it adds up to is a series of “blinding flashes of the obvious”—obvious in terms of existing understandings from other scholarly sources, not to mention the common understandings of most school leaders. At least for the purposes of this chapter, it is remarkable that, whatever current writings in educational administration philosophy might have contributed, a more sophisticated conception of educational leadership is not one of them. Summary

This section of the chapter identified, as historical and theoretical sources of
leadership authority, tradition, religion, psychology, sociology, and a combination of philosophy, social psychology, and critical theory. Knowledge developed through psychological and sociological inquiry have been especially influential in justifying the exercise of leadership, but most contemporary approaches to leadership in schools have significant roots in at least several different sources of power and authority. Further, each source of power, while capable of nourishing several different leadership offspring, is relatively hostile to others. Finally, this section also has shown that all the sources of leadership authority, save post positivism and critical theory, are quite mature. To the extent that these sources are central to concepts of leadership, as we have argued, contemporary leadership approaches are best characterized as evolutionary in nature. Conclusion Few attempts have been made to look broadly at the quest for an adequate conception of leadership in schools as it has unfolded over the twentieth century. Beck and Murphy’s (1993) work is likely the most recent among these efforts. Having attempted the task ourselves, we are especially aware of the many different ways in which any single description of the quest could be viewed as missing essential understandings critical in someone’s view. In this concluding
section, we briefly reflect on the nature of the quest itself, offer a synthesis of results to the mid-1990s, and identify some priorities for future theory and research.

A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP Nature of the quest

Viewed up close or at one point in time, it would be easy to conclude that efforts to conceptualize leadership in schools over the past century have been going in circles. From an upclose perspective, it is especially difficult to understand several issues with which this chapter has been centrally preoccupied: the genesis of different concepts of leadership; why a leadership concept falls into favor at one point in time only to fall out of favor eventually, overshadowed by a different concept; and whether the multiple leadership concepts encountered in the literature are truly competing with one another or, rather, reflecting different elements of some, as yet to be described, more sophisticated conception of leadership in schools. Chaos or complexity? Although chaos seems to be the fashionable answer among most of those who have written about development in the field of school leadership, the inquiry described in this chapter arrived at a moderately more optimistic conclusion.
Unquestionably, conceptual development related to educational leadership over the century has not occurred through any widely agreed on, explicit game plan (more like the flight of the bumble bee than a bullet, to use Phil Jackson’s metaphor). But then what social science concept has? Rather, the developmental process seems to be well captured by Hutchin’s (1995) view of organizational learning as a process of mutual adaptation manifest in the actions of individual members of the leadership community as they reacted to, criticized, and built on one another’s ideas. It is neither necessary nor likely that many individual members of the leadership community have understood the pattern of actions represented in the community as a whole. So justifying the claim that the concept of school leadership has developed through some defensible process does not also require justifying the claim that those in the midst of the process intentionally designed it that way.

From the perspective of our own analysis, the mutually adaptive process through which concepts of school leadership have developed over this century has consisted of conceptual differentiation, recalibration, and elaboration. This seems to be the case for all leadership concepts. Some version of each category of leadership concept, if not the specific models that each subsumes, was evident.
by the middle of the century. Differentiation is evident, for example, in the

gradual increase in number of sources of power and authority used by scholars
to justify the exercise of leadership and in the further clarification of implications of each of these sources for leadership practice. Recalibration is visible in

the adaptation or updating of the meaning and expression of enduring leadership concepts in acknowledgment of changing problems and contexts. Elaboration is illustrated in efforts to deepen understandings of those sources of leadership legitimization as well as to extend knowledge of the practices associated with each different approach to leadership. The outcomes of this process, although not synthesized well to date, are conceptions of leadership in schools that are increasingly complex (a good thing), multi-dimensional, ecologically valid, defensible, and user-friendly. HIS T O R Y A N D R E A R C H A relational conception of leadership

A type of synthesis of contemporary leadership literature has been accomplished through the six-fold classification of leadership concepts that subsumes an initial, more specific set of 20 (refer to Table 2). These categories, however, are not directly comparable. They do not provide alternative solutions to the same problem. Rather, these concepts focus attention on
different aspects of the organization. For instance, managerial leadership awards considerable importance to organizational policies and procedures, whereas instructional leadership focuses on the organization’s core technology. The six leadership categories also attend to different pieces of the leadership puzzle. Contingency approaches, for example, focus on leaders’ problem-solving processes whereas moral leadership attends to leaders’ values. Finally, the six sets of leadership concepts also concern themselves with different aspects of those designated as followers.

Transformational leadership emphasizes the importance of followers’ commitments whereas participative leadership concerns itself largely with followers’ roles in decision making, as an illustration.

Thus these six approaches to leadership do not explicitly represent a set of discrete dimensions that, taken together, provide a comprehensive account of what is entailed in leadership. They still place excessive emphasis on the practices or internal processes of an individual person designated as “leader,” for example.

In this concluding section of the chapter, we explore and illustrate the possibility of developing a more comprehensive account of leadership based on relat
tionships. After Wheatley (1994) and others, such a conception views leadership as a more or less complex set of relationships cohering around a core of common intentions. The ways in which existing leadership concepts differ from one another suggest three of the four sets of elements likely to be interacting in such relationships: the leader, the follower, and the organization. The fourth element is the environment within which the organization and its individual members find themselves. Leaders and followers.

For purposes of developing a more comprehensive account of leadership, these elements of both leader and follower that interact might be conceptualized as capacities (knowledge and skills), attitudes, values, and goals (elements of motivation), and practices (more or less overt behaviors). School leadership literature is replete with treatments of leadership defined by the relationships between one or more of these elements of leaders and followers: for example, the relationship between a principal’s vision (goals) and a teacher’s classroom practices (as in instructional leadership), or a principal’s practices and a teacher’s motivations (as in transformational leadership).
Organizational theory offers several ways to conceptualize relevant elements of an organization. By way of illustration, we have found significant relationships in some of our own work (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1995) between leadership and a set of six organizational elements derived from such a theory (Daft, 1988; Banner & Gagné, 1995; Galbraith, 1977; Bolman & Deal, 1991).

These elements include mission and vision, culture, structure, information collection and decision-making processes, programs and instruction, strategies for change, and policies and resources. The literature on school leadership also provides many examples of leadership defined in terms of the relationships between some of these elements of the organization and one or more of the other sets of variables included in this conception. Symbolic leadership, for example, describes relationships between the values both implicit and explicit in a leader’s practices and the culture of the school. Participative leadership focuses attention on, among other things, the relationships among teachers’ practices, principals’ practices, and organizational structures. Environment

A fourth element interacting in a relational conception of leadership is the environment within which the organization functions (in other words, whatever
is defined as outside the “boundaries” of the organization). Although given con-
siderable attention in organizational theory, this element is not well represented
in most existing categories of leadership concepts: the subcategory of moral
leadership referred to as “political” in Table 2 is the primary exception, some
times focusing on the relationship between the interests of those inside and
outside of the organization. Our review of the historical and theoretical roots of
these concepts suggests that this is an unfortunate shortcoming. The perceived
value of a leadership concept at any point in time, as well as its eventual fall
from favor, seem largely to be explained by events in the larger environment
within which the organization finds itself.

As with organizations, critical elements of the environment in which schools
find themselves can be defined in a variety of ways. Daft (1988) offers a set of
elements with demonstrable relevance to schools:

- The pool of human resources which employees are drawn from (such as the extent to which talented college graduates choose to enter or not enter teaching);

- The market for services provided by the organization (the challenge to public schools’ quasi-monopoly on students provided by the recent charter schools movement);

- The availability of financing for the organization’s initiatives (erosion of support for school funding by increased public demand for health care and other social services);
• New technologies in the environment that may threaten the need for the services provided by the organization (the extent to which computer-based technologies provide access to educational services and information outside the bounds of formal educational institutions);

• Economic conditions that influence the volume of business (the impact on support for school bond issues of recessionary business cycles);

• Governments and the nature of their policies and regulations (the extent to which many current western governments are embarked on major educational restructuring initiatives);

• Sociocultural conditions such as social value systems and demographics (generational shifts in the size of the school age population and the effects this has on support for education of youth).

These elements making up the wider environment of schools and other organizations offer leadership some of its greatest challenges, as just the handful of examples provided here demonstrates. Some recent leadership inquiries have begun to take them explicitly into account. For example, an interest in the relationship between leader practices, teacher practices, and government restructuring initiatives is evident in recent research on leadership.
in the context of school-based management (Murphy & Beck, 1995). Goldring and Rallis (1993) explore the meaning of school leadership through the relationship between leaders’ practices and most of the elements of the environment identified by Daft (1988). But the importance of most environmental elements has not been well reflected in efforts to conceptualize school leadership to date. Relationships Although it is necessary to specify at least illustrative elements of each of the constructs interacting in a relational conception of leadership, the most complex and important aspects of leadership are to be found in the nature of the relationships themselves. How can such relationships adequately be conceptualized?

The generic definition, with which the chapter began, of leadership as an influence process concerning the choice of goals and the development and implementation of the means for their achievement, is one starting point for answering this question. Additionally, these relationships can be viewed from both descriptive and normative perspectives. With purely descriptive purposes in mind, variation in influence processes can be explored within such dimensions as strength, direction (one way, reciprocal), and type, for example. Normative interests in
the relationships defining a leadership act require exploration of additional dimensions of influence. For example, transformational theorists argue that such influence ought to elevate the motives of both leaders and followers (Burns, 1978). Critical theorists argue that influence exercised through leadership ought to stimulate analysis and reflection about collective intentions and the means of their achievement, as well as be empowering (Foster, 1986).

Kelman (1976) provide an illustration of the different forms that influence can take and how these forms vary in the autonomy and freedom they offer individuals affected by them, an essential condition of empowerment. At the least empowering end of their continuum of influence types is coercion, “[a situation in which] one person or group forces another person or group to act or refrain from acting under the threat of severe deprivation” (1976, p. 484). Facilitation, the most empowering form of influence according to this view, is “designed to make it easier for an individual to implement his own choice or to satisfy his own desires” (1976, p. 491). Between these two extremes is persuasion (the use of argument and reason to influence a person to change), and manipulation.
(altering factors that influence a person’s choices without their knowledge).

The distinction between management and leadership contributes little or nothing to an understanding of leadership conceived of as a set of relationships.

Relationships simply vary in their complexity. At the least complex extreme,

such relationships entail a relatively small number of transparent interactions.

Someone in a formal leadership role, for example, tells a willing member of the organization to undertake a non-trivial task, understood by leader and follower in the same way, in order to accomplish a goal of the organization that both leader and follower value. Although this interaction might be considered a prime candidate for classification as “management,” it still conforms to the basic properties of leadership conceptualized from a relational perspective.

Given this conception of leadership, such simple forms of leadership are probably in the minority, however. The potential complexity arising from varying forms of relations among leaders, followers, organization, and environment helps explain the difficulties leadership theorists have experienced in developing a widely agreed-upon understanding of leadership. Stimulated by complexity theory (Waldrop, 1992), it is reasonable to
represent the relation

relationships constituting many individual leadership interactions
as forming a system.

Although each such system may include some relationships
that are linear, many

are likely to be dynamic, reciprocal, and, therefore,
highly unpredictable. Poten

tial followers, for example, may develop quite different
interpretations of the

same influence initiative, interpretations sufficiently
varied as to make the same

initiative both facilitative and coercive, depending upon
who is doing the inter

preting. What distinguishes a relationship defined as
leadership from some other

type of dynamic, non-linear, social interaction is its
intentionality. Implications for future research and theory

It is possible to imagine a large number of promising
directions for future theory

and research about school leadership in light of our
relational conception of

leadership. Two directions stand out as deserving special
attention. First, rather

than devoting exclusive energy to the development of new
leadership concepts,

there is much to be learned from further development of
existing concepts such

as the six categories of leadership summarized in this
chapter. In particular, it

would be useful to pursue such questions as: What are the
similarities and differ

ences among these leadership categories in terms of key
relationships? What is
the nature of the influence evident in these relationships? and What are the con
sequences of these key relationships for followers and the organization as a whole?

The second promising direction for future theory and research would be to extend the small body of recent research examining, in particular, the relation
ships between leadership practices, capacities, and motives, and selected ele
ments of the environment in which schools are located. An especially neglected aspect of that environment is social values. Although such values appear to be of increasing salience in a rapidly globalizing world (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Wong & Cheng, 1996), all six conceptions of leadership reviewed in this chapter reflect western values and have been developed within a framework of western assumptions, problems, and evidence. “Which cultural values have different conceptions of leader capacities, motives, and practices most adequate?” is a question that needs to be pursued as part of the agenda for future research and theory concerning school leadership. Part of the inquiry required by this ques-
tion includes the identification of additional leadership concepts, those with their genesis in non-western cultures. Note


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A Critical and Historical Review
A CENTURY’S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: 70 RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Recent education reforms have produced some unintended effects. Measures taken to subject a vast area of public spending to greater predictability and control, to bypass bureaucracy and give back initiative to teachers and parents, seem to have encouraged quite different and unforeseeable developments.

One of these is that education, as an institution, has become more reflective
upon itself. From its beginnings in the nineteenth century, public education was dynamic with a sense of missionary social purpose. Dissemination of knowledge, cultivation of enlightenment and provision of opportunity for all were goals which positioned teachers and schools centrally within the nation state’s modernising, civilising, project.

Today, we are not so sure of ourselves. Politicians focus on mini-max strategies, re-casting policies which generate least opposition in order to yield as much recordable improvement as can be squeezed from inelastic resource levels.

But parents and teachers are more sceptical and unsure; emerging ‘partnerships’ between them are understood as collaborative, discursive encounters in learning, for their own and their children’s personal benefit. Missions are for marketeers, whilst there is 'no mission' for traditionalists clinging to earlier beliefs in 'social progress'. Local ‘communities’ are now atomised, fragmented, disempowered.

Increasingly, individuals search for alternative networks in search of companionship or a livelihood, grasping electronic access to virtual communities for meeting and for learning opportunities which their particular locality is now unable to provide. Access, rather than provision, is the most that can be offered.
close to home. Education has slipped, somewhat unwittingly, it seems, over the precipice of post-modernity.

Another approach to the past, at a moment of anniversary, is to re-examine the recorded events themselves over the period of 25 years. It was a most turbulent period in the history of British education; Labour's incomplete RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT efforts to introduce comprehensive education were followed by more than fifteen years of Tory reforms, still being implemented and extended, even, most recently, under a New Labour government. LEAs once 'owned' their schools, and, in the 1970s, were urged to adopt corporate management techniques to replace their historic tradition of local or municipal stewardship. The Houghton pay awards acknowledged the increased complexity of schools and encouraged teachers to think that at last they were not only socially valued but would be financially and commensurately rewarded. Implementing ROSLA was on the horizon; then came the 'oil crisis'. Interesting and progressive new curricula were being developed such as MACOS, Nuf eld science and the School Council's history project. The main anxieties were about a shortage of student places and teachers, and providing physically and
Now, 25 years later, we have been ‘reformed’, yet everyone is searching for a ‘role’. The LEA’s is diminished and unclear. Parents want to be more actively involved in their children’s learning but too few know how, with any confidence. Some schools are still short of teachers, but there is no physical shortage of student places. Most young people stay in education until they are 18 but then enter an adult world undermined by a bewildering array of ‘risks’ and unequal opportunities (see pp. 30–31). Instead of ‘mission’, the contemporary climate is one of ‘panic’, confusion and the search for ‘security’. Preoccupations of this generation of parents are about standards, testing, drugs and unemployment.

Neither rationality nor its applications in the natural and calculative sciences seem to secure the requisite freedom from life’s anxieties.

This book is offered as a celebration of work published in the BEMAS journal between 1972 and 1997, a resource to assist critical review and reflection and, in the limited space available, provides challenging and at times provocative comment by four editors who have collaborated in the selection and editing of the material. The first issue of the journal appeared in the Summer of 1972 as
The Educational Administration Bulletin, under the editorship of Meredydd Hughes. It was renamed Educational Administration in 1975 (Hughes, 1997) and after 1979 was edited by Ray Bolam (1979-1983), under whom it became Educational Management and Administration, published by Longmans. Michael Locke was editor between 1984 and 1991 and Peter Ribbins from 1991 to the present.

This review considers a sample of all the papers published over those 25 years. They vary widely in quality, content and approach. Some of them expose earlier research agendas, others illustrate and explore the flux of professional concerns and uncertainties. All the papers identified for discussion will, it is hoped, repay re-reading. One of their most striking features is the extent to which action and outcome have become more important than knowing for its own sake. Theoretical questions, once examined for their intrinsic epistemic significance, are now considered primarily for their methodological or positional implications. Performativity, consideration of, for example, what will strengthen the position of educational research in a wider and more open marketplace for research funds, dominates institutional and individual
incentive structures.

Public policy issues in education are discussed in EMA in the early 1980s, but become gradually less prominent as professional and organisational controversies assume increasing importance. Many of these issues form the subject matter of four short editorial commentaries which introduce the four sections of selected papers.

We think some of those papers are outstanding and regret the extent to which they have been abridged. They are felt to be representative of the experience of those engaged in education during that time, as well as indicative of the journal’s significant achievements over the period. In contrast, this essay attempts to anthol ogise, illustrate and critically review the whole of the journal’s output from 1972 to 1997, in its ever-changing historical and educational context. An impossible, perhaps, but not unrewarding task. I saying and doing Meredydd Hughes’ first editorial stated the aims of the new Society and its journal as: ‘to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge about research, training and practice in educational administration, and also to provide a forum for the discussion of new approaches to the preparation and development of administrators and new developments in research’ (Hughes, 1972c). He expressed the hope
that EAB ‘will help to forge the links of the dynastic alliance which will surely follow the obsequies of the old order’ (Hughes, 1972b). The ‘old order’ referred, in William Taylor’s phrase, to ‘the tired old dichotomy between theory and practice in education which ought to have been dead long ago’ (Taylor, 1973, Chapter 8). But was the dichotomy really dead? Recent experience supports scepticism; reforms are increasingly devised and formulated with scant attention to professional or academic advice. Under Sir Ron Dearing the National Curriculum had to be rescued by teachers and academics and the government’s recent Green Paper on the Learning Society (DfEE, 1997a) seems to have incor porated few of the insights offered, for example, in the Fryer Report (DfEE, 1997b). Theory and practice: views of practitioners Yet questions concerning relations between theory and practice in education are enduring and deep-lying. In an early article by H. L. Gray (1972, p. 1), the training which senior teachers received was said to be based on ‘the learning of practical skills and self-knowledge’; theory was ‘a support to an understanding of . . . skills and self-knowledge’ and, through its capacity to explain, can ‘provide useful models for analysis and prediction.’ The imputed ‘power of prediction’
itself generated suspicion regarding the value of research. This is evident in

the comment of another headteacher (Morrison, 1973) on contributions by academics (McKenzie, 1973; Cumming, 1973). Behind an otherwise restrained endorsement by teachers for the work of academic colleagues, there seems to have lurked a fear that academic research might lead to a loss of professional autonomy for teachers and the replacement of schools as ‘communities possessing a kind of organic solidarity’ with ‘mechanical contrivances powered by direct command.’ Another ground for practitioner suspicion emerges from the reference by Cumming (1971) to his classic (and in many ways still isolated) study of educational costs. His article illustrates the inherent futility of conceptualising educational research in manipulative or instrumental terms, an error into which researchers themselves sometimes fall. ‘Persons at all points in the education business, including researchers themselves, often unconsciously expect the system to be changed by research as it is currently conceived.’ This, for Cumming, is not only a ‘crass naivety’ but endangers the positive functions of research in fields of social and institutional life. He
agrees with Gass (1971) in his OECD review of Educational Policies for the 1970s that there is ‘an argument against the support of basic research with the objective of obtaining “results” which may be “applied”’. Short-termism and instrumentality are exemplified in the reported response of Scottish Education Department officials to his work. They were ‘surprised’ to be asked how and when the research data on school and college costs could be used, though it had been gathered in institutions they administered. For ‘they, like other administrators, desire, albeit unconsciously, to keep the mystique of their work to themselves and see researchers as the providers of facts which others (themselves) can interpret’. There is more than a suggestion here that identifying clearly what educational research is to be used for will assist definition of what it should be. Greenfield and the positivists Green eld (1976) made his first appearance among contributions to a symposium which he led at the IIP Conference in 1974. None of the reviewers is out rightly opposed to Green eld’s position; Michael Harrison is warmly appreciative of Green eld’s ‘connectivity’, and its recognition of the human constructedness of organisational life (ibid., p. 3). Pat and John White (ibid., pp.
6-10) are severe on Green eld’s subjectivism and an inconsistency they detect

in his rejection of both ‘realism’ and ‘idealism’. They suggest his insights might

have been more cogently developed if they ‘were not entangled with the trendy

nonsense of “phenomenology” ’! Hoyle’s commentary (ibid., pp. 4-6), though

short, is both thoughtful and synoptic in its range of suggestion. He reminds us

that phenomenology reveals how individuals make their roles rather than take

them. Today, we might say that they both make and take them, from the pat

terned, differentiated historical circumstances of their lives (Giddens, 1995). But

this is an excellent and instructive short essay in criticism: constructive and bal

anced. It opens windows and invites the reader to explore theoretically what is HI_EN_1978A

meant by the organisational dimension of the teacher’s role in the management

of learning.

Green eld himself, in his rejoinder (Green eld, 1978a), takes Hoyle’s com

ments very seriously, though the tone of much of his piece is one of quiet resig

nation in the aftermath of an unholy row at the 1974 IIP in Bristol. He clings

tenaciously to what are still today important questions: ‘What is real about

organisations?’ and ‘What can theory about them mean, if we do not agree on
that reality?’ (p. 86). That ‘reality’ is frequently, for many individuals, a prison,

formed of ignorance, poverty, and the unequal distribution of human power to

effect change in the disposition of institutional possibilities in the social world.

To Griffiths (1977), Greenfeld was contesting the self-evident: I also wonder about Greenfeld’s basic contention that organisations are not ‘real’. To me, New York University is ‘real’, the Salvation Army is ‘real’, IBM is ‘real’ and the Catholic Church is ‘real’.

Greenfeld, for his part, wanted to change the way in which such organisations

served human ends. Some of those institutions had not always acted in ways

beneficial to human development. They tended to pursue their own organisational aims by dedication to internally coherent and ‘rational’ rules. Yet, as

Bauman, Chomsky and countless millions of twentieth century victims of injustice and barbarism have shown us: The greatest crimes against humanity (and by humanity) have been perpetrated in the name of the rule of reason. (Bauman, 1993, p. 238)

Greenfeld’s integrity of social purpose and justification as a theorist shine through

in this paper: ‘Social and organisational theories are thus perhaps seen as visions

of the world which people act out. In this view, “verification” of theory becomes

as much a moral judgement as an empirical process’ (1978a, p. 88). Wisdom and knowledge

Kendell and Byrne (1978), two less well-known American academics, continue

the debate, observing that so far it had been concerned
with ‘victory’ rather than
‘demonstration’ and was therefore essentially a political
controversy (pp. 107–8). But there is little evidence in this debate of
awareness of the insights of
Kuhn (1974), of the work of Bernstein and the sociologists
of knowledge, or of
the emerging assaults (Feyerabend, Lyotard, Derrida) upon
the very concept of
knowledge as truth authorised by application of heuristic
method. Methods are
tools not forms of underwriting truth; their selection is
value laden. Similarly,
the Vatican’s treatment of Galileo turned on issues of core
belief and values; an
allusion taken up by Green eld in response to Hoyle: R E C
O R D S O F A C H I E V E M E N T
The image of the telescope is fortunate, since it evokes
the history of
another ideological battle about nature and how we should
perceive it
... Only faith in a new order of things, in a new method
of enquiry, and
in a new cosmology could bring one to see the rightness of
the helio
centric view. (Green eld, 1978a, p. 91)
Here perhaps is the root of Green eld’s vulnerability.
Since the Reformation, a
single, authorising ‘faith’ (in Scripture) had been
‘defeated’, at least in principle,
by the claims of empirical rationality. Green eld hoped
that phenomenology’s
superior capability to ‘account’ richly for the experiences
and exigencies of lived reality might redeem the failure of positivistic educational theory to show how teachers could enhance what they provided for learners, in particular learning settings. The utter poverty of positivism’s contribution to educational practices is revealed starkly in the use made by Kendell and Byrne of Patrick Suppes (1974):

It is often thought and said that what we most need in education is wisdom and broad understanding of the issues that confront us. Not at all, I say. What we need are deeply structured theories in education that drastically reduce, if not eliminate, the need for wisdom. I do not want wise men (sic) to design or build the airplane I fly in, but rather technical men who understand the theory of aerodynamics and the structural properties of metal. And so it is with education. Wisdom we need, but good theories we need even more.

Green eld saw that this was wrong; that in education we need wisdom more than anything else. Ask any child what is most desirable in a parent—wisdom and goodness or knowledge and power? What Green eld could not perhaps realise in 1975 was the impossibility of any single theoretical or political
perspective providing the necessary ground from which to remove the baneful

in uence of ‘theory’ and its instrumentalities. Only now can we dimly perceive

that wisdom and its ethical postulates must in future be plurally articulated, con

tested and found room for in a disharmonious social world, replete with disjunc

tion, indeterminacy and radical uncertainty. Different ethnicities, genders

(including their transformations) and value systems must be given freedom to

cohabit with their differences intact. Contested control

It would be mistaken to see Hughes’ editorship (1972–1979) as dominated by

theoretical confrontations. Management training (Vols. 1.1; 3.2; 4.1), the rela

tion between the professional and educational roles inherent in Headship (Vol.

2.1), current innovations in management within local government (Vols. 1.1; H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

3.1; 7.2), in-school evaluation (Stanton, 1978, 42-53) and the implications for

professional as distinct from lay participation and responsibility in the curricu

lum and, more particularly, in the management of schools, received increasing

attention. The publication of the Taylor Report (DES, 1977) was highly in u

tential and perhaps stimulated interest in ‘innovation’ and ‘change’ (Vols. 4.1;

4.2; 6.1). A response to Taylor in early 1978 (Barnes,
Humble, Davies and Lyons, 1978) concludes with some prescient reservations:

- it is important not to expect too much from structural reform - people and processes will begin to change things but structure by itself will not do. Further attention to decision-making processes and the style of leadership of heads is thus needed.

- there may be no discernible relationships between ‘better education’ (whatever that may be) and this type of structural change.

- there are other pressures leading to centralisation of decision-making which will effectively counter the decentralisation movement - control of the curriculum, the economic circumstances, declining school populations, etc.

- we are still left with the fundamental dilemma that, within these proposals there may be little congruence between public and social accountability (embracing the wider community) and financial accountability (still through the LEA).

Indeed, though Taylor turned out to be formative in altering the public and professional ‘terms of reference’ within which these questions came to be examined, and its core proposal that the curriculum could no longer be a matter solely for teachers (DES, 1977, p. 49) was implemented with increasing specificity in the Acts of 1980, 1986 and 1988, some crucial qualitative improvements (participative school leadership, understanding of the relation between forms of school organisation and their educational effects, closer ‘fit’ between pupils’ school experience and the requirements of the social and economic conditions for which they are being prepared), remain as elusive as ever. And
the apparently unresolvable conflict between the interests of individuals, localities and central government in matters of social policy are still as much a source of parental discontent as the conflicts between teachers and parents which led to the William Tyndale débâcle (ILEA, 1976) and the establishment of the Taylor Committee itself. II Educational agenda in a more politicised environment

The Society’s first Research Seminar 1 in Birmingham in March 1979 produced a volume rich in historical knowledge and illumination. Current British research is reviewed and there is a comprehensive post-mortem on transatlantic bickerings about ‘Theory’. Greeneld’s reflections (Greeneld, 1979a) and Hughes and Ribbins’ (1979) astute and pragmatic commentary are most valuable.

George Baron (1979a) surveys a decade of ‘Research in Educational Administration in Britain’ and touches on most of the issues and questions considered in this review. Concerns underlying the academic/practitioner debate are clearly exposed:

The conflict between academic and practitioner arises from each party necessarily inhabiting a different universe. As the researcher develops his approach to his problem, no matter how ‘practical’ its orientation,
he draws on material and ideas from outside the immediate situation to
help him in his analysis and explanations. By so doing he
distances
himself from the administrator who, when subsequently
reading the
research report, is alienated by what appears to be
irrelevant and extra
neous material: furthermore, from his experience the
administrator
brings to his reading a multitude of questions stimulated
by the research
but not answered by it. (pp. 13-15)

Different mental worlds are revealed here, arising from the
multiplicity of inter
ests, knowledge, goals and motives of research users and
makers of educational
knowledge. There is also a particular kind of knowledge
possessed by those pro
fessing education, as distinct from the knowledge claimed
by colleagues in the
social sciences and other disciplines (Taylor, 1973, p. 194): ‘... knowledge
about education is to a large and increasing extent role
specific knowledge.’

Dissatisfaction among users of research is summed up by
Shipman (1976):
‘From within local government the research enterprise in
academia seems to
deliver the wrong goods, at the wrong time, without an
invoice.’

Lord Rothschild (CPRS, 1971) exempli ed for Baron the
central government
interest being articulated with increasing force in the 1970s, foreshadowing those orthodoxies later enunciated by the Office of Science and Technology (OST, 1993) in Realising Our Potential: ‘the funding agency says what it wants and the researcher works within a defined brief.’

Believing that the DES, aided by the SSRC, would protect the research community from these onslaughts, Baron separates out ‘Policy Related Research’, the particular interest of government, from other areas in which the majority of academics can work relatively free from outside interference. He suggests the following four categories:

- Research for Understanding
- Research for Policy Development
- Research into Administrative Structure and Process
- Evaluative Research.

The purpose of Baron’s distinction was to protect academic freedom. But today, a different division seems to be emerging; one in which educational research is parcelled into ‘soft’ areas (action research, school effectiveness studies, curriculum evaluation and monitoring), safely entrustable to the weaker, less well-resourced institutions (obtaining Grade 4 or less in the Research Assessment Exercise), and ‘hard’ research, large-scale critical
investigations of educational structures and goals, which can be cross-fertilised and strengthened by links with contributory social science disciplines, of the kind envisaged by the ESRC thematic programme areas (ESRC, 1997). Interests and approaches

The phenomenological ‘shift’ and its applicability to ‘case study work’ is exemplified by Best, Jarvis and Ribbins (1979) on pastoral care in the comprehensive school. The gap between the (functional) realities of practice and the (heavily prescriptive) rhetoric of practitioner accounts is neither ignored nor allowed to inhibit discovery and innovation. Attempting ‘to marry the logic of falsification with the Phenomenological premium on meanings’, hypothesis testing is undertaken through questionnaires and a ‘Rhetoric Detector’ designed to untangle and expose intricacies and substitutions in the language of justification used by practitioners (pp. 64–6). The language in which teachers account for their actions and their pupils’ unrealised attainments is as thoroughly permeated by the child-centred philosophy of the Plowden Report as the explanations of their successors today are imbued with terms drawn from accountancy and manage-ment. For example, the learner’s ‘busy-ness’, an indication then of fruitful learn
ing in process, is now expressed as an aspect of efficiency; the learner’s ‘readiness’ to move forward at an appropriate stage, significant then diagnosis is taken now as evidence of attainment and becomes an index of the school’s effectiveness.

At around the turn of the decade, a new and more urgent preoccupation with the relationship between educational research, public policy and the needs of pupils and practitioners is discernible. Policy ‘directions’ were becoming more prominent in researchers’ agenda, at the expense of methodological concerns.

Interestingly, Lakomski (1989, p. 43) notes a similar shift in her consideration of Australian work at about the same time: This move makes possible the focus on political values, and power, and thus helps address normative issues in educational administration hitherto neglected.

In a brief Conference introduction, Glatter (1981) observes that: Whatever the precise meaning of ‘research into educational policymaking’, it seemed to be agreed that not much of it had actually been done. (p. 5) RECORDS追溯到

This would soon change, along with a developing awareness in the DES of an urgent need for harder-edged, policy-related information and research. Following the publication of the Yellow Book, the Ruskin College Prime Ministerial speech of 1976, and LEA responses to Circular 14/77, in which the disparate and passive role of many local authorities in curriculum
matters was exposed,

the new Conservative government brought a fresh impetus to the need adum

brated in the Taylor Report to remove control of the curriculum and organisation

of schools from its long-standing niche within the traditional ‘partnership’

shared by teachers, LEA of cers and DES of cials. Central government (at

least, certain political groupings within it) soon began to dismantle fences and

poke more intrusively and purposefully among the intricacies of what had been

cultivated as a ‘secret garden’. Externalities

Education was being compelled to answer more specif cally to its natural aspira

tion to contribute to the welfare of society at large. Educational research was

being required to answer empirical questions, illuminate the relationship

between normative changes and their implications for educational organisation

and practice, and specify appropriate action which could win public support.

In the terms of Drake’s (1981) paper, attending to externalities required a

more forceful determination by educational researchers to assist with the discov

er of modes of educational and training delivery which were consonant with

internal and external ef ciency.

By internal ef ciency is meant that combination of resources which
yields the maximum achievement of [educational] objectives for a
given commitment of resources. By external efficiency is meant the
gearing of [education] to objectives external to the [education] system,
e.g. production of a desired flow of skilled manpower or meeting
certain equity objectives for employment. (p. 15)
The introduction of GNVQ and, more recently, Ofsted’s campaign to eliminate
‘progressive teaching methods’ (TES, 1996) may be considered thinly nourished
legatees of that rationality. Yet, sadly, too little of the rigorous method of
enquiry outlined in Drake’s paper has contributed to either educational policy or
its implementation in succeeding years. For example, greater attention to ‘the
effect of financial arrangement on the parties to the [educational process]’ has
for almost ten years now been used to justify delegation of local financial
powers. Schools and colleges will, it may reasonably be claimed, make more
efficient and effective decisions if the power to allocate resources is more gener-
ally available to them. Yet the equity consequences of assessment-led teaching
and the ‘marketised’ environment in which schools compete on the basis of
accredited results have been ignored by central government (Simkins, 1995).
Even now, more than twenty years after OECD articulated the need for a shift of resources within education systems from the front-end of statutory provision (5-16) to a more ‘end-loaded’ investment in ‘lifelong’ education, with all the implications of such a shift for more equitable and socially relevant patterns of both distribution and learning outcomes, only fragmentary indications of such a redirection, chiefly bearing upon HE funding and in response to fiscal pressures, are apparent.

A noteworthy attempt (Pascal, 1987) to remedy the ‘scarcity of empirically grounded studies’ is evident in a subsequent study undertaken from 1981 to 1985 in the University of Birmingham. The work of governing bodies and their working relationships with parents, teachers, other politicians and administrators is examined and discussed by reference to four different dichotomies which were identified. The effectiveness and appropriateness of recent reforms of the composition and functions of school governing bodies were studied from four conceptually different but related perspectives: elitist and pluralist models of the distribution of power in the practice of decision-making, assessment of the relative claims of centralised and devolved approaches to the distribution of powers.
and duties, the extent and consequences of role ambiguities experienced among professional and lay representatives, and the incidence and implications of functional conflict arising from contradictory expectations of support and account ability on the part of parents and the general public. The report concludes that the distribution of powers ‘embodied, but not clearly defined, in the 1944 Act, is inadequate and out of date’ and that ‘major redefinition’ is provided in the 1986 Act. Unfortunately, the grant of extensive additional powers to governing bodies in the 1988 Act, as well as in the Teachers’ Pay and Conditions of Service Act of 1991 (DES, 1991b) clarified matters only by adopting a thoroughly managerialised concept of the governing body, without resolving the ambiguities and conflicts inherent in the continuing and extended exposure to the twin claims of accountability and a delegated managerial function. Governors retained responsibilities to represent the community, fulfil the requirements of central policy and regulation, and account to both parents and legally constituted authorities (LEA, employment tribunals, admissions appeal boards, residual powers of the Secretary of State) for what schools managed to achieve within their own exigencies of devolved budgets,
subject both to centrally approved formulae and centrally imposed rate capping. Quality and satisfaction

More generally recognisable than the somewhat forbidding abstraction implied

by ‘externalities’, the term Quality Control in Education was the focus of discussion at the Society’s Ninth Annual Conference in 1980 and was accorded a special issue of the journal (Vol. 9, No. 2, 1981). Taylor (1981) points out that quality is a relational, not an absolute property. Indeed, it has no meaning except in relation to some generally understood function (ibid., pp. 2-3) and, as such, bears a cost derived from society’s agreed allocation of available resources, earmarked to secure desired social outcomes. Quality control, far from being a technically discrete operation, lies at the heart of the political process, in which rival claims on social resources are contested and resolved. Quality always carries a price tag. Achieving it requires intricate estimations of needs and satisfaction which must be explored at the level of both individual and collective consequences (Drake’s externalities once again). It is the ‘public good’ component and its relation to individual consumption and investment considerations which make simplified ‘objective’ measures so dangerous and lead to Taylor’s
forthright reminder that 'customer satisfaction is not the sole criterion of satisfaction in educational provision' (p. 6). The ambiguous and underdeveloped role and contribution of the Inspectorate in relation to these issues is brought out in the succinct conclusion of Young (1980) to her review of HMI’s Aspects of Secondary Education in England. What was difficult to discern, however, were the underlying models or theories of the nature of teaching and how schools function that were used to make the professional judgements contained in the survey; no framework of theoretical and methodological assumptions was apparent with which to assess the quality of the evidence. I find this a serious omission. III Change and continuities Professional development for senior teachers Fittingly, Hughes (1982) contributed the opening paper of Volume 10.1 to report on a two-year research project, funded by the DES, to study the extent and nature of courses of professional development. The 1978 Conference had chosen a similar theme and two papers from that earlier conference are also examined here (Glatter, 1979; Baron, 1979b). Under review at the conference had been an issue which, in the words of Royston McHugh, ‘was of direct professional rele
vance and of major importance to all members of the Society’, as well as that of
the future development of the Society itself.

Hughes’ report argued for the establishment of a School Management Unit
under the general oversight of the Schools Council, itself at that time the subject
of review by Mrs Nancy Trenaman. However, the Trenaman recommendation
‘that the Schools Council should continue and with its present functions’ was
not accepted by the government. Her recommendation ‘for a representative
Schools Council’ and a ‘new initiative in management development and training
for headteachers and senior staff . . . associated with a widely representative edu
cational body such as the Schools Council’ (Hughes, 1982, pp. 13-14) was
ignored. The aftermath is well known. Extended powers for governing bodies were introduced in 1986 and 1988; locally delegated schemes of financial man
agement and school admissions and a prescribed pattern of curriculum and
assessment have followed from the 1988 Act. But little was done to prepare
senior staff in relation to their new management duties until the recent initiatives
by the Teacher Training Agency. Hughes’ recommendation had been for:

• a structured programme of award bearing courses . . . to meet the long term career needs of those involved in, or
aspiring to, management responsibilities in education;

- a flexible programme of short courses of more immediate relevance, focused on particular topics or skill requirements and possibly aimed at specific levels of responsibility. (p. 9)

Teacher unions and the Society of Education Officers were to have had a major role in the provision to be organised by the School Management Unit. BEMAS too was to have lent at least some form of regional support. A question uneasily forming itself on reading these deliberations of more than ten years ago is: could our educational establishment have done more to provide a more secure and well-founded future, at least in relation to a structure of provision for professional development which ensured a constructive and innovative role for members of the profession itself? Dualism in practice?

The 1978 conference had produced two papers, by Baron (1979a) and Glatter (1979), setting out contrasting approaches to professional development, two quite different conceptions of how the Society and the activity and aspirations of its members should interact to enhance ‘effective practice’. In Baron’s paper, a pervasive dualism, of theory and practice and of thought and action, is evident from the first page: educational administration... a field of study which contributes to effective practice. (p. 1)

Starting from two key propositions, that educational
administration is a field of
study, practice and training distinct from other forms of
administration and that it
should be studied systematically, alongside planned periods
of practice, by those
holding administrative positions, firm conclusions follow:
more resources, more
academic departments, more recognised courses and a
national accrediting body
responsible, among other things, for 'preparing the ground
for' a national policy for
recruitment and professional development. The paradigm
position adopted here
appears to be one in which the
University/Academy/Professional Body is the
significant creator, codifier and repository of knowledge,
prerequisite for the shared RECORDS O F ACHIEVEMENT
‘understanding’ which it disseminates among professional
practitioners. The Public
pays the bill for what the Academy (and the Profession?)
has prescribed.
Glatter’s approach and perspective is very different. While
Baron sets himself
explicitly to review ‘what we have achieved, as measured
against the aims . . .’,
Glatter entitles his paper ‘Future Directions . . .’ and begins by setting out bio
graphically his entry position as ‘humble administrator’, a
practitioner who
became an academic in order to ‘understand something of the
processes in
which I was engaged’ (p. 19). Dichotomies for Glatter are
to be sought out as
potential fault lines in a network of social and professional relations, the originating source of practice, not as orienting contours in a process of conceptual clarification and systematisation. The potentially restrictive implications of the term ‘professional development’ should not be allowed to create an enclave within which professional insiders can more readily arm themselves with jargon, ‘psychobabble’ and other protective devices. Provision, he argues, should be extended to lay participants, politicians and governors.

On a conceptual level, an emerging dichotomy between policy and management is deplored both because it conflicts with the reality of how educational and governmental institutions actually work and, even more importantly, because ‘the separation of values from techniques always seems to me potentially dangerous’. Surveying briefly some current developments in North America and Northern Europe, Glatter argues unequivocally for educational administration, not as a discipline or field of study in its own right but as an applied professional field requiring a theory of practice (italics added) ‘based much more than in the past on the special features of leadership, management and change in educational institutions’, rather than relying on ‘general theories"
drawn largely from the social sciences and the broad literature of administration’

(p. 25). Much more clearly in Glatter, theory is drawn from practice rather than developed in enclaves in order to contribute to practice.

What Glatter does most valuably here is to provide colleagues with a contextualized agenda and orientation on the basis of a clearer and more purposeful specification of role and action for those engaged in professional development.

Many of the features put forward for emulation in his 1978 paper are now routine currency. In the meantime, however, the ‘social sciences and the broad literature of administration’ have themselves undergone a sea-change, emancipating themselves and voyaging far from the well-defined territory and positivistic rubrics of functionalist theory and associated research designs, diversifying in terms of their relationships with other disciplines and modes of thought and inquiry. Can education, and the study of education management and administration in particular, attentively serve the interests of learners and absent itself from this plural and formative process, excluding itself from the role which social science now fulfills within a much larger context of radical social change?

The social and natural worlds today are thoroughly infused with reflex
ive human knowledge; but this does not lead to a situation in which H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H collectively we are masters of our own destiny. Rather to the contrary: the future looks less like the past than ever before and has in some basic ways become very threatening. . . . In most aspects of our lives, individual and collective, we have regularly to construct potential futures, knowing that such very construction may in fact prevent them coming about. New areas of unpredictability are created quite often by the very attempts that seek to control them. (Beck et al., 1994, p. vii)

Thus defined, the role of social science, within which education is surely a key location, is becoming coterminous with that very process of social re-definition and reconstruction. Is not the paradox of having ‘regularly to construct potential futures, knowing that such very construction may in fact prevent them coming about’, precisely what teachers experience when they implement a ‘whole school’ approach to Special Needs and find that the school’s curriculum policy has also to be re-defined in consequence, or when they establish planned provision for the less able, only to find that it impacts unexpectedly on pedagogy and assessment practice across the school? Glatter’s reflective and speculative thoughts in this paper capture, I believe, something of these ‘re-exive’ uncer-tainties which are inherent in the task of management in educational settings. Micropolitics

The conditions of endemic and constitutive uncertainty (Preston, 1996) in which British education is now conducted were the focus of the
Society’s Tenth Conference, held at Bristol in 1982. The highlights of that collection are three papers by Glatter (1982), Hoyle (1982) and Bailey (1982), which contribute significantly to an understanding of educationalists’ managerial tasks. Bailey’s rejoinder to Hoyle tries to integrate ‘the study of micropolitics into the broader framework of organisational theories’. This is a balanced and pragmatically detached contribution which relates the topic to more enduring and important implications, especially in relation to our obligations to children, as well as to all learners. School is for most children their first experience of organisational life and of the wider society beyond the family. The quality of its micropolitics is in itself a powerful educational force maintaining or denying the quality of life in our society. (Bailey, 1982, p. 105)

Pratt (1982) notes changing perspectives within these contrasting approaches. In the decade 1972-82, the preoccupation, associated with the process of local government reform (DoE, 1972) had been ‘one of designing structures for the achievement of specified purposes’. This approach came increasingly to be challenged by an opposing camp of ‘realists’ who resisted imposition of a ‘managerial’ view of reality’, phenomenologists by method, who looked for theory to be ‘grounded’ in refection drawn from practice. What was being questioned by
some and rejected by others is the domination in
organisational and management

studies of a narrowly rational view of human action.
Glatter (1982) supports

these endeavours to reveal the micropolitics of schools in
their conduct of the
daily work of teaching. Yet, he points out, the attempt to
form and implement

policy on a rational basis is also a human propensity which
can be and some
times is attempted with success (p. 161). More signi-
cantly, Glatter warns of the
danger implicit in expecting too much from a single model.
Just as the dominant

‘rational’ models of the 1960s and 1970s ‘were based on an
underlying set of
values, connected with optimism and a belief in the
possibility of progress
largely through “technical” means, so the micropolitical
approach, which at
times comes close to nihilism, is in tune with the cynicism
and demoralisation of

our age.’

Hoyle exposes a somewhat gloomy picture of school
organisations; as

Machiavellian, darkly imbricated within ma a-like intrigues
and ‘hidden
agendas’. But he is concerned also to find realistic and
illuminative strategies,
with a ‘theory-for-understanding’ which might help schools
examine and extri-
cate themselves from obstructive growth, lurking in their
routine dynamics of
interaction and control, hitherto neither fully understood nor confronted. The paper is a lucidly and economically written introduction to a carefully selected range of writers and ideas drawn from organisational theory. The politics of management

Pratt (1982) seems to have marked a turning point when he summarised the concerns of members as moving away from the 'management of politics towards . . . “the politics of management”. ’ Acknowledging the importance of Greeneld’s contributions he notes evidence in the educational literature of a growing recognition ‘that structure, function and process [are] interactive.’ The shift of focus (from macro to micro) and of method (from technical/instrumental to discursive/interactive) may have been symptomatic of an increasingly general readiness to acknowledge that educationalists were less sure of the direction in which they should go and of the purposes for which their skills should be employed.

This sense of a 'turning point' and a felt need of directions amidst the encircling gloom may have prompted the title of the next Conference: Education Today and Tomorrow: Challenge and Response (Vol. 11, No. 2). At any rate, out of the turbulence surrounding the discussions and emerging research agenda of the period up to 1982, a new, more exploratory focus on
practical problems and the feasibility of their solution is discernible in the period 1983–1995.

Volume 11 also exemplifies the journal’s continuing double achievement in identifying new professional perspectives and disseminating studies of organizational practice. 11.1 considers ‘the Role of the Deputy Head in Secondary School History and Research’ (Owen, Davies and Wayment, 1983), ‘institutional Factors and School Absenteeism’ (Reid, 1983) and ‘Microcomputers in Secondary Schools’ (Pratt, 1983). This last paper contains an interesting nugget on the role now termed IT co-ordinator. Pratt, drawing upon an NFER study of LEA Advisers and Innovation (Bolam et al., 1979) and an unpublished Bristol MEd dissertation (Reilly, 1982) advocates reversal of received wisdom regarding dissemination of IT expertise: instead of appointing substantive experts as consultants and advisers, ‘experienced process experts [should be] required . . . to acquire the substantive expertise’ (p. 61). This approach now characterises professional good practice (North, 1991).

In the next volume, a new political focus is followed up by a fresh and more rigorous economic approach to organisational and policy questions (Thomas, 1984; Hough and Warburton, 1984; Crispin and
Marslen-Wilson, 1984). New structures and mechanisms which would have significant implications for education at all levels were also being examined in the journal. A small-scale study of the impact of the National Advisory Body on the management of a large college appeared (Bush and Goulding, 1984). The NAB was precursor of the national funding councils (FEFC, HEFC, Funding Agency for Schools), and the Cambridgeshire (Hinds, 1984) and Solihull (Humphrey and Thomas, 1986) pilot schemes of school delegation paved the way for the national introduction of LMS.

Two of these authors (Hough and Thomas) were subsequently appointed to Chairs in the Economics of Education and their Inaugural Lectures have now been published in EMA (Hough, 1991; Thomas, 1996). In the next section, a number of these papers on financial and economic issues will be discussed as indicative of the journal’s contribution to the promotion of studies in this field.

An economic approach. Education, like many public services, only recently came to be subjected to economic analysis. The ‘dismal science’ connotes aims, values and methods of enquiry unrelated if not alien to the aspirations of teachers, carers and healers.

Brian Knight expresses similar observations in his short paper ‘Attitudes to Edu
cational Finance’ (Knight, 1984). Why is it that those who work in maintained schools and colleges believe that outside certain limited areas financial information is not important; that they are not concerned with the detailed costs of the work they do; that the financing of a school and college is not a subject for serious study; that interest in such finance is misplaced, even sinister or odd?

A peculiar English sensitivity regarding explicit discussion of money matters may also have inhibited application of economic theory to educational contexts.

R. H. Tawney, as Hough (1991, p. 219) reminds us, described the economics of RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT education as ‘that repulsive hybrid’. The socialist tradition in general, so in u ential in parts of the English educational tradition, has been especially resistant to application of an ‘economic’ approach. But those thought worlds, if they ever existed in such a rare ed form, have now disappeared utterly, as schools con front, within a framework of delegated school budgets, the challenges of computer-based Management Information Systems and the opportunities to be made available by the ‘Superhighways’ Initiative (DfEE, 1995).

The recent origin of the subject is usually dated to the address by Thomas Schultz to the American Economic Association in 1960 and his enthusiastic advocacy of a human capital approach to investment in education (Schultz, 1963). Attention to the subject in this journal may be traced to the pressure of
more pragmatic concerns, in particular to the modifications made to local
government finance after 1972, which eroded the independence of LEA financial
decision-making, to the cumulative effects of associated overall expenditure
reductions on education, and to the pressure on schools in particular, following a
chronic fall in birth-rate after 1964. Volume 12 is notable for its preoccupation
with the consequences of these structural and seemingly irreversible changes, by
attention to issues such as: managing effectively in ‘small’ schools (Mountford,
1984), LEA responses to the effect of the 1981 Block Grant (Crispin and
Marslen-Wilson, 1984), and the quality consequences for teachers and pupils of
the ways in which contraction of the teaching force was being effected (Thomas,
questions of individual school costs, in a short paper whose citations reveal both
the dominance of American work in this field and the relative lack of attention
hitherto accorded to such questions in the journal. This has been remedied to
some extent in subsequent issues, notably by the contributions of Simkins (1986,
Thomas and Bullock (1992) and Thomas (1996). Noteworthy too is Bondi’s
Manchester-based study (Bondi, 1988) of the relation of school costs to policy and community variables. In what may be an undeservedly overlooked contribution in this area, her conclusion, that falling school rolls have less influence than had generally been supposed on variations in costs, and especially on premises related costs, is surprising, and, in view of what is now known about some of the effects of formula funding, worrying.

'Patronage, Markets and Collegiality' (Simkins, 1986) exemplifies what few individual papers fully achieve, namely illumination of a general institutional problem through analysis which maintains positive interaction between school-based research data and a simple, but robust, conceptual model. The literature cited is apposite, selective and suitable for the widest possible readership.

Simkins (1986, p. 17) argues, perhaps presciently, that 'something of a move ment to broaden the scope of schools' financial responsibilities' is afoot. What strategies are available to schools for ensuring that often crucial marginal choices within tightly constrained limits of discretionary decision are made most effectively in terms of both the school's internal efficiency and its broader, underlying effectiveness as a learning institution in the

...the...
care of a committed and
motivated staff? The paper deserves to be read for its
intrinsic qualities, and is a
most valuable teaching resource. After almost ten years now
during which
schools have been working with greater freedom to make
independent resource
decisions, perhaps it would be timely and pro table to
reassess some of the
paper’s conclusions (pp. 28-9). To what extent have
participative decision
processes survived? How closely related are current school
resource allocation
procedures to processes of curriculum decision-making? How
widespread and
effectively are formulae in use in schools (Boulton, 1986)?
Some recent findings
(Webb and Vulliamy, 1996) point to the emergence of a
damaging divide
between the needs of the curriculum and seemingly
inescapable organisational
pressures within schools. The impact of these has been ‘to
create “a new head
teacher”, with more hierarchical forms of management style
creating a gulf
between headteachers and the staff’ (p. 313). In the case
of primary schools,
Webb and Vulliamy conclude: Thus, not only is there
currently a tension between the administrative and
curriculum leadership demands of primary school headship,
there is also a growing tension between collegial and
top-down management strategies at the whole school level.
.. The current climate thus encourages headteachers to be
powerful and, if necessary manipulative leaders in order to
ensure that the policies and practices agreed upon are ones
that they can wholeheartedly support and defend. (p. 313)
Structural and qualitative change

A new employment structure embracing both pay and conditions for teachers was established between 1986 and 1992. The professional implications of these impending changes were considered by Henson (1987) in a brief but usefully synoptic review of the literature and the implications of a more hierarchical set of relationships implicit in the Baker proposals. A fundamental question, which has been obscured if not suppressed by the dirigisme employed by recent governments in relation to education and by the historically diminished influence of the teacher unions on both government and public opinion, is whether learning can and should be controlled by teachers and whether the schools are to be institutions in which learning will be ‘delivered’ as product, or ‘nurtured’ as a process in which all are expected to participate. If teachers cannot or should not control the conditions and processes of learning, how can they be ‘managerially’ responsible for attainment of stipulated learning outcomes? If schools are to belong meaningfully to the communities they are there to serve, can and should they be required to operate with a centrally imposed specification of required learning activities and outcomes?
Perhaps a more inscrutable factor which has inhibited sharply focused
consideration of these questions has been the nature and rapidity of changing
social and economic conditions. The Callaghan initiative in 1976 to steer
schools more pragmatically to meet the needs of the workplace was almost cer-
tainly premised upon a conception of work, its nature, value and availability,
which is now seriously obsolete. Succeeding governments have moved forward
with an ideological, some might say quasi-religious belief in the social and eco-
nomic virtue of establishing market conditions as prerequisite for the ef cient
operation of almost every social activity and service. Yet in the globalised
economy which every day impinges more directly upon the lives of each indi-
vidual, it is becoming apparent that the scope for markets is increasingly con-
 ned to the stimulation of the consumption and distribution of goods; creation
and production require the distributive, co-ordinative, informational, and cre-
ative qualities and capabilities of a kind which are achieved more effectively
within network relations. Levels of mutual trust and qualities of human inter-
action which suffice in exchange relations are inadequate for an increasing
number and variety of human interactions and institutional formations. Might
not learning be one of them?

Two contrasting papers (Glatter, 1987; Dennison, 1988) made their contribu-
tions to this continually emerging debate by setting an educational agenda for
the year 2000. Glatter considers current attitudes and practice with regard to
management and policy and identifies five specific issues: staff management;
profession/parent relationships; institutional effectiveness; the management/
policy interface; and the role of BEMAS. He found it disturbing that the issue of
parental involvement seems ‘to have been appropriated by one part of the polit-
cal spectrum.’ With hindsight now we are beginning to see some of the con-
sequences of crude attempts to redefine parents and learners as ‘consumers’ and
‘users’ and must surely hope that the ‘upheaval of reaction’ which Glatter refers
to will be successful in identifying and winning support for more enlightened
community involvement in education. On institutional effectiveness he draws
attention to a neglected aspect of the self-concepts of members of organisations,
a theme addressed more philosophically by Patricia White (1987). On policy and
management Glatter challenged the current ascendancy of the ‘accountancy’
approach to education policy-making and in particular points to the detrimental
effects of an unsustainable separation between policy and management, despite

the stubborn refusal of the Audit Commission ‘to comment on issues of educa
tion policy’. Referring to Maw (1984) and Inglis (1986) he just hints at the

threat to professionality inherent in attempts to separate policy and management,

which Glatter (1987, p. 9) believed to be ‘even more closely intertwined’. If

authority over educational values is reserved to ‘policy’ bodies, the teaching

profession may be stripped of the moral basis of its professional role, increas

ingly technicised, refashioned as chief instrument or conduit for the implementa
tion of policy (Hargreaves, 1994; Webb and Vulliamy, 1996). Implications of

these developments were to be explored later in contributions by Ranson (1992) and Strain (1993) and elsewhere, with particular reference to curriculum man

agement, by Hargreaves (1994) and Ball (1993a).

Dennison’s paper, ‘Education 2000 – Trends, In uences and Constraints to

the Turn of the Century’ is more avowedly futurological in both aims and

approach. Four ‘dominant factors’ are identi ed as demanding attention:

• the changing nature and structure of skill requirements in response to technological change;

• the consequences of consumerism on schools and the
teaching profession;

- continuing reductions in the volume of public expenditure on education;
- the extended application of IT in learning, school management and staff development.

What we have learnt since then has revealed how little is yet understood which might help us respond practically to these challenges. A further train of thought is suggested; if Dennison’s predictive agenda were aptly chosen, have those issues (work-related education, the implications of social change, resources in education and the application of IT) been adequately represented in contributions to this journal? It is hoped that this review might prompt readers to consider such questions. Financial management in schools and colleges

Notable among papers given at the 17th Conference (Volume 17.2) was Levacic’s (1989) discussion of the rules to determine LEA’s distribution of formula-based budgets to schools and colleges. She shows how schemes of dele regarding anticipated outcomes. Since decision-makers will use formulae to achieve their particular interests and objectives, explicit normative criteria should be stipulated. This enables self-interested or sectional purposes to be disentangled from those based on the values (efficiency, effectiveness, equity,
accountability) which the scheme is intended to promote. Schemes are intended to encourage schools to be more efficient by generating savings and using them for chosen purposes; schools are therefore permitted to carry forward budget surpluses. Other elements of the formula, however, seem to allow schools to operate self-interestedly without regard to general principles. In Northern Ireland, for example, the inclusion of a weighting to support provision for children from materially or socially deprived backgrounds encourages schools to admit as many children as possible within that category but to spend resources differentially in support of learning by those children most likely to succeed in external examinations. In Levacic’s words, ‘reference to general principles helps in reaching agreed and consistent solutions to specific issues’ (p. 89).

Professional understanding of the relations between policy intentions and educational outcomes is indebted to the work of Levacic (1992) and Thomas R E C O R D S O F A C H I E V E M E N T and Bullock (1992). Both reveal interim indications that some significant improvements in efficiency and accountability may be attributed to the operation of LMS. Cost information is more transparent, inducing more focused accountability, and school autonomy, particularly in respect of virement, is resulting in
more efficient resource allocation within schools (Levac i c’, 1992, p. 27). Some more equitable patterns of distribution are also evident, arising from instances where discretionary funding has been replaced by application of general rules.

Yet, some disturbing contrary tendencies are also revealed and the interim verdict on the extent to which the reforms have increased equity or contributed to enhanced teaching and learning is sceptical and mixed. Though opportunities for the exercise of parental choice have been increased, resources seem to be shifting away from smaller primary schools in favour of larger ones and away from secondary schools (Thomas and Bullock, 1992). On qualitative learning outcomes, ‘important factors found to be associated with school effectiveness – purposive leadership, positive school climate . . . high expectations, curriculum planning, work-focused activities, recording pupils’ progress’ are not specifically enhanced by LMS reforms (Levac i c’, 1992, p. 27). Competing values ‘The Equity Consequences of Educational Reform’ are scrutinised a little later in an excellent paper by Simkins (1995) in which he discusses a range of ‘input’ and ‘output’ definitions of equity, and points out that a formula and local market circumstances ‘only determine the degree of
equity between schools in the system and hence place constraints on the opportunities which schools can provide for individual pupils’ (p. 224). In his conclusion he argues that LMS ‘clearly embodies a concept of procedural equity but has con
sequences for distributional equity too’ (p. 230). In this respect, the ‘input based definition of equity with pupils classified primarily on the basis of age’ may result in further disadvantage for primary school pupils, especially those in smaller schools, or who have special educational needs or who come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Some of the conceptual difficulties inherent in attempts to resolve these problems are explored further in Thomas (1996, pp. 40–1; on the use of weighting procedures which incorporate non-utility information based upon underlying principles) and Strain (1996, pp. 55–6; on the ‘endowment effect’ and school strategies to avoid instances of ‘local injustice’).

How economic concepts illuminate education policy choices and assist practitioners at the institutional level in their efforts to achieve learning aims for pupils is explained by Thomas (1996).

A ‘market’ . . . represents those circumstances where decision-making
is decentralised and self-interest is assumed to be the motive force of human action. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

The education system in England and Wales is a ‘mixed economy’ embodying market-like aspects, where agents make decisions on the basis of self-interest, as in circumstances where parents choose a particular school or a teacher chooses to take up a professional post, as well as extensive features of a ‘command’ economy, one in which the resources judged necessary for particular productive processes to take place are commanded by a central agency which enjoys authority within a hierarchical set of institutional relations. As Thomas reminds us, even in today’s devolved conditions of school management: the maintained school system is almost wholly funded by general taxation and, for parents and pupils, is free at the point of consumption. The overall level of spending is determined by government (central and local), and the means of production are largely owned or employed by the government, which also determines the rules for allocating funds to schools. More important still, the curriculum and assessment of pupils is largely determined by the Secretary of State. (p. 32)

Whether the consequences are efficient and equitable is then examined in relation to an earlier study (Thomas and Bullock, 1994). This raises questions such as whether the ‘current [irregularly stepped] funding profile’ of LEAs in relation to Age-Weighted Pupil Units (AWPU) is consistent with what is inherently
required by 'the continuous nature of the education process'. The Isle of Wight

is now known to allocate 2.9 times more to provision for 16-year-olds than it
does for 8-year-olds, compared with 2.08 times by Sunderland. In the (primary)
school size range 122-3 the level of funding per pupil may vary by as much as

25 per cent. With these findings it is indeed possible and necessary to ask more

pointed questions about the efficiency and equity effects of current funding prac
tice. Is it necessary, for example, for comparable schools to be funded at such different levels in order to provide the same national curriculum? Are the schools with comparatively high levels of funding providing a superior experience and achieving more than the less well-funded schools? (p. 38)

With wry, ironical detachment, Thomas goes on to observe that: It is only as a result of the new system of funding schools that there is evidence which enables these questions to be considered - a clear benefit from introducing a greater emphasis on ‘command’ in the funding of schools. RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT New ways of examining old questions

In this final section, the focus is deliberately restricted to a small number of

papers in search of possible new ways of thinking and learning about educa
tional management. Some of these experiments with new methods emphasise
continuity with earlier approaches; others attempt radical rede
dition of profes
sional and organisational agenda. All assist our understanding of emerging
requirements of organisational leadership in schools and colleges and of the role
and purpose of ‘public’ education ‘systems’, within a
‘Learning Society’. Leaders and followers

Gronn (1996) exposes some significant defects in the ‘new’
cult of ‘leadership’,

whose rise to prominence he dates from the early 1970s.
Recent conventional
conceptions of ‘leader-followership’ posit a cause-effect
relationship between
leaders and followers, consistent with a range of
self-justifying, instrumentalist
assumptions associated with ‘managerialism’ (‘the manager's
right to manage’;
‘the government’s right to govern’ etc.).

Leadership is seen as something performed by superior,
better indi
viduals (invariably, ageing white males), rather than by
groups, located
in top positions, and as something done to or for other
inferior, lesser
people. Causal significance is achieved when relevant
counter-factual
conditions are satisfied (e.g. the outcomes for followers
otherwise
would not have transpired but for the leader’s leadership; all rival can
didate explanations for the outcomes have been eliminated).
(Gronn, 1996, p. 12)

Recalling the ‘critical role’ accorded to followers by Max
Weber, Gronn most
persuasively cites ‘an emerging consensus that leading is
an inherently symbolic
activity’, an activity imbued with the intrinsically human
capacity to frame
meaning, ‘to make sense of one’s own and others’ experiences of the world’. If leadership activities are to contribute as we would wish to the construction of a shared social reality, support of the group must be mobilised through exchange of shared symbols and meanings. This is how identities are formed (Anderson, 1991). For these processes to be active, a level of consent and participation will be necessary on the part of the group. Transforming organisations is part of a cultural project. Identifying the extent and organisational forms by which this can become operative and fruitful, is a central task in a continuing, interdiscip

linary endeavour.

it is enduring moral values and culture which give organisations their distinctive characters and styles. Any cult of ef ciency and effective

ness is of secondary import; these are essentially instrumental and operational values, necessary conditions for the persistence of the cooperative system that constitutes organisation . . . but not suf cient. For, antecedent to both ef ciency and effectiveness is some overall abiding purpose or end, a moral economy, which provides people’s willingness to co-operate with its justi cation from the outset. (Gronn, 1996, p. 24)

Gronn’s paper accords well with the aims and methods attempted by Ribbins and Sherratt (1992) in their efforts to supplement a large-scale research project examining ‘the changing patterns of governance and
management . . . in response to recent legislation' through the use of ethnographic accounts of what is actually happening in schools. As well as using traditional sources of evidence, such as collections of documents, interviews, diaries, discussion and observation, they try to set the Head’s accounts against those of other key actors and to involve Head, teachers and researcher in a process of reflection and interpretation which they term ‘a dialectic of biography and autobiography’. Professional implications and principles Busher and Saran (1994), after exploring ‘the various models which might be used to illuminate the work of headteachers’, argue convincingly for ‘the need for micropolitical theories of organisational life to be inclusive of both formal and informal aspects of organisations’ and to support positively the development of ‘consensual interactions’ without neglecting conflictual elements. They identify the main features of leadership activities in schools as: constructing an organisational culture which embraces the shared values and beliefs of members, managing the external environment and ‘using and diffusing power to handle conflicting values and interests between stakeholders’ (p. 8). Their distillation also retains the essential characteristics of a political model of organisa
tion, in essence a human social construct whose purpose and processes are defined through uncoerced discourse which responds primarily to moral, rather than technical, claims. These purposes in turn derive from ‘a duty to serve the best interests of the pupils’: heads who acted in this way built their credibility as professional leaders with teachers. (pp. 11, 12)

Further exploration of how these qualities of leadership might be developed and practised in a morally defensible organisational framework (Hodgkinson, 1993) can be found in Volume 21, No. 3. The merits of generic as distinct from sector specific standards of competence are reviewed by Earley (1993); Ouston (1993) examines management competence specifically in relation to the findings of school effectiveness studies and teachers’ assessment and training needs. Eraut (1993b) delves more analytically into what must be a prerequisite for significant advance on these fronts by arguing the need for a new epistemology to fulfil the aims outlined in Schön’s Reflective Practitioner. Such a model incorporates the personal and professional knowledge which teachers actually draw upon in their teaching and managing in schools. The paper is both carefully constructed and conceptually rich. Following Argyris and Schön (1976), listening and actively
seeking feedback from colleagues is encouraged in order to correct for the tendency of people’s perceptual frameworks to be determined by what they want or expect to see (p. 230). These are termed ‘meta-processes’, which assist continuing critical adjustment of cognitive frameworks and assumptions. They are essentially processes concerned with self-knowledge and self-management.

Eraut later adds ‘the conception of a meta-evaluation framework’ as central to the notion of professionalism. In the case of teachers, he suggests, such a framework should be founded on two moral principles: the twin obligations to practise child-centredness and, for the sake of future generations, continuously to improve one’s professional expertise. The learning society

The importance of principles, assumptions or values such as these lies not in their embodiment of intrinsic authority or some immanent guarantee to practitioners of being ‘right’, or of enabling them through practising them more reliably to ‘do things right’ – their significance is, much more elusively, that they constitute the foundation of any education system. One Head’s expression of belief in his own school’s constitutive values was recorded by Ribbins (1992):

it has to do with how we value children; all children and not just some
children. We believe that all children have a right . . .
to achieve. Our

first job as teachers is to enable them to achieve. This
still applies even

if they don’t want to achieve. I do not believe that
children always

know what is best for them . . . I think also we have
sometimes to say to

parents as well that something is good for their child.
Within this we

have a firm commitment to equal opportunities. We want to
help all

children to broaden their horizons and visions. We want to
help them

all to understand there is a world beyond the one they know
and that

ey can all participate in it. The school is just a step
to this and

teachers are there to help to make it possible. My task is
to create the

conditions which make this possible for teachers and
children to

achieve. It is not a task I can achieve alone. (p. 67)

Of course, values espoused are not always or entirely
matched by results in prac
tice. In particular, entrenched historical and social
patterns of underachievement

are hard to change. Introducing his seminal essay ‘Towards
the Learning H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H

Society’, Ranson (1992) notes the ‘stubborn statistic’,
recently acknowledged by

HMI (DES, 1990), of one in three children receiving a poor
education, under
achieving. He attributes this to ‘the long cultural tradition of educating a minority’.

Underachievement, Ranson argues, is institutionalised in our schools ‘because of principles and assumptions which are constitutive of the education system’.

Many of these assumptions, by their appearance of being ‘only common-sense’, conceal the shaping force of underlying values which contribute to the ‘distribution’ of unequal, unjust or undesirable educational consequences, such as underachievement. Ranson lists some of these in a一览 and readily recognisable ‘principles’. Education is an activity for schools and parents, when children are young; training is for colleges and employers. Learning involves instruction by those whose authority to teach derives from their knowledge and skills. The curriculum should also transmit skills in identified areas of (objective) knowledge.

The learning outcomes of education processes should be measured by universal objective tests whose results should be published to reward and enhance the credibility of the successful, encourage the average and penalise the ‘failing’ institutions. By these latent mechanisms or constitutive principles, failure to ‘deliver’ what central government specifies to be the appropriate ‘outcomes’, which may or
may not match the kind of organisational values articulated by the Head quoted earlier - to enable children to achieve even when they don’t want to achieve - is transmitted and explained publicly as the failure of the school itself, a failure of professional competence or application, or, more unfairly still, the fault of the individual child and its family.

The remedy proposed by Ranson is to alter fundamentally many of these constitutive principles by replacing them with new, socially agreed conceptions of the place of learning in society and of a more ‘civil-ized’ working relationship between working, civic, learning and caring roles in the lives of individuals.

These constructs, institutions which sustain and mediate our social relations and experiences, are the responsibility of all, in common. Learning is an indispensable part of such a polity at all stages of an individual’s life. This is the conception of ‘The Learning Society’ whose advocacy Ranson concludes with: A different polity, enabling all people to make a purpose of their lives, will create the conditions for motivation in the classroom. Only a new moral and political order can provide the foundation for sustaining the personal development of all. It will encourage individuals to value their active role as citizens and thus their shared responsibility for the common-wealth. Active learning in the classroom needs, therefore, to be informed by and lead towards active citizenship within a participatory democracy. Teachers and educational managers... can, I believe, play a leading role in enabling [original italics] such a vision to unfold not only among young people but also across the public domain. (p. 79)
This review has attempted to sift and encourage a second reading of some of the enquiries and debates which have been published in this journal. It has not attempted to assess their intrinsic merits as publications but from them to recapture and re-present still pertinent ideas, experiences and ways of examining the challenges now facing teachers and learners.

Our practical understanding of the relation between theory and practice in education has changed beyond recognition since the early days of the Bulletin and the 1974 IIP Conference. The recognition of the value of action research for teachers as both practitioners and researchers has been crucially influential in this respect.

Yet the logical and conceptual foundations underpinning such activities still exercise the concern of theorists. Evers and Lakomski (1993, p. 150) opt for explanations of social behaviour which are reconcilable (coherent) with those of natural science. Others, notably Hodgkinson (1993, p. 184), resist tenaciously all attempts to blur the line between ‘fact and value’, insisting on the separate, moral, humanistic nature of administration. The domain of the ‘social’, what is experienced routinely, intersubjectively and in common among human beings, is almost lost sight of in this long-running battle between positivistic
'coherentists' and humanistic 'idealists' (Bates, 1993, p. 174-5). My own preference is to insist, with Bates, on the primacy of the intersubjective and the 'social' (Strain, 1996, pp. 50-51), to continue to search for 'real' possibilities of learning.

Notes

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SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS A day in the life of a headteacher
Angela M. Thody


Introduction

The late twentieth century in England has witnessed what might be described as

a ‘back to the past’ movement in education, its management and administration. 1

Devices last utilized in the nineteenth century have re-emerged with minor vari

ations. There are, once again, for example, a National Curriculum for schools,

apprenticeship ‘on-the-job’ training for teachers, performance-related pay for

staff and institutions (at least in higher education), school governors with real

power, proposals for smaller, dedicated, local government units to replace the

all-purpose local authorities, a requirement to re-introduce the monopoly of the

Christian religion in schools and a ‘back to basics’ call for teaching methods. All

these requirements impact on systems of management employed in schools

although so far there have been no requirements for this to
return to nineteenth-century arrangements. If, however, this ‘back to the past’ movement is to be successful, perhaps it will need reinforcement with the appropriate management techniques.

What were these techniques? This article reports the outcome so far of an attempt to discover how schools were managed in nineteenth-century England.

If our dilemmas appear to be persistent, then perhaps the managerial solutions will prove to be likewise and we may then have some ‘new’ ideas to guide our schools’ leaders.

This topic has not previously been researched, as far as can be ascertained.

This article was intended as an exploration to see whether there was sufficient material to make such a study possible and this has proved to be the case, although little of it is directly on school management. The sources used are discussed in the methodology section at the end of this article, together with reflections on the value of history in the study of education management.

The author, having used observation techniques to describe and analyse the work of twentieth-century school leaders, decided to adopt a similar approach to recording the work of a mythical headmaster of the nineteenth century. Hence
readers are invited to follow a day in the life of Mr Thody, headmaster 3 of

Reynold Street Board School, 4 London. The observation had, perforce, to be

second-hand having been ‘factionalized’ from various
nineteenth-century sources. Back to the past: the

headmaster’s day


Place: The lodgings of Mr Thody, proximate to the school.

Subject: Mr Thody, age 30 years, unmarried. In his first
year of headship following Assistant Teacher status at
another London Board school. He became a Pupil Teacher at
fourteen and then progressed into provisional certification
followed by full certification.

School: Reynold Street Board School – 360 scholars
including 80 infants. Two certificated teachers, one
provisionally certificated (Mr Thody, headmaster; the Senior
Assistant, Mr Davison; the Assistant, Miss Sinclair) each
deemed responsible for 40 pupils each (‘By Article 84, a
woman over 18 years of age, and approved by the Inspector,
is accepted in mixed, girls’ and infants’ schools as
equivalent to a pupil-teacher’). Two pupil teachers, each
allowed to supervise 40 pupils, and one candidate for
pupillage permitted 20 pupils. There are seventeen on the
managing body.

Context: Mr Thody has completed his ablutions, personal
devotions and dressing. School paperwork is habitually
undertaken at this time of day. During school hours, he
will have his own teaching to conduct or will be otherwise
engaged in superintendence. The lunch time, and before and
after school, are his management times. 6.00–6.30 a.m.
Registers/administrative tasks

Mr Thody commences by checking that the pupil teacher
delegated to take the

register daily has marked in ink only, with no erasures and
with no pencil entries

inked over, boys’ names in the upper part, girls’ names in
the lower part and a
daily total noted for numbers present. He then works out, and records the

average daily present for the past week, notes the numbers of unexplained

absences and the reasons for other absences. Today, he has the additional task of

einsuring that the admissions, progress and withdrawal records are complete,


is numbered in order to avoid double counting and Mr Thody is very proud of his accurate date of birth records. He informs the observer that he had to

visit the registrar’s office to obtain the details of ten of his pupils whose parents

had been unable to supply the information.

All this is a final check to reassure himself that all is ready for the inspectors’ visit next week. He is nervous at the prospect of his first inspection and

there is a managers’ meeting this afternoon as a preliminary in order to see

that all is ready. He has his own pupil progress book ready for display; he is

hoping the managers will approve the idea for all his teachers to adopt. Mr

Thody explains to the observer that the importance to school management of

the correct keeping of the registers arises from the relationship of attendance

to grant received and to examination results. The school is paid according to
how many children attend and what results they achieve in examinations.

Keeping the registers is an extremely time-consuming element of a head teacher’s management tasks and Mr Thody is hoping that the National Union of Elementary Teachers will make representations to the Board of Education to lessen the detail required. The Union generally concerns itself with curricular matters, such as the representation made earlier in the 1880s that parsing should not be required from 4th Standard children studying grammar. Mr Thody hopes the Union will bring pressure to bear on management issues too.

6.30–6.45 a.m. Daily planning

Mr Thody shows the observer his timetable for the day. He says he usually glances over it to remind himself of the day’s outline. He re ects how pleased he is that he decided to have a timetable since it enables him to ensure that when one class is doing something noisy, such as reading, then other classes in the same room would be doing quiet work while the infants should not undertake more than three hours’ work. Mr Thody had discovered that advance timetabling means he is less harassed since he does not have to decide what to do next when he is busy with the activities of the day and can concentrate better on what is in hand. The children bene t since it enables planned
progress, and impresses them with the value of time and the morality of obeying routines. 10 ‘A timetable is to a school what grammar is to a language’, 11 quoted Mr Thody.

6.45 a.m. Equipment orders

Mr Thody selects the order book for equipment. He is listing the number of slate pencils required. He pauses to consult a supplier’s catalogue for guidance on the appropriate lengths of pencils for different ages of children. 6.46–7.05 a.m. Management meanings

Mr Thody flexes his hand and rests his quill. Leaning back in his chair he ruminates aloud to the observer. ‘Strange how one’s training never seems to cover the essentials of management. Now if only I had known how to judge the minimum length of slate pencils. 12 Still, things have improved. Consider the syllabus through which I must guide my pupil teachers. School management is a compulsory subject.’

He hands the observer the 1887 General Syllabus for Certificate Examinations. 13 School management First year

1 The methods of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic with special reference to the development of the intelligence of children.

2 The form of school registers, the mode of keeping them, and of making returns from them.

3 The training for the senses and of the memory, and the order in which the faculties of the children are developed.

4 Notes of lessons. Second year

1 To teach a class in the presence of Her Majesty’s Inspector.
2 To answer questions on the following subjects: a The different methods of organising an elementary school. b The form of the school registers, the mode of keeping them, and of making returns from them. c The ventilation and drainage of school premises.

3 The processes of reasoning; the order in which the faculties of children are developed; the formation of habits and of character; all considered in their application to the methods of teaching and of moral discipline.

4 Notes of lessons. [The syllabus for female candidates was identical except that Notes of Lessons did not appear in the Second Year and Methods of teaching Infants and of organising Infants' Schools were included in the first year]

Mr Thody continues: 'I like the way the syllabus acknowledges that curriculum management and teaching methods are all seen as part of school management.

The objective of management is to maintain the conditions for the implementation of good teaching. One can trace this back to Bentham's 1818 Chrestomathia, which could be considered to be one of the founding books of our discipline. Bentham stated that the objective of good school management should be effective delivery in the minimum of time with the maximum of uniformity but he didn’t neglect the registers of course. Providing evidence of different pupil outcomes through “his book keeping function [is] one of the more important responsibilities of the master”. 14 Bentham, however, failed to separate the major and the minor tasks as Gill has now done in his latest textbook. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN E
‘I support Gill’s separation of school management and school keeping. He defines management as not being my responsibility but being that of the “body termed school-managers over the appointments and labours of the teachers, the school buildings, furniture and apparatus and the income and expenditure . . . .

[school keeping is that branch of management] by which a master becomes fully conversant with the . . . attendance, payments, instruction, progress of the school ars . . . their health and comfort”. 15 He’s been one of the best selling authors on school management 16 and he has not significantly changed his ideas over time.

In fact, I have not needed to buy this 1883 edition although it does elevate school keeping to a branch of management. 17

‘There have been changes in how we see management, of course. We have progressed since the limited view that management simply comprised how best to classify the scholars 18 or was seen as just the Mechanical Arrangements (the whole building, its furniture and apparatus), Systems of Organization, Time Tables, Monitors, Discipline. 19 Naturally, all the authors this century have made teaching methods an integral part of school management. Indeed, as late as 1842, 20 they were virtually the whole of school management
but now we head

masters no longer do all the teaching ourselves so that our
management must

include managing those who teach for us. “Management is now
as essential to

success as the power to teach, or the ability to govern.”
21 My aim is to make

school a pleasure and, therefore, school should be
“invested with attractions and

associated with agreeable feelings”. 22 Hence, I must
ensure that classes are not
disarranged, that pupils do not display slovenly posture,
that they are punctual,
march in an orderly fashion and do not hear improper words
in school. 23 Without

good management, there can be no effective teaching; 24
system is essential if the

importance of childhood development is to be realized. 25

‘Oh yes, you may smile at that, but I am a modern
headmaster. Things were
different in my father’s time - he kept a school in the
1850s when it was a

matter of coping with children rather than developing them. The average child
then was described as “in a state of constant irritation;
its matted hair - its filthy
esh - its skin a prey to foul insects . . . corroded with
disease - its clothes tat
tered, or so coarsely botched or, it may be, secured with
string and nails . . .
soiled with nameless dirt and reeking with disgusting
odours - his shirt a foul

rag, his stockings in pieces, and his shoes scarcely
clinging to this feet”. 26

‘And it was everywhere much the same; the United States of America, for example, struggled with similar difficulties of school superintendence. 27 My father’s contemporaries could be called first-generation school managers. Even the great Matthew Arnold saw management simplistically as the arrangement of the rooms 28 but he recognized even the importance of that to good organization . . .

‘Good Heavens, is that the time? I must breakfast soon if there is to be any good organization today at Reynold Street.’

Mr Thody explains that his landlady brings his breakfast to enable him to work through the meal. Today, he has Blakiston’s school management hints 29 propped up against the teapot. In the evening, he takes his tea in the downstairs front parlour on his own; when he was an assistant teacher he ate with the family. 7.20-8.30 a.m. Finance

Mr Thody began a report for the managers’ concerning the fees that should be charged. He commented on how he enjoyed the financial aspects of management despite the time needed to see that grants were earned according to examination passes, that money was accounted for and that the books balanced. ‘School management’, he said, ‘is no different from factory management
... [we are well]

aware that [we are] dealing with the allocation of limited resources, and con

sequently that it [is] essential to effect economies in time, labour and expense'. 30

In his report, Mr Thody wrote that fees charged ‘should always be such as shall

honestly avow to the parents the true market value of the education imparted’, 31

a statement he felt would encourage the managers to increase the fees which cur

rently contributed just under 30% to the total expenses of 53/5d per child (£2.66)

per annum. 32 'At threepence per week fees,' continued Mr Thody’s report,

‘Reynold Street has a reputation as a school only for the poor. If fees are raised,

the school would attract a better class of entrant. The consequent rise in exam

ination passes would increase the government grants and permit the school to

increase its attractiveness.’ The Form IX returns were attached as an appendix to

the report, together with some examples of other schools’ expenditure to demon

strate how well Mr Thody was managing this school’s finances (e.g. rural

school, £98 11s 4d (£98.56) income from school fees, subscriptions and pro

ceeds from a bazaar; £36 8s 8d (£36.43) expenditure on salaries, books, coal,

consumables etc; £62 2s 8d (£62.13) balance in hand). 33a

8.30–8.45 a.m. Travel
Mr Thody collects his papers and books and walks to school.

8.45–9.00 a.m. Admissions

Two parents have come to request admission for their children. Both families have relocated from other areas of London. Mr Thody informs them that the school is full and the managers have decided not to admit new children above Standard One. One parent states that his two sons have always achieved highly in examinations for both class and specific subjects. Mr Thody asks the parent if this year’s examination results are at hand but it seems that the inspector has not yet reported them. Mr Thody promises that he will review the request for admission when the examination results are available.

[Observer’s note: Mr Thody seems willing to ignore the managers’ decision if there is a possibility of attracting able children. Presumably this accords with his policy of upgrading the school by increasing fees.]

9.00–9.25 a.m. Walking the school/staff management

Mr Thody walks round the school to check its readiness for the pupils. He notes cleanliness, asks that the windows be opened, it being a fine day promising growing warmth. He reminds a pupil teacher to ensure that all slates are in the desk racks. He commends the map drawn by the senior assistant teacher in readiness for the geography class in the gallery. The
Infant Mistress, Miss

Johnson, proffers the needlework being gathered in preparatory to the inspectors’ visit and Mr Thody discusses with her how it might best be displayed. He praises her introduction of different coloured cotton threads to denote each stage of needlework achievement which will make it easy for both him and managers unfamiliar with domestic sewing to assess pupils’ progress at a glance.

Mr Thody returns to his desk in the centre of the hall to await the pupil teachers after they have completed their pre-school tasks. He explains to the observer that ‘the encouragement and stimulation afforded to staff by my morning perambulation makes them feel important’. 34 ‘Often, at the end of my tour, and as the outcome of my observations of staff throughout the day, I enter into a reference book my criticisms and suggestions for improvement which I will discuss with them privately at the end of the day. They are aware that I constantly appraise them. I will have “none of this half apologetic way which some head masters have of coming into the class of an assistant with some pretext as if they felt they were intruding”. 35 Of course, the teachers’ classification also depends on the examination results of their pupil and the inspectors’ reports but
they ask for my comments. I hear that the same system was
introduced as long

as forty years ago in New South Wales, so highly is it
regarded. 36 It is an effect

ive means of ensuring quality teaching although I hear
there are still cases where

“Whitehall trembles when it sees the weakest of the
N.U.T.s”.’ 37

‘The effective management of staff is so important’,
continues Mr Thody.

‘We are all so aware of the need to maintain a high morale
- fortunately it has

been rebuilt since the first shock of the introduction of

the Revised Code in

1862 38 39 but one must be vigilant. We do not suffer the

same teacher absen
teeism and rapid turnover of staff as do the poor rural

schools 40 and we insist on

good healthy teachers. The best come here, of course,
because we can pay more

than the voluntary schools which do not have the bene t of

public money from

the rates, but only of fees, subscriptions and the grant

from the Committee in

Council. Being a headmaster must have been so much easier

when Lancaster’s

Mutual Instruction system was in vogue, during the early

years of this century.

Of course, I could not approve of all the teaching being
delegated to the untrained monitors but at least it left the schoolmaster

free to manage the

school.’ 41 9.25-9.30 a.m. Classification
Miss Sinclair, Female Assistant, asks about transferring a pupil to a higher class.

Mr Thody suggests they must wait until after the inspectors’ examinations the following week when Mr Thody also wishes to reconsider the whole school’s classification. It would be a major management task to alter this, Mr Thody explains to the observer and to Miss Sinclair.

The school had adopted Matthew Arnold’s recommendation that children of all abilities should be age-grouped for collective teaching into one section and subdivided into smaller classes for desk work to test individual attainment and then into smaller groups of ten (known as ‘drafts’) for sessions facilitating individual practice. The school hall was partitioned (with curtains and temporary boarding about three-quarters the height of the room) so that a semblance of the classroom system could be essayed but Mr Thody said that he would prefer a full classroom system with ability dictating a child’s place in the Standards in order to improve school results and attract a better class of parent. Classification by ability was the best way to excite ‘emulation and vigorous exertacion’ 42 although Mr Thody reminded Miss Sinclair that there had been a time when scholars were classified according to the level of fees they paid; the more they
paid, the higher the class they were put in irrespective of their abilities or previous learning. 43 9.30–9.45 a.m. Pupil teachers’ lessons

Mr Thody listens to the home lessons of the pupil teachers who will later listen to the other children. He also listens to some of the senior scholars’ work as it cannot all be fitted into the time allotted later in the day. Usually, this would be done during the school hours by the pupil teachers but, with the inspectors’ visit imminent, it is important that the headmaster does it. He tells the weaker scholars that he will hear them again after school has finished in the afternoon. 44 He hands the pupil teachers their rotas for the week; their teaching duties are assigned so that they do not miss the same classes each week. 9.45 a.m. School begins

The headmaster walks to unlock the school door to admit the scholars, lamenting that he is not leading a school in his father’s day when headmasters were paid extra for instructing pupil teachers. He recalls Gill’s advice that headmasters must demonstrate a love of school by always being present before the children arrive. 45 He shouts to the stragglers only just entering the yard and remarks sotto voce ‘but I blame the parents. I report to them when their children are late S C H O O L M A N A G E M E N T I N E L E M E N T A R Y S C H O O L S

and it should be their responsibility to ensure they are here on time. It is part of
basic family values’. 9.55–10.00 a.m. Cleanliness inspection

Mr Thody gives a ‘hasty glance’ at the children’s hands, faces and hair as they file past him. He then oversees the movement of scholars to their places. They appear to know which of them is to go to the gallery, which into the desks within particular partitions and which to the drafts, without being told, so Mr Thody clearly has well established routines. All the teachers are present, to Mr Thody’s obvious relief.

Absentee teachers mean that the headmaster has to double his class in addition to the supervision of the school. 47 10.00–10.30 a.m. Seniors’ dictation, desks in partition one

Mr Thody checks their home lessons. He calls each draft of pupils and completes two large drafts in the half hour; pupil teachers hear the rest. Drafts not being inspected read silently under the care of the head pupil. Mr Thody explains to the observer that he has arranged the timetable to ensure that all pupils have contact with him at some point in the week. 48 When not teaching, he superintends to ensure that all are in ‘perpetual employment’ but he feels it important that all pupils should have the benefit of his expert teaching which would also enable all the teachers to learn from his example. 50 10.30–11 a.m. Juniors’ dictation, desks in partition three

Mr Thody sits at his desk in the centre of the room. His
attention is directed to
the pupil teacher who is guiding this class. The pupil has
dictated the passage
and then leaves the scholars to make corrections while she
completes hearing the
home lessons. Mr Thody leaves his desk to give the children
help with the
correct holding of pens and to make them aware that the
‘presence, example,
and spirit of the master must pervade in every class, and
must especially be felt
in the weak ones. All temptation to idleness must be
prevented.’ 51 He returns to
increase parental interest in the school. 52 11.00–11.30
a.m. Seniors’ writing, desks in partition one
Mr Thody informs the observer that he only superintends
this lesson on a Thurs
day usually but he is supervising today because of the
impending inspectors’
visit. The pupils work silently from their own books. The
candidate pupil is
instructed by Mr Thody in how to check the writing. There
is some classroom
disturbance and Mr Thody has to move to the Infants’ room
to assist Miss
Johnson. H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H 11.30–12
noon Seniors’ arithmetic, drafts on the floor
One of the most important lessons of the day and always
managed by Mr Thody.
Arithmetical tables and mental arithmetic are taught to two
drafts concurrently.
He achieves this by having them stand in a large circle
instead of in two semi
circles, each facing the wall. The other two drafts are working on slates on exercise dictated by the pupil teachers. 12.00–12.30 p.m.

Mr Davison supervises the yard. Mr Thody completes his daily tour of the buildings. He checks that the drains, urinals and WCs have been flushed for the second time today. He notes where the dark chocolate paint below the dado needs retouching before the inspectors' arrival and enters a request for a blackboard pointer into the stock book for perusal by the managers at their meeting later that afternoon. He comments to the observer that they would probably discuss whether or not the school could adopt a full classroom system to replace its current tripartite division.

He explains that the classroom debate is a major issue for school boards at the moment and the schools' managers were wanting to put their views to the boards. Many felt that there were insufficient pupils at the same standard in a division to make the gallery sessions, for a full division, really useful. His solution had been to propose the floor partitions which permitted small class work while still enabling him to see the whole school at once. He was concerned that if full classroom divisions were introduced then teachers would be permanently attached to one class or to one subject to the detriment of their whole-school knowledge.
Mr Thody gathers the papers wanted for the managers’ afternoon meeting. He
calls to a pupil teacher to go round and retie those corks which have become
detached from their ink bottles. He remarks to the observer that he was pleased
with that particular pupil whom he had recommended as a teacher because of her
good attendance and ability in all subjects.

He begins to arrange ‘specimens of [the childrens’] fine handwriting [for an
exhibition] to attract parents’. 53 Mr Thody also intends to ask the managers to
see the display and to bring their acquaintances. He feels that this is important to
the school’s reputation management. There are already strong school community
links 54 but he wants to obtain the attention of ‘in uential persons in the neigh
bourhood’. 55 He wants to show them that his school represents ‘the moral code
of an ascendant bourgeois culture’ 56 which they might feel able to support. He
laughingly recollects, for the observer, that there are still those who need to be
disabused of views such as those of Lady Ludlow as portrayed by Mrs Gaskell
in her 1858 novel: ‘if our lower orders have these edge-tools [reading and
writing] given to them, we shall have the terrible scenes of the French Revolu
tion acted over again in England’. 57 Mr Thody adds that there is also competition
from the voluntary schools in the area. ‘They continue to thrive despite their higher fees and lower salaries so we must look to our reputation.’

The topic is taught by Mr Thody to the whole group utilizing the map drawn earlier by Mr Sinclair. Mr Thody occasionally turns during his lesson, to frown at the over-loud rendition of poetry by the junior class in the drafts. Mr Matthew Arnold’s praise of rote learning of poetry resulted in the teachers trying to ensure that the whole school has the requisite 200 lines by heart for the following week. Mr Thody interrupts his lesson to move to partition one in order to quell an incipient pupil disturbance but ‘modern ideas of schoolmastering prevent[ed him] from falling upon [pupils] and murdering [them], so that [he] could do no more than hurl a book or a bit of chalk’. Mr Thody’s presence helps secure concentration for needle drill. The division is divided into three drafts, each of 20 pupils and, of these, the pupil teachers take two and the headmaster takes one. The
master first glances to
see that the senior division are well engaged then begins
to question his draft.

The pupil teachers listen to the other two drafts. On
subsequent days, the head
master will question the drafts heard by the pupil
teachers. 2.00-2.30 p.m. Seniors’ geography, gallery

Mr Thody examines the scholars’ recall of his earlier
lesson and then the

remaining time is spent on Africa and Zululand again
because of Matthew

Arnold’s preference for geography to be more than one’s own
parish. 61 The managers’ meeting

During this lesson, three of the school’s managers cross
the school room to com
mence their meeting in the vestibule. They acknowledge Mr
Thody who steps
from the gallery to meet them and to pass over his
registers and report. After dis

missing the young children, Mr Thody leaves the school to
the care of Mr

Davison and proceeds to the managers’ meeting. They agree
with him to recom
mend to the School Board that nine long desks be removed
and 22 dual desks

substituted; that the few remaining copies of Hughes’
stories for Standards I-IV

(no longer approved by the School Board) could be given
away; that marching

lines could be painted on the floor of the Infants School
and that six chairs, a

long pointer and an inkstand could be ordered. 62 H I S T O
R Y A N D R E S E A R C H 2.30-2.35 p.m. Dismissal and
break
Infants and lower standards are dismissed and the headmaster superintends their leaving. Mr Davison supervises the older pupils marching in the yard and eating lunch packages. 2.35–3.40 p.m. Reading

Mr Thody hears the oldest children reading while the pupil teachers hear the others. During the week, the groups will rotate so that each child will be heard by the headmaster. Home tasks are announced and Mr Thody watches their dictation by the monitors. He sets home tasks because then ‘the parents get the impression that their children are well looked after’. 63

The last ten minutes are for his reading to the whole division. 3.40–3.45 p.m. Good conduct and dismissal

Good conduct and achievement badges are awarded on the basis of last week’s results. Mr Thody reminds the pupils of the importance of competition. While the pupils hurry out, he comments to the observer that rewarding merit has a long tradition since Lancaster originated weekly medals for outstanding performance and small cash prizes for good work. 64 ‘As long ago as 1804’, intones Mr Thody, ‘Lancaster allocated 22% of his budget for prizes and rewards’. 65

3.45–4.30 p.m. Pupil teacher training/managers’ meeting

In continuance of the five hours’ teaching he is supposed to give the pupil teachers each week, Mr Thody directs them to revision of the names of rivers.
He requires them to read Chapter V of Joyce’s 1864 Handbook on School Management and Methods of Teaching which explains how to plan a geography lesson. He discusses with them Joyce’s views that pupils should know the geography of Britain better than that of any other parts of the world. This view conflicts with that of Matthew Arnold who thought it could be just as interesting to learn about the four quarters of the globe. 66

He leaves them to complete their tasks alone (although he expresses concern about his lack of time to supervise them adequately) as he goes to say goodbye to the managers. He states that the correspondent will become ‘fairly mithered’ 67 unless he goes to help him write up the minutes neatly. Mr Thody expresses his relief that his managers do not have the responsibilities of those of voluntary schools but says that he thinks all managers’ responsibilities should become those of the Boards.

Only three managers attended the meeting (a usual number, states Mr Thody, one of whom was female [Observers comment – she certainly reflects Mr Sneyd Kinnersley’s description of a lady manager: SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. There was a time when she was a prominent personage: she assisted at
the inspection, and waited for hours that she might see the inspector
blundering over the ‘garments’. She called his attention to specially
meritorious stitches, and deplored the blindness of My Lords in their
selection of sewing tests; she deprecated mathematics and urged the
superior claims of housewifery. She gave private information on the
characters of the pupil-teachers and the children generally hinting that
the pretty ones were undesirable . . . It was not only at inspection that
she appeared: in many schools she was to be found without fail two and
three days a week; possibly assisting in the needlework; possibly taking
a general interest in the girls; always full of good works.]

68 4.30–5.00 p.m. Staff management/quality assurance

Mr Thody holds a weekly short conference for staff. Today he reminds them of
the importance of the merit registers and the regular reports to parents who
would thereby know their children’s position in class. 69 He reads out the pro
gramme for the Inspectors’ visit. He tells them that after this visit, he will be
instituting half-yearly examinations so that the scholars’ development can be
more accurately known. 70 He reminds them to prepare their lessons tonight,
telling them he will be spending the evening ensuring that
the feared Form IX

gives an accurate picture of the state of the school in respect of attendance,

instruction and pupils’ ages. He informs them that the inspectoral system is so well respected that New South Wales has adopted it. He bids them good-night,

expressing his confidence that they will do well at the examinations next week. 5.00–5.15 p.m. School closes and walking home

After checking that the school will be locked, Mr Thody walks back to his lodgings. He tells the observer that he has heard that the London School Board may be introducing ‘organizing teachers’, copying the 1856 system of the Irish Commissioners of National Education. Their job was to improve and bring uniformity to national schools and to educate teachers in schoolkeeping. The organizing teachers themselves received lectures on the science and practice of school management. 7.15–6.15 p.m. Tea

This is served to him in the front parlour. He has a newspaper beside him, which he would usually read at this hour. He asks if he might have conversation with the observer instead as it is rare that he has a social evening. ‘It is so difficult’ he states, ‘to find the right people with whom to meet socially. One feels the general disdain for teachers amongst the upper classes but parents are generally
too low with habits and thoughts repugnant to mine. Small trades people seem to feel I will be critical about their speech while better trades people feel above me.

Professionals distrust my learning and I can hardly consort with masters of private schools. A manager may give me leave to walk in his grounds but could scarcely expect me to be his guest.’ 75 He brightens when the observer asks if there are fellow elementary school heads with whom he might discourse and he responds with comments about two heads he has recently encountered at a London School Board meeting for newly appointed headmasters. 6.15–8.00 p.m. Managing change

Mr Thody completes the school log book for the day. Usually he writes it once a week but with the inspectors’ visit imminent he is punctilious about the niceties.

He selects Trollope’s Australian travelogue for personal reading 76 but finds he cannot settle. He says his mind is too much occupied with the inspectors coming. Like the teacher in Crabbes’s The Borough, he must set aside his personal reading and ‘To this sad duty his sound mind apply, And Vex’d in spirit, throw his pleasures by’. 77 He wonders whether he has been long enough in this job to introduce major changes at Reynold Street. He feels he has ‘sufficient experience of the school to enable [him] to judge of their expediency’ 78 but rec
ollects Gill’s advice that ‘No wise man will rashly innovate’. Mr Thody is aware of the disorder and confusion that can arise from hasty change and knows that what he chooses to do must be apposite to the character of the district. He feels strongly, however, that better class children must be attracted to the school.

At this point, the observer leaves. Learning from history? The value of lessons from the past

Has Mr Thody presented us with approaches we have not adopted? Do his methods strengthen our own by demonstrating their earlier applicability? Do these questions suggest that historical examples ought to be useful if a study of history is to justified? Usefulness has been seen as dangerous since if we look at past events as a source of advice on today’s practicalities, we may select ‘only those facts which suit our present interests, [so that] we may distort the past and merely find in it what in some respects we have put there ourselves’. Readers may wish to reflect whether or not this has happened in the foregoing account. I chose to categorize Mr Thody’s work in twentieth-century terminology (e.g. Reputation Management) which serves to stress similarities rather than the differences which Seaborne feels should be what we should try to comprehend. Is there more merit in perceiving differences rather than
similarities?

Seaborne argues that the reasons for studying history ‘must rest, in the last analysis, on the intrinsic interest of the study of past events’ 82 but is it not because of similarities to our own time that past events become of interest? SCHOOL MANAGEMENT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Once such interest is aroused, it becomes possible for ‘historical study to trace the development of education . . . and so to reach a deeper understanding of the function it ful ls today’. 83 The functions of school management have become of major political, practitioner and academic interest since the mid-1970s, the time when Silver was criticizing research on the Victorian period for neglecting the content of schooling and educational processes because only those issues in Victorian education that had ‘meaning in twentieth century terms have been admit ted to the de nition of the history of education’. 84 A neglect may, however, begin to be recti ed when current interests invite comparisons.

Silver feels, like Seaborne, that selecting history for twentieth-century needs precludes the Victorian period being understood in its own terms because this may make us question our cherished assumptions. Silver’s views gain credence from, for example, Hogan’s reassessment of Lancaster’s system of monitorialism.
Hogan demonstrates that it is from this system that the current competitive individualism in classrooms began, although we might not like to admit it. Further, how many of us readily accept the criticisms of Lancaster’s system while at the same time thoroughly commending our own system of peer tutoring? The Lancaster and Bell monitorial schools are also credited with having been the basis of the incorporation of business management methods into schools; we may think that managerialism in schools is new and unwelcome but it appears to have been deep in the English education system since the beginning of the nineteenth century. The monitorial schools transferred to education the factory methods that were just beginning to be incorporated into industrial processes, hence providing ‘a kind of innate characteristic or psychological trait which has helped form . . . a characteristic approach to the problems of public school administration’. If we accept this last view, it seems to reinforce the value of selecting issues that link the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To claim, as Silver appears to do, that there was a Victorian interpretation seems surprisingly singular since views changed during the century. It could even be unreasonable to claim that any Victorian interpretation of their own and proximate
times has more claim to
veracity than views from the twentieth century. Reactions
from all periods could
be said to be subjective. Using history as a tool in
education management lies
between the realist and subjectivist schools. 87 Real data
are used but as one time
travels, subjectivity is revealed as one reads how each
generation tends to revile
the choices of its immediate predecessors in order to
justify their own activities.
Such subjectivity should not be seen as a cause for
disallowing twentieth
century interpretations of earlier periods: ‘case study and
comparative and
historical methods become the preferred means of analysis
[for research which]
aims at dealing with the experience of people in specific
situations’. 88 History for education management
The specific situation of school management would benefit
from a historical
base. In an elegantly argued paper, Sungaila 89 suggests
that such a base would contribute to the emergence of shared values amongst
academic and practitioner
managers. Part of her argument centres on the Heideggian
realization that truths
about a discipline are apparent the more one understands
‘having been-in-the
world’. 90 People are perceived as a continuum of past,
present and future which
‘allows man [sic] to perceive the possibilities that he has
inherited and realize in
the historical “moment of vision” what he can be for his own time’. 91

This is to move our discipline on from being a practical response to a prac
tical need (borrowing from business management and basing itself in being a
technical discipline arising from information gleaned from collating and
categorizing information about current management practice). Already, our
discipline has acknowledged the value of experience in the establishment, since
1991, of a mentoring scheme whereby newly appointed headteachers are guided
by experienced headteachers acting as mentors. 92 Similar acknowledgement is
apparent in the movement to school-based management, and intending-teacher
education. 93 This acknowledgement needs extending to include historical know
ledge about what it means to be an education manager.

Such a study would accord with Seaborne’s views that education history is
more interesting if studied thematically than chronologically. For education
management, there is more at stake than interest alone. Education management
emerged in the 1950s from social sciences, building also from business manage
ment. The latter began around 1900, apparently full grown with its theories of
scientific management. What happened before then seems blank, yet a discipline
surely needs a strong origin if it is to grow to maturity. Its origins can become apparent from studies such as this. As the concept of educational administration as a profession and social science gains ever wider recognition and acceptance, it becomes appropriate to examine the theory and assumptions which underlie the field. In particular we need to ask whether the theory and assumptions still appear to hold in settings where they were developed before they were recommended and applied in totally new settings. 94

History is our laboratory and it may yet rescue us from our current preoccupa

tion with regarding quantitative proofs as the only ones of any value in the testing of our ideas. The nineteenth century and the history of education management

Having indicated the value of history and its particular relevance to education management, why then select the nineteenth century particularly? First, I must confess to a personal interest as a reason for this choice, arising from work com
pleted as a student teacher in the long forgotten days when the history of educa
tion was a compulsory subject for study. 95 Second, although there may be concerns that this period is already well researched, the studies have not conS C H O O L M A N A G E M E N T I N E L E M E N T A R Y S C H O O L S sidered school management. There is a great deal of work on the development of the government of the system, on the curriculum and on teaching methods.

There are many individual school histories (though relatively few on state e
mentary schools, and these, being singular, leave us with inadequate notions of what typical schools were like). It remains true that the research on the educational history of the nineteenth century could be described as limited to very few areas and approaches with gaps to be filled, notably in the format of the education of the poor. Third, it could be said that this is the only century, other than the twentieth, in which there were schools of significant size to be managed. Methodology and sources This study intended to illuminate what it meant to be a nineteenth-century education manager through creating an image that:

... reflected [a school’s] character and quality and that [told] us some thing of what the experience of schooling is like. Since schools are made up of different people in different times and places, it is to be expected that images which reflect the experience of schooling must be many and varied... [they are] sets of ‘one-sided viewpoints’. This particular one-sided viewpoint explored the possibilities of ‘factionalized’ shadowing, hoping thereby to respond to Seaborne’s plea for writing history comprehensibly so that it can be understood easily through using the advantages of observational techniques. This account was created as far as possible from
contemporaneous sources. It

was constructed around school timetables published in Joyce and Currie. On to these was built information from other management textbooks published during the century. Material published before the period to which this account directly refers was incorporated in the form of the headteacher’s reflections on times past in order to provide a flavour of how school management changed during the century. It was assumed that the headmaster would still be using some of the methods of the past; headteachers today do not all use all the most recommended modern methods and Victorian school leaders presumably behaved similarly. One feature had to be invented (pupils’ lunch) since no reference could be found to it in the texts consulted. Various texts outlined daily timetables but none exhibited more than very short breaks. It seems unlikely that the children went all day without either breaks or food so five minutes have been permitted in the above account. Whether or not this is accurate awaits information from further research.

In attempting to ascertain how far the textbook accounts were translated into practice in schools, the books themselves were first compared to see how far they all agreed. Where several books suggested the same
ideas, these were incorporated into this study. Recourse was also made to novels, poetry, source H I S T O R Y A N D R E S E A R C H books on childhood in the nineteenth century, school log books, managers’ record books, autobiographies and biographies and inspectors’ reports. A small sample of each was used in order to assess the value of each as a potential source for more extensive use later. Secondary sources which utilized other nineteenth-century sources were also used.

Reflecting first on novels and poetry, it ‘has long been recognised that imagi
native literature can be used to infer contemporary assumptions and accepted social values’. 101 Novels, however, depend on creativity, ‘selection . . . interpre

tation, on a personal vision of social fact’ 102 and, hence, literature is not usually a good source of commonplace fact. This is borne out by the relatively few sources located on public elementary schools and the recognition that, for novel
tered and short and locating them is not easy, which explains the value of biographical guides to fictional sources. 103 Novelists do not seem to have been attracted to school leaders as heroes.

They appear in novels brie y (Sue’s headteacher in Hardy’s Jude the Obscure for example). Combined with other sources, however, novels
help to fill out a
general picture. Trollope’s The Claverings reminds us of the social opprobrium
faced by teachers as the hero, Henry, rises in status when he departs education to
become an engineer. Mrs Gaskell’s My Lady Ludlow well illustrates the chang
ing attitudes to popular education over the first fifty years of the century. I often
wonder if Matthew Arnold was inspired by a school inspection to write ‘And we
are here as on a darkling plain, Swept by confused alarms of struggle and fight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night’. 104
Accounts of peoples’ childhoods were investigated as a source but these were
found often to be written by those outside the social bracket that would have
patronized the state-supported schools. 105 Alternatively, autobiographers found
school not worth writing about. In Armstrong’s Victorian Peepshow, for
example, he recounts his governesses in some detail and those of his siblings,
merely recording that ‘I was by that time at day-school’ 106 with no details. He
later recounts two humiliations at the hands of schoolmasters 107 and that ‘I don’t
remember to have been in the least interested in what I learnt’. 108 For girls, there
was the added issue of writers despising girls’ education and being concerned
that girls were being educated outside the home at all. 109
Autobiographies of adults operating the education system as teachers, inspectors or administrators appear to be a more fertile source. Log Books and Managers’ Minute Books provided useful outlines of what happened on a daily basis in schools and have the advantage of providing the headteacher’s viewpoint, which few of the other sources do. On the other hand, they are usually very brief and records for individual schools are patchy.

Inspector’s Reports provided a further perspective. Those of Matthew Arnold tended to comment on major issues in the system rather than on the minutiae of school management but there is material to be culled from them, especially as his reports cover such a long period. Sneyd-Kinnersley’s autobiography was used. The reports and reminiscences used for this article, although published in collections in 1908, related to the period selected for this observation. The value and availability of other inspectors’ reports and government documents are discussed in Sutherland.

This pilot study has demonstrated that there is more than enough material to make a fuller study of nineteenth-century school management worthwhile. In addition to the sources outlined above, there are also
investigations to be made

of periodicals, of school histories and of many secondary sources. 112 The study

has found that some approaches were more prevalent at particular times in the

century so that further research might be able to characterize different periods. A

brief foray into the literature of New South Wales, Tasmania, Ireland and the USA indicates that research material is available. An interesting development of

this research would be to compare Anglophone countries, at very different

stages of development in the nineteenth century, but with similar expectations of

schooling, to see if they had common patterns of school management. Tale end

Sadly, the study of the history of education as an element in the training of

intending teachers has long been abandoned in England and Wales despite the

assertion in 1966 that its value was so self-evident that there was 'no need to

make out a case for the study of the history of education as an essential aspect of

the course offered to intending teachers'. 113 In contrast, the management of edu

cation has recently been recommended as an essential element of the training of

intending teachers. 114 Combining the history and management of education

might help tomorrow’s school managers (and today’s) to achieve a fuller appre
ciation of possible solutions to managerial challenges - at least they might have

more arguments to advance for or against reintroducing payments by results. Notes

In sourcing this article, the assistance of Mr Roy Kirk, Librarian at the School of Education,

University of Leicester, is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to Emeritus Pro

fessor Brian Simon who has commented on the text. Any errors are the fault of the author.

1 In contrast with the rest of the world, common practice in the UK is to use the term

‘management’ for ‘administration’. To attempt to avoid confusion, ‘management’ is
de ned here, as it was in nineteenth-century textbooks, as the activities of the head

teacher (see note 3) in running the school. These activities encompass strategic and
tactical matters, such as planning, curriculum and staff management and detailed

‘administrative’ tasks such as keeping the registers and arranging lunch for the

inspectors. Administration in nineteenth-century England appears to have referred to

the local and central levels of the government of education rather than to the institu

tional level which is the subject of this article.

2 A. M. Thody, ‘University management observed’, Studies in Higher Education, 14

(1989), 279-296; A. M. Thody, ‘Strategic planning and school management’,

4 Reynold Street is a mythical school since records available for individual schools are vestigial. Some creative licence has been needed in order to ensure that many elements of management are touched upon in one day. Further discussion of ‘factionalization’ is to be found in the methodology section at the end of this article. The London School Board was real; it was one of the many local authorities for education established after the 1870 Education Act to provide schools which would fill the gaps not covered by voluntary schools. The London School Board commenced work immediately after the 1870 Act in view of major deficiencies in the capital’s educational provision; elsewhere, the voluntary authorities were given several years’ grace to provide more schools before the School Boards commenced. Board Schools were financed from fees (until 1896), local property taxes and central government grants (the latter dependent upon attendance and examination results).


6 In some areas, including London, the School Boards had opted to have managing bodies for their individual schools but they were not found in all areas. Voluntary schools all had managers. The definitive work on Victorian school managers is P. Gordon, The Victorian School Manager (London, 1974).

7 Pupil teachers were only allowed to complete the registers during their final two years of training but it remained the headmaster’s job to complete the compilations and he was, of course, the responsible agent.


10 J. Gill (1883) op. cit., Ch. V.

11 P. W. Joyce, A Handbook of School Management (Dublin,
12 This topic formed the subject of a question in the 1897 Queen’s Scholarship examination so its importance was eventually recognized.

13 Collins (1887), op. cit., 91.


16 1869 was Gill’s 12th edition so he appears to have been a popular author.

17 Gill (1887), op. cit., 101.


19 Joyce, op. cit.

20 Collins (1842), op. cit.

21 Gill (1883), op. cit., 90.

22 Ibid., 101.

23 Ibid., 103.

24 Collins (1887), op. cit., 5.


30 Miller, op. cit., 11.

31 Fitch, op. cit., 63.

32 Arnold op. cit., 199.

33a E. M. Sneyd Kinnersley, H.M.I. Some Passages in the Life at One of H.M. Inspectors of Schools (London, 1908), 162.

33b Gladstone Street School (later known as Milton Street School), Leicester School Board, Mangers’ Log book, 1881-1900 (19D59/VII/341 4/5/3), Minutes for 20 August 1886; Medway Street School, Leicester School Board, School Log Book, 1886-1903, (DE 3036/1), Minutes for 7 July 1881.

34 Gill (1883), op. cit., 106.

35 Fitch, op. cit., 29.


37 Sneyd-Kinnersley, op. cit.

38 The Revised Codes were the first English National Curriculum. For each standard there were attainment targets in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic in which all pupils were examined. Other subjects were optional but likewise had targets. Achieving the targets meant that the pupils earned grant for the school
Matthew Arnold, the famous poet and one of the HMIs for London, resolutely opposed the Code and criticized what he saw as its stultifying effects. Others were, however, in favour and it was viewed as a means of raising standards and of ensuring that all children received the same entitlement to the curriculum. The Codes were abolished at the turn of the century but the arguments for and against them have become apposite again since England reintroduced its National Curriculum in 1988 (in much greater detail, and with many more compulsory subjects than in the nineteenth century).


41 Gill (1883), op. cit., 86.

42 Ibid., 93.

43 Arnold, op. cit., 6.

44 Joyce, op. cit., 74.

45 Gill (1883), op. cit., 107.

46 Joyce, op. cit., 61.

47 Medway, op. cit., 17 September 1886.

48 Collins (1887), 23.

49 Joyce, op. cit., 15.

50 Gill (1883), op. cit., 104.
51 Ibid., 103.

52 Fitch, op. cit., 75; Gill (1883), op. cit., 105.


55 Dunn, op. cit., 17.


57 E. Gaskell, My Lady Ludlow (Guernsey, 1985 edn, 1858 original), 55.

58 Arnold, op. cit., 210-9.

59 Ibid., 200.


61 Arnold, op. cit., 90-91.

62 Gladstone, op. cit., Minutes, April, 1883.

63 Gill, op. cit., 100.

64 Hogan, op. cit., 402.

65 Miller, op. cit., 13.

66 Arnold, op. cit., 90-91.

67 Sneyd-Kinnersley, op. cit., 162.

68 Ibid., 168.

69 Currie, op. cit., 203.

70 Gill (1883), op. cit., 105.

71 Currie, op. cit., 204.
72 Mumford, op. cit., 10.
73 Joyce, op. cit., 9.
75 Anon, op. cit., 142.
76 A. Trollope, Australia (Gloucester, 1987 edn of 1873 original).
77 Hartcup, op. cit., 10-19.
78 Collins (1883), op. cit., 29.
79 Gill (1883), op. cit., 102.
80 Ibid.
82 Ibid., 41.
84 Silver, op. cit., 62.
85 Hogan, op. cit.
86 Miller, op. cit., 10.
88 Ibid., 13.
90 Ibid., 64.
91 Ibid.


94 Green eld and Ribbins, op. cit., 94.


96 Silver, op. cit., 58.

97 Green eld and Ribbins, op. cit., 19.

98 Seaborne, op. cit.

99 H. Minzberg, The Nature of Managerial Work (New York, 1973); V. Hall, H. Mackay and C. Morgan, Head Teachers at Work (Milton Keynes, 1986); A. M. Thody, ‘University management observed’, Studies in Higher

100 Joyce, op. cit.; Currie, op. cit.
101 Grylls, op. cit, 45.
102 Ibid.
104 Dover Beach, 1867.
106 Armstrong, op. cit., 85.
107 Ibid., 135-6.
108 Ibid.
110 T. Gammage, Autobiography as a Source for the Educational Historian: a Select Sneyd Kinnersley, op. cit., for an example of the genre, provides much detail and humour.

113 Simon, op. cit., 91

PART 12 Strategy, marketing, change and culture


Cohen, M. D. and March, J. D. (1974) Leadership and
Ambiguity: The American college


concepts of globalising

dpaper presented at the 26th International Federation of Training and Develop


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Paul.


PRIM AR Y SCHO O LS A N D T H E E D U C AT IO N M A R K E T P L AC E


When considering the changes that face education and the challenge of leading schools into a successful future, school leaders encounter two problems. The first of these is articulated by Hamel and Prahalad (1994, pp. 4-5): So the urgent drives out the important; the future goes largely unexplored; and the capacity to act, rather than the capacity to think and imagine becomes the sole measure for leadership.

This dichotomy is contextualised for headteachers in over a decade of educational reform and innovation during which they have been responding to multiple innovations, especially in the areas of centralised curriculum, assessment and inspection demands from central government. The “urgent” agenda imposed on heads and the increasing accountability demands for managerial responses leave little time for reflection and school-based leadership solutions.

The second problem is articulated by Handy (1990, p. 54): We are all prisoners of our past. It is hard to think of things except in the way we have always thought of them. But that solves no problems and seldom changes anything.

The incremental approach to change and decision making is deeply ingrained in our culture, and to challenge current orthodoxy and think differently presents a considerable shift in our traditional patterns of decision making. The purpose of this paper is to provide the opportunity for reflection on
the key changes and challenges that face schools and school leaders. To achieve this aim, the paper will focus on outlining six changes that are affecting schools and will then articulate six challenges that school leaders face. Changes

The changing economic and societal contexts

In an interesting review of the changes that are impacting on our society, Leadbeater (1999) uses a provocative title to his book: Living on Thin Air – The New Economy. He outlines a useful way of categorising the changes that are impacting on the modern world as “the three forces driving change in the economies of modern societies: finance capitalism, knowledge capitalism and social capital”. Using these categories, it is possible to draw out implications for schools.

Leadbeater (1999, p. 5) considers that finance capitalism “is the disruptive power of deregulated, interconnected global financial markets”. Finance capital moves around the globe, seeking the best return, and large multinational companies move production from country to country, seeking the lowest production costs. Reich (1992) suggests that in modern economies the old primary, secondary and tertiary divisions of the economy and employment are being replaced with three sectors of jobs. First are those jobs at the local minimum wage (the “Mac
donald’s jobs”) which have to be undertaken locally and cannot be exported.

Second are the traditional assembly semi-skilled and skilled jobs (car assembly, furniture assembly, etc.) which are now rapidly declining in developed countries as corporations relocate to lower cost emerging economies. In the expanding third sector are the jobs in the new economy related to information, technology and communication. It is critical that schools upskill our children to be part of the expanding third sector or they will be forced into the minimum wage jobs because the second-level assembly jobs are being exported as finance capitalism relocates to lower cost countries.

Knowledge capitalism relates to the shifting balance between “tangible” and “intangible” assets. Leadbeater (1999, p. 9) makes the significant comment: Across a wide range of products, intelligence embedded in software and technology has become more important than materials . . . The steel in the latest luxury cars in the US costs $1,000, the electronics cost $3,000.

The importance of this comment is that it is knowledge that is the prime resource in the modern economy and society. Training for today’s jobs will not be as important as educating young people with “thinking skills” and the ability to work together collaboratively to create the new assets of the modern society.

Social capitalism is the “glue” that holds societies and communities together.
In a very powerful argument for supporting networks of social relationships that create social capital, Leadbeater (1999, p. 13) comments: A trend towards inequality is deeply ingrained in modern society. Poorer people are less able than rich people to cope with the risks inherent in the global economy. To reverse this trend we need to invest in new institutions of social solidarity. That is the defensive case of social capital. There is a creative case as well. An ethic of collaboration is central to knowledge-creating societies. To create we must collaborate.

In the educational context, schools traditionally provided the “intellectual capital”, literacy, numeracy, and scientific understanding, while the family provided the social capital. The change in employment patterns, the breakdown of traditional family groupings, the decline of religious practice and the growth of consumerism have all impacted on the social capital supporting the child. The significance of this change has been critically analysed by Putnam (2001). The change affects many schools so that they now need to provide the social, as well as the intellectual, capital for children. The changing tracks of educational reform

One of the most original thinkers and contributors to the field of education leadership and management over the last 20 years has been Professor Brian Caldwell at the University of Melbourne. His trilogy of books, written with Jim Spinks over ten years, The Self-managing School (Caldwell and Spinks, 1988),
Leading the Self-managing School (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992) and Beyond the

Self-managing School (Caldwell and Spinks, 1998) charts the developments of

the global reform in this field. In his perceptive analysis of the reforms in the


In Track 1, “Building systems of self-managing schools”, the systems include

centralised curriculum, assessment and accountability together with school-level

responsibilities including the control of resources at the school level. This is cer

tainly a process we have witnessed in England with the National Curriculum,

Key Stage testing, Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) inspections, and

the publication of test and examination results imposed by central government,

alongside the devolution of resource decision making to schools. No one would

doubt the increased “formal” autonomy at the school level but many would

suggest that “over-regulation” and “innovation overload” are reducing signifi

cantly the individual school’s ability to control its own affairs.

Track 2, the “Unrelenting focus on learning outcomes”, is very evident within RE THINKING SCH OOLS AND SCH OL LEADERSHIP
the UK system, with literacy and numeracy strategies being at the centre of the government’s attempt to improve learning outcomes in the Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2) tests. Whether the “shallow” learning, which is measured by replication in tests, is accompanied by “deep” learning and understanding remains to be seen (a point that will be developed later). However, there is little doubt that a “floor” has been put under standards. How the changes develop is critical. Will schools be given the freedom to explore the “ceiling” of achievement or will they keep responding to increased targets (the floor) in the basic skills to the neglect of broader educational outcomes and achievement?

The direction of this change will be a critical decision for a second “New Labour” administration: can it provide a framework for schools or will it be seduced by over-prescription to control the system?

Track 3, “Creating schools for the knowledge society”, remains the main agenda item for the education system. In my planning work, I consider that it is impossible to write a “futures” plan in any detailed or precise way. What is needed in schools is to create a “futures” dialogue to build up a “futures” perspective in the school. This is a process to which we, as a university, are
committed to contributing regionally, nationally and internationally. I hope this paper helps to develop that dialogue. In doing so we need to ensure that education is a broadening not a narrowing process. The danger of a reductionist approach is highlighted by a former Vice-President of the USA (Dan Quayle in Moe et al., 1999, p. 11): I was recently on a tour of Latin America, and the only regret I have is that I didn’t study my Latin harder in school so I could converse with those people. The changing “educational business” In a paper with Professor Guilbert Hentschke, of the University of Southern California, we consider the changing resource and organisational patterns that are impacting on education (see Davies and Hentschke, 2002). To analyse these patterns, we pose three basic questions about education:

1. Who pays?
2. Who provides?
3. Who benefits?

The first of these, “Who pays?”, presents a rapidly changing pattern. There is an increasing reliance on multiple sources of revenue. In the education sector in general, and the school sector in particular, leaders have traditionally relied on a small number of revenue sources but now, when these reach their natural limits, they seek alternative sources. This can be seen in a number of categories: STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANG
• donor sources;
• parental sources; and
• for-profit and not-for-profit business sources.

Donor sources can be seen in the specialist school initiative where private donors contribute and elicit matched funding from the government for the development of the specialist school. Parental contributions to the funding of education have changed radically with the introduction of tuition fees in the higher education sector and it is likely that the state-only funding and parent-only funding of school education will become a continuum, rather than an “either/or” situation. A very overt introduction of private capital is in the form of the Private Finance Initiative (PFI), which involves private companies raising the capital to build schools and then leasing the buildings to the operator. The privatization of “failing schools”, such as King’s Manor in Surrey, so that a private company is paid to run a school, based on certain performance criteria, can also be seen as introducing “private” capital into the school sector.

The second question, “Who provides?” has two interesting dimensions:

1 the changing organisational framework for the provision of services from hierarchy to markets; and
Schools themselves, or the local education authorities (LEAs) that control them, have traditionally used their own hierarchical organisational structures to provide most of the services that they require. During the 1990s, a significant shift has been seen to outsourcing school services so that there is now an increasing reliance on contracting-out within a market environment as an alternative to providing all educational services from within the school or LEA. This change has taken place through two mechanisms: first, the delegation to schools of their budgets (including staffing) and, second, the requirement within that delegation to engage in competitive tendering for the supply of goods and services.

Schools are, therefore, relying more heavily on contracting with other organisations to perform services that traditionally have been undertaken by employees within the school or LEA. The concept of outsourcing work is not new; it is a variant of the classic management decision as to whether to buy something or to make it. Indeed, one of the basic decisions that all organisations have to make is whether to use their own organisational hierarchy (internal staffing and organisation) or to use markets by entering into contractual relations with another firm.
Economists who study this topic (e.g. Williamson, 1987; Williamson and Masten, 1999) argue that the only reason to create a firm is to provide a contract relationship between employer and employee which is “superior” to contracting in the marketplace. The change seems to be that the school therefore becomes an organiser of services, rather than a provider of services. RE THINKING SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Traditional education institutions (schools and colleges) are now complemented by a wide array of emerging education service providers. Whereas the traditional institutions are largely public organisations, the emerging providers are largely private for-profit and private non-profit organisations. Traditional education institutions typically provide the full array of services expected, whereas emerging providers may serve either a comprehensive function (e.g. whole school operation) or pursue a specialised niche. Many emerging education service providers see their ultimate market as national or even international, i.e. essentially not constrained by the political jurisdictions within which traditional education institutions have grown up.

The school has traditionally provided a comprehensive set of services and established geographical hegemony by providing the whole
range of services in
an area. Thus, a local all-ability school has provided for
children within its
immediate geographical area. Indeed, the latest moves in
England to foster
greater “inclusion” of special needs students and those who
have been excluded
for behavioural problems bear witness to this. However, we see counteracting
forces emerging that challenge the dominance of the local
all-ability school. One
challenge to this pattern is the growth of specialist
schools. In England the spe
cialist schools initiative (for technology or sports
schools, for example) pro
motes a larger geographical catchment area which changes
the nature of the
school. Another challenge to local comprehensive provision
is the privatisation
of education services at the LEA and school level which can
be seen as a revolu
tion in changing the mix and variation of providers.
The third and most signi
cant question, that of “Who bene
fits?”, presents an
unsatisfactory response of “the jury is still out”. Determining changes in “Who
bene
fits?” is not very straightforward. Two key issues
emerge in this new frame
work. First, is the need to adjust the criteria for school
funding to include equity
as well as effectiveness and adequacy. Second, the rede
ning of schooling as a
commercial industry as well as a social good involves a
reconceptualization of
the role of government.

What are the implications of these three questions and
their answers? It could
be that the role of government is changing from a social
welfare function to an
economic investment function. The future may be one in
which the government
deals with the education industry as it deals with other
industries, for example
attracting it, fostering its growth, minimising its
negative externalities and ensur
ing consumer protection, rather than seeing itself as the
direct provider. The changing tensions between autonomy and
recentralization
The significance of the changes that followed the 1988
Education Reform Act
(DES, 1988) in England and Wales cannot be underestimated.
While schools
had significantly increased resources under forms of
delegation, such as local
management of schools (LMS) and grant maintained status
(GMS), they had
enormous increases in central direction, control and
accountability in the forms Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture
of a National Curriculum, centralised assessment and
testing combining with the
OFSTED inspection regime. I would consider this to be a
change from a tradi
tional input model of education to a centrally determined
output model of educa
tion as shown in Figures 1 and 2.
The significance of Figures 1 and 2 is the reversal of the flow from an input driven to a centrally determined output-driven and centrally controlled model of education.

The reforms of the “New” Labour Government in terms of the replacement of LMS and GMS with Fair Funding (considered by some headteachers as an oxymoron!) have, for some, reduced school control. Indeed, the Standards Fund has significantly reduced the ability of schools to direct resources to areas they determine as priorities and replaced it with central government direction of resources. It has, by channelling money through LEAs, augmented their role considerably. In curricular terms, not only has what to teach but also how to teach has been centrally determined by developments such as the literacy and numeracy strategies in key stages 1 and 2. This initiative has further reduced schools’ control of the education process. The danger is that the government becomes addicted to control, and both RE THINKING SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Predetermined: Curriculum: Educated Individuals:

Staffing Locally & school Only the elite

Buildings determined taking national

Equipment examinations

Time

Figure 1 Traditional model of the educational process.
Block Budgets: National Curriculum: Centrally Determined:
Schools Central frameworks Performance
determine supported by indicators for all
appropriate specific curriculum key age stages
resource initiatives such as
mix to deliver the literacy and – all of which
process numeracy strategies. are published
and outputs.

Figure 2 New model of the educational process.
the floor and the ceiling are determined by central
government. Schools are thereby
forced into compliance regardless of their actual opinions.

There is a tension between compliance and performance.
Excessive compliance
reduces the scope for creativity and limits performance. It
will also put undue
emphasis on outcomes, with processes having to be ignored.
Among these
processes are “thinking skills” and despite the previous
Chief Inspector of Schools
not believing they have a place in the curriculum, schools
increasingly realise that
a proper focus on thinking skills is vital in the pursuit
of deep learning. The out
comes addiction also diminishes the central importance of a
vision of education
that is wider and deeper than simple test results. The
famous quote from Proverbs
“where there is no vision the people perish” has a ring of truth in it. Schools need time and scope to build and develop their own visions— they cannot be centrally imposed with a “one size fits all” mentality. Indeed Fullan’s (1993) concern that premature and externally imposed visions can blind us to effective improvement strategies is a powerful warning in this context. We now face the danger that the significant improvements in education will be put at risk by over prescription and regulation, resulting in organisational and personal stress which is self-defeating for the education sector. I, like many others, recognise the tremendous improvements made in our schools, and comments like “bog standard comprehens” from the government press spokesman are as inaccurate as they are offensive. Having established a framework for schools within which they can both operate and be held accountable, the Government needs to trust the schools to deliver and must not demoralise them with further controls.

The changing impact of technology

The application of information and communications technology (ICT) has been the most powerful change agent in the educational world over the last 20 years. However, has that change in learning technology fulfilled its potential and is it a change that will unite or divide our society? In assessing whether technology has
ful lled its potential, it is useful to use a categorisation of learning by West Burnham (2002). He categorises learning in three domains as shown in Table 1. STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Table 1 Modes of learning

Shallow Deep Profound

Replication Understanding Meaning

Information Knowledge Wisdom

Experience Reflection Intuition

Extrinsic Intrinsic Moral

Compliance Application Challenge

Dependence Independence Interdependence


In assessing the changing use of technology in schools, it is interesting to reflect whether we have moved from the shallow (an information source) to deep understanding or indeed whether there has been any profound learning involved. For the majority of our students, I would suggest that we are only just starting on a journey to deep and profound learning.

The assessment as to whether technology will unite or divide our society is too unclear to make at the moment. It is clear that ICT has the potential to bring both resources and educational interaction into every home. But therein lies the problem. Not every home can either afford, or may
be inclined to support, the use of technology. Thus children in supportive homes that have adequate resources are likely to be considerably advantaged against those that do not. The danger is that technology will widen the gap between the “haves” and “have nots” in our society. The change that is occurring in some schools, and needs to happen in all schools, is that they become learning centres providing that technology access and support outside the traditional school day and school year. The changing use and misuse of information The collection of key stage test data has provided a treasury of material that can contribute to sustainable student achievement. However, those data are being turned into information that is being misused by politicians to the detriment of students. Is it naive to assume that, if a Key Stage 1 or 2 test highlights that a child does not understand some key concept or skill, then that test information should provide an agenda for that child’s personal learning contract? It would seem not. Instead we are faced with the government having “booster” classes to ensure that children pass the test so the government can boast of meeting its achievement targets. Surely we do not want to reinforce “shallow” learning encouraging children to replicate information to pass a
deep learning to establish an educational base for that child to progress in the future.

There is also a further moral dilemma with the misuse of test results. While a lower result in key stage tests for a school may dictate the direction of future action for that school, it does nothing for that current child who has "failed". What is needed is to move assessment back from the output stage to the process stage where information about a child can alter what is being taught or how it is being taught to improve that child’s performance. To do this we need to change the emphasis from "assessment of learning" to "assessment for learning". While I would not disagree with external testing, the obsession for ever-increasing test out comes may be counter-productive. It results in the neglect of the ultimately more rewarding, but more difficult, gathering of information for improving learning processes. This is likely to be detrimental to the whole educational process. We are likely to end up with a situation where we are educationally data rich but information poor. What we need is what Andy Hargreaves, while working with us in the Global Alliance for School Leadership, called a “‘Focus on deep learning’
and not just superficial performance results” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 14).

Having looked at the changes facing schools I now turn to the challenges facing school leaders. Challenges The challenge of leading with a moral purpose

Last year, while watching television, I came across an advertisement for Mercedes-Benz which was based on a Janis Joplin song. It went like this: Lord won’t you buy me a Mercedes-Benz? All my friends drive Porsches, I must make amends. Work hard all day with no help from my friends. Lord won’t you buy me a Mercedes-Benz?

It would be interesting to reflect on whether our children, who listen to advertising material like this, stop to think of the moral basis that underpins the words. Let us take each line in turn. “Lord won’t you buy me a Mercedes-Benz?”: I was unaware that the purpose of the supreme being in any major world religion was that of material reward! As for “All my friends drive Porsches, I must make amends”, I thought greed and avarice were also against the tenets of most religions! “Work hard all day with no help from my friends” is a sad reflection on the sense of community and sharing!

It is clear, with the increasing secularisation of our society and the increase in materialism, that the school provides one of the cornerstones of a moral community and central to this is the moral leadership of the headteacher. Indeed,
in a rapidly changing society, moral leadership becomes
even more important in
providing a framework for action. Sergiovanni (1992), in
his seminal book
Moral Leadership: Getting to the Heart of School
Improvement, has provided
considerable insights in this area. Much closer to home, over the last year, I have
been privileged to observe Barbara Gray, an outstanding
leader in the primary
sector, working with a committed staff and an excellent
group of governors at
her school to build sustainable school improvement
strategies. How do you
underpin all that you do with a moral purpose?
Interestingly, it is often re ected
in the symbols and the language used. In discussing with
staff and other educa
tionalists engaged with the school, Barbara often repeats
the question that under
pins all that she does which is: “What is in the best
interests of the children?” A
simple, but effective, way of asserting the moral purpose
that runs through all
that the school does.
When dealing with children, the key task is to convince
them that they make
personal choices and that those choices should be moral
ones, re ecting what is
in the best interests of the wider school community. Barbara is often heard saying to children, “What choices did you have? Now can you
go back and
make a different choice?” in an attempt to get them to reflect on the choices they have made. Consistency is a key element in achieving this moral culture and it takes time to reculture an organisation. A success came almost one year after being appointed when one child came to her and said “Miss Gray, I have just made the wrong choice!”. Building within the child the recognition of right and wrong choices is the cornerstone of building a moral community. The challenge for school leaders, in a society with conflicting and often undesirable values, is to have the courage to build moral communities by sustaining moral leadership in their schools and rebuild social capital. The challenge of leading the reengineering processes.

In a paper discussing reengineering (Davies, 1997) I considered reengineering in education. I used a number of quotations to show how this concept had developed in the business world. Hammer and Champy (1993, p. 32) define reengineering as: the fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvement in critical contemporary measures of performance.

Hammer and Stanton (1995, p. 17) consider that: The verb “to reengineer” takes as its object a business process and nothing else. We reengineer how work is done, how outputs are created from inputs. We cannot and do not reengineer organisational units.

Hammer (1996, p. xii), in the third of his books on reengineering, Beyond
Reengineering, highlights the overwhelming importance of process as follows: Originally I felt that the most important word in the definition was “radical”. The clean sheet of paper, the breaking of assumptions, the throw-it-all-out-and-start-again flavour of reengineering – this was what I felt distinguished it from other business improvement programs... I have now come to realise that I was wrong, that the radical character of reengineering, however important and exciting, is not the most significant aspect. The key word in the definition of reengineering is “process”: a complete end-to-end set of activities that together create value for a customer.

What use can be made of this business concept? The key is to concentrate on reengineering organisational processes and not structures. Successive governments restructure the education system but do those restructuring efforts have any impact on reengineering the learning processes of children? Indeed, we may be in for another bout of restructuring school organisational patterns in terms of the specialist schools initiative. As Husbands (2001, p. 15) comments in the Times Educational Supplement on the introduction of specialist schools:

“Dismantling a comprehensive system of state education will be socially and educationally disastrous”. The danger is that moving resources around, as with specialist schools, may result in a situation that the specialist schools “… have sucked pupils, staff and innovatory energy from schools nearby” (Husbands, 2001) which does little to solve the challenge of improving the learning
opportunities of all our children. The challenge for educational leaders is to

focus on learning processes and the interconnectiveness of the curriculum and

not on ways of restructuring the administrative systems that we already have.

This focus often involves reculturing the organisation so that the child’s

experience and learning needs are at the axis upon which the school’s structures

turn and have their legitimisation. Indeed the current emphasis on Key Stage 3

performance “dips” could be due to our concentration on primary and secondary

school structures and the failure to consider the child’s educational journey as an

interconnected learning process. The challenge for the educational leader, there

fore, is to balance external demands with the paramount need to reorganise

schools around learning processes. A useful tool to help analysis is provided by

Charles Handy in the form of the Sigmoid Curve (see Figure 3).

Handy suggests that all organisations go through a cyclical process of growth

and decline. He suggests that at point A, after a period of success, there is little

organisational or external pressure to rethink. However, that is the critical point

to reassess fundamentally a move onto the next curve or eventually the organisa

tion will decline to point B. The challenge that we need to
address is “what will make a successful school in 2006 and beyond and what we do we need to reengineer in our organisational processes to make that possible?”

STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Figure 3 The Sigmoid Curve (source: Handy (1994, p. 51)). The challenge of leading the development of organisational core competencies

One of the challenges for school leaders is to deal with the urgent without forgetting to deal with the longer term important developments. Developing skills to deal with the latest initiative presents a dilemma. Over a period of years, staff can develop a set of specific job-related skills, such as assessing maths work, but do not have a set of generic competencies to underpin all their work.

In the world of business some organisations seem to have a set of core competencies which are not specific to one task but underpin all that they do. Prahalad and Hamel (1990, p. 90) give an example of core competencies in the business sector: Canon, for example, has a core competency in optics which is spread across businesses as diverse as cameras, copiers, semiconductors and lithographic equipment.

These competencies are below the surface (like the roots of a tree). The success of firms lies not with individual products but with a set of core competencies or abilities that allow a firm to create a range of products. Using this concept,
Tampoe (1994, pp. 68–9) sees core organisation competencies as comprising a number of factors from which I would highlight:

- A mixture of skills, resources and processes that underpin all activities.
- A capability which the organisation can sustain over time.
- Essential to the delivery of high quality over a range of activities.
- Greater than the competency of an individual.

By applying this analysis, as well as developing specific skills, leaders in schools would endeavour to develop a set of generic core competencies in the organisation so that when a new challenge appears, the school can draw on these core competencies to build its own solution. Examples of these would be:

- Fundamental understanding of learning and differentiation.
- Ability to work as a team in problem solving.
- Using performance data as a means of improvement not just assessment.
- Respecting and valuing students and staff.

The challenge for educational leaders is to define what core competencies exist in a school and those that need developing. The danger is that it is easy to get distracted from this fundamental organisational development work by responding to the latest initiative. Retraining schools and school leadership: the challenge of leading strategic intent not just strategic planning.
Work with my colleague and joint author, Linda Ellison of Nottingham University, has focussed a great deal on the planning processes employed by schools.

In particular we have developed new models of planning (Davies and Ellison, 1999, 2001). These focus on three strands of planning as shown in Figure 4.

Our current work is focussing on the value of developing strategic intent in schools to work alongside strategic planning. Strategic planning encompasses concepts like linear, predictable, rational and aggregated data. It can be summarised that, in broad terms, you know where you want to go and you know how to get there. However, in an increasingly turbulent environment, such planning is not always possible. There are circumstances where this is not possible and strategic intent might be more useful. Strategic intent is described by Boisot (1995, p. 36) as “a process of coping with turbulence through a direct, intuitive understanding, emanating from the top of the firm and guiding its efforts”. In simple terms, it could be said that you know broadly where you want to go but not how to get there.

When using the concept of strategic intent, the school would set itself a limited number of intents (a maximum of five) and these would be expressed in
concrete terms. They are not vague “visions”, but specific areas of activity. The leader in the school would be aware of areas for fundamental change and improvement and would know what she/he wanted to achieve but would not immediately know how to achieve them. A good example would be developing a success and high achievement culture across the whole school community. The challenge is in living with that ambiguity while organisational capability is developed first to understand the nature and dimensions of the area for development and then to build solutions. Strategic intent is about tackling deep-seated cultural change and fundamental rethinking by building organisational capability ST R A T E G Y , M A R K E T I N G , C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E

Figure 4 Models of planning (source: Davies and Ellison (1999, p. 4)). Futures Perspective Strategic Intent Strategic Planning Operational Target-setting Plans 5-15 years 3-5 years 1-2 year: and competencies, rather than assuming that the school has a set of simple linear plans that it can put into action. This capability enhancement is based on increased knowledge and understanding as to how to perform at a higher level as well as what to perform.

In order to achieve strategic intent, I believe that it is necessary to go through four stages as shown in Table 2.
With a strategic planning approach it is possible to go straight to stage four.

However, the capability building process necessary in establishing a set of common strategic intents involves working through all four stages. Inspection frameworks seldom understand strategy, often seeing it as simply the addition of an extra year to an existing short-term planning framework. Certainly external inspection systems, such as OFSTED, want planning frameworks with definable outcomes that can be measured. That precision is fine for some activities.

However, when we come to activities that are more complex and culturally bound, which deal, in Hargreaves’ (2000, p. 2) words, with changing “social and emotional understanding”, such precision is not possible. With these deep seated challenges of shifting organisational culture, setting intents while the organisation builds an understanding both of the nature of the change and the capability to undertake it is the only way to achieve sustainable transformation.

The challenge is to be able to devote energy and direction to the establishment and development of strategic intents while “fighting off” the reductionist approach of external inspection which wants definable outcomes at the start of every plan. The challenge of leading a success culture
I believe we are now approaching some sort of “Richter” effect in our school improvement quest. As we increase the percentage of children passing key stage tests, the effort to increase yet further a particular percentage is immense. To move a school up from 40 percent to 50 percent and then 60 percent on any RETHINKING SCHOOLS AND LEADERSHIP

Table 2 Building strategic intent – the ABCD approach

Articulate 1 Strategic intent

Build 2 Images Metaphors Experiences

Create 3 Dialogue Cognitive map Shared understanding

Define 4 Strategic perspective Outcome orientation Formal plans

particular measure is difficult. To move it up another 10 percent does not require another 10 percent of effort. As in the Richter scale for earthquakes, it probably needs a ten-fold increase in effort to move from one measure to another if we are using the same approaches and technology of learning. The idea that we can simply persuade staff and students to work harder is self-defeating. The classic saying “hard work never killed anyone” is simply not true, it kills lots of people!

Nor do I believe that examinations have become easier because more people have passed. That makes as much sense as saying that, because more athletes than ever can run 100 metres in under ten seconds, 100 metres is shorter than it used to be!
If we want to improve performance, what we need to do is not just work on the margin so that a few more children slip into a higher band but to achieve a more significant reculturing approach.

Such an approach would entail a much more fundamental attempt to create a high achievement and success culture within a school. It would involve students having higher self-esteem and self-worth, parents and community having greater engagement with the school and teachers having higher expectations of their students. That is a much more significant agenda for school improvement. It all depends on how we define and celebrate success. Is success benchmarked for each child against a concept of personal best with a differentiated teaching and learning approach or is it simply a linear list of marks against a test? The other fundamental challenge is to celebrate success. This is not always easy within an English culture as opposed to an American one. Self-reserve and modesty are not necessarily virtues if we want to expound the success of our educational achievement. The second classic saying that comes to mind is “virtue brings its own rewards”. In real life this is not true. One of the problems with education is that we have been too modest about our achievements and, as a result, we have
let the politicians fill the vacuum. We should rewrite the saying as “virtue with a good marketing strategy brings its own rewards”. What happens at the end of every day in the classroom? Is the teacher summarising the day’s successes or issuing warnings about incomplete homework? The last thing we tell our child dren is probably the first thing they tell parents. What do staff say about their headteachers and their schools when they stop off for a drink on the way home:

“I’m exhausted working in that terrible school”, or “I’m exhausted because we are doing so many exciting things to educate the next generation”? Creating and, importantly, sustaining a success culture is not always easy but it remains the cornerstone of reculturing many schools in their journey for continuous school improvement. The challenge is creating, sustaining and leading a success culture. The challenge of leading and managing: achieving the balance

In the second part of this paper I have focussed on the challenge facing school leaders. We have concentrated a great deal in recent years on leadership, someSTRA TEGY, M A R K E T I N G , C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E times at the expense of good management. Headteachers of schools need to be both good leaders and good managers; in my view they are different sides of the
same coin. Two years ago I read a unique book on the increased involvement of

business in education, interestingly published by Merrill Lynch the investment

company. The book was called The Book of Knowledge - Investing in the

Growing Education and Training Industry (Moe et al., 1999). The book used a

number of quotations from famous individuals to illustrate key points. Two of

them from the US sporting world stuck in my mind. One from the manager of

the LA Dodgers baseball team seemed to sum up the importance of manage

ment: We’ve been working on the basics because, basically, we’ve been having trouble with the basics. (Bob Ojeda quoted in Moe et al., 1999, p. 68)

It is important that the basics of good curriculum design, good teaching and

learning strategies and safe, caring environments are established and maintained.

Indeed, without these little else can be achieved. However, it is important that

we do not just replicate some formula for good practice year after year; we need

to reassess and redirect our schools to be successful in 2006 as well as currently.

The second quotation is from Wayne Gretzky, arguably the most successful

player in the history of the North American ice hockey league. When asked the

secret of his success he gave a simple but telling reply: I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been. (Wayne Gretzky quoted in Moe et al., 1999, p. 37)
This sums up the leadership challenge. How do we determine what we need to do to make our schools successful in the future? It is by envisaging new strategies and approaches and not just replicating where we have been before.

The challenge for educators in schools is to be both good leaders and good managers. In conclusion how, therefore, do we understand the changes that are facing us and rise to the challenge of leading in this new millennium? One way is to stop thinking historically and incrementally about educational developments. The dangers of this traditional approach are highlighted in an interesting book entitled Scuttle Your Ships before Advancing by Luecke (1994). In the book he recounts two episodes from history.

In the first, in August 1346, England’s King Edward III faced the superior forces of the French at Crecy. Edward’s front line consisted of yeoman archers who could deliver up to 15 arrows per minute, hitting human targets at 100 metres. On the other side, French knights on horseback were supported by Genoese mercenary crossbowmen who could fire two bolts per minute. The English were drawn in a circle around their supply carts; the French relied on the
shock power of war horses at high speed. The outcome was the loss of just 300 English. Up to 16,000 French perished under the barrage of English arrows.

In the second episode, 69 years later, in October 1415 at Agincourt, the same result was achieved by England’s Henry V: some 6,000 French lives were lost to

Henry’s 150. Luecke (1994, p. 153) comments on these events: In continuing the string of French disasters, Agincourt demonstrated the tenacity with which the nobility clung to the technologies and tactics that had accounted for past glories, even in the face of overwhelming evidence that their usefulness had long faded. Their stubborn resistance to change brings to mind the modern warning, “When faced with a steam-rolling technology, you either become part of the technology or a part of the road”.

One could not accuse the French army at the time of being a learning organisation! What was needed was a new approach. The purpose of this paper has been to provide a framework for debate for school leaders as they seek new approaches to enhancing the educational opportunities and success of all their


Caldwell, B.J. and Spinks, J.M. (1988), Beyond the


Hammer, M. (1996), Beyond Reengineering, Harper Business,


Sergiovanni, T. (1992), Moral Leadership: Getting to the
Notions of leadership

An analysis of the recent history of the training and development of senior school staff would suggest that ‘leadership’ as a concept is currently in the ascendancy.

Numerous research studies and reports from school inspectors and others claim that leadership is a crucial factor in school effectiveness and the key to organizational success and improvement. However, a decade or so ago, the dominant training and development discourse was not about leadership per se as much as it was about developing and improving the management of schools. Indeed the government of the time set up a task force—the School
Management Task

Force specifically to address such matters (see DES, 1990). At about the same

time, national occupational standards for managers of organizations were
developed by the Management Charter Initiative, with a version also produced for
educational managers (Earley, 1992). Leadership, when it was discussed, was

often seen as a subset of management; there was no equivalent set of leadership

skills and tasks, rather the demonstration of leadership was contained within a

framework of management competences. The evolving national standards for
headteachers (TTA, 1998) could also be said to be informed largely by this man
agement-dominated, even managerial, discourse. Within the academic study of
administration there has been a long and ongoing debate about the relative

significance and/or key differences between ‘management’ and ‘leadership’ (see
e.g. Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Bolman and Deal, 1991).
The move away from ‘management’ and towards ‘leadership’ as the key factor
underpinning school success was fully realized when in November 2000 the
National College for School Leadership was established with the explicit aim of

transforming leadership in English schools. The late 1990s also saw the growth of

a number of regional leadership centres and plans have
recently been announced
to establish a national college for other sectors within
education (DFES, 2002a).

The establishment of leadership colleges and leadership
centres has seen an
accompanying growth of discussion and debate about the
nature of leadership, its
constitution and enactment. Research into leaders and
leadership has a long history
and a number of models or theories of leadership have been
developed over the
years. It is beyond the scope of this article to consider
the main models or theories
of leadership (useful summaries are provided by Bollington,
1999, and Leithwood
et al., 1999) but to note that the emerging model that
underpins current discourse,
as expounded by NCSL and others, is one of transformational
and instructional
leadership (e.g. see NCSL, 2001). It is a leadership that
has close connections to
learning and pedagogy and andragogy—it is learning-centred.
It is also an inclu
sive leadership and one that is distributed throughout the
school.
Transformational leadership models conceptualize school
leadership along a
number of dimensions, and give emphasis to building vision,
establishing commit
ment to agreed goals, providing intellectual stimulation,
offering individualized
support, and explicating and encouraging high expectations
for staff (Bass, 1999;
Campbell et al., 2003; Gold et al., 2003). However, there is no evidence to suggest that, on its own, this form of leadership brings about anything but modest improved consequences for pupil outcomes and for this reason the transformational approach to school leadership has been complemented by the instructional or pedagogical leadership model (Earley et al., 2002). This model typically assumes that the critical focus for attention by school leaders should be the behaviours of staff as they engage in activities directly affecting the quality of learning and teaching in the pursuit of enhanced pupil outcomes. School leaders who take seriously their instructional or learning-centred role are concerned to promote and develop their schools as learning organizations or professional learning communities in order to help bring about the school’s learning goals for its pupils (see Hopkins, 2001; Hopkins and Reynolds, 2001; NCSL, 2001). What is more, this kind of leadership is not something which is said to reside within any one individual. The modern conception of leadership, be it within schools or elsewhere, is dispersed throughout the whole organization. The leadership demonstrated by headteachers, chief executives, directors and others at the apex of organizational structures is obviously crucially important, but part of that
leadership is to distribute or disperse responsibility and
to empower others to give

of their best. Goleman and colleagues, best known for their
work on emotional

intelligence, put it as follows: There are many leaders,
not just one. Leadership is distributed. It resides not
solely in the individual at the top, but in every person at
every level who, in one way or another, acts as a leader to
a group of followers—wherever in the organisation that
person is, whether shop steward, team head or CEO. (2002:
xiii–xiv)

Similarly, the NCSL’s think tank states that leadership is
a function that needs to

be distributed throughout the school community. Its view of
leadership is quite L E A D E R S O R F O L L O W E R S ?
clear, it is ‘not hierarchical, but federal and involves
clarity of direction, struc
tures and support’ (NCSL, 2001: 11).

Notions of dispersed or distributed leadership raise
questions about its char
acter, the degree of dispersal and the relative importance
of leadership at differ
ent levels. For example, is the leadership demonstrated by
the headteacher of
equal value to that demonstrated by subject leaders or
classroom teachers? Also,

how far is leadership distributed? Does it mean that all
individuals who work in
schools are expected to have a leadership role, including
those who have no of
cial responsibilities or allowances? Deputy heads,
assistant heads, middle man

tagers (or what the College is choosing to call ‘emergent
leaders’ and ‘middle
leaders’), subject leaders and coordinators could all be
said to have ‘leadership’ as part of their remit. Their job descriptions are likely to include statements which require the demonstration of some form of leadership in their work with colleagues and other adults. Teachers, too, are increasingly being referred to as ‘teacher leaders’ in recognition of their work with others, especially in relation to professional development and whole-school decision-making (see e.g. Harris, 2003). All teachers have, of course, to demonstrate leadership in their everyday classroom activities, but such leadership is not so much about working with and through professional colleagues. The NCSL’s think tank report is quite clear about this: ‘instructional leadership is not inextricably linked to status or experience. It is distributed and potentially available to all’ (2001: 11). Also: Successful school leadership is not invested in hierarchical status but experience is valued and structures are established to encourage all to be drawn in and regarded for their contribution . . . Collaborative work has been found to increase the involvement, engagement and affiliation across all staff.

While recognizing that schools also employ a growing number of ‘support staff’ who may also be encouraged and expected to demonstrate leadership capacity,

where does this leave the other signi cant—albeit unpaid and voluntary-group, the school’s governing body? Governors and leadership

The role and responsibilities of the governing body have developed over the
years to the present position where it is expected to have a leadership role, especially in relation to strategic leadership and helping to provide and shape the school’s direction and be clear about its core values and vision for the future (DfES, 2002b). Recent guidance is clear: governing bodies are ‘to carry out their functions with the aim of taking a largely strategic role in the running of the school’ (DfEE, 2000b: 1). Similarly, the developing framework of national standards for school governance gives prominence to such matters as strategic planning and ensuring progress (Little, 2002).

The focus has also been on school improvement and how governors can help schools to raise standards (DfEE, 1998). Recent research has given emphasis to the governors’ role in school improvement and examined the value and benefits an effective governing body can bring to a school (e.g. Creese and Earley, 1999; Scanlon et al., 1999). Training materials, produced by the DfES and available for LEAs to use with newly appointed governors, have centred explicitly on the key roles of governing bodies (DfES, 2001). These roles, which have become enshrined in the 1998 Education Act, are to be supported by a code of practice.
The Act states that: The purpose of each governing body is to help the school to provide the best possible education for its pupils . . . to do this effectively they should have a strategic view of their main function—which is to help raise standards—and clear arrangements for monitoring against targets.

The key roles are concerned with providing a sense of direction for the work of the school (the strategic role); supporting the work of the school (acting as a critical friend); and holding the school to account for the standards and quality of education it achieves (the monitoring and accountability role). These three roles also underpin the Ofsted framework when examining the leadership and management of schools (Ofsted, 1999: 92).

It could therefore be argued that governing bodies have a leadership role and that this is expressed largely in terms of the enactment of the roles set out, especially the first. Advice and guidance to governing bodies is increasingly conceptualized in terms of carrying out these roles (e.g. DfES, 2000b), while the most recent DfES national conference for governors was simply entitled ‘Steering or Rowing?’ (DfES, 2002b).

The Terms of Reference Regulations, 2000 (as set out in the Guide to the Law, DfEE, 2000a—updated annually), state clearly that the role of the governing body is strategic. Martin and Holt (2002), drawing on the Audit Commission
sion’s ‘Lessons in Teamwork’ (1995), attempt to describe what this means in practice. The governing body’s ‘steering’ or strategic role is to agree aims, values and policies for the school and they note how it is about ‘setting a course, deciding on a route, looking to the future for the school, thinking about what the school needs to achieve and plotting how to get from where it is now to where you would like it to be in the future’ (Martin and Holt, 2002: 17).

This is not a role, however, to be performed in isolation; operating and thinking strategically is done in conjunction with the headteacher and other school staff. Indeed, ‘strategy must be worked out in partnership—and the vast majority of headteachers who choose to be governors, together with governors represent the teaching staff, have a legitimate role to play as part of the corporate body in setting the course’ (Martin and Holt, 2002: 17). As government regulations and advice make clear, ‘creating strategy is the essence of the governing body’s role. It produces the strategy for the school’s development’ (Martin and Holt, 2002: 17). Martin and Holt provide helpful advice on what being strategic actually means in practice and refer to a three-stage process of agreeing aims and values; working out or planning how to put them into
practice; and ensuring that they are put into practice (p. 18). But what do we know about how governors and headteachers perceive and enact these key responsibilities and how they conceptualize the governing body’s leadership role? The governing body’s leadership role: research findings

The number of studies that have researched the role of the governing body, especially its leadership role, is limited. An edited collection was published in the 1990s with the same title as this paper (Thody, 1994) but it actually said very little about governors’ leadership role. The few empirical studies of governing bodies that have been conducted, for example by Deem et al. (1995), Earley (1994), Esp and Saran (1995), Levacic (1995a, 1995b), Saran and Taylor (1999), Shearn et al. (1995a; 1995b) and Thomas and Martin (1996), all come to very similar conclusions. They conclude that under self-management of schools, governing bodies are more or less at the mercy of the headteacher and other senior managers, and that ‘even when lay governors have opinions they wish to express, it seems that they face great difficulty in making their “voice” heard, let alone in having their views taken seriously’ (Whitty et al., 1998: 100). The remainder of this section draws upon the findings of a recent research project.
into school leadership to investigate the role of governing bodies, especially in
the light of the growing emphasis on acting strategically. First, however, it is
worth briefly noting the main sources of data collected.

The research design for the DfES-funded study ‘Establishing the Current
State of Leadership in English Schools’ comprised four elements:

• six questionnaire surveys using separate stratified random samples of existing headteachers; aspiring headteachers (NPQH candidates); deputy and assistant headteachers; middle managers/team leaders; chairs of school governing bodies; and all the local education authorities (LEAs) in England;

• a series of face-to-face and on-line focus group discussions with groups of different kinds of school leader;

• three sets of telephone interviews conducted, respectively, with a sample of training (school leadership) providers, a sample of school middle managers, and LEA patch or link advisers for the ten case-study schools;

• case studies of ten well-led schools.

Readers interested in further details of the research and how it was conducted,
including sample sizes and response rates, should consult the final project report
(Earley et al., 2002). This article draws upon information derived from the ques-
tionnaire surveys of headteachers and chairs of governing bodies but, where
appropriate, data are used from other sources. S T R A T E G Y, M A R K E T I N G, C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E

Conceptions of leadership were explored with all respondents—both via inter
views and the questionnaire surveys—and a consensus emerged that leadership was perceived largely in terms of wanting to ‘make a difference’, to ‘have an influence’ or that leaders wanted to ‘implement their own vision’. It was said that these were the kinds of factors that inspired teachers to want to lead a school and ‘to give themselves a challenge’. The key aspects of leadership which leaders themselves said they found motivating centred chiefly on people management—interacting with staff and with pupils. For example, the survey of over 750 headteachers found that almost two-thirds of those responding to a question about what motivated them mentioned interacting with pupils, with almost a similar proportion mentioning dealing with staff. Planning was mentioned by almost four out of every ten headteachers, and decision-making or challenge mentioned by just under one-third.

The questionnaire survey of over 200 chairs of governing bodies also sought views on leadership and asked about the main factors that encouraged teachers to apply for leadership positions. Over a quarter of the sample of governors made reference to either financial and other benefits of promotion; or to career development and the desire for greater responsibility and challenge or job satis
faction. About a fifth of survey respondents wrote of the desire to lead or to 'run your own show', to want to 'make a difference' or improve the school and children's educational experiences. The leadership role of governing bodies

There was a view expressed by some training provider interviewees that many school governing bodies were ineffective as 'strategic leaders' and became over involved in the detailed running of individual schools. LEA respondents, too, generally did not consider governors to be effective in terms of their role in helping to raise standards or improve schools—only about one in eight rated them as effective.

Headteachers seemed to have a limited concept of the role of the school's governing body. The findings from the questionnaire survey of heads, where the leadership role played by the governing body was specifically raised, are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Although over one-fifth of the (weighted) sample of heads LEADERS OR FOLLOWERS?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 Role governing body should play in strategic leadership (%)</th>
<th>Major role</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Minor</th>
<th>No role at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headteachers (n = 606)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs of GB (n = 197)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(22%) agreed that governing bodies should play a major role in the strategic
leadership of schools, far fewer (only 13%) judged that their governing body actually did so. Over one-third of headteachers (35%) thought that their governing body actually played a 'minor role' or 'no role at all' in the strategic leadership of their school. Of the one in eight heads who thought their governing body did play a strategic leadership role, most were from secondary (15%) or primary (13%) schools, with special school heads (4%) being much less positive about their governors’ strategic role in practice.

Over 500 headteachers provided further comments about how the work of the governing body relates to the leadership role of the headteacher. About one quarter made reference to the governing body giving support and encouragement, with a further quarter mentioning the governors’ role as a ‘critical friend’ or a ‘sounding board’. About a tenth of headteachers providing comments to this open-ended question made a negative remark about governors such as their lack of time and knowledge and/or inadequate skills.

A questionnaire was also sent to chairs of governors (to a different sample of schools from that of the headteachers) who were asked a similar set of questions about the leadership role of the governing body. Respondents were initially asked to indicate (on a four-point scale) how significant...
they thought the governing body’s role was in school leadership. Just under one-third (32%) regarded its leadership role to be ‘very significant’ (see Table 3), while not a single governor was prepared to say it was of ‘no significance’. There were no statistical differences between governors’ responses to this question and the phase of school in which governors served.

Governors were asked how the work of the governing body related to the leadership role of the head. A similar set of themes and comments was offered as was found for the heads. For example, the governing body’s work was largely seen in terms of providing direction, being supportive, acting as a sounding board and ensuring the school’s resources were well managed. The following quotes were representative of this commonly held view: It keeps a supportive, but watchful eye on how the head envisages the strategic direction of the school, how resources are managed and the morale and well being of staff. We support by bringing skills and expertise from...
outside the education system. [The governing body] allows a ‘eshing out’ of the head’s ideas.

Interestingly, several comments included notes of caution about what governors were not able or willing to do. Supporting the head, occasionally offering advice but we are not teachers and cannot always understand fully. The governors do not and should not be involved in the day to day leadership role of the head. The best analogy is that governors carry out the role of non-executive directors in a large corporation, monitoring and advising the chief executive. We’re supportive—but it is unrealistic to expect that non-qualified governors can do anything more than oversee in a general sense. Lack of time for most governors means that the head makes most decisions without reference to governors.

Chairs of governors were also asked (as were the heads) to indicate, on a four-point scale, the degree to which they thought their governing body should play a strategic leadership role, and the extent to which it actually did. The results, also shown in Tables 1 and 2, present a far more positive picture than that for the headteacher sample. Perhaps unsurprisingly, no governor respondent was prepared to agree that their governing body played ‘no role at all’, although 15 percent were of the view that their actual role in strategic leadership was ‘minor’. Secondary school governors were more likely than their primary counterparts to state that the governing body should play a major strategic leadership role in the school’s affairs. However, such phase differences were not found for the second part of the question (i.e. in response to perceptions of the governing
body’s actual strategic leadership role).

In response to a further open-ended question asking about the governing body’s main leadership role, about one-fifth of chairs of governors pointed to the importance of providing support and encouragement; a further fifth to planning, decision-making processes and providing strategic direction; one in six mentioned the governing body’s monitoring role and one in ten noted its role as a critical friend/sounding board or as a test bed for new ideas. Comments included the following: Governors should be in charge of the overall direction of the school and should ensure that the ethos of the school is maintained and preferably strengthened. To set principles on which the school is based—its philosophy. Supporting, challenging the head. Identifying areas of weaknesses or issues that need attention. Representing views of other stakeholders, particularly parents.

Again, comments were often augmented with a qualifying or cautionary note: Effective support (critical, practical, reflective) of the head, and of staff. In practice, this is an ideal rarely achieved. It is not possible for part-time volunteers to be realistically engaged in day to day leadership.

The role of the governing body and issues around leadership and governance were also considered in each of the research project’s ten case-study schools. They provide further examples of how headteachers and governors were able to work closely and effectively together. Some governors in the case-study schools—in particular the chair of the governing body—appeared to have
a strong influence

and to be able to act as a mentor or a ‘critical friend’ to the leadership team.

Important and strategic decisions, such as whether the school should apply for

Beacon status or become a specialist college, were fully discussed with the governors and they were actively involved in decision-making. However, it was not clear whether the role of the governing body, as opposed to the role of one or two key influential governors, was generally one of strategic leadership. (See Earley et al., 2002, for an account of each of the ten case studies.)

Inspiration and ideas

With the exception of LEAs, all respondents involved in the research project’s questionnaire surveys were asked about the main sources to which they looked for inspiration and ideas about their work as school leaders. Chairs of governors were also asked to indicate their main sources of inspiration and ideas about their practice as school governors. As can be seen from Table 4, the most important source mentioned by over eight out of ten governors was, perhaps strategy, marketing, change and culture unsurprisingly, the headteacher (81%). Other important sources included LEAs (70%), other governors from the school (68%), and books, newspapers and other publications (54%). Ideas derived from the school’s leadership or management
team (47%) and from governor magazines (39%) were also noted. About a quarter made reference to government departments, other governing bodies, the internet and other sources.

The majority of headteachers (83%), deputy heads (72%) and NPQH candidates (78%) in the project's surveys looked to ‘other school leaders’ as their main source of ideas and inspiration for their work as school leaders but governors were also mentioned to varying degrees (see Table 5). The majority of deputy heads drew inspiration from their headteacher. LEAs were mentioned by around half of each of the school-based groups as an important source of inspiration and ideas about school leadership. Middle managers relied most heavily on other leaders and managers in the school and on the headteacher.

As can be seen from Table 5, 16 percent of headteachers—just over one in six—indicated that ‘governing bodies’ were a main source of ideas and inspiration about their work as school leaders. The percentages were lower for deputy heads and NPQH candidates and much lower for middle managers, which is perhaps unsurprising when consideration is given to the amount of contact these groups are likely to have with governors compared to the headteacher. The very
A high proportion of chairs of governors who point to the head as a significant source also highlights the key role that heads can play in the operation of their school’s governing body. The degree to which governors are likely to be involved in strategic leadership and perceive of themselves as leaders is going to be shaped to a considerable extent by the approach and attitude of the head teacher. As one chair of governors noted: ‘The governing body may have great vision and motivation but if the head is not receptive this energy is wasted.’

Table 4 Chairs of governors’ sources of ideas and inspiration (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main source Chairs of governors (n = 200)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other governors from school</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other governing bodies</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government departments</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local education authorities</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors or ‘buddy’</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The headteacher</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior management or school leadership teams (SMTs)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books, newspapers and other publications (education, business, government)</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas from governor magazines, etc.</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet, intranet and CD-rom</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
headteacher has to have a view of leadership that is dispersed and that part of that dispersal includes the governing body. Acting strategically and non-executive boards

It was earlier noted that, although over one-fifth of heads agreed that their governing body should play a major role in the strategic leadership of the school, far fewer judged that it actually did so, with over one-third claiming that the governing body played a 'minor role' or 'no role at all' in the strategic leadership of their school. Ofsted have noted similar findings in their recent report "The Work of School Governors (Ofsted, 2002). It states: Governors in about 90% of schools have a satisfactory or better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their school, but they are less effective in shaping the direction of the school. (p. 5) Where governors do not contribute effectively to shaping the direction of the school, they often have little knowledge of the school’s main development priorities, agree plans and policies unquestioningly, and rely too much on the headteacher as the source of their information about the school. (p. 10)

It was also noted earlier that recent training materials for new governors, STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Table 5 Respondents’ sources of ideas and inspiration (%)  

Source of ideas     Headteachers Deputy NPQH Middle (n = 758) (n = 227) heads managers (n = 151) (n = 239)

Universities 24 13 17 8

Headteacher(s) – 68 68 52
Other school leaders 83 72 78 76
Local education authorities 54 48 50 40
Government departments 20 18 23 10
Books/publications 72 71 76 49
Ideas from other countries 26 19 19 12
Business sector 13 11 4 9
Mentors (business) 8 5 4 3
Mentors (education) 22 24 29 13
Senior management or SMT 62 62 66 44
Governing bodies 16 9 11 5
Internet, intranet and CD-rom 29 23 46 28
No particular source 3 3 1 8

devised by the DfES for use by LEAs, focus on the three key roles—which

include helping to decide the future direction of the school—and that governing

bodies are being urged to act more strategically in the way in which they work

and to avoid becoming involved in school matters that are not their prime

concern. The vast majority of the research sample (95%) had received training

for their role as a school governor. A high proportion (43%) had found it ‘very

useful’ with only three percent claiming it to have been ‘not very useful’.

Although no data were collected on the type or content of the training that had

been received, governor respondents were asked to identify those areas where
they felt further training and development were necessary. A whole range of strategically or sharing leadership with the head. As one chair of governors noted: ‘training needs to be less about procedures, policies and guidelines and more about visioning, leadership, effective teamwork, motivation and culture’.

But what about outside the state school sector and outside education—for example, are university governing councils or non-executive boards of private companies able to act strategically or are they similarly constrained in the way they operate? Do such boards or councils engage in activities that might be termed leadership or strategic?

Little is known about how governing boards operate within the university sector, but the emerging picture from the little research there is in this area is not positive. On the basis of his research into university governing boards, Bennett claims that they could be said ‘to be rather ineffective bodies not appearing to have any major impact on the strategic plans and major governance matters of their institutions or overly involved with the monitoring of executive performance’ (cited in The Times Higher, 12 April 2002).

As a model applied to schools, the company board with non-executive dir
ectors has its advocates. For example, the report on school governors of the

House of Commons Select Committee (1999) stated that the analogy with the

role of non-executive directors was helpful, as did the report of the Better Regu

lation Task Force report on red tape affecting headteachers (2000). Much has

been written about the operation of company boards and the role of non-execu

tive directors (e.g. Berry and Perron, 2001; Esen, 2000; Gay, 2001; Short,

1996). 1 However, I do not intend to analyse this literature in depth here but

merely offer a brief comparison with governing bodies. For example, an inter

esting perspective is offered by Whyatt, a businessman, who states that non

executive directors have a number of similarities with school governing bodies,

in that they ‘normally don’t get involved in the daily running of the business but

they monitor performance, provide wider experience to assist in longer term

strategic planning and become involved in areas of specific interest or aptitude’

(2002: 1). Neither governors nor directors can possibly be involved in every

thing and neither should they be, for once the detailed objectives have been

agreed the people working for them have to be left to get on with their imple

mentation. Often boards of directors (including non-executive directors) will L E A D E R S O R F O L L O
W E R S?

have meetings (usually off-site) which concentrate on
strategic planning and
help determine the organization’s long-term aims and the
strategy to achieve
them—a practice which some school governing bodies have
taken up.

Interestingly, Whyatt, a managing director himself, states
that ‘the emphasis
that directors place on strategic planning is crucial and
clarifies long term object
ives’ adding that ‘governors perhaps could take more from
this approach’ (2002:
2). He also comments that an important lesson that boards
of directors can learn
from governing bodies is to make greater use of
non-executive directors; the
latter, like school governors, can bring a wide range of
experience to a company
and help broaden its vision, especially in strategic
planning.

Non-executive directors have two main roles: to scrutinize
executive
decisions and to advise on strategy without becoming
associated with manage
ment. Like governing bodies their role has changed—‘20
years ago (non
executive directors) were seen as largely decorative’ (as
‘baubles on a Christmas
tree’ according to the chief executive Tiny Rowland). ‘Now
the scrutiny role is
far more pronounced’ (Morgan and Walsh, 2002).

However, as a series of recent high-profile cases has con
rmek, many com
panies have been ill-served by their non-executive board of
directors who have
supposedly been responsible for challenging and monitoring
the performance of
their chief executives (Caulkin, 2002). Is it, as Caulkin
enquires, that non-execu
tives frequently form a cosy ‘one-of-us’ club who all too
often do not want to rock
the boat? (Recent analyses by Morgan and Walsh point to the
multiple director
ships of a select band of non-executives, to
self-perpetuating oligarchies and to the
need to broaden the pool of talent. Most non-executive
directors of FTSE 100
companies are executives of other FTSE companies.) If this
is the case then such
practices are unliekly to enable non-executives to perform
their main function—
which is to help the executives to make better decisions.
Of course, a crucial dif
ference from school governors is that non-executive
directors are usually in receipt
of payment for their services—on average £25,000–30,000 per
directorship which
is estimated to take up one day per week (Day, 2002).
It is suggested that non-executive directors, like school
governors, can be
equally disadvantaged, having less access to company
information (Levac i c´,
1995b) and often subject to charismatic and dominant chief
executives (Caulkin,
2002). Again, like governors, they can provide wisdom and
expertise, an outside
view or perspective, asking awkward or penetrating
questions; non-executives
are said to represent shareholders’ interests in the same
way that school govern
ors represent those of students, parents and the wider
community. Most are said
to be doing their job well (Day, 2002) and the role only
comes to attention when
things go wrong (e.g. in spring 2002, the Secretary of
State set up an inquiry into
the role of non-executives on company boards which,
following the Cadbury
and Greenbury reports, means there will have been three
inquiries into corporate
governance in the last ten years).

A detailed comparison between governors and non-executive
directors has
been made by Adams (2001). He argues that there are a
number of similarities between the two and the analogy of the school governor and
the non-executive
director might initially appear attractive. Both for
example have seen their
responsibilities rise in recent years: They are required to
monitor the performance of the Board of Directors, and that of the Chief Executive, to engage, principally on behalf of the stakeholders (shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, and the wider ‘community’), in setting the firm’s overall aims and objectives (its ‘vision’ and ‘strategy’). In addition . . . they should be adept at asking searching and possibly awkward questions. (2001: 33)

Adams also outlines some of the differences between the two, including the fact
that non-executives constitute only part of the board of directors and that both

will have different assessments of their respective value to the organization (professionals as opposed to amateurs? Certain skills and contacts or commitment

and support?). In addition, the work of the school governor is voluntary and

there is no pecuniary or self-interest (governors are motivated more by a sense

of duty or of wanting to help the school improve or to give something back).

Adams therefore concludes that governing bodies are more similar to a board of

trustees than to a company board with non-executive directors, seeing the trustee

as a better description or fit with what school governors actually do and what

motivates them. Conclusion

This article has presented data that indicate the degree to which governing

bodies could be said to be operating strategically and sharing the leadership

function with headteachers. As governors were reminded at the most recent

DfES national governors' conference, 'acting strategically means ensuring that

the school was managed in keeping with the strategic framework, by requesting

reports and reviews' (DfES, 2002b: 27). Also, as Ofsted has noted, where gover

nors are operating well, they will contribute to the shaping of the school's direc
tion and be involved in the development of the school improvement plan.

Furthermore: . . . although the plan is invariably written by the senior staff of the school, effective governors discuss the plan and ask questions in a way that helps their understanding of where the school is going. This allows them to test the clarity of vision of the senior staff. (Ofsted, 2002: 10)

The DfES-funded research reported in this article shows that, for many school governing bodies, leadership is still something that is largely perceived as leadership or followers? and practised through the headteacher and senior colleagues. The research findings suggest that headteachers had a rather limited concept of the role of the school’s governing body but that many welcomed governors and wanted them to play, in collaboration with themselves and others, a leadership role. It is also apparent however that there is a clear gap between the desired state and the practice on the ground. It is not always easy for school governing bodies (or boards of non-executive directors) to operate strategically. It is often said of school governors that they feel more comfortable giving support and offering advice than they do in helping to decide the school’s strategy and direction. Therefore in conclusion four questions are asked of school governance:

• Is too much governor training currently focusing on the wrong things?
• Does more of it need to be centred on the whole governing
body, including the head and other senior staff?

- Should governors lead schools or should they focus their efforts on ensuring they are effectively led?

- Are the current responsibilities and expectations of governors simply unrealistic or too high? Is too much expected from a group of part-time (or, more correctly, occasional time) unpaid volunteers?

This last question has been explored elsewhere (Earley and Creese, 2003a) where it is asked if the role is best filled by the present pattern of untrained, volunteer, ‘lay’ school governors, or whether it is time to adopt a more professional approach. For governing bodies to become more effective—more ‘professional’ in the way they work—the role clearly needs to give greater emphasis to strategy and accountability. Training is needed, preferably but not exclusively school-based, which helps governing bodies to operate in this way and ask ‘the awkward questions’ about the school and its performance (see e.g. NGC, 1998).

The induction materials for newly appointed governors produced by the DfES should prove most helpful in this respect. Perhaps if governing bodies are to be retained—and there are very good reasons for keeping them (see Earley and Creese, 2003a; 2003b)—they should focus their attentions, more than they currently do, on headteacher performance, school strategy and policy, with even greater management delegation being given to the head.
teacher. Should governors concentrate most of their efforts, as Rowan and Taylor (2002) suggest, on ensuring their schools are effectively led? Should more emphasis be given to the performance management of the head and the leadership team with an enhanced role for the external adviser to the governing body?

As Churchill said of democracy, ‘it’s not perfect but it’s the best thing we’ve got’, and perhaps this is equally true of governance at school and corporate level (Day, 2002). When governing bodies are working well they can be leaders and not merely followers, operating under the guiding hand of the headteacher or chief executive. As has been noted elsewhere (Ofsted, 2002; Scanlon et al., 1999), there are strong indicators to show that a school is more likely to be successful where there is evidence of good governance—and the latter, by definition, is concerned with steering and not merely rowing under the direction and strong leadership of the head. The degree to which governors are likely to be involved in strategic leadership and perceive themselves as leaders is going to be shaped to a considerable extent by the approach and attitude of the headteacher.

As Rowan and Taylor (2002: 20) unequivocally state: ‘There is no escaping the
fact that, since the 1986 and 1988 Acts promoted enhanced powers for governors and local management of schools, the head is seen as the main leadership figure in schools’.

Similarly, Whitty et al. (1998) conclude that professional interests continue to dominate and that this is hardly surprising if one considers: . . . that educational self-management allocates increased managerial powers to headteachers who, by virtue of their new roles, become the main conduit for all significant information coming into and going out of the schools. This capacity enables them to manage and outmanoeuvre lay governors should they so wish to do so. (p. 101)

Governing bodies are not always helped in gaining access to the information they need to perform their role. A recent study, for example, notes that 40 percent of LEAs did not circulate monitoring and evaluation reports to chairs of governing bodies, with some LEAs seeing the provision of such information to governing bodies as 'a very hot issue' (Bird, 2002: 36).

If, as the NCSL and others state, effective leadership is shared then headteachers have a key role to play in shaping the nature and distribution of that leadership and this must include the development of trust and the sharing of information. Culturally embedded notions of power and authority vested with headship are difficult to shift but the relationship between the two needs to move to one of interdependence—a leadership that is shared and a real partnership, one that is not unequal.
and includes all stakeholders. Note


51(1): 31-5.


Harper & Row. L E A D E R S O R F O L L O W E R S ?


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LEADERS OR FOLLOWERS?
75 STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT Where is the school going? A guide to strategic thinking Brian Fidler


There is almost nothing in the literature on school management about strategic management. The closest topic is that concerned with the aims and objectives of the school or perhaps goals. Hoyle (1986) writes about the concept of ‘mission’.

This he sees as ‘the distinctive or presumed-to-be-distinctive, cluster of goals with associated beliefs, attitudes and activities’ (p. 112). Following Selznick (1957) he
recognises that one of the indispensable tasks of leadership is to formulate and present the organisational mission.

Whilst further education colleges have been encouraged to produce mission statements these are uncommon in schools. In some areas school development plans are appearing which provide a rationale for INSET amongst other things.

But these are often very inward-looking.

As a result of research in 20 schools and questioning many heads on training courses Everard (1986) observed; My impression is that school managers are weak in . . . the ability to sense what is going to happen and then to get ready to meet the future head-on - forward planning, in fact. Interestingly, not a single respondent mentioned 'planning' as a managerial skill, though one head who had been to Henley Management College had been more struck by the need for it (and staff appraisal) than by anything else he had picked up on the course. (p. 57)

In a recent book Anne Jones recognised the need for a strategic view including 'the ability to articulate a coherent framework or philosophy, a set of overarching goals which mean something to the members of the whole school community' (Jones, 1987, p. 9). Thus there has been an embryonic realisation of the importance of some explicit overall direction for the school.

In other organisations this process is called strategic management. I believe that this term is as applicable to a school as to any other organisation. Importance of strategic management
In almost all organisations long-term survival is the most important consideration, with short and long-term success following some way behind. Anne Jones puts the need rather graphically, ‘without having learnt the skills of strategic management and operational planning, heads are liable to find themselves involved in nothing but crisis-management’ (p. 62). In the past most public sector schools would have expected such long-term and wide-scale planning to have been carried out primarily at LEA level and not at institutional level. In the future although LEAs have a strategic planning role it is not too clear what this will mean in practice. At least one Chief Education Officer has stated that there will be no more planned reorganisation schemes instead action will be taken when and if an individual school fails. Schools now more than ever will be in a position where they will be largely responsible for their own destiny. In Everard’s view this will provide a severe challenge for many heads as during his research: few heads mentioned activities aimed at changing the environment within which the school operated, yet they reported many problems whose source lay in the LEA or the Education Committee. It was as though there was passive acceptance of situations that were decided at County Hall, and a feeling not only of powerlessness in relation to these, but of acceptance of an immutable subordinate relationship of obedience. (Everard, 1986, p. 76)

Thus strategic management at school level will be crucial
and require new ways of thinking and acting.

Strategic management is also important because it is also the key to all other school management processes. It is the blueprint which informs other decisions on marketing/public relations staffing - appointments and development resourcing

Quinn (1980) describes strategy thus: ‘A strategy is the pattern or plan that integrates an organization’s major goals, policies, and action sequences into a cohesive whole’ (p. 7).

It is the plan which integrates all the actions of the school as shown in Figure 1. What is strategic management

Strategic management is concerned with deciding on strategy and planning how to implement it. It consists of analysis, decision-making, implementation and evaluation.

Strategic decisions are concerned with:

1 the whole scope of an organisation’s activities,
2 an organisation’s long-term direction,
3 matching of an organisation’s activities to the environment.

A key concept in organisation theory is for the organisation to be constantly adapting to its environment to find the best fit. The environment here goes
beyond the physical environment and the legal framework, to include political,

economic, social and technological pressures (PEST). Thus schools need to

adapt not only to national legal requirements (eg ERA) but also to the demands

of the local community.

Whilst organisations are constantly trying to keep in step with a changing

environment the pace of change in the environment may require more than small

changes. Mintzberg in a historical study of organisation strategy identified four

types of strategic change - continuity, incremental, flux and global. Global

change was infrequent but was necessary when the organisation and its environ

ment had fallen badly out of step.

It may well be that the nature of the changes proposed by the ERA and attenS T R A T E G Y , M A R K E T I N G , C

H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E

Figure 1 A schematic view of the inter-relationships between strategic planning and other school functions. Person power plan Appointments Appraisal Training and development Marketing External relations Promotion Review and update of plan. Governing body Curriculum plan Resource deployment Budgeting Management and organisational structures to deliver services to pupils Strategic plan for the school ACTION Performance indicators

dant political and social expectations may mean for many schools that a form of

global change in strategic direction may be necessary. Sources for strategic management

In the business sector there has been increasing interest
in strategic management

for more than 30 years with an explosion of publications in
the last 15 years. Influential writers include Quinn and Porter in the USA and
Mintzberg in Canada. A very valuable synthesis and development of this work has
appeared in this country by Johnson and Scholes (1988). Strategy in business
organisations has two facets;

(1) deciding on what business to be in (usually called
corporate strategy), and (2)

deciding how best to conduct that business. Clearly for
schools the first question is
already decided and only the second question remains.

Some of the recent sources have acknowledged that strategic
management

should go on in all sectors whether commercial or not. Thus
there has been

adaptation of these ideas from the business world to the
not-for-profit sector

(Bryson 1988) where it is recognised that political
considerations are likely to

play a much larger part than in commercial organisations.
Some of these sources

attempt to add a management dimension to previous work on
policy-making in

public sector organisations.

In addition to differences in methodology some of the more
fundamental

points of dispute of writers on business strategy include:
a Whether strategy is formulated before action or whether
it is only apparent in retrospect after a series of
decisions have been made: Strategies may be looked at as
either a priori statements to guide action or a posteriori
results of actual decision behaviour. One, therefore, must look at the actual emerging pattern of the enterS T R A T E G I C M A N A G E M E N T Figure 2 Patterns of strategic change. Taken from Johnson and Scholes (1988, p. 25).

Continuity Incremental Flux Global prise’s operant goals, policies and major programs to see what its true strategy is. (Mintzberg, 1972; quoted in Quinn et al., 1988, p. 4)

Mintzberg uses the term emergent strategy for that which is evident after the event and intended strategy for that which is planned. The difference reflects the observation that change generally produces some unexpected results. It is not intended that there should be any inconsistency between what is announced and subsequent actions. Cynicism can be expected if this is the case. Whether strategic plans exist only in the minds of individuals (but which nevertheless affect their actions) or whether they are set down in writing. These two approaches are described by Steiner (1979) thus: It is not at all unusual to find in organisations a clash between these two approaches to strategic decision-making. . . . They can and should complement one another. A formal system can and should help managers sharpen their intuitive-anticipatory inputs into the planning process. (p. 10)

Not surprisingly strategy in business thinking is very bound up with competi

tion. ‘The fundamental basis of above-average performance in the long run is sustainable competitive advantage’ (Porter, 1985, p. 11).

In commercial organ

isations Porter believes that there are two types of competitive advantage: low cost or differentiation. For non-commercial organisations clearly this would reduce to differentiation. This could be achieved either across the whole range of an organisation’s activities or in a narrow segment (some of these activities).

This latter is called differentiation focus.

There are a number of means of differentiation ‘if there are a number of
attributes that are widely valued by buyers’ (p. 12) these may go beyond just carrying out the basic organisational task better. It may be achieved by the way that the organisation goes about the task, or by its marketing approach.

Porter’s basic thesis is that organisations must choose which is their basic strategy and then follow it. He believes that those who try to follow more than one generic strategy become ‘stuck in the middle’ and this is ‘a recipe for below-average performance’ (p. 16) because the different strategies generally require inconsistent actions and none are then successful. Being ‘all things to all people’ is a recipe for strategic mediocrity and below average performance because it often means that a firm has no competitive advantage at all (p. 12).

Once achieved the general strategy has to be sustained. This requires constant effort in a competitive world. Competitors may imitate or the advantage may fade in the eyes of the consumers. Thus it is usually necessary for a firm ‘to offer a moving target’ to its competitors (p. 20).

Even for public sector organisations which do not basically see themselves as competitive this concept of differentiation may be a useful one. It can encourage them to tease out what their basic strengths are both to tell their clients and also to give a sense of pride to the organisation. The Johnson and Scholes model
Johnson and Scholes have developed a conceptual model for strategic management. This consists of three stages, each of which has three major parts. These are:

- strategic analysis,
- strategic choice, and
- strategic implementation.

This offers a model for both working on and thinking about strategic management. Although these stages might logically be seen as being sequential, in Figure 3 A summary model of the elements of strategic management. Taken from Johnson and Scholes (1988, p.16).

There are clearly differences of approach in thinking about who should take
part in strategy formulation. It is possible that in a highly autocratic organisation

the most senior management would be the ones to analyze, choose and implement the strategy. However, it is the contention of Johnson and Scholes that it is the responsibility of every manager to consider strategy. Each manager should have some inputs to make to the process since each must play their part in implementation and may have unique insights into the effects of the strategy.

The managerial process by which all these efforts are co-ordinated is clearly a massive one and one in which individual differences between organisations will show up. It is likely that a consultative or participative mode by which all managers play a part in the formation of strategy, fully understand the strategy when it is finally chosen, and then play their part in implementing it in an appropriate way will yield the greatest overall success. Strategic analysis

The three components of strategic analysis are:

- looking at the environment,
- looking at internal resources, and
- looking at the culture and values of the organisation.

In reality, this analysis should be going on continuously and not just carried out at only one point in time. However, it is likely that periodically, say every five years or so, a thorough strategic analysis should be
carried out, whilst between

these five yearly periods, perhaps each year, some intermediate level of analysis

should be carried out to update the strategic plan and take account of the factors

which have changed in the meantime (both achievements that have been made

and also changes in the environment). But clearly the whole process if done

thoroughly would take a substantial amount of management time. This could not

be justified on an annual basis. Environment

The first step in strategic analysis is to examine the environment. This does not

primarily mean the local physical environment, but rather the political, social,

legal, financial and technological environment. This process is called environS T R A T E G Y , M A R K E T I N G , C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E

mental scanning. It is difficult to offer systematic advice about how this could be

carried out in a truly comprehensive way. It will clearly be a matter of judgement

what is important in the environment for a particular school. However, the import

ant point to note is that the organisation is outward-looking and responsive to the

environment. This process is also forward-looking, trying to predict the ways in

which the environment both is changing and will change in the future such that the

match between the strategic direction of the organisation and its environment can
be kept as close as possible. In commercial organisations, in particular, a very important factor in the environment, is any competitor organisation. Similarly, it is likely that for schools other educational organisations, both ones from which pupils come and ones to which children go, will be important factors in the environment, and, particularly in urban areas, it is likely that nearby schools which teach children of the same age group will be important factors in the environment.

A particularly important consideration for schools is an assessment of the satisfaction of stakeholders. A stakeholder is any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the organisation. Bryson (1988) considers that ‘the key to success in public and non-profit organisations is . . . the satisfaction of key stakeholders’. It may be instructive to formulate what different groups of stakeholders might count as success for the school. Some efforts should be made to validate these assumptions.

Probably the most important strategic consideration for schools will be any intelligence about future pupil numbers. Most LEAs have produced estimates of varying accuracy and of varying future time-scales of pupil numbers for each school. In the future it will be more difficult to make meaningful predictions if
there has been a catchment area policy which has had the
effect of directing chil
dren to unpopular schools. This will be especially difficult
where the more
popular schools are not physically full or taking their
1979 numbers. Modern
but these are based on extrapolating past trends into the
future and are likely to
be markedly inaccurate until there is adequate evidence to
go on in the new
regime of more open enrolment. Schools in sensitive
positions might find it
worthwhile to devote sufficient resources to developing
their own intelligence
and probable future numbers. Co-educational schools should
study the trends for
boys and girls separately to see if there are differences.
If we assume that the organisation already has a strategy
and therefore is
broadly heading in a given direction, then the environment
poses both opportun
ities and threats. Opportunities are seen as those facets
in the environment that
are actually going to enhance the given course of the
organisation and ensure
both its long-term survival and success. On the other hand,
threats are those
aspects of the environment which will make the progress of
the organisation
more difficult and, in the worst possible case, could
possibly pose threats to its
survival. A most important factor in the environment is the
local community and
the expectations of various client groups about what the organisation can provide for it and what the organisation stands for.

**STATEGIC MANAGEMENT Resources**

Analyzing the organisation’s resources goes beyond its buildings or physical equipment and indeed includes its total resources, including its staffing and know-how. Thus, the analysis of the resources of the school would start with the school buildings and examine both their location and particular accommodation in terms of specialist rooms and other facilities. The possibilities of finding extra teaching accommodation in very popular schools might be investigated. Staffing resources clearly need a lot of detail. Both qualifications, expertise and skills of staff all need to be taken into consideration, and this includes both teaching staff and non-teaching staff. These should include both formal qualifications and expertise and also interests and skills which are more amateur in nature.

Also included within the heading of resources are those intangible other attributes of the school such as its reputation and ethos. In carrying out this analysis of resources, strengths will emerge by which, compared with similar organisations, this particular school has great strengths and also weaknesses where, in comparison with similar schools, this school is less strong. This then
completes the SWOT analysis of the school. Other things being equal, clearly the most favoured strategic direction of the school will be one that takes advantage of opportunities in the environment and minimises threats and takes advantage of internal strengths of the institution and minimises the weaknesses. This is called strategic fit. Organisational culture

The third and final component of strategic analysis takes account of the culture of the organisation. It is important to analyze the present culture because it may be that to make strategic changes this culture will need to change. To recognise the culture within which one is operating, it is helpful to think about the sort of description people would give about how the organisation operates. These descriptions will cover traditions, rituals and possibly myths about times past.

Such widely shared understandings of how the organisation operates are important in making this assessment. Thinking about the induction of new staff may also be helpful in thinking about the culture and values of the organisation. What would they need to be told such that they would operate like other people in the organisation. Really one’s trying to investigate ‘the way we do things round here’. Clearly the values espoused by the leaders of the organisation are going to
be particularly influential in any strategy.

Organisational culture and climate are related concepts. Owens (1987) sees climate as being more concerned with the perceptions of organisation members and the extent to which they find the way that the organisation operates is satisfying to them.

The combined effects of past experience and the culture of the organisation give rise to the ‘recipe’ (Johnson and Scholes, 1988, p. 40). This provides STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE answers to many problems since decisions are made in accordance with the recipe. Difficulties arise when the environment has changed and the recipe no longer works satisfactorily. The effects of ERA will almost certainly lead to this situation in schools. For strategic planning it is particularly important to be aware of the implicit limiting influence on thinking which the recipe imposes.

Organisational culture has recently been the subject of increasing interest. The Peters and Waterman (1982) study of successful US companies identified this as a major determinant of success. Clearly, if all members of the organisation are working in concert, this is likely to be a much more successful approach than if the top management have a certain strategic plan but that is not followed,
nor even shared, by members lower down in the organisation. Either they will continue to operate ignoring the strategic plan or, even worse, they will actively seek to frustrate it. As Johnson and Scholes say, ‘strategy is also a product of what people want an organisation to do and what they feel the organisation should be like’ (p. 113).

Harvey-Jones (1988) lays great store by the need for the mission of the organisation to be both clear and shared by staff at all levels: The ideal organisation, it is said, and the one that has the best chance of success, is one where, if you ask anybody, from the chairman down to the newest recruit on the shop floor, what the business is trying to do, you would get the same answer. The answer need not have exactly the same words as your prize sentence, but the answer must indicate clarity at every level. (p. 79)

This consists of three processes, the generation of options, the evaluation of options and the selection of strategy. Generation of options

As a result of the strategic analysis it is necessary to look at various broad courses of action that the organisation might choose to take as a result of that analysis. For business organisations Johnson and Scholes consider that there are three possible considerations in generating strategic options, the first one of which is to identify a generic strategy, the second is to
look at alternative directions in which the organisation might develop, the third is to look at the methods by which the development could be achieved. For schools the generic strategy would have to be based upon differentiation and focus, ie in what ways a particular school is going to be better than other similar schools of its type, and whether it is to achieve these advantages on a broad front or whether it is just to identify certain areas where it thinks it has something rather special to offer and concentrate its success around these.

Bryson (1988) considers that the identification of strategic issues is a vital step between strategic analysis and the development of strategy. Strategic issues are the fundamental policy questions affecting the organisation's mission and values. These by definition involve differences of opinion and interpretation. These may involve ends (what) and means (how). Each issue should be framed as a question. These should be prioritised according to the consequences of failing to address the issue. 'The strategic issue identification step therefore is aimed at focusing organisational attention on what is truly important for the survival, prosperity, and effectiveness of the organisation' (Bryson, 1988, p. 57).

Possible very broad alternative directions include
continuing on the present strategic course, and that might prove a useful baseline against which to judge alternative directions. Other alternative directions could range from seeing future closure as the most likely development to seeing an expansion in size. Within such a spectrum it may be possible to see an expanded and related role for the school, perhaps taking account of a greater community element – what would be referred to in industrial terms as diversification. In terms of the alternative methods by which this might be achieved the first would be by working with the existing organisation and developing it. The second would be by seeing a merger or takeover of another school and working towards an acquisition. The third alternative method would be to see joint working with another institution whilst remaining separate entities but nevertheless collaborating for the joint good of both institutions.

The whole process is to develop a range of options which might be related and go together as a generic strategy, but essentially a series of options from which choice can be made. A range of issues which a school might consider to help assess its strategic direction is given on p. 298. STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE Evaluation of options

From the series of options that have been developed it is then necessary to look
at which of them are likely to prove the most viable. Johnson and Scholes suggest three broad criteria for making this choice, the first of which is suitability, in other words, how far does the chosen course of action maximise the SWOT analysis. The second criterion is that of feasibility, in other words, do the resources and other changes that would be required seem feasible. And the third criterion they suggest is of acceptability, and that has to be both internal acceptability in terms of the culture of the organisation and external acceptability, and that would be to governors and the wider community, including parents.

Amongst a range of techniques for evaluating possible choices two seem to offer themselves as having potential for schools. Clearly the most widespread is some form of cost–benefit analysis such as is discussed elsewhere. This seeks to analyze the benefits that might accrue from the possible courses of action and to assess these against the cost required in order to achieve those benefits, this may be direct physical cost or it may be opportunity cost. The second major technique could be that of scenario planning or developing a ‘vision of success’ (Bryson, 1988), in other words, trying to paint a picture of what might happen if the chosen course of action was pursued. What would the end
result look like?

Would the scene then carry credibility? That might also lead to some contin
gency planning. If various steps on the way to the scenario went in different
directions from the assumed ones, what contingency plans could the school
develop in order to cope with this? Strategy selection

Finally, the selection of strategy has to be partly a rational process and partly a
political process. Indeed in the case of schools, this might be the role that the
governing body could play in having various strategic options put to it and then
making the final decision on the strategy. Strategic implementation

Strategic implementation has three components, the first of which is concerned
with the organisation structure, the second with resource planning and the third
with people and systems. Planning and allocating resources

Clearly, to achieve the strategy, resources will be required and will need to be
allocated. This of course shows the importance of financial delegation because
this gives the possibility of directing resources to where the school decides they
are most needed. Although it is well known that the extent of directing resources is limited in any one year, this is where the long term becomes important

because, if resources can be re-allocated only at 2 per
cent a year, then over five years 10 per cent could be re-allocated. In the short term nearly all costs . . . are fixed; in the long term, all costs become variable. Thus, a particular split between fixed and variable costs is valid only for one particular time horizon of decision. (Emmanuel and Otley, 1985, pp. 88–9)

The degree of difficulty in re-allocating resources is likely to be affected by whether or not the school is static in size or whether the school is growing in size. If the amount of money, in real terms, is likely to remain constant, then spending on a different course of action can only be achieved at the expense of cutting some present expenditure, whereas if there is additional money appearing, then it is possible to look at a standstill budget to keep existing activities functioning and to apportion further money for new developments.

It would be prudent to plan for little real expansion in spending over and above that generated by additional pupil numbers, in which case it is likely to involve the transfer of some expenditure from one current heading to a future one. The inter-relationship between resource planning and allocation and the initial resource analysis should be quite clear. Some kind of very simple network analysis might be quite useful in indicating the stages through which the strategy will be achieved and trying to look at the spending implications of each of these
to make sure there is not some hiatus towards the end because of some intermediate step which should have been funded. Organisation structure

Clearly, the structure of the organisation, the relationship of people and tasks is intended to facilitate the work of the organisation. If the generic strategy that has been developed involves a change in direction for the organisation, then the organisation structure will have, at the least, to be reviewed and may need substantial change. Thus, the basic structure of the organisation needs to be considered and then individual jobs within the organisation. The whole structure may need changing rather than an extra post being grafted onto the existing structure. If a change in the basic structure of the organisation is required, this may be a long term process by which over a number of years a structure is gradually put in place as opportunity allows. Existing personnel and a historical legacy may mean that the change cannot be achieved by one simple restructuring at one point in time but to the ‘prepared mind’ opportunities can be seized as they present themselves.

The basic organisational structures are: a functional structure, a divisional structure and a matrix structure. A functional structure has as the divisions of the
organisation those that are responsible for major activities, thus for example, for STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE.

a school, they might be teaching, marketing and external relations, finance and personnel as four large sub-divisions of the work of the organisation, of which clearly teaching would be much the largest. A divisional structure is closer to the basic departmental organisation of secondary schools by which teaching is divided up into its various subject areas with heads of departments. A matrix, on the other hand, has a grid of overlapping responsibilities (Fidler, 1984) where ‘the organization sets up a dual authority structure’ (Mintzberg, 1983, p. 86).

Typically secondary schools operate in this way where on one arm of the matrix there are subject departments, and on the other arm of the grid are the various pastoral groupings within the school. If further functions are added to this already complex structure then the resulting structure would actually need to be represented in three dimensions for a large secondary school. At right angles to the current matrix would be a functional structure to manage the additional tasks which ERA has delegated to school level. For a small primary school it may mean the creation of a matrix and maybe for larger primary schools, which already have the semblance of the
matrix structure of the secondary school, it too would become three dimensional. Such structures have grown up in schools without their full complexity being adequately appreciated. Strategic considerations may provide an appropriate opportunity to re-examine such structures.

Allied to the basic structure are the job positions within the school which introduces the element of delegation and how far the organisation is decentralised with each individual operating in a given area with a large measure of autonomy and how far things are tightly controlled from the centre. From all that has been said previously about shared values in the organisation and a clear strategic direction it should be clear that within such a framework delegation substantially increases the capabilities of the whole organisation since there are then many managers at work and not just one. But it also follows that delegation without a clear strategic direction for the organisation is likely to be counter-productive. People and systems clearly the most potent elements in implementing any strategic change are people and systems. The systems make sure that the things people are doing are co-ordinated and reinforce each other in the direction that the strategy requires.
and other actions are discouraged. This means reward systems, monitoring and
control must all be facing in the same direction.

The skills of existing people will have been noted at the analysis stage and
thus future demands can be predicted. New people may need to be employed
and those already in position will need to be trained for any new skills that are
required. All of this needs to be planned at the stage of choosing a particular
strategy and then subsequently implemented.

If the new strategy requires a change in the organisational culture, then that S T R A T E G I C M A N A G E M E N T
has to be thought through as a major change process. All that is known about
change suggests that people do not generally welcome it and the way has to be
prepared very well for change to be successful. To indicate that change is hap
pening and to help the process along, some symbolic acts may be required by
leadership to indicate that things have changed and to reinforce the kind of
actions that are going to be highly regarded in the future. Some of the Peters and
Waterman characteristics of excellent business companies may be appropriate to
successful schools in the future (Handy, 1984).

Having decided upon the major strategic direction of the organisation, the
work of Caldwell and Spinks (1988) may be appropriate to design operational
programmes to implement the elements of the strategy on a smaller scale. Planning programmes

The appropriate element of the Caldwell and Spinks model is the one by which

groups of staff work together on designing particular teaching programmes that

implement part of the strategy. The design of the programmes takes account of

all the elements of the strategic implementation process by which the resources

required for the programmes, the expertise of people and any training are all

taken into account in designing each programme. A programme for example

could be a particular course in history for a particular teaching group. However,

to embark on this course without first identifying and agreeing the strategic

direction of the school would be a recipe for fragmentation and be dysfunctional.

Programme planning is the approach adopted by the MSC in TVEI programmes, where a good deal of thought is put into planning resources and other requirements that are in effect the ‘cost’ of implementing the programme. This then provides the link into budgeting since these programmes can be costed and incorporated into the budget.

The Caldwell and Spinks model is a simplified form of PPBS (Planning Pro
gramming Budgeting System) (Simkins and Lancaster, 1987). But it prioritises pro
grammes in time-order rather than by whether or not they provide an efficient and
effective contribution to the overall strategy. A more explicitly evaluative approach
is indicated by Harling (1981) in an example of devising priorities for spending
additional money in a primary school. Conclusion
Strategic management provides the unifying influence on all aspects of the man
agement of a school. It seeks to work in the longer term, involve the whole
organisation and be outward-looking.
To adapt a metaphor: It could be said that in the past school managers have had
to be adept at keeping the passengers and crew happy whilst rearranging the
deckchairs on the decks of the Titanic. In the future it will be necessary to place a STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE
much higher premium on ensuring that school managers are capable of keeping a
look-out for icebergs from the bridge. Or as Anne Jones (1987, p. 13) remarks (with
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Marketisation and the growth of external relations management

Schools and colleges have always interacted with their external environments in both pro-active and reactive ways. Until the 1990s, however, educational institutions were emphatically ‘domesticated’ environments (Carlson, 1975) protected from the impact of market forces - funding was guaranteed, catchment areas were
delimited and protected, and their quality of education/training was not linked to funding in any explicit way. Building an external relations component into institutional planning or strategy was simply a matter for professional judgement, and its presence or absence depended on the management’s view of what the proper relationship was with external stakeholders. Political and social change, however, embedded in a commitment to the ideology of the market and of consumer choice in pursuit of the three ‘Es’ of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Farnham, 1993), has been steadily absorbed into the educational culture and given statutory authority through legislation. Schools and colleges have moved into a ‘wild’ environment (Carlson, 1975), characterised by market accountability, financial responsibility, and a key focus on explicit demonstrations of quality that enable consumer comparison of institutions.

Marketisation has characterised the public sector in many western countries in parallel to the processes in the UK, shifting schools and colleges to focus on marketing and external relations management – but to varying degrees. In some states – for example, the USA and Denmark – the tradition of school engagement with the community has always supported the notion of partnership with a
wide range of external stakeholders (OECD, 1997). In Spain, Sweden and France some elements of competition between state schools and colleges have been enhanced, and the need to take stronger account of public perceptions of school quality has become established in schools (Agudo, 1995; Van Zanten, 1995). In contrast, in Australia and New Zealand, as in the UK, the implanting of models of parental choice into the school system has pushed schools strongly towards adopting competitive stances in external relations management (e.g. Waslander and Thrupp, 1997).

The challenge of managing the external relations of schools and colleges has clearly been increased by marketisation. This chapter examines the nature of external relations management and marketing, its interpretation and development by schools and colleges, and its place in institutional strategic planning. External relations and marketing – deconstructing alien concepts

The concept of marketing is for most educationists an imported, even alien, concept. Foskett (1996) has shown how there is a wide range of interpretations of marketing amongst managers in secondary schools and confusion about its relationship to public relations, promotion, advertising and external relations management – an idea confirmed in the FE sector by Pieda (1996), Smith, Scott and...

Many definitions of marketing have emerged from within the discipline of ‘management’ (e.g. Christopher, McDonald and Wills, 1980), but it is possible to identify two specific perspectives – marketing as an overall philosophy for an organisation, and marketing as a functional area of management. As a functional area marketing involves the application of strategies to effect the sale of a product or service. As an overall philosophy, however, marketing is central to the operation of an organisation and ‘is not a specialised activity at all (but) encompasses the entire business – it is the whole business’ (Drucker, 1954, p. 56).

Three types of organisational orientation may be identified from this analysis.

Product-oriented organisations are concerned primarily with the product, be it a ‘good’ or a ‘service’, that they have the expertise in producing. Sales-oriented organisations recognise that selling is central to their survival, and an emphasis is placed on promotion of their ‘products’ through advertising and sales techniques. Foskett suggests that Such a sales-oriented culture is often the marketing stereotype . . . The first response of an educational institution moved from the market-protected positions of monopoly power (e.g. impermeable school catchments or LEA allocation of particular courses to particular FE colleges), or of great
excess demand over supply (e.g. applications to higher education in the 1970s) is to seek to sell what it already offers very vigorously. (Foskett, 1998, p. 49)

A market-oriented organisation, in contrast, is one in which the customer is central to its operation, and its emphasis is on satisfying customer requirements by providing goods and services that customers want. Such an orientation has implications for the organisation and its management, for each element of the organisation’s operation, from strategic planning to ‘front-of-house’ activities, will be dictated by the customer-focus.

Marketing in education, however, is complicated by two important issues. Firstly, service industries, even in the private sector, have not traditionally taken a strong marketing perspective. Cowell (1984) explains this in a number of ways:

- Service products are inherently intangible which makes their promotion difficult, particularly where the ‘product’ is long term in its rewards (e.g. education).

- Services in the professional sector may see marketing as unethical, compromising the objectivity of their relationship with their ‘client’.

- Some service sectors experienced demand far in excess of their ability to provide it (e.g. higher education), so promotion was unnecessary.

- Most educational organisations have enjoyed monopoly power (e.g. over a specified type of provision or a tightly demarcated catchment area), and so have perceived no need for marketing.
• Little professional guidance or training on adopting a marketing perspective has been available.

Secondly, traditional concepts of professionalism and public service in education do not sit easily with the notion of marketing. The view of the professional as ‘expert’ and the monitor of quality may be interpreted to mean that responsiveness to the market is unnecessary. Indeed, in education the customer may be seen not as the pupil or parent, but in terms of professionally defined notions of either an academic discipline or the needs of society as a whole. As Gray has suggested: The purposes for which public sector institutions such as schools were established go far beyond mere customer satisfaction. (They) have public service duties and responsibilities . . . (to) tackle real needs which may not be appreciated by those customers. (Gray, 1991, p. 25)

Educational institutions, therefore, have many different external links which go beyond transactional or exchange relationships. While such relationships do exist - for example, in the recruitment of students/pupils - they are only a small component of the totality of external relations which must be sustained. These are illustrated in Figure 1.

These functions are not, of course, distinct and the overlap and feedback between them is very important. For example, a school’s role as community partner, if effective, will contribute to its recruitment of pupils, as will its strategy.
performance in the quality assurance processes operated by Ofsted. The import
ance of this is emphasised by Foskett and Hesketh (1997) who identify the
significance of ‘word of mouth’ in parents’ and students’ choice of school or
college, which, although a secondary product of the school’s activities, may
account for two-thirds of the influence on parental choice of school (Foskett,
1995; Carroll and Walford, 1997).

While managing these external relationships is of great importance to the
Figure 1 External relationships of schools and colleges.

(a) Transactional-based external relations

• As an education/training provider in the education/training market – for example, in ‘selling’ FE courses, or selling a ‘primary education’ to parents for their children.

• As professional client – for example, in purchasing advisory services from the LEA.

• As commercial customer – for example, in the purchase of supplies.

• As a competitor – for example, in bidding for commercial contracts, or for a share of earmarked funding from LEA/FEFC or EU sources.

(b) Relationship-based external relations

• As partners with ‘customers’ – for example, the relationship with parents in supporting pupils’ development.

• As professional partner – for example, relationships with service providers such as educational psychologists.
• As community partner – for example, relationship with community organisations such as the church or the police.

• As political player – for example, in responding to consultations on educational initiatives.

• As professional adviser – for example, in providing advice to parents on special needs support.

(c) Public accountability external relations

• As political servant – for example, in receiving delegated funds through LMS or FEFC funding, or in implementing government literacy initiatives.

• As accountable public body – for example, in being subject to LEA, Ofsted or FEFC inspection, or generating public examination results that appear in league tables.

Worcester’s Law

(Worcester, 1985) asserts that ‘no organisation can sustain a good reputation that it does not deserve’. A perception that marketing is simply about choosing the message the institution wants to convey and then communicating that by public relations and promotional activity ignores the importance of underpinning the image with effective quality assurance. This, in turn, suggests three important issues for managers:

1 External relations management cannot be the domain of only a small group. It is neither something that only senior managers do nor can it simply be delegated to junior colleagues. While in a large institution specific functions (e.g. media relations) may be undertaken by specialists, and the whole process will need co-ordination from senior management, each member of the organisation has an important role.

2 Effective external relations will probably require signi
cant ‘internal marketing’ (Robinson and Long, 1985) to support it. This is the process of sharing vision amongst the whole organisation and generating strategies for actioning the vision from internal consultation.

3 Staff are key players within this process, since their activities define the quality of the organisation, and they represent a key stakeholder group with whom ‘management’ must manage relationships with great care. This link between staff support, quality and external relations is recognised in much of the quality management research in education (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993; West-Burnham, 1997), and is exemplified by the Investors in People movement.

So what is the relationship between external relations management and marketing? External relations management relates to: Those aspects of an organisation’s activities that in any way cause it to relate to an audience beyond its own boundaries. This includes both processes with an overtly external connection and those processes which, while largely internal to the organisation, have a direct impact on some external (stakeholder). (Foskett, 1992, p. 6)

Such processes need management whether or not an organisation is market focused. Putting up a sign which says ‘Parents must not proceed beyond this point’ at the school gate is managing external relations, but is probably not very effective marketing! Where an institution is market-focused, however, all external relations management has a marketing component, since it is designed to support the notion that all of the organisation’s activities are focused on customers and clients, that marketing is an holistic philosophy for the school or college. Such a perspective means that the harsh equation of ‘marketing = STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE’
selling’ can be replaced by a perspective which is much more in tune with educational philosophies.

Figure 2 is a model of marketing that includes both traditional educational values and the discipline of the market. Marketing is represented as a ‘field’, with an individual’s or organisation’s precise conceptual location representing a balance between recruitment, quality and community responsiveness. Such a location will depend on the ‘micro-market’ conditions the organisation finds itself in, and will change over time. A college under threat from declining student numbers may focus its marketing perspective on the bottom left of the model, while a neighbouring institution in a more secure market position might be located more centrally or towards one of the other corners. In all cases, however, there is a component of each of the three elements in the marketing perspective that a school or college must adopt – quality and community relationship can never be ignored in favour of ‘pure’ recruitment activity. This emphasis on links with stakeholders in non-transactional relationship emerges strongly from an analysis of marketisation in a number of European countries (OECD, 1997), and Cardno (1998) emphasises the centrality of the community
links in the context of government guidance on strategic planning in New Zealand schools.

This model links to an important concept that has emerged in the marketing of small businesses (Payne et al., 1995; Gronroos, 1997) – relationship marketing. This recognises that small organisations (and all schools and most colleges) are small organisations) sell not just a product or service but a relationship.

Figure 2 The marketing triad model. Internal quality issues dominate. Pupil recruitment issues dominate. Community communication issues dominate.

RECRUITMENT RESPONSIVENESS QUALITY

which is based on partnership, mutual trust and confidence (Stokes, 1996). A number of ideas emerge from this:

• Such an approach reflects what has traditionally been regarded as good ‘educational’ practice in most schools and colleges, and sits more comfortably with educationally driven philosophies.

• It emphasises the importance of managing all external relations in support of effective long-term relationship with external client groups.

• It con rms Drucker’s (1973, p. 4) perspective that effective marketing almost removes the need for ‘selling’, for ‘the aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well that the product or service fits him and sells itself’.

• Most schools and colleges have extensive experience in developing these relationships, so that ‘even while claiming an innocence of marketing, or more vehemently, an antipathy towards it, (schools and colleges) are actually rather good at it’ (O’Sullivan and O’Sullivan, 1995).
Strategy, management and external relations

Accountability and autonomy have made a commitment to strategy a core requirement for educational institutions, both statutorily and pragmatically. Strategic management is, in essence, taking proactive responsibility for the future and long-term development and direction of the whole institution. Middlewood (1998), drawing on the work of Mintzberg (1995), Fidler (1996) and Weindling (1997), distinguishes clearly between strategic thinking and operational management. Strategic thinking is long-term, reflective, conceptual and creative, emphasising the identification of opportunities in response to a continuous scan of the environment, and is concerned with achieving the institution’s vision. Operational management is short-term and immediate, leading to action in a small time frame, and concentrates on concrete, often routine, functions focusing on the internal context of the institution. Strategic thinking and operational management are clearly not separate, indeed they must not be so for each must inform the other, but they represent opposite ends of a management activity spectrum.

Strategic management is intimately involved with the institution’s external environment. Hanson and Henry (1992) emphasise the
importance of ‘strategic marketing’ to educational institutions, where most of the organisation’s planning is intimately linked to its awareness of the environment in which it operates.

This they distinguish from ‘project marketing’ (‘the most-practised form of mar keting’ (ibid, p. 258), which is short-term and is the management of specific market needs.

Johnson and Scholes (1993) indicate that the whole concept of strategic management comprises three components, within each of which we can identify external relations components: S T R A T E G Y , M A R K E T I N G , C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E

• strategic analysis
• strategic choice
• strategic implementation. Strategic analysis

Strategic analysis is about ensuring that strategy is linked to the market. The organisation’s environment provides the parameters within which it may operate, and comprises the market environment and the socio-political environ ment. Every organisation is constrained by external economic circumstances, and the political environment in which policy decisions are made. While the opportunities for actively influencing these are limited, no organisation needs to be entirely the victim of external circumstances. A key
aspect of strategic analysis is collecting sufficient ‘intelligence’ and data to be able to make reasoned judgements about future trends, scenarios and patterns. Sensing this component of the external environment is often highly subjective and requires astute political judgement, but the view from the crow’s nest this provides means that careful adjustments of the tiller can avoid the ship foundering on the rocks (Foskett, 1997).

Sensing the market environment is also subjective, but much less so. Market analysis seeks to describe the organisation’s present and future markets in terms of:

- market characteristics – size, constraints, character, patterns of change and future development
- competition – the nature and behaviour of competitors
- buyer behaviour – the decision-making processes of customers

Such market intelligence can be obtained formally through a marketing research programme (Davies and Scribbins, 1985) or informally through gathering information from inside or outside the organisation (Martin, 1995). (See Chapter 12 for a detailed consideration of marketing research.)

While strategy must be informed by market considerations, many other factors are also of importance, for schools and colleges have a broad social remit.
in addition to the market imperatives. The FEFC (1997) has identified a number of factors which impact on college strategy, including:

- the overall direction of the institution
- needs and market analysis
- staff skills
- finance and estate management issues
- the local labour market.

Planning and marketing are tightly linked, therefore, but are not the same thing.

It is the role of management to make judgements about the importance of the strategy, external relations and marketing market in their planning decisions and strategic choices. Gray (1991) sees strategic planning as deriving from strategic analysis, however, with all strands of institutional plans building from marketing analysis techniques. The product of this process has three components:

1. An institutional plan
2. Thematic plans for each component of the institutional plan (e.g. curriculum, estates, finance)
3. A marketing plan, which identifies both future marketing activity (e.g. promotion, public relations) and future marketing research and evaluation activities. Strategic choice

Strategic choice is, in essence, choosing the broad approaches that the organisation will take to achieve its aims. Kotler and Fox (1995) identify three elements of marketing strategy formulation, which are intended to
ensure that the institution 'plays' in the market in the most effective way. These are explored in detail in Chapter 14, but are outlined here:

1 Target market strategy. This involves identifying which segments of the market the institution wishes to operate in - a college may choose to focus, for example, on 16-19-year-old academic-track students rather than vocational courses. Schools, while constrained because of statutory curriculum requirements, may still focus on particular market segments (e.g. as a technology school).

2 Competitive positioning strategy. This involves identifying the distinguishable features of the institution that make it distinctive from competitors in the same market segments - for example, a small school may emphasise its friendly, community ethos, while a large school may emphasise its range of facilities.

3 Marketing mix strategy. This involves identifying the specific combination of elements that the organisation will present to promote itself, and is often characterised by the idea of the five Ps (Product, Place, Price, Promotion and People). Strategic implementation

The final stage in Johnson and Scholes' (1993) model is strategic implementation, which involves turning the strategy into practice. This includes establishing appropriate systems, acquiring and applying the relevant resources, operating the systems, and evaluating/measuring their effect. Within this process, two important management issues can be identified. Firstly, the establishment of effective internal quality assurance systems should ensure that the STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE service or product meets customer expectations. Secondly, it is important to
develop mechanisms for collecting external data on how programmes and activities are perceived – what the FEFC calls ‘con rmatory evidence’ (FEFC, 1997). Case studies in the management of marketing and external relations

How far do these principles operate in the ‘real world’ of educational institutions, though? Few detailed research-based case studies exist either in the school sector or in FE. From the research of Foskett (1995), Gewirtz, Ball and Bowe (1995), James and Phillips (1995), Glatter, Woods and Bagley (1996) and Woods, Bagley and Glatter (1998), the following features of external relations management in schools emerge:

• A steady cultural shift towards accepting the need to operate actively in a market environment.

• A very varied interpretation of marketing, but with a strong ‘productcentred’ perspective in schools.

• A reactive, ad hoc approach to marketing, with the dominance of short-term promotional activities.

• An emphasis on short-term ‘crisis management’ approaches, dealing with recruitment issues.

• A failure to recognise the dynamic nature of markets and the presence of market threats even to institutions in currently strong positions. Schools successful with their image and recruitment are frequently complacent and do not seek to scan the market.

• The absence of any coherent form of marketing research.

• The adoption of undifferentiated marketing strategies by schools, most seeking to be ‘all things’ to all potential pupils. Glatter, Woods and Bagley (1996, p. 22) suggest that popular schools ‘have no incentive to differentiate
further’ and less popular schools seek ‘not to sharpen but to blunt any difference and thereby share the mutual benefits from being similar’.

In primary schools, practice is similar to that of secondary schools, but is even more ‘conservative’ in approach (Stokes, 1996; Minter, 1997). As Foskett (1998, p. 54) indicates: A strong commitment to educational values drives them, together with the establishment of strong relationships with the community. The role of word-of-mouth is so important that a ‘selling’ orientation is of little assistance, so many primary schools have, by default, and without reference to the ‘canons’ of marketing, adopted a strategy that is ‘relationship marketing’.

Although marketing has become a major preoccupation for FE institutions and a substantial marketing function has been developed in larger colleges with significant specialist marketing teams, many smaller colleges still place marketing as a peripheral activity in the job portfolios of middle and senior managers.


- There is considerable diversity in the organisation and systems adopted to deal with marketing.
- As with schools, the emphasis is on short-term ‘project’ marketing rather than strategic marketing integrated into long-term institutional planning.
- Considerable expertise has been developed in the use of promotional strategies traditionally associated with large commercial organisations.

The three case studies below are presented to provide a more detailed perspective.
ive on these developments, although it is important to recognise the unique char-
acter of the market places within which each of the institutions operates. They
are not presented here as being ‘typical’, but serve to illustrate some of the pres-
sures and responses schools and colleges have experienced in the market place. Case study 1 – Grove Primary School

Grove Primary School is a 7-11 junior school in a small village in a rural part of central southern England. It takes most of its pupils from the village infant school, and in 1996 had 75 pupils on roll. This represented a steady decline from 95 three years earlier, indicating a growing disenchantment in the village with the school. In 1996 the headteacher left and the new head was appointed by the governors with a brief to reverse the decline in numbers. The strategy employed by the head was not based explicitly on any marketing principles (the head denies any knowledge of marketing!), but on a clear five-element approach:

1 recognition that word-of-mouth is the most important promotional tool for any school, especially in a strong community like the village

2 personal relationships between all the staff and all external stakeholders (parents, neighbours, suppliers, LEA) must be positive, optimistic, welcoming and indicative of the pursuit of quality

3 quality is identified by good achievement in school performance league tables

4 the head must take the lead in spending as much time as
possible with parents of potential pupils, and respond to all invitations for the school to participate in local activities.

The head scans the external environment for opportunities to enhance the school’s relationships with stakeholders, and to identify potential threats as they arise. Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture.

The school has no formal marketing plan, and marketing is not mentioned in the School Development Plan. While the governors monitor the results of marketing, they take no active part in the process, and the head is clear that ‘I am the school’s marketing’. Such a pattern of activity is clearly based on relationship marketing rather than transactional marketing, but indicates a school which is, in reality, highly responsive to its market environment. In this school, the success is:

• a roll for 1998/9 of 105
• a number of pupils now admitted from infant schools at some distance from the school
• a number of affluent parents in the village opting to use the school rather than preparatory schools
• the appointment of an additional member of staff.

A number of key principles emerge from this example. The importance of seeing marketing in the primary school as relationship marketing is underlined, which in turn emphasises the need to be concerned with all external relations processes and not just recruitment. Linked to
this is the centrality of

quality assurance and the pursuit of measurable success in
underpinning exter

nal perceptions, which in itself requires the engagement of
all staff with

responding to the external environment. Thirdly, the
importance of monitoring

the environment is clear, as is the identification of a
clear set of strategies and

priorities. Case study 2 – Greenstreet Community School

Greenstreet Community School is an 11-16 mixed
comprehensive school

serving, principally, a large local authority housing
estate in a city in southern

England. While its performance in public examinations has
improved in recent

years, and it performs well in relation to its intake of
pupils, it is still amongst

the poorest performers in the LEA. It has never recruited
up to its maximum

intake number, and has substantial competition from other
local schools, includ

ing a similar school at the other end of the estate.
Important threats are the

school’s reputation for bullying and boys’
underperformance, and new buildings

at its major competitor school. Significant strengths
include a strong community

education programme, a highly regarded staff, a strong
sports tradition and an

attractive campus. A new head was appointed in 1997.

The school has never had an explicit marketing plan and
external relations
management had always been a (poorly developed) responsibility of the head teacher, who had never spent much time promoting strong links with external organisations. The new head, on appointment, established a primary aim of filling all the places in the next year’s intake and establishing Greenstreet as the first choice school in the locality through: **STRATEGY, EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND MARKETING**

- short-term promotional developments to address current under-recruitment through, for example, establishing good links with the education reporter of the local newspaper, and feeding regular stories in relation to pupil achievement

- focusing in the medium term on improving examination results through establishing teaching and learning issues as the key focus for all staff, addressing in particular boys’ under-achievement and the linked issue of behaviour; innovative developments included a cross-curricular literacy programme and the introduction of vocational programmes for 14-16-year-olds

- identifying the characteristics that might make Greenstreet distinctive within the local schools market; this included, for example, emphasising and developing the community character of the school with internal appointments of staff to develop strong literacy and music outreach programmes

- establishing mechanisms for sensing the external environment – for example, commissioning a survey of feeder school pupils and parents to gain their perceptions of the school and its competitors

- developing appropriate political links through the generation of good relationships with the LEA, community groups and the local post-16 institutions.

Despite these developments no explicit marketing plan was created. Each
approach was either a feature of a short-term component of
the development
plan or else a strategy developed in the head’s own
practice. The strategy,

though, demonstrates clearly the recognition of both
short-term and long-term
marketing needs, the link between long-term aims and issues
of broad external
relations management, the focus on partnership as much as
‘exchange’ relations,
ships, and the importance of quality assurance and teaching
and learning as
guarantors of future success in the market. Case study 3 -
Lowlands College

Lowlands College is an urban further education college in
north-west England.

At the time of incorporation in 1992 it emphasised strongly
traditional vocational and craft-based programmes, with a small
‘academic-track’ sector and
some self-funding business training programmes. Its
strengths were its industrial
links and its reputation for quality vocational training. Its
weaknesses were its
traditional ‘dirty hands’ image, and its location in a
declining inner city area.

Prior to incorporation, the local authority had channelled
‘academic’ work to
two sixth form colleges in the city. Marketing was the
responsibility of a Vice
Principal and the Head of Business Studies, but no explicit
marketing plan or
strategy existed. Following incorporation the college was
faced with a declining
Average Level of Funding (see Chapter 6) and a highly competitive market with expansion targets of 25 per cent over four years. S T R A T E G Y, M A R K E T I N G, C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E

Lowlands reorganised its marketing organisation and operations. A Marketing Officer and Assistant were appointed, line managed by the Vice Principal (Planning), with a responsibility for promoting the college’s programmes. A separate Community and Enterprise Office (CEO) was established, led by a middle management appointee, reporting to the Vice Principal (Curriculum), with a brief to review the needs of the college’s client groups, to identify new markets and to generate new sources of income. The CEO was also charged with establishing a marketing database and undertaking appropriate marketing research. The integration of these activities fell to the Senior Management Team with the responsibility for the college’s strategic plan. The Strategic Plan contains a section on ‘Marketing’ which focuses on promotional activities. Other sections in the plan include a theme within ‘Curriculum’ on ‘New developments and potential’, and a further section on ‘Managing relationships with external partners’.

Key decisions on strategy included the choice not to expand substantially ‘academic’ provision, but to focus on vocational and
business-funded training pro
grammes. The college chose, despite the decline in engineering employment, to establish a high quality IT-based engineering provision for training, and to develop a training and conference suite for the regional business community. A franchise Year 1 engineering programme was established with a local university. In the period 1992–95 the college expanded its market share of engineering and business programmes in the region, but overall expansion meant that FEFC targets were not met. The funding gap this left was only bridged by the use of demand-led (DLE) funding (see Chapter 6) from the FEFC. By 1998 the college’s financial position has deteriorated, and a merger with one of the local sixth form colleges is being negotiated.

Lowlands demonstrates the challenges of managing external relations in a highly competitive post-compulsory environment. The college adopted a strong sales-oriented approach which, in turn, led to the planning of external relations and marketing being diluted within the college’s strategy. The decision to focus on existing areas of expertise was not based on external scanning, although this choice recognised the need to be distinctive in the market. The college was handicapped by its own inexperience with marketing as it moved from a
‘domesticated’ to a
‘wild’ environment, and the inclusion of marketing into the strategic planning
process for the college was a bolt-on to existing planning. A college of similar
history nearby used its market analysis to re-focus the college’s programmes
towards business education, with an aggressive pursuit of the academic-track
market of local school sixth forms. Its future is much more secure than that of Low
lands. Conclusion
Managing external relations and managing marketing are tightly linked
processes for all institutions. At a strategic planning level, the strategy needs to
be driven by the institution’s interaction with its external environment, including STRATEGY, EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND MARKETING
its markets. In turn the strategy drives the way the institution operates directly in
the market, and shapes the character of the wide spectrum of relationships that
influence external perceptions of the ‘quality’ of the institution. The education
system is characterised by considerable diversity in marketing and external rela
tions practice. The ‘sales-oriented’ perspective still dominates, with marketing
detached from mainstream institutional planning. However, since most schools
and colleges are small businesses, an approach based more strongly on the
concept of ‘relationship marketing’ may link together more firmly an institu-
tion’s educational mission and its market situation. In conclusion, Smith, Scott
and Lynch’s perspective on marketing in FE still describes the situation across
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Pieda (1996) Labour Market Information for Further


Celebration School enrolls students from the ages of 5 through 18 in a comprehensive public (i.e. state) school programme. The school, in operation since fall, 1996, in close proximity to Orlando, is located in Osceola County in a small central Florida community recently created by the Walt Disney Company’s development group, the Celebration Company. What makes the school’s development interesting, apart from the cachet associated with anything Disney in US and British culture, is both the particular care that was taken to construct a school from ground zero and the intent on the part of the early visionaries to provide a case example for replication. The location of the school in a setting of contrasting and often competing interests - developers on one side, county government on the other; wealthy Celebration residents in contrast to less affluent county residents - placed...
the enterprise at risk from the beginning.

In a Fall, 1997, conversation with the new principal Dot Davis, curriculum co-ordinator, Donna Leinsing, Kathy Borman and others, Don Rollie, a consultant to the National Education Association involved in Celebration’s Teaching Academy, reflected on why a chronicle of the school’s development was inherently important: [It is important because it addresses the question of] . . . How do you build a school from zero, ground zero, into an effective, functioning, cutting-edge educational institution? Now the fact that it’s also being created in a brand new community is interesting, but in some respects sort of incidental. You can’t separate them probably. But one of the features this school purports to be aiming at is replicability. In your own chartering language you say that this school should be replicable anywhere.

While Celebration’s developers held the ideal of replicability, it is difficult to imagine many school districts investing similar resources in the creation of a school. It is also the case—and Celebration School presents a good example—that early visionaries are often succeeded by practical realists whose concerns focus on the bottom line of the enterprise, e.g., student discipline, achievements, enrolment and parent satisfaction. Nonetheless, documenting Celebration School’s development and first two years as a fully implemented school provides a road map or, more accurately, a cautionary tale for those considering
such an undertaking.

Celebration was designed over a period of ten years through a unique private/public collaboration involving the Walt Disney Company, Stetson University and the Osceola County School District. In addition, a leading national professional organisation representing teachers, the National Education Association (NEA), as well as elite universities, notably Johns Hopkins, Brown and Harvard in addition to Auburn University, were also instrumental in creating a school culture from the ground up with such features as electronic portfolio assessment; multi-grade teaching and learning in a comprehensive Kindergarten through 12th grade arrangement (i.e. primary grades through high school in one setting); and a strong emphasis on equity and access to academic learning for all students through work on projects cutting across traditional school subjects.

Learning at Celebration School was envisioned as a life-long endeavour carried out in a community of learners with teachers as ‘learning leaders’.

This chapter chronicles the development of the concept of the school from its earliest incarnation as a component of Walt Disney’s dream of a community of the future to its present ‘neotraditional’ emphasis on community, place, techno
logy, and a healthy lifestyle, the cornerstones of the built community of Celebration. Important issues throughout the school’s development include the extent to which business and education work as partners in creating a school, how a school culture was put in place during the school’s initial years of operation, and how problems of school leadership were addressed by a principal whose backing by a vocal and articulate group of home owners and developers gave her the leverage she needed to ‘take charge’. The planning phase - mid-1980s to early 1992 The Disney Development Company (DDC) now part of Walt Disney’s Imagineering, was the seed-bed for the creation of the town of Celebration including its school. The Imagineering people are Disney employees in the development side of the business. Formed to manage the development of the town, The Celebration Company is a division of Walt Disney Imagineering. According to Terry STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE Wick, the Education Liaison for the Celebration Company from 1996 to August 1998, Michael Eisner, the Walt Disney Company’s CEO, agreed to support the project when the Imagineering people ‘came up with five cornerstones . . . .edu . . . .place meaning the physical space - the architecture and . . . .community being that
kind of spiritual piece that
pulls people together and gives them that sense of here's where we're gonna go.'

In his recent autobiography, Eisner discusses the town of Celebration and especially its school. His appraisal of the school and its approach proved to be prophetic: We knew that an experimental approach would be controversial. My children attended a similar school, the Center for Early Education in Los Angeles. When Breck [Eisner’s son] was eight years old, my parents asked what grade he was in. ‘Continuum purple’, Breck blithely replied. A simple ‘second grade’ would have been far easier to explain to my mother. Jane [Eisner’s wife] and I were relieved when the school adopted a more standard language. . . Despite some early complaints about the Celebration school, applications [from county parents] far exceeded openings, and standardized test scores for students at all levels significantly exceeded state averages. (Eisner 1998: 408)

Eisner’s children’s progressive, student-centred school in southern California was inherent in the model at the centre of Celebration School’s original plan.

The model was also in keeping with schools such as Dalton or Allen-Stevenson, the small private school Eisner attended in the 1950s on Manhattan’s upper East Side.

Walt Disney’s original vision in the 1960s was of a utopian community sheltered by a dome where Disney employees and their families could find homes, safe neighbourhoods, and a feeling of community. However, the plan ‘pretty much sat on the shelf’ according to Charles Adams, a Director of Community Development.
for Disney during the construction of the town, until Peter Rummel was hired by the Disney Development Company in the mid-1980s to plan additional theme parks including the recently opened Animal Kingdom as well as the Celebration community. In Adams’ words, He [Peter Rummel, now Chairman of the Jacksonville-based St. Joe Paper Company] came aboard with the Disney Development Company in the mid 80s. They had done an analysis of the land then and determined that they would put all the theme parks and resorts . . . north of Highway 192. [This] was the northernmost 20,000 acres, leaving us 10,000 acres site down here [south of 192] kind of as excess land. The company asked him to consider the highest and best use for it. It was for a mixed community like this, housing, of ces, retail, schools, golf

CREATING A SCHOOL CULTURE FROM THE GROUND UP courses, and all those kind of things. [Since he had] developed planned communities, particularly in the Southeast and in Florida . . . he clearly had the background to take off on an endeavour like this. He just played with it for three or four years and then finally decided to hire people with residential background and community development. (Charles Adams, personal communication, 10 March 1998)

Celebration’s distinctive architecture, including a post-of ce designed by Michael Graves, is in uenced by what Adams and others refer to as ‘neo-tradi tionalism’. The goal was to create an environment with a maximal fit between its inhabitants, their needs, and the city’s infrastructure, services and appearance.

Criticisms of the community have appeared (Pollan 1997: 50), arguing rather convincingly that the founding ideology is bound up with consumerist principles
underscoring residents’ paramount concern with ‘corporate sensitivity’ to their needs. After all, the land that was purchased by Disney in the mid-1960s for less than $250 an acre is now being sold in quarter-acre parcels for more than $85,000 each.

Few, however, criticise the architectural features of individual buildings and homes or the overall ambience. Celebration’s streets are lined with mature trees (brought in by Disney) and porch-fronted homes; garages have been relegated to alleyways that connect blocks of homes that vary in cost. Garages are topped with small mother-in-law apartments that have turned out to be critical in creating communal links with the school. Today, many interns from Auburn, Johns Hopkins, the University of Central Florida and Stetson doing their student teaching live in these apartments, paying next to nothing in rent to the families who own them.

Planning for the school was begun in 1989. The Disney designers believed that a public school was the best choice, taking into account such factors as affordability, competing models, and impact on the greater community. In Terry Wick’s view: Education was the piece that brought the school district, the State of Florida, Stetson University and the Celebration Company together. The district kept saying ‘You’re just not gonna have a school out there.’
Disney kept saying that residents won’t move in unless there is a school. It was a long, long, long negotiation process with the school district. (Terry Wick, interview, 10 March 1998)

The image of the 10,000-acre site south of Highway 192 as excess or ‘left-over’ property has haunted the development of both the community and the school.

On the school district side, from the perspective of Osceola County, taking a cautious position with anything ‘Disney’ seemed a reasonable thing to do.

Residents in the county have seen themselves as less privileged than those residing in Orange County (Orlando), enviously noting that Disney paid 65 million dollars a year (in 1997) in taxes to Orange County while contributing only 10 million dollars in taxes to Osceola County. Indeed, the district eventually agreed to finance a new school, funding up to 15.5 million dollars for its construction.

The remainder, including the land, valued, according to Wick, at 7 million dollars, was underwritten by the Walt Disney Company. Fearing that its development would not sell, Disney became an active agent in the establishment of the school: Disney knew that this could not just be another Osceola school . . . What Disney decided it would do is use its name under the Celebration Company and go out and leverage colleges and universities and other educational experts . . . To work with a cadre of teachers from the county as well as some teachers from the state of Florida who had been former teachers of the year to say ‘If you could start all over from scratch and build a building,
what would that be?... We... [Disney] have a vested interest in the school’s success... we’re kind of like a business partner on steroids. (Terry Wick, Interview, 10 March 1998)

In 1992, as an example of Disney’s business partner resolve, 5 million dollars was put aside for two purposes. First, this sum was to help fund the development of the school design – what eventually became the DNA model – by educators.

The second, and from Disney’s perspective, more critical concern, was to augment the district’s per pupil allotment of $3,200 – a figure far less than the national average of approximately $7,000 in 1997. According to Wick this ($5 million) ‘enhancement’ fund contributes approximately $300 for each enrolled student to augment the per pupil allocation provided by the county. This $5 million fund is controlled by the district and the school.

Describing herself as a person ‘who was not hit as hard with the pixie dust’ as some of her colleagues in the district, a long-term resident of the county, member of the School Board, and until it was dissolved in late spring 1998, member of Celebration School’s Board of Trustees, Donna Hart is quick to note the scepticism with which Disney is regarded by county residents, many of whom are low-paid service workers at the Disney attractions or in the businesses that support them. There was a lot of distrust on the part
of our people that lived in our county. They worked for Disney; they were not especially enamoured . . . A lot of them felt like they didn’t get a fair shake . . . didn’t make enough money, or whatever the case may be. They were not that excited about going into partnership with them to build a school. Some of it was equity issues. People complained. They said you’re going to have this super school out here, and we’re from the county, and we’re

CREATING A SCHOOL CULTURE FROM THE GROUND UP never going to get this kind of stuff. We [on the school board] were trying to explain that we were looking to use this as kind of a pilot, and spread it out throughout the district. I think people in the county think Disney’s got plenty of money to do whatever they want to do . . . [but] what Disney brings to us more than their own checkbook is the resources of other people . . . We’ve got 29 schools in the district, so I guess spreading the wealth is going to take time. (Donna Hart, interview, 9 March 1998)

Not surprisingly, the Disney interests were regarded with more than a measure

of caution on the part of many county officials and residents outside the

Community of Celebration who believed that the profit motive was pre-eminent

in Disney’s hierarchy of values. In Donna Hart’s interview, the Celebration

Company people were taken aback by the process of developing a school in the

public sector: They just were so used to being autonomous. ‘We’re going to do this, and talk to the head of a company’ and the head of a company says ‘yes’, and they spend money on it or whatever. When you’re working in a public forum, it’s totally different. You don’t sit behind closed doors with your board of directors. You’re out there in the public talking about all of this. Which I think was part of the problem. One thing that made contract negotiations so difficult, was that Disney had closed doors. They could sit behind closed doors and talk about the contract. Dealing with stockholders is one thing, but dealing with the public in general in a public forum, that’s something very different. (Donna Hart, interview, 9 March 1998)
One solution to the problem of reconciling Disney corporate interests with those of the county became obvious fairly early on – turning over the development of the school programme to a team of teachers and their expert advisors who bore Disney’s stamp of approval.

This process began when members of the Disney Development Company (DDC) travelled to Auburn University in Alabama in 1992 to consult Rich Kunkel. Larry Rosen, a professor of education at Stetson University in Florida, had come to Disney’s attention as a person respected in the district for his work in faculty development, in demand throughout Osceola County. Kunkel had been Rosen’s major advisor in the graduate school at St Louis University, a Midwestern Jesuit college. As Dean of the School of Education at Auburn with an active, far-ung and influential network, Kunkel was regarded as knowledgeable about Professional Development School (PDS) research and development, especially partnering relationships between public schools and universities. Professional Development Schools have been the focus of considerable interest in both reforming US schools and changing teacher preparation programmes in STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE.

colleges and universities. Typically, a PDS incorporates faculty from the univer
sity who reside part time at the school site where they engage in collaborative faculty development, research and teaching, and supervise undergraduate stu
dents in teacher education.

Kunkel was also experienced in making alliances with businesses, having developed a working partnership with Pepperell, the textile corporation, and funding from RJR Nabisco’s 21st Century Schools. Kunkel helped the DDC establish an advisory board for the creation of the school, with the development of a PDS for Celebration. This board was eventually comprised of the ‘big names’ that Disney desired, including Howard Gardner, the Harvard University psychologist credited with developing the theory of ‘multiple intelligences’. In addition to his assistance in framing the PDS plan and forming a board of advi
sors, Kunkel also takes credit for convincing the Disney interests that the school should be inclusive, serving a diversity of students: ‘The last thing the world needs is another white suburban school, no matter how excellent.’ Rich Kunkel, Larry Rosen and the teachers from the county who worked on early plans of the DNA2 model for the school held no illusions about the importance of stressing diversity and were fortunate to have an ally in Charles Adams, the developer,
who remained committed to constructing housing available to renters as well as
buyers at affordable costs. Schools as organisations
Schools, regardless of their settings and structures, communicate a sense of
values held by members of the school organisation. There is an observable rela
tionship between organisational values and internal and external environments;
further, the actions of organisational members reflect learned patterns of thought
and activity that powerfully shape people’s organisational experiences (Deal
1985). These experiences reflect the culture of the school. Schools have inter
related qualities that inform constituents about the implicit or explicit agreement
among teachers, administrators, and others on how to solve problems and how to
behave; constituents understand that it’s the way things are done in the organisa
tion. At Celebration School, sets of core values, ways of viewing the curriculum
as organised into domains for the active, constructivist teaching and learning of
integrated sets of ideas, were embodied in the school’s key documents, speci
cally the DNA2 (See Appendix 1). The DNA2, so named for its obvious connec
tion to the double helix, was designed by the visionaries to describe the ‘diverse
domains’ (curricular frameworks), ‘nurturing neighbourhoods’ (classroom
organisation to include cross-age/grade groupings of students), and ‘authentic applications’ (alternative assessment practices such as electronic portfolios to assess student project work) that formed the central framework for teaching and learning in the school.

The culture of an individual school is a subset of the culture of the larger organisation and its community (Lutz and Merz 1992). In the case of Osceola County and the community of Celebration itself, major alterations in the assessed valuation of property, population demographics and patterns of student attendance and performance occurred by dint of the creation of the school itself, leaving the school and district vulnerable to community dissatisfaction, a problem for the school and the district as events unfolded during the first year. Parents and other residents in the newly developed community of Celebration were well aware of the contrast between the value of homes in the county, worth $60,000 on average, compared to their homes which ranged in cost from $160,000 to close to a million dollars. Organisation culture has more to do with relationships and assumptions that
people hold regarding a complex interweave of lived experience, expectations,
ideals and future plans; schools do not exist in a vacuum. Assumptions about the
organisation develop over time and rely on shared philosophies, ideologies,
values, beliefs, expectations, attitudes and norms that knit a community together
(Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa 1985). They are usually passed down from one gen
eration to the next; teachers, parents and administrators learn about the school’s
culture from those who have lived in the culture. These established individuals
share with newcomers a stable collection of common assumptions, beliefs, arte
facts, and language patterns that operate beneath the surface and exert a power
ful influence on behaviour in the organisation (Deal and Bolman 1991). The
history that contributes to a school culture also serves to distinguish it from
other schools within the larger school district organisation.

But, what occurs if there are few mutually agreed-upon cultural assumptions
to invoke in the process of initiating new members into the school culture? What
happens if instead there are deeply conflicting beliefs held by various con
stituencies? Of interest in our account of Celebration School is its creation de
novo as a school Disney developers assured buyers would be ‘world class’, a
phrase that became equated with student achievement measured by performance on the SAT. This image was in stark contrast to the emphasis placed by the visionaries on an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning carefully constructed on ‘best practices’. Finally, in the summer of 1998 both these images were at odds with the views of Celebration residents in a newly constituted committee of ‘concerned parents’. Along with the principal, committee members saw the school as ‘chaotic’, lacking structure, paying far too little attention both to teaching basic skills, and to enforcing student discipline.

People, particularly administrators vested with authority, may have considerable influence on school culture. Administrators, for example, exercise a strong influence on how a school operates on a day-to-day basis. During her first year as principal, Dot Davis hired an assistant principal whose tasks from January 1998 onward were to create procedures for addressing absenteeism and tardiness, accounting for student course credits and GPAs, and arranging for tutoring older students in preparation for taking the SAT exam – all vital concerns of vocal Celebration parents. Nonetheless, organisational newcomers must contend with the history of the organisation as well as the norms and shared
beliefs that influence strategy, marketing, change, and culture

accepted rules of behaviour - in this case the visionaries’, teaching and learning plan. Clearly, those with formal powers can insist on compliance with procedures and policies that govern formal behaviour within a school or district. In fact, vocal parents expected Dot as the principal to actively rein in the visionaries who came to be regarded as ‘the clique’ during the summer of 1998. In a town where customer satisfaction is paramount, where many building lots were as yet unsold and property values still shaky, it was simply good business for the person in charge - the principal - to respond to community pressure to take control of the situation.

Not all elements of the culture are readily controllable even by the person in charge. Components of the culture include: (1) shared values, which influence day-to-day life in an organisation; (2) heroes and heroines, the people who embody the values of the organisation - often visionary heroes who provide role models that represent what an organisation stands for; and (3) rituals and ceremonies - manifestations of the values and beliefs, that influence everyday social interactions, work rituals, management rituals, and rituals that reinforce values.

(Deal and Bolman 1991). Because cultures evolve to meet the needs of their
environment, their strength and influence may vary among organisations. In the case of Celebration School, the first two years saw a number of elements working to both construct and unhinge an embryonic school culture from its moorings in the original vision as articulated most forcefully in the design for teaching and learning, the so-called DNA2 model. Leaders may possess either formal or informal power, but over time they have the potential to influence an organisation’s culture. The critical variable is time, whether it is to influence an existing school organisation or to establish a culture for a new school organisation. Cultures support different behaviours that are consistent with distinctive patterns of values; those in leadership positions have the opportunity to influence those behaviours. Dot Davis, Celebration’s principal during the school’s first year in its new building (1997-8), came with a more conservative approach than that of the visionaries, one more responsive, as it turned out, to the local community of Celebration’s own views. The case of Celebration School The development of Celebration School occurred in phases. Marking each of the phases is a fairly distinctive leadership regime. Each phase witnessed the leadership of a set of individuals who were supplanted in the
phases of development

that followed. Louis and her colleagues (see for example, Louis and King 1993: 217) argue that while the development of new or radically redesigned schools may ‘constitute a relatively straightforward solution to systemic school improvement’, such a notion ignores the legion of problems that beset visionaries who would undertake such a task. Several themes that Louis and King derive from their case studies of such schools have direct relevance to the case of Celebration School. The most important here are related to the construction of a professional culture based on trust and stability of relationships.

CREATING A SCHOOL CULTURE FROM THE GROUND UP

Closely related to the formation of trust and collegiality is the lack of precedent for new teacher and administrator roles coupled with the press of demand ing workday schedules, allowing little opportunity for the cultivation of trust, norms, rituals and solidarity based upon collective reflection on the cbb and flow of organisational life (Louis and King 1993). In addition, the Celebration School case highlights the problematic nature of building an innovative school pro gramme in collaboration with a number of organisational, business and indi
individual policy entrepreneurs, each seeking recognition, influence and authority.

The school may be new, but the external constituents bring their sets of beliefs and assumptions about what this school should do and how it should look. These may (and in the case of Celebration School did) conflict with those held by internal constituents, especially those who developed the guiding principles of the curriculum. Finally, as summer planning for the second year came to an end in July 1998, the intrusion of the local community with its agenda catapulted the school’s administration into crisis. We are getting ahead of our story, and so will turn now to a chronology of the major phases of the planning and implementation of design for Celebration School to illustrate the problematic nature of creating a public school in partnership with business interests. Building a school and constructing a curriculum, 1992–1997

The next phase of Celebration School’s development was orchestrated through negotiations that were often extremely delicate between the Celebration Company and the district. According to developer Charles Adam, We [Disney] were all fired up and ready to work with the public schools and guess what, they weren’t ready to work with the Walt Disney Company. There was a lot of baggage. Disney had been here in Orlando for 25 plus years and nothing had ever been done in Osceola County, except getting a lot of the lower-end housing development. All of the theme parks . . . [are in] Orange County. Until Celebration came along nothing at Disney had been developed in Osceola County. (Charles Adams, interview, 10 March
To reduce the level of mistrust and scepticism, the developers ‘begged’ school district people to attend a retreat referred to as the Visioning Workshop with delegates from the National Education Association (NEA), the representative body for teachers in the county; representatives from the school administration; principals; and state department of education representatives. Larry Rosen was asked to work as group facilitator for the retreat. The Visioning Workshop was held January 7–8, 1993. Participants included representatives from the Florida Department of Education, DDC, Osceola School District, and Stetson, with Kunkel as facilitator. Early on, he requested participants from each delegation to place the organisational mission statement on the wall, pull the embedded values from the documents, and post them below the statement.

Charles Adams went on with his story: Then we said, ‘Whoa. Backup’. When you reduce it to just the core values, look how much overlap there is among all those various groups. And all we did on that retreat . . . was agree upon the values in which the education delivery system would be based. That was invaluable, because later on we clearly ran into obstacles during the public processes. We could always refer back to them and ask, ‘Have we changed our minds?’ ‘Are these values still important to each of us individually or as a group?’ The answer was always ‘Yes’. (Charles Adams, interview, 10 March 1998)

One of the sticking points early on was the creation of the Teaching Academy.
(later renamed the Institute for Teaching and Learning). An important goal during this period was to target best practices in education with an eye to their successful implementation in the school. Both parties also desired to have a forum – the Teaching Academy – for institutionalising them. Rich Kunkel, Larry Rosen, participants from the NEA, especially Don Rollie and others, identified key national initiatives they considered most promising. 'Best practices' quickly became equated with current reform agendas including the 'integrated curriculum' associated with Theodore Sizer’s Essential Schools and the 'multiple intelligences' concepts developed by Howard Gardner in Harvard’s Project Zero, in addition to a number of other ideas such as 'authentic assessment', using electronic portfolios, a particular favourite of Larry Rosen. Strands of the educational reform nexus were examined over the next several months by school district people responsible for drafting the preliminary curriculum who read widely and visited schools throughout the US identified as successful in implementing systemic reform initiatives. The developers, however, never lost sight of the larger political and economic motives for designing a ‘world-class school’. According to Adams, 'we wanted
a place where you could bring legislators and leaders and others to see how it
could be done.’ In addition, the developers were well aware of the importance
home buyers attached to sending their children to excellent public schools. The
district envisioned more practical uses for the Teaching Academy as a site for
best practices. This idea found its way to Tallahassee and to the attention of then
Commissioner of Education, Betty Castor. Because a showcase for best teaching
practices was in line with her priorities, a line item of $4 million was added to
the budget to cover construction costs. However, just as the Governor’s budget
was to be finalised, members of the legislature removed the Teaching Academy
item, substituting moneys for reform schools in its place, an irony that did not
escape many.

Following the Visionary Workshop, a curriculum planning team was formed

CREATING A SCHOOL CULTURE FROM THE GROUND UP
to design the important components of the school, draft a mission statement,
create a curriculum, plan the physical space, and develop designs for techno
logy. In addition, staffing patterns, hiring plans and evaluation criteria, as well
as governance structure and student body management, were also addressed.
The team included teachers and specialists from the country schools. This team worked very closely with the Osceola District School Board over the next few years while being paid through the district-controlled ‘Enhancement Fund’ Disney had set up. They decided to take on a K-12 school design, although in retrospect, now believe that a K-8 plan would have made implementation easier. Nonetheless, the planners intended to create a full inclusion school; children with severe handicaps were to be accommodated by facilities within the county.

Perhaps the most important accomplishment during the first year that the school was in session (1996–7) was the establishment of the Professional Development School (PDS). Representatives from Hopkins, Auburn, Stetson, and the University of Central Florida spent time at the school not only co-ordinating the activities of the interns sent from the various university teacher education programmes, but also meeting with Celebration School teachers and conducting staff development on an ad hoc and also more formal basis.

As the school year began in 1997, the doors opened on Celebration School’s new elegantly designed campus. In keeping with the planners’ vision of the
school and other public buildings commanding central locations in the community, the lovely brick buildings constituting the school campus, punctuated by green Caribbean shuttered windows, grace a large centrally situated location steps away from the town’s business and commercial centre, itself an interweave of palm trees and post-modern architecture. Before the second school year began, a series of two meetings were held to allow community members – primarily parents – to become familiar with the school design. Two meetings were held at a hotel less than a mile from the town. According to Donna Leinsing, those attending were enthusiastically supportive with the exception of a few ‘chronic complainers’: We had two meetings at the Hyatt and filled up the ballroom twice on each date . . . We introduced new staff, talked about the neighbourhood space and how we could use it to create schools within the school. We explained our reasons for deciding that K-S would be good for the children. The audience was positive and excited about moving into the new school. We had a few chronic complainers . . . left over from the first year, but in general everyone was excited about learning more about how the school would operate. (Donna Leinsing, E-mail communication, September 1998) STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE While Donna points to the enthusiasm of the parents, it is clear that a number were sceptical about how well the school would work. The multi-age arrangement of students, inclusion of high school aged students, and other aspects of the
school – especially the use of student portfolios in place of tests to gauge the
students’ progress – were questioned by parents. An additional meeting
addressed some of these concerns: The second meeting featured a principal and a team of teachers from a K-8 multi-age school in Indiana (New Augusta). They did a very nice presentation focusing on the similarities between Celebration School and their school. They answered questions and emphasised their successes.

Nonetheless, some parents remained sceptical, questioning the balance between teaching basic skills and enhancing students’ self-esteem. Their scepticism was apparent in an evaluation carried out by Auburn University in the summer of 1997. Institutionalising the school structure

The school opened in the fall of 1997 with just over 800 students, in grades Kindergarten through 12, including students aged 5-18. Approximately 200 students lived with their families in the new community of Celebration itself while the majority of students were bussed in from around Osceola County. County students had been selected through a highly competitive lottery system to attend the school. Three to four core teachers worked with 65 to 100 students in each of the school’s neighbourhoods. The neighbourhood was the key organisational structure for academic learning and team-building among teaching staff. As Donna Leinsing, the school’s curriculum co-ordinator during the first and
second years described it, A neighbourhood is a space which
should not be confused with a classroom space because it’s
really 6,000 square feet. And we hope it resembles more of
a house plan. But there’s open space, there’s closed space,
the rest-rooms are here, the planning room is here,
conference rooms, and each neighbourhood has a
refrigerator, a microwave . . .

In other words, neighbourhoods constitute the locations in
school where teaching and learning are formally enacted. Unlike a ‘pod’, each
neighbourhood has

some open space and some closed space in the form of rather
traditional class

rooms and science labs, for example, in the upper grades.
Each neighbourhood
determines its schedule, makes decisions as a team, and
evaluates student

performance in this context. In our observations at
Celebration School over a

six-month period, however, we saw few instances of team
instruction. Rather, at

CREATING A SCHOOL CULTURE FROM THE GROUND UP

least in the upper grades, teachers alternated teaching
responsibilities according
to curricular units with one social studies teacher, for
example, teaching a unit

on the Holocaust while another followed with a unit on
post-World War II eco

nomic development in the US. The multi-aged nature of the
neighbourhoods,

which were organised to include students from grades K – 5,
6-9, and 10-12,

fostered cross-age instruction and informal mentoring. At
the primary level,
approximately 100 children were divided among four teachers, the goal to have each student settle into a neighbourhood as a young child and move in a continuous progress model while remaining in a familiar setting with teachers and classmates with whom long-term relationships could be built. Continuous progress provides a model for teaching, learning and curriculum that shifts instructional planning from the group to the individual child while utilising flexible grouping procedures and team teaching. In a continuous progress arrangement, there is less emphasis on grade levels and tracking and more cross-age, cross-ability grouping, promoting a problem-solving, constructivist, hands-on approach to instruction and student learning (Goodlad and Anderson 1987).

Borrowing from established but progressive approaches including continuous progress, multi-aged arrangements that trace back to Maria Montessori and newer innovative practices, Celebration School's founders worked with the architects who designed the arrestingly beautiful building. As a result, the school’s built structure was designed to accommodate the DNA2 design for teaching and learning. Response to the school’s physical space was almost uniformly positive among the students and teachers. A primary
grade teacher

pointed out: 'It [the physical space] is so very different. We are not all off on a single hallway, in little rooms with our doors closed teaching a class. We really depend on one another to do what we do.' A senior remarked: 'Most of the

schools I had been in, it was "these are my kids, my classroom, my books and I need my special area". And here it's not that way.' Because space is con gured
to allow students from different grade levels to interact in and outside class meeting times, boundaries between grade levels are blurred. Another student,

also a senior, observed: [T]hat’s the thing, the neighbourhood, I don’t even think of it as me being a senior here and everybody else sophomores and juniors - it’s, you don’t even really think about it. I mean most of my friends are sophomores. That’s who I play basketball with; that’s who I hang out with. At other schools seniors don't hang out with sophomores or freshmen.

We observed many informal student interactions that indicated a strongly nurtur


In their analysis of the dif culties and rewards attached to creating a profes

sional culture in the context of school reform, Louis and King (1993: 217)
debunk the assumption that developing a new school culture, particularly one at

odds with current district norms, is a simplistic endeavour. Rather, they argue,
‘School reform through the initiation of new schools is no cure-all but instead creates its own set of challenges’. In the context of Celebration School, the construction of a school organisation based on multi-age neighbourhoods and professional collaboration among teachers across traditional subject-matter areas, while embraced as fundamental to the workings of the school by its planners, was at odds with both the training and experience of most teachers, and, as it turned out, with the belief systems of many Celebration parents and community members. Unfortunately, a professional culture based on trust and collegiality never developed during the course of the first two years. At the start of the second year, hiring decisions were still being made. In addition, a new principal, Dot Davis, had been offered her position during the summer from a pool of over 1,000 applicants. Although the unanimous choice of the search committee, it was apparent to many that her approach was cautious and reserved as though she were taking stock of the enterprise for which she was now responsible. As we noted earlier, schools and the professional culture of teaching within the school are constructed over time to include symbols, rituals, traditions, myths and language that are transmitted from one organisational generation to the next to channel behaviours.
In new schools, building a culture begins long before the children, teachers, or parents arrive. In the case of Celebration School, the activities of a number of individuals who were deeply invested in creating a culture in line with the vision established in the earliest planning days had been ongoing for several years and had been implemented during the school’s very first year, in 1996–7 before our chronicle begins. The newly hired principal, embraced by Disney, the school district and ‘old’ teachers, appeared determined to follow her own vision. Dot left Alabama where she had been successful in implementing an imaginative public magnet school serving very poor children. She also had the advantage at Celebration School in being the candidate all participants in the hiring decision agreed upon.

Hiring new teachers had proven more difficult than many had anticipated. In one of the key school design documents framed as a memo to the Celebration School staff in early 1997 outlining the features of the Celebration Professional Development School, then Principal Bobbi Vogel wrote: Since Celebration is a new school, it provides a unique opportunity to hire school staff based on their ‘fit’ to the school and its shared vision as designed by educators and parents. This ‘new beginning’ provides a school staff chosen for their excellence as educators and their agreement with the concept of a PDS as described herein. (Memo to staff, dated 6 March 1997)
While the nationally advertised teaching positions at the school drew a large number of applicants, the relatively low salaries paid to teachers in Florida compared to salaries earned by teachers nationally dampened the enthusiasm of many applicants who responded to the nationally advertised search. Those who were hired were for the most part young and inexperienced or at least new to teaching. In the end, youth, inexperience, and a traditional pre-service education proved a disastrous mix. One of the experienced team leaders remarked, I am old enough to be the mother of three people that are on my team. I just turned 50 this year. The rest of my team-mates haven’t hit 30. The average age among the three of them is probably 26, if we are lucky. We have a brand new teacher and then two teachers, one who has taught for four years and one who has taught for five.

In a similar vein, Donna Leinsing, the curriculum co-ordinator, saw creating a well-integrated faculty, on-board with a cross-disciplinary, project-based curriculum as a major challenge: The only challenging piece at this point is that very good, strong, individual teachers are probably the ones who are experiencing the most change. Children are fine. Children are resilient, flexible, enjoying every minute of it. But the teachers need to stop and rethink everything they do. Which is something we did last year. We rethought everything we did. But now this is another dimension. There are forceful personalities here. We did one thing very well last summer. We spent the whole summer together which was very important to me. It was good time spent together. We did bond, as a core faculty. But we also had time to decide which people would be most comfortable working together as a team. And I think that’s why we’re still here right now. Because those teams really are so strongly bonded, and have similar styles, personalities, very supportive of each other, they take turns being up or down individually, but collectively they
While Donna may have been correct in her perceptions about teachers, from the perspective of vocal parents in the town of Celebration, what was being created was not so much a tightly bonded group of teachers as a clique that saw itself as knowing what was best for the community’s children but who were unwilling to listen to parents whose concerns about their children learning basic skills, having structure and being prepared for the SAT and college, not in constructing portfolios of their work that state universities would be reluctant to consider in making admissions decisions. Nonetheless, during the course of the school’s first two years, teachers and students embraced the notions of project work and teaming. A teacher in the upper grades remarked, STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE The atmosphere is certainly more collaborative and less competitive. If one of us in neighborhood K-12 has an idea of something that we think would make work easier or documenting easier, or planning easier; it’s an idea for a unit that can be, no matter what. The entire group is very quick to say, ‘You know, let me show you what we are doing and it works really well for us.’ And you don’t tend to find that in other environments. That shared collaboration really has produced some really creative things. (Suzanne Snow, interview, 30 January 1998)

At Celebration School, collaboration was socially and culturally constructed at multiple levels among students and teachers. The planners had designed this school to look different, feel different, and produce different results from those
in traditionally arranged schools. A top-down hierarchical arrangement typical

of most schools, including those in the district, was replaced by co-operation and

collaboration to enhance each person’s unique skills and qualities. Student

project work at all levels was designed to be cross-disciplinary and problem

based in nature. For teachers, this meant focusing within neighbourhoods on

ways to integrate traditional subject-matter content into an interdisciplinary and

applied framework. One elementary teacher observed: In my neighbourhood it’s very team oriented. I work in a team with three other [elementary teachers] which creates for a very collaborative environment. So, whereas we’re responsible for separate things we all meet together to make sure that we’re all focusing on the same topics - same goal which is the learner so that’s very beneficial for us.

The PDS plan outlined in her memo to the Celebration teaching staff by Bobbi Vogel in the early spring of 1997 had called for the involvement in the implementation of the PDS of the university partners, Auburn, Johns Hopkins, Stetson and the University of Central Florida to support, among other activities, the mentoring of future teachers who carried out internships at Celebration School.

During the first and second years, each of the university partners sent several interns (future teachers) to the school. Clinical supervision was provided by teams representing the four universities; during the second year a course in clini
cal supervision for Celebration staff and other teachers from the county was offered by an experienced consultant. By and large, the interns were extremely competent and therefore well received by teachers working with them. In fact, the Johns Hopkins interns, all of whom had returned to school to earn teaching credentials after pursuing successful careers in other fields, were judged to be exceedingly gifted teachers and in two cases were offered teaching positions for the 1998–9 school year. Similarly, several of the Auburn interns have been offered and have accepted teaching positions. According to Rich Kunkel, the PDS concept is an extremely important aspect of the school and one that is becoming established in an increasingly more mature role at Celebration School.

While collaborative research agendas and university appointments for key teachers at the school have yet to be arranged, Kunkel sees important gains through the introduction of technologies, teaching strategies, and business and university partnerships in support of the PDS at Celebration.

Three of the original planning group for the school, Donna Leinsing, Paul Kraft and Carolyn Hopp remained at the school in leadership
positions among
the faculty until mid-July 1998, when Leinsing received
notice that she had
been ‘reassigned to In School Suspension’ for the 1998-9
academic year. Hopp
along with Suzanne Snow received notices the same day that
Leinsing had
received her reassignment advising them that they would not
be recommended
for appointment in the 1999-2000 academic year. While a
number of the
remaining teachers were disturbed by what some saw as a
high-handed
approach taken toward these early ‘visionaries’, many gave
their tacit support
by remaining silent and still others saw their departures
as an important signal
that the new principal was in charge, and an arrogant,
‘know-it-all’ regiment
was over. Developing a student culture
During its first year of full implementation, Celebration
School drew most of its
students from outside the immediate town of Celebration. Of
the 800 students
who enrolled in grades K-12, approximately 500 were drawn
from the county by
lottery, with 300 attending from the town. Although there
are notable differ
ences in socio-economic status between Celebration
residents and Osceola resid
ents in general, we found it dif cult to distinguish
between students based on
residency.
In attempting to understand the student culture, we drew upon both observations and interviews of students. Our experiential sampling survey, for example, revealed that fully half the time that students were working in an instructional mode, they carried out their activities in self-selected groups. The interactions students experience in these arrangements contributed to their enjoyment of school-related tasks, and also contributed to the involvement in students who differed in age, fostering collaborative efforts in groups of varying sizes and kinds. There may be drawbacks to an emphasis on group work, however. Some students apparently struggled with the independence they were given. Absenteeism, so far as parents were concerned at least, became an issue in the upper grades toward the end of the year. Although some students and local town parents saw absenteeism as a problem, the school as compared with other district schools had an exemplary attendance record. Among the county schools, Celebration ranked first among central Florida schools in a four county area (Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Volusia). When we asked what made Celebration different from other schools they had attended, a female senior student replied, STRATEGY, MARKETING, C
HANG AND CULTURE

Um, the set-up of it, like, the project atmosphere. You don’t have, like, tests that you have to take. You show your work by actually doing it, and showing it by a project you may do. However you want to present it, you can present your project. Um, the classes aren’t set up the same. They’re kind of like an open-atmosphere class, and not like a sit down and do work. You know you have, like, more discussions I think, and more time to sit in class and talk with the teachers about things . . . I think it’s pretty well structured. I mean that’s my point of view. And the teachers have a class and it’s all set up and, you know, we go over the notes that we need to go over; we do everything we need to do. And then we have project time, if we have projects to work on, or class time discussion and whatever – we just learn.

Seniors we observed during the course of the year seemed especially mature.

Although they uniformly held clear and focused academic and career goals,

most planned to attend either the nearby community college or state university.

Further, students seemed enthusiastic about how and what they were learning at all levels. One of us observed the school student leadership elections early in the year and recorded in his field notes: I observed elections for student of ces, not just president. The candidates made presentations for a specific position. What I found to be most interesting, was how each of them assimilated the team concept present in the school. In each presentation, the candidate referred to the importance of working as part of a governance team. They did not talk about what they could do as an individual, rather they emphasised their role as a team member. Celebration seems to have a real sense of team and working together both among the professional staff and its students. I thought the student candidates demonstrated their commitment to that ‘team spirit’ in their presentations to the student body.

Throughout the year, students from outside the gates of the community mingled easily with those whose parents had purchased more expensive Celebration
properties. In fact, these county students held elected student governance of ces,

were active in the fledgling sports activities of the school and generally did well academically. Trouble in paradise, summer 1998

By the conclusion of the 1997–8 school year, several issues seemed ready to percolate or, conversely, appeared to be settled at last. One of the latter such issues was the matter of the Teaching and Learning Institute (formerly the Teaching Academy) leased during the year by the Disney Cruise Line to train its new children’s programming staff. Separate agreements were reached with the Celebration Company interests and the county on the one hand, and between the Celebration Company and Stetson on the other. Terms reached with the county were in line with those that had been discussed from the outset: the county would use the Institute facilities at a nominal cost to carry out staff development attended by Osceola teachers and staff. Stetson, on the other hand, agreed to pay close to $80,000 to lease space in the Institute to conduct courses, workshops and in-service programmes aimed at Celebration faculty and, with their NEA partners, to host 2–3-day institutes providing training in areas such as national
A new generation of development for the Celebration enterprise seemed imminent at the outset of the new 1998-9 school year. Brent Harrington, the Community Services Manager (ad hoc ‘mayor’) - after declaring at a concerned parents’ meeting that the school was no longer in the hands of the founders

(‘This is no longer Bobbi Vogel’s school’) announced his intention to move back to the Phoenix area where he had accepted a new position with DMB, a national developer of master planned communities. Terry Wick, the education liaison, was offered and accepted a promotion within Disney to develop corporate education initiatives including an updating of the American Teacher Awards, requiring her to move to Los Angeles. The Osceola County School District Superintendent who had also come from Arizona and who had generously supported the work of the visionaries reached an amicable decision with his board to step down. Even Charles Adams and his family made the decision to move to a site his company was developing in North Carolina. Finally, Larry Rosen with
drew his son from the school, put his house up for sale (although Disney interests frowned upon the sale of a home before a three-year time period had
passed) and moved back to DeLand Florida, where Stetson is located.

Meantime, the teaching staff at Celebration School undertook its summer staff development work during the months of June and July. Teresa Field of Johns Hopkins University agreed to facilitate workshops during the summer involving all members of the teaching staff. Teachers’ time during the six-week session was paid through the district’s ‘Enhancement Fund’ set up by Disney.

The summer began with a resolve to continue to build a strong professional community among teachers; task groups for the summer workshops were organised to focus on specific issues including curriculum, assessment, safe environment and technology with the addition of a governance task group.

For the second year, the School Advisory Council sent out a survey to parents during the spring of 1998. As it had been during the previous year, response was light. Fewer than 10 per cent of those surveyed responded. The responses indicated a bipolar distribution with parents split almost evenly in their estimate of how well things were going. As a way of reaching out to the community of parents, Dot the principal, scheduled parent information nights. The first focused on the Professional Development School notion.
subsequent seminars

touched upon integrated learning, co-operative learning and assessment. Groups of teachers were present and actively participated, sharing information with STRATEGY, MARKETING, CULTURE

those who attended. These meetings may or may not have been the springboard that launched the Concerned Parents Committee, a group of individuals who lived in the town and whose children were in the upper grades.

An hour into the meeting, as the general discussion got underway, in the back of the room a parent stood with his Franklin Planner open, an outline of his points written on a piece of paper. He began: As far back as PD [pre-Dot] there has been a paradigm that has been projected that borders on educational fundamentalism - that you either agree or disagree; you are either for it or against it - you're a stakeholder or not. If a person expresses concern - and I have seen it a lot over the past three years - that person is a 90s version of tarred and feathered. If I am a concerned parent, do you think I'm going to express my views easily? I am pro-Dot. My concern is that there is a faculty who don't understand their own administration and principal's desires. Why do they have that much weight? [Audience members murmur 'Yeah' and 'Right'] There is an element of distrust - this is a town issue - this is everybody's issue. As one who deals with language, let me say that typically an organisation will resort to highly technical language when it is distances from its audience. What's a neighbourhood? What's a level? Let's call a class a class. [Audience members murmur their agreement] I just got back from New York. I went to the Disney store in Times Square . . . It looks like every Disney store in the US. 'Consistency'. When every neighbourhood develops its own curriculum there is no consistency . . . The old way worked for me. It is not the best but it worked. This town is about new ways. It's both - the best practices of yesterday and today. This [the current situation at the school] is not progressive. If the
Disney Corporation changes every year, it will lose customers . . . consistency.

This plea for ‘consistency’ and a return to the way things were when these ‘concerned parents’ were themselves in school appeared to galvanise those present at the meeting that July evening. The discussion that followed moved to a general agreement that, although there might be some small differences in opinion among those present, there was enough consensus to move forward. A future meeting date was established to address concerns to Dot and the meeting was adjourned.

Creating a School Culture from Heground Up

Conclusion

Staff and community members who were close to the school have always believed that Disney would do whatever was necessary to guarantee the success of the school. According to Donna Leinsing, Disney interests held a concept of success that had something to do with keeping grumpy residents happy at all costs. Real estate is the name of the game in Celebration and we know it’s overpriced. Some parents think textbooks teach children; I’m sure some people want more technology and technology that works.

Interpreted this way, Disney’s guiding motive was to make sure that residents remain appeased and happy; keeping property values secure and rising overrode any concern with the pedagogical mission of the school.

What important lessons can be learned from the Celebration
case to guide

organisations and individuals who ally themselves and their organisations with
efforts to build a school from the ground up? First, as one example, the NEA’s
approach, as interested participant/observer, allowed the organisation to keep
tabs on important developments, especially with respect to the establishment and
development of the Professional Diploma School. As a consequence of a posi
tion as disinterested observer, the NEA was, remarkably, able to navigate among
competing visions and desires for Celebration’s development and also remained
a trusted partner in the school’s ongoing work. Third, because the NEA’s stance
was somewhat distanced, as an organisation it was not in a position to either
guide or evaluate the day-to-day operations of the school.

As we have argued here, the development of a school culture from the ground
up is always a difficult proposition. In the Celebration case, competing pedagog
ical visions, monied developers, planners more interested in the social and moral
development of the child than in the inculcation of basic skills and high marks
on the SATs, clashed with vocal parents who valued academic achievement
related outcomes for their children. According to a report on a series of focus
groups conducted by Kunkel and colleagues in the summer of
1997, teachers

saw their role as carrying forward the ‘burden’ of a good public education and

the creation of the best learning settings for each child (Richard Kunkel, per personal communication, August 1998). While teachers

shouldered these responsibilities, they unfortunately lacked the capacity to see the bigger picture

all too apparent to an influential group whose children attended this school and

who ultimately found support for their position with the current school admin

strategy, marketing, change and culture Appendix 1: Timeline

1993 Planners take blueprints of Celebration School to the Osceola School Board.

1993–1995 Osceola School Board suggests architectural and other changes to Celebration School plans, throughout their negotiation process.

1996 Celebration receives 4,500 resumes for fifty teaching positions.

1996 August – Celebration School building is officially under construction. Meanwhile, 200 resident students begin taking classes at the Teaching Academy, since renamed.

1996–1997 Administration holds a lottery for Osceola County student enrolment; over 500 students were selected.

1997 August Celebration school opens its new doors to nearly 800 students.

1997–1998 Our research team chronicles the development of Celebration School, its culture and professional community.

Appendix 2: Those involved in creating Celebration School

Charles Adams: Director of Community Development of DDC during the time of Celebration’s construction.
The Celebration Company: A division of the Walt Disney Company.

Disney Development A former division of the Walt Disney Company.

Corporation (DDC):
Diverse Domains, Nurturing The Celebration School Curricular Neighbourhoods, and Authentic Documentation. Designed to be replicable,

Applications (DNA): like DNA.

Michael Eisner: Chief Executive Officer of the Walt Disney Company.

Donna Hart: Osceola County School Board member since 1992. During planning phase, acted as the liaison between designers of Celebration School and School Board, working closely with Disney and the public in the process.

Carolyn Hopp: Now former teacher and founder of Celebration School, currently pursuing a doctoral degree. One of the five planners on the payroll before ground was broken on the campus.

Walt Disney Imagineering: A division of the Walt Disney Company.

Paul Kraft: One of the five planners on the payroll before the campus was constructed, and main writer for the DNA2. Since then, has served as media specialist at Celebration School.

CREATING A SCHOOL CULTURE FROM THE GROUND UP

Rich Kunkel: Professor at Auburn University, Alabama. Played key role in developing a board of experts on the development of the school, and worked as consultant to the DDC.

Donna Leinsing: A founder of Celebration School. One of the five planners on the payroll before they broke ground on the campus and formerly (until the summer of 1998) curriculum co-ordinator for the school.

Professional Development Usually refers to a public school,
and the

School (PDS): agreement between a school and a university. Generally considered to be a symbiotic relationship, it allows for research to enter into classroom practice, facilitates internships for students in Education and combines resources. Most professional development schools involve just one university; Celebration involves four; Auburn University, Alabama; University of Central Florida; Stetson University of Florida; and Johns Hopkins University of Maryland.

Peter Rummel: Worked for the DDC, now chairman of the St Joe paper company.

Larry Rosen: Former graduate student of Rich Kunkel at Auburn, and consultant to the DDC especially in connection with Celebration School’s computer technology.

Suzanne Snow: One of the original teachers at Celebration, but not one of the ve planners. She taught classes at Celebration during the year before the school building opened.


Deal, Terrence E. (1985) ‘Cultural change: opportunity, silent killer or metamorphosis?’


Kilmann, Ralph, Saxton, Marjy and Serpa, Roy (1985) ‘Five

301. **STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE**


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**CREATING A SCHOOL CULTURE FROM THE GROUND UP: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVE SCHOOL REFORM**


A feature of school reform around the world has been the systematic decentralization to the school level of authority, responsibility and accountability within a centrally-determined framework of curriculum, policy,
priorities and standards.

Indeed, it is now hard to find a nation where changes along these lines have not taken place or are planned or are proposed (see Caldwell, 1994; 1998; Whitty et al., 1998 for an account of driving and constraining forces). How these changes have impacted on the professional actions and cultures of teachers and their leaders is of critical importance, as is the extent to which they have had impact on learning outcomes. Context for research

Reform along these lines has occurred in every state and territory in Australia over the last quarter century. In this paper, particular attention is given to the most recent wave of reform in Victoria, which has occurred since early 1993 under the rubric of Schools of the Future. Almost 90 percent of the state’s budget for public education has been decentralized to schools for local decision making within a curriculum and standards framework in eight key learning areas. Schools have a capacity to select their own staff, who remain employed by the central authority, with provision for annual and triennial report to the local community and the state education department on a range of indicators.

With 1,700 schools, this is the largest system of public education anywhere to have decentralized such a high proportion of the total
budget, covering virtually all non-capital expenditure, including teaching and non-teaching staff.

Schools of the Future was implemented at the same time that the state government took action to rein in a high level of public debt and bring Victoria into line with funding and other standards for public education that form the basis of fiscal transfers between national and state governments (in Australia, education is a responsibility of the states but the national government is the only level of government with an income taxing capacity). About 300 schools were closed and about 8,000 staff considered in excess of requirements left the system. State debt has been reduced through extensive privatisation of public sector services.

The starting point in this paper is a description of the research program from which findings are drawn. Then follows an account of emerging roles and preferences of principals for the new organizational arrangements. A description of new mechanisms for the management of resources sets the scene for a review of findings on learning outcomes, with a relatively stable model of direct and indirect effects now evident. The final section describes the professional culture of the principalship that is emerging under these conditions.
Research program

Findings are drawn from several research projects. The primary source is the Cooperative Research Project, a joint endeavour of the Education Department, the Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals, the Victorian Primary (Elementary) Principals’ Association, and the University of Melbourne through its Department of Education Policy and Management. The Cooperative Research Project began in mid-1993 and concluded in mid-1998, completing on schedule a planned five-year longitudinal study of the processes and outcomes of Schools of the Future. Seven state-wide surveys of representative samples of principals have been conducted and these have covered virtually every aspect of the reform, including its impact on learning outcomes for students (Cooperative Research Project 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1996, 1997, 1998). Findings from the final survey are reported here (Cooperative Research Project, 1998). Seventeen investigations have focused on discrete elements, including leadership, professional development, new workplace practices, resource allocation and school improvement. Four of these investigations are reported (Ford, 1995; Gurr, 1996; Johnston, 1997; Wee, 1998).

The second source is the School Global Budget Research
Project conducted over three years from 1994–1996 that gathered information on approaches to resource allocation in a representative sample of Victorian schools to guide recommendations to the Minister for Education on how resources should be allocated to schools (“how the cake is to be cut”) (see Education Committee, 1994; 1995; 1996).

The third source is an international project focused on approaches and impacts of resource allocation under conditions of decentralization. This is a cooperative effort of the University of Melbourne (Brian Caldwell, co-chief investigator) and the University of Wisconsin at Madison (Allan Odden, co-chief investigator), with the involvement of the Open University in the UK (Rosalind Levacic, associate investigator). This study is funded in Australia by the Australian Research Council, with two main purposes: 

1 to develop and test a theoretical school-based funding model for per capita resourcing of schools based on the learning needs of students, taking into account factors such as stages of schooling, relative student and school disadvantage, disabilities and impairments, and location and distance; and

2 to investigate linkages between local responsibility for the management of resources, internal resource allocation decisions and student learning outcomes.

Preliminary findings from the third project have contributed to another inter
national study, in this instance an initiative of the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) of UNESCO which provides a comparative perspective of efforts in Australia, Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the USA to develop needs based approaches to the formula-based funding of schools under conditions of decentralization (Ross and Levacic, 1998). Role of the principal

In descriptive terms, the change in role of principal in Australia, especially Victoria, has been profound. The traditional role in a highly centralized system that prevailed until the mid-1970s is contrasted with the role that has emerged in Victoria in a highly decentralized system. Traditional role

The system of public education was highly centralized until the early 1970s. Few decisions could be made at the school level. Teachers were assigned to schools by formula. There was no selection of principals or teachers at the local level. All non-staffing resources were allocated by formula whether the school needed them or not. Curriculum was centrally-determined and there was a regime of inspection. There was little involvement of the community in local decision-making. No funds of any kind were decentralized from system to school and any cash at the school level was raised locally by voluntary effort.
School design was standard, with rapid growth in the number of schools and stu-
dents as the effects of immigration and a rising birth rate after the Second World
War took effect. The principal made few decisions of substance. Markets were
virtually non-existent in public schools. Retention rates to the end of secondary
schooling were low. In today’s terms, classes were large and a relatively high
proportion of teachers were untrained. The national government had minimal
involvement in school education. Emerging role
There have been profound changes to the role of the principal since the early
1970s. Many decisions formerly made centrally have been decentralized, with a
parallel increase in decision-making for teachers and parents, especially through S T R A T E G Y , M A R K E T
I N G , C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E
school councils that have had limited policy powers since the early 1980s, at
which time there was provision for the local selection of principals but not
teachers. National and state governments made funds available for particular
purposes and these have been steadily decentralized for local decision-making.
The former zoning of students to local attendance boundaries was abandoned in
the mid-1980s, immediately creating a market for students, especially as enrol-
ments started to decline in some communities and new funding mechanisms
were created so that the money followed the student as budgets were decentral
ized. The student profile became increasingly multi-cultural with the impact of
large scale immigration of the Second World War, so that many schools now
have scores of languages spoken in the homes of their students. While inspec
tion of schools was abandoned in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a centrally
determined framework has been established with a state curriculum and
standards framework now in place, and a wide range of indicators on which
schools must report to their local communities and the education department.
There are system-wide tests in key subjects at two points in primary (elementary) and one point in secondary now in a trial phase. There is increasing
opportunity for local selection of teachers and there are schemes for teacher
appraisal as well as a performance management system for principals. Principals
now have responsibility for almost the total cost of running the school. Principals’ perceptions of the new role the Future have been systematically and comprehensively tracked through successive surveys of the Cooperative Research Project. Each has drawn on a large
representative sample. The following summarizes key findings.

- The work load of principals has increased since the
base-line survey in the pilot phase in 1993, rising from a mean of 57 hours per week to 59 hours per week. This workload is greater than was expected by most principals.

- Mean job satisfaction has fallen over the life of the reform, initially 5.3 on a seven-point scale for principals in the initial pilot phase of Schools of the Future, falling but stabilizing across all schools to 4.3.

- While confidence in the attainment of the objectives of reform remains moderate to high, principals report modest achievement of many of the expected benefits, and low achievement in respect to expected increases in levels of resourcing and teacher satisfaction and to expected reduction in bureaucratic interference.

- Many problems have been encountered, and while some have lessened in magnitude, many have not, notably workload and aspects of resourcing.

- Principals report low levels of satisfaction with the principal performance assessment scheme and the extent to which their schools have been able to achieve flexibility in their staffing arrangements.

STRATEGY LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL REFORM

- Despite these problems, concerns, dissatisfactions and diminished expectations, principals report significant benefits in respect to curriculum and learning outcomes and approaches to planning and resource allocation, and these are described in more detail below.

- Taking all things into account, the overwhelming majority of principals would not wish to return to previous arrangements before Schools of the Future. In the four frameworks of reform, new arrangements are preferred by 86 percent for the curriculum framework, 86 percent for the resources framework, 81 percent for people framework, and 82 percent for the accountability framework. Overall, 89 percent prefer the new arrangements.

These findings are consistent with those in studies in other countries, notably in

respect to intensification of work and preference for the new arrangements (see

Bullock and Thomas, 1994 for findings over three years in surveys of principals
There are two broad types of decisions to be made by government. One is the total amount of the overall budget to be allocated to schools (“the size of the cake”) and the other is how that amount is to be allocated to schools (“how the cake is cut”). The research reported here is concerned with the second of these and how resources so allocated are deployed at the school level. Funding mechanisms

In Victoria, six principles were adopted to guide the allocation of resources to schools: pre-eminence of educational considerations, fairness, transparency, subsidiarity, accountability and strategic implementation (Education Committee, 1994; 1995; 1996). The outcome was a funding mechanism that involved a basic per pupil allocation according to stage of schooling; a curriculum enhancement allocation for schools with particular programs; pupil specific allocations for those with disabilities and impairments, special learning needs, and from non-English speaking backgrounds; and specific school allocations to take account of rurality and isolation and premises-related costs. Research on school and class room effectiveness and improvement helped shape recommendations on relative
weighting of these components.

It is noteworthy that this classification of factors for
allocating resources to
decentralized budgets has international application.
Approaches to needs-based
formula allocation of resources to schools in Australia,
the UK, Canada, New Zealand and the USA can all be classified in this way (Ross
and Levacic, 1998).

This is an important development if the school reform
movement is to have
strong educational underpinning as far as resource
allocation is concerned. STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE
Principals’ perceptions of resource management

Principals were generally concerned about overall levels of
resourcing for their
schools. Of particular interest in this paper is how
resources, once allocated to
schools, were then deployed at the school level, and what
were the effects on
learning outcomes. The views of principals were sought on
this matter in each of
the surveys in the Cooperative Research Project.

In the final survey (Cooperative Research Project, 1998),
principals reported
moderate to high levels of improvement in the extent to
which having a “global
budget” enabled the school to plan for resource management
for the next three
years, build a relationship between curriculum programs and
resource allocation,
allocate resources to identified educational needs of
students, and achieve prior
ities identified in the school charter. At least 75 percent of principals rated the extent of improvement at 3 or more on a five-point scale (from 1 “low” to 5 “high”), with a modal rating of 4 in each instance.

Principals also report moderate to high realization of expected benefits in the processes of planning and resource allocation at the school level. More than 80 percent gave ratings of 3 or more on the same five-point scale for items on the extent of realization of better resource management, clearer sense of direction, increased accountability and responsibility, greater financial and administrative flexibility, and improved long-term planning.

Principals did not report so positively on another aspect of resource management, namely, their capacity to select staff and the take-up of what is known as “full staffing flexibility”. Benefits in these matters were expectations for Schools of the Future. Most principals reported a low level of realization. The issue is of ongoing concern in the relationship between the professional and industrial organizations of principals and the Education Department as efforts are made to harmonize school and system needs.

While principals are concerned about overall levels of resources and matters related to the selection of staff, it is evident that signi
cant benes have been achieved in respect to the management of resources. Of over-arching import ance, however, is the way in which these gains have been translated into improvements in learning outcomes for students and, for the purposes of this paper, the role of the principal and other leaders in achieving these outcomes. Modelling effects on learning outcomes

It is sobering to note the consistent nding in research over many years that there appear to be few if any direct cause-and-effect links between school-based management and gains in learning outcomes for students (see meta-analysis in Summers and Johnson, 1996; earlier review by Malen et al., 1990). Some observers have noted that such gains are unlikely to be achieved in the absence of purposeful links between capacities associated with school reform, in this instance, school-based management, and what occurs in the classroom, in learning and S T R A T E G I C L E A D E R S H I P A N D S C H O O L R E F O R M teaching and the support of learning and teaching (see Bullock and Thomas, 1997; Hanushek, 1996, 1997; Levacic, 1995; Smith et al., 1996). Some researchers have developed models for achieving these linkages, with promising work in Hong Kong by Cheng and Cheung (see Cheng, 1996; Cheung and Cheng, 1996; 1997).
The analysis of international trends in “devolution” by Whitty et al. (1998) made similar observations, but relied on a one-shot case study of four schools early in the reform to draw sweeping conclusions about impact in Victoria (Blackmore et al., 1996). Surveys of councillors, parents and teachers reported by Townsend (1996) were also conducted in the early stages and were largely limited to broad-brush opinion in a relatively small number of schools. On the other hand, the systematic surveys of representative samples of principals over ve years in the Cooperative Research Project, backed up by recent case studies in which schools drew on student achievement data over several years, are yielding more promising evidence of how reform may impact on outcomes. Principals' perceptions of outcomes.

Principals provided ratings on the extent of realization of expected benefits or extent of achievement of certain outcomes. Ratings for seven domains are reported here.

1 Levels of confidence in attainment of SOF (Schools of the Future) objectives. While there has been a downward trend over the life of the reform, especially on professional matters affecting teachers and principals, ratings remain moderate to high, especially in respect to accountability for achievement of students and whether the reform fosters the attributes of good schools.

2 For curriculum and learning, successive surveys have consistently shown that principals believe there has been a moderate to high level of realization of the expected bene
t in respect to improved learning outcomes for students. In the most recent survey, 84 percent gave a rating of 3 or more on the five-point scale (1 is “low” and 5 is “high”). Similar ratings were made for the relevance and responsiveness of curriculum and opportunity for innovation.

3 Findings for planning and resource allocation reveal moderate to high levels of realization in most respects, a notable exception being level of resourcing (“the size of the cake”).

4 Moderate to high levels of realization were reported in a range of indicators in the personnel and professional domain, and these were concerned with better personnel management, enhanced professional development, shared decision-making, improved staff performance and more effective organization following restructure. Relatively low ratings were given to the expectation that there would be increased staff satisfaction and an enhanced capacity to attract staff.

5 Expected benefits in the school and community domain were generally achieved for cohesiveness of staff and community, level of community involvement, higher community profile, enhanced school identity and level of cooperation between schools. An expectation for lower levels of “bureaucratic interference” has been largely unrealized.

6 Principals gave moderate to high ratings for the extent to which there had been curriculum improvement due to CSF (Curriculum and Standards Framework). Items were concerned with improvements to school capacity in a range of matters including planning the curriculum, establishing levels and standards for students, moving to a curriculum based on learning outcomes and meeting the needs of students.

7 Ratings for CSF curriculum support were mixed, being moderate to high for course advice, teacher networks and professional development focusing on leadership teams, and generally low for the system-wide testing scheme at the primary (elementary) level (the Learning Assessment Project or LAP) and the computer-based management information system for students (KIDMAP). Modelling the links between elements of reform and learning outcomes.

These findings are generally positive but they do not illuminate the extent to
which capacities fostered by the reform have a direct
impact on learning out
comes. Structural equation modelling was employed in the
analysis of findings
in each of the last three surveys, using LISREL 8 (Jöreskog
and Sörbom, 1993).
The approach allows the analysis of ordinal-scales
variables such as those util
ized in this research. The model reported here derives from
the most recent
survey (Cooperative Research Project, 1998).
The first step was to create clusters of related items and
to treat these as con
structs. These constructs are the seven domains, for which
findings were
reported above, with construct titles shown in italic.
Further analysis was con
ducted to determine the “goodness of fit” between the data
and the model
formed by these constructs.
Figure 1 contains the explanatory regression model that
shows the interde
pendent effects among variables (in this instance, latent
variables that represent
the constructs) on the variable curriculum and learning
benefits, which is the
object of interest in this section of the paper.
Standardized path coefficients are
shown, representing the direct effects (all paths are
statistically significant
beyond the p < 0.05 level by univariate two-tailed test).
The fit between the data
and model is very good indeed, with an adjusted goodness of
fit index of 0.969,
indicating that almost all (96.9 percent) of the variances and co-variances in the
data are accounted for by the model.

The path coefficients may be interpreted in this manner. The
direct effect of STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL REFORM
personnel and professional benefits on curriculum and
learning benefits is indicated by a path coefficient of 0.299. This indicates that an
increase in the
measure of personnel and professional benefits of one standard deviation, as
reected in ratings of principals, produces an increase in
the measure of curriculum
and learning benefits of 0.299 of a standard deviation.
The model shows that three variables have a direct effect on curriculum and
learning benefits (which includes improved learning outcomes for students),
namely, personnel and professional benefits (which reects ratings for realiza
tion of the expected benefits of better personnel management, enhanced profes
sional development, shared decision-making, improved staff performance, more
effective organization following restructure, increased
staff satisfaction and an
enhanced capacity to attract staff); curriculum improvement
due to CSF (which
reects ratings for improvement of capacity for planning
the curriculum, estab
lishing levels and standards for students, moving to a
curriculum based on learning outcomes and meeting the needs of students); and confidence in attainment of SOF objectives.

Noteworthy are the pathways of indirect effects, illustrated for planning and resource allocation benefits, which is mediated in respect to its effect on curriculum and learning benefits through personnel and professional benefits and confidence in attainment of SOF objectives. Expressed another way, realizing the expected benefits of better resource management, clearer sense of direction, increased accountability and responsibility, greater financial and administrative flexibility, and improved long-term planning, will have no direct effect on curriculum and learning benefits but will have an indirect effect to the extent they impact on personnel and professional benefits which in turn have a direct effect.

Also noteworthy are the constructs that have direct effects on confidence in attainment of SOF objectives. High ratings of confidence
were associated with high ratings for the achievement of planning and resource allocation benefits, school and community benefits and CSF curriculum support. The likely explanation is that unless principals experience benefits in these last three domains, they are unlikely to have confidence in the reform. Modelling of this kind has been done for findings in each of the last three surveys and there is now stability in the model, with only small variations in the direction of effects and the size of path coefficients.

Limitations of the model

The findings in these surveys are limited to the extent that they are based on the perceptions of principals rather than measures of student achievement. This has been a concern in most efforts to determine the impact of reform in recent years.

In the case of the Cooperative Research Project, there was no system-wide baseline data on student achievement when Schools of the Future was implemented, and efforts to compare achievement in schools in the pilot phase with that in schools that had not entered at the outset were thwarted by a union ban on the collection of data.

In the final survey of principals, respondents were asked to indicate the basis for their rating of the extent to which the expected benefit of improved student
learning had been realised. They were asked to rate the importance of certain achievement measures and indicators of attendance, time allocations in curriculum, participation rates, exist/destination data, parent opinion, staff opinion and level of professional development (a total of 23 indicators were provided). Most principals indicated moderate to high importance for these indicators in arriving at their ratings, with the most notable exception being the low level of importance attached to the system-wide testing program in primary schools.

In a related part of the most recent survey, principals were asked to rate the extent of change for each of the aforementioned indicators, with a five-point scale of “decline” (1 or 2), “no change” (3) or “improve” (4 or 5). A large majority of principals reported either no change or improvement, with more than 50 percent reporting improvement for most indicators, with the notable exception being achievement measures associated with the system-wide testing program in primary.

In the absence of student achievement data that would put the matter beyond doubt, one way or the other, a high level of trustworthiness ought to be attached to these findings, given consistency in ratings, the stability of the model over the
last three years, and the declarations by principals that they took account of a

range of indicators in forming their judgements. STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL REFORM

Exploring the links in case study research

The next stage of research combined the agenda for the Cooperative Research Project and the international project supported by the Australian Research Council. The latter brought together work led by Caldwell at the University of Melbourne, Levacic at The Open University and Odden at the University of Wisconsin at Madison.

The first stage of the Australian component involved case studies of primary and secondary schools in the Schools of the Future program. Preliminary findings in the primary investigation, designated the Learning Outcomes Project are reported here. Three questions were addressed by Wee (1998):

1. Where improved student learning is claimed, how is it that schools know that there has been improvement in learning outcomes and what is it that has been done at the school level that allows schools to make those claims?

2. Can improved student learning be linked, either directly or indirectly, to the reforms that have occurred under Schools of the Future?

3. Where improved student learning is claimed, what are the dimensions of leadership and strategies used by leaders in schools to promote increased student learning?

The research was carried out in the Western Metropolitan Region of the Education Department. Eight primary schools that had expressed a
willingness to participate in a case study following the survey of principals were invited to name up to three areas of the curriculum where improvement in student learning had occurred and where evidence was available to substantiate such a claim.

Four schools were selected, reflecting diversity in size, setting and curriculum area where evidence of improvement was claimed.

Preliminary findings in the Learning Outcomes Project reveal that schools can cite evidence that their efforts have led to improved outcomes for students.

They draw on many sources of data in recognizing improved student learning in their schools. This illustrates the capacity being developed in the system to gather information about the performance of schools.

Maps of direct and indirect links were prepared by Wee for each school and these suggest how school capacity associated with being a School of the Future has led to improved outcomes for students. These maps are consistent with the outcomes of the structural equation modelling reported earlier but they are richer and more informative, with differences among schools in the pathways that have been followed, and they are explicit in respect to the role of school leaders, including the principal.
of the principalship Policy milieu

Changes in the role of principal have occurred in a policy milieu in which centrally-determined frameworks of curriculum, policies, priorities, standards and accountabilities have shaped action at the school level to which significant authority and responsibility has been decentralized. Expectations for schools have increased. All is occurring in the context of limited if not declining resources for public education and the transformation of the way in which public services are designed and delivered.

The field is contentious and, despite assertions that what has occurred is an outcome of particular ideologies (see contributions in Smyth, 1993), there is much evidence around the world that change along these lines is likely to continue. An illustration of this is presented by experience in Britain under New Labour, where there is no sign that the major features of reform under the New Right agenda of the last decade will be reversed, despite assurances that attention is to shift from structures to standards, and pressure is to be balanced by support. Targets for improvement have been set in literacy and have been fore shadowed for numeracy at the school, local authority and national levels. Educa tion action zones have been established, but the role of
the local (public) education authority is no more assured than in the past, for there is the possibility of private management, even from international providers. The new professional culture in Schools of the Future

The evidence presented in this paper suggests that principals in Schools of the Future in Victoria have accommodated the new milieu in the practice of their profession and that a new culture has emerged. This is despite several dysfunctions and evidence of intensification of work in the same manner experienced by teachers (see Hargreaves, 1994 for a critique on intensification). Despite concerns about work load, resourcing, and lack of flexibility in staffing it is clear that the overwhelming majority of principals would not wish to return to previous arrangements.

Three sets of case studies associated with the Cooperative Research Project have illuminated the professional culture of the principalship in Schools of the Future (Ford, 1995; Gurr, 1996; Johnston, 1997).

Ford (1995) provided a comprehensive and detailed picture of the new role of the primary (elementary) principal. Her starting point was a set of eight key result areas for principals developed by the education department following consultation with principals in Schools of the Future:

- school ethos and learning environment;
• vision and future directions;
• implementing school charter, particularly goals and priorities; 
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOLL REFORM

• curriculum overview and monitoring of student outcomes;
• resources utilization and pursuit;
• personnel selection, performance and development;
• interdependent organizational structure and key teams performance;
• policy development and support for school council (Ford, 1995).

Ford identified a set of ten representative tasks in each of these eight key result areas and surveyed a representative sample of primary principals in one metropolitan region in Melbourne. She found that there was high agreement among respondents on the importance of all 80 items, indicating the extraordinarily rich and complex role for the primary principal under the new arrangements.

Most striking among Ford’s findings were those related to gender. For 73 of the 80 items, women gave higher ratings of importance than did men, with differences being statistically significant in 27 instances. Among the latter, those of greater importance to women: concerned the valuing of participation to achieve consensus in school ethos, a common vision, team development for leadership density, planning and review of school operations, and school budgeting. As well, the female respondents were more future oriented and valued analyzing social and educational trends. Educationally, they valued, significantly more than
their male colleagues, catering for individual differences, independence in learning, improving the teaching learning processes and refining assessment and reporting procedures. (Ford, 1995, p. 125)

In the matter of gender, Ford suggested that “females perceive their role through a richer tapestry of dimensions than do their male colleagues” (Ford, 1995, p. 125). The findings suggest that women principals tend to be attitudinally more disposed than men to the emerging role of principal in the self-managing school, at least in the Victorian setting.

Gurr studied the role of secondary principals in Victoria’s Schools of the Future. He identified 17 themes associated with the leadership role of principals and concluded that leadership which focused on learning and teaching was important, but less direct than was practised or advocated in the past; that transformational leadership was evident, marked by a future orientation, with cultural and symbolic dimensions; and that a capacity for accountability and responsiveness was needed (Gurr, 1996). Changes to the leadership role of the principal since the reform was initiated in 1993 were described. There was greater complexity and a higher level of responsibility in accountability, school community relations, direction setting, personnel and financial management, and for many, ensuring the survival of the school. Principals were
becoming less hands-on and more involved with external networks, relying more on delegation and the support of senior staff to cope with daily demands. STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Johnston conducted case studies of three secondary schools in Victoria identified by knowledgeable people as having the characteristics of a learning organization (Johnston, 1997). Her research addressed the question “What are the characteristics of schools and principals which are perceived to be successful learning organizations?” The five disciplines in the Senge (1992) model provided a frame for the study: systems thinking, personal mastery, team learning, shared vision and mental models. She found that the model should be modified for the school setting, with four key elements being instrumental in the development of a learning organization in schools: inclusive collaborative structures, effective communication channels, integrated and inclusive professional development programs, and learning focussed leadership.

Johnston’s concept of “learning focussed leadership” appears critical if the linkages described in this paper are to be made effective. It is a rich concept but it is strategic and empowering more than it is heroic or “hands on”. She
described the principal of the exemplar among the three schools in the following terms: The principal was clearly influential but, at the same time, was regarded as a team player. She was particularly adept at demonstrating what the current reality was while exposing the school to a vision of what could be. She articulated the creative tension gap and indicated the way forward. In the process the school was infused with an energy and optimism not often seen in schools at this time. The idea that all within the school should be leaders captures the notion of leadership of teams. (Johnston, 1997, p. 282)

A meta-analysis of research on the relationship between the role of the principal and school effectiveness was carried out by Hallinger and Heck, with their work spanning the period from 1980–1995, the years in which the school effectiveness and school improvement movement gathered momentum. Consistent with the findings of Gurr and Johnston, they uncovered surprisingly little evidence of a direct relationship, but consistent evidence of an indirect effect in their testing of models which suggest that: . . . principal leadership that makes a difference is aimed toward influencing internal school processes that are directly linked to student learning. These internal processes range from school policies and norms (e.g. academic expectations, school mission, student opportunity to learn, instructional organization, academic learning time) to the practices of teachers. Studies based on a mediated-effects model frequently uncovered statistically significant indirect effects of principal leadership on student achievement via such variables. (Hallinger and Heck, 1996, p. 38)

Research by Peter Hill and his colleagues in the Victorian Quality Schools Project illustrates this conclusion. They found that class
effect sizes were much
greater than school effect sizes in analysis of differences
in student achievement,
confirming that the school improvement effort should be
focused on the class
room (Hill and Rowe, 1996). Hill contends that principals
have a central, if indi
crect role by helping to create the “pre-conditions” for
improvement in
classrooms, including setting direction, developing
commitment, building capac
ity, monitoring progress and constructing appropriate
strategic responses (Hill,
1997). A strategic role in the new culture

The research findings of Hallinger and Heck in their
meta-analysis, and of Ford,
Gurr, Hill and Johnston in Victoria, are consistent with
the view that there is no
direct link between the capacities that come to schools in
the reform movement,
including the new authorities and responsibilities of
principals, and learning out
comes for students, unless explicit links are made between
these capacities and
what occurs in the classroom. Principals and other school
leaders can, however,
play an important role in setting events in train that will
make these links effect
ive, for example, the processes for the selection of staff;
the professional devel
opment of teachers; the focusing of curriculum to the
particular learning needs
of students; and the management of a planning and resource
allocation system

that ensures that data on need and performance are analyzed, priorities are set and action proceeds. In other words, the linkages and gearing illustrated earlier must be made effective and this calls for leadership and management of the kind illustrated here (see Caldwell and Spinks, 1998 for a framework of strategic intentions for school leaders who seek to make these links). Consistent with general contemporary writing on leadership, the whole enterprise will be shaped by a shared vision of what can be accomplished.

There are many issues to be resolved in established the new professional culture for principals and other leaders. An important strategic issue is the nature of the reform movement and the manner in which the profession at large should be involved (Hargreaves and Evans, 1997). Another is the nature of public education itself, including the manner in which it is resourced (Caldwell and Hayward, 1998). There is certainly a substantial agenda for researchers, policy makers and practitioners who seek a “new professionalism” in school education. Note

* Dr David Gurr, Department of Education Policy and Management, University of Melbourne, analyzed data from the most recent survey of principals in the Cooperative Research Project reported here (Cooperative Research
Project, 1998) and provided helpful comments on a draft of this paper. Dr Ken Rowe, Senior Research Associate.


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How can teachers be interdisciplinary and specialized, autonomous and accountable, cognizant of both change and continuity? They can start by embracing some basic
principles of renewal.

We live in exhilarating and terrifying times. We are experiencing greater eco

nomic flexibility, more technological complexity, more multicultural diversity,

heightened moral uncertainty, and crises of national identity. Some have called

this a postmodern age (see Hargreaves 1994 for a review) and an age of paradox

(Handy 1994). What does it mean to teach, to lead, to renew ourselves and our

schools in the midst of these transformations?

Above all, we need new guidelines and principles of change that aren’t

merely borrowed uncritically from the profit-centered business world. I will

propose several principles of school renewal to help teachers navigate the turbo

lent currents of postmodern times. First, however, a brief rundown of what edu

cators are up against in their renewal efforts. Five paradoxes

This postmodern culture is characterized by many contradictions that have direct

implications for educators. Here are five such paradoxes. 1. Many parents have given up responsibility for the very things they want schools to stress

In the same week the Canadian public clamored for schools and school systems

to adopt “zero tolerance” policies against violence, “Mortal Combat” was the

top game rental at video stores (Barlow and Robertson 1994). Similarly, as
parents increasingly demand that schools produce more literate graduates, they continue to allow their children to watch television for hours on end. 2. Business often fails to use the skills that it demands schools produce

Lasch and Urry (1994) point out that there is “better education yet more jobless ness among black American males,” and that despite rising literacy rates and graduation rates among black high school students in inner cities, jobs there have disappeared. The American economy is becoming pear-shaped, with highly skilled workers at the top, and a much larger underclass of unemployed, under employed, or employed people in undemanding jobs at the bottom (Clegg 1990). 3. More globalism produces more tribalism

As Secretary of Labor Robert Reich (1992, p. 3) has observed, global economies and ceaseless currency trading are making national borders irrelevant. At the same time, the U.S. National Education Goals stress national superiority, pro claiming that “United States students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.” While the economic world is increasingly dominated by transnational corporations, national education systems encourage national curriculums and standards, retreating behind parapets of parochialism. 4. More diversity and integration is accompanied by more emphasis on common standards and specialization

Society demands that students acquire more flexible work
skills, so educators

must emphasize problem solving and critical thinking and create interdiscipli

nary links among separate subject domains. Society calls for schools to respond
to multicultural diversity, so educators must consider multiple intelligences, dif
ferent learning styles, heterogeneous grouping, and the integration of special

needs students into ordinary classes.

At the same time, the obsession with national strength and identity are

spawning standardized tests, international comparisons, and even school-by

school competition based on traditional performance evaluation. This evaluation

emphasizes restricted definitions of intelligence, narrow learning styles, rigid

sorting and tracking, and reaffirmation of subject specialties that most tests

seem to value. No wonder many teachers are perplexed. 5. Stronger orientation to the future creates greater
nostalgia for the past

Complexity and uncertainty are leading many people to long for golden ages of

traditional subjects, basic skills, and singular values in a world of clear moral cer

tainties. Outcomes-based education precipitates fundamentalist insistence that the

curriculum reassert Christian values (Brandt 1993). Multicultural diversity leads the RENEWAL IN THE

AGE OF PARADOX

privileged classes to retreat to private schools and charter schools and other such
safe havens of traditional values (Soja 1989). Six principles of school renewal

How can educators work with perpetual paradox? How can we be integrated and

specialized, standardized and variegated, local and global, autonomous and

accountable, embracing change and continuity? The existing literature of educa-
tional change offers only limited help. It either addresses problems of a bygone
age (like the effective schools of the 1970s) or relies too heavily on pop-man-
agement corporate models of change. As a beginning, I propose six principles of
school renewal that take these paradoxes into account. 1. Moving missions

Shared visions and common missions have their source in the corporate manage-
ment literature. Drucker (1993, p. 53), for example, argues that “the organization
must be single-minded; otherwise its members become confused. . . .” This may
work for business organizations, but is it appropriate for public schools?

Of course, teachers should have moral purposes and talk about their purposes.

But common missions that require complete consensus, such as “educate all
children to their full potential,” may become bland and vacuous because they
must appease or appeal to so many different interests. At the same time, mission

statements can become too fixed to enable suf cient
responsiveness to changes in policy mandates, personnel, or student populations. Not that we should dispense with missions and visions altogether, merely that missions will work better if they are temporary and approximate, and do not require complete consensus.

Teachers and schools should therefore review and renew their purposes over time. Many people enter teaching because they care about children in particular or want to contribute to social improvement in general. Often these purposes become submerged as teachers fall prey to daily classroom pressures and routines (Fullan 1993). Teachers’ purposes can also differ, leading to confusion and inconsistency for children and creating difficult or superficial staff relations.

We must recognize, however, that people cannot be given a purpose: purposes come from within. My colleagues and I recently studied work cultures and educational change in eight high schools. We found that the teachers most likely to resist a newly legislated mandate to de-track 9th grade were those in academically successful suburban schools (Hargreaves et al. 1992). For them, the mandate addressed alien agendas of student equity in multicultural communities.
within the inner city. Policy makers often impose purposes in this way. So do

some school principals. As Fullan (1993, p. 13) says, “It is not a good idea to

borrow someone else’s vision.”

If teachers are to continuously review and renew their moral purposes, they must have sufficient scope to do so. As it is, most educational policy inhibits opportunities for renewal, and, in fact, makes teachers mere tools of other people’s purposes.

Insofar as possible, policy decisions should be determined at the immediate level where people will have to realize them (Corson 1990). Planned change that follows systematic cycles of development, implementation, and review is too in exible and bureaucratic to respond to local circumstances (Louis 1994).

Moreover, detailed documents that freeze policies in text become outdated and are overtaken even as they are being written—by changing communities, new technologies and legislation, research insights, and unanticipated problems (Darling-Hammond 1995).

Policy is best established by communities of people, within and across schools, who talk about the provisions, inquire into them, and reformulate them.
bearing in mind the circumstances and the children they know best.

For example, I am working with the North York Board of Education, one of Canada’s largest school districts, to create a process for realizing language policy across the curriculum. This district is one of immense linguistic and ethnic variety—more than 70 languages are spoken in its schools. Over half of its school children are categorized as English as a Second Language, and school populations are changing rapidly as new waves of immigrants come to the city. No one district policy can address these distinctive needs. So within and across schools, we are establishing teacher dialogue groups. These groups will revise a set of language learning principles, share good practices and initiate and review new ones, discuss case vignettes, and edit videos of teachers and university researchers speaking on language learning. They also will discuss how to accommodate the flexible teaching styles necessary to give all students a voice in large secondary school classes.

This approach does not eliminate the need for written policies about equity, standards, language-learning principles, and other matters. It merely enables schools and communities to make policies real through action and dialogue, thereby stimulating and sustaining renewal.
Before collective action and dialogue can take place, certain relationships must be built among teachers and others, relationships that form the culture of the school. To develop or alter these relationships is to reculture the school (Hargreaves 1991, Fullan 1993).

Among teachers, two kinds of cultures have traditionally prevailed.

• Cultures of individualism, where teachers have worked largely in isolation, being sociable with their colleagues, but sharing few resources and ideas, rarely visiting one another’s classrooms, and engaging only occasionally in joint planning or problem solving (Little 1990).

• Balkanized cultures, where teachers have worked in self-contained subgroups—like subject departments—that are relatively insulated from one another, and that struggle competitively for resources and principals’ favors (Hargreaves 1994).

Both individualism and balkanization fragment professional relationships, making it hard for teachers to build on one another’s expertise. They also stifle the moral support necessary for risk-taking and experimentation.

Reculturing the school to create collaborative cultures among teachers and with the wider community reverses these dynamics. It creates a climate of trust in which teachers can pool resources, deal with complex and unanticipated problems, and celebrate successes. Collaboration also furthers the development of a common professional language, so that teachers can resist
A key component of reculturing is the willful involvement of critics and skeptics, who might initially make change efforts more difficult. We must recognize that diverse expertise contributes to learning, problem solving, and critical inquiry.

A school improvement project my colleague Dean Fink and I are working on with the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education is a case in point. We have stipulated that in order for a school to participate, its school improvement team must include at least two teachers who normally are not considered to be on the leading edge of school initiatives. We wanted this project to be for all teachers in the schools involved—10 schools in Maryland’s Prince George’s County School District. We began with an orientation workshop in which we discussed the value of diverse expertise and viewpoints, and how experienced teachers who were rightly suspicious of change had often had negative experiences with change efforts.
space. These structures shape relationships. Structures of teacher isolation have their roots in schools that have been organized like egg crates since the mid-19th century: schools in which children are moved in batches through prescribed curriculums, from grade to grade, teacher to teacher. Similarly, balkanized teacher cultures are often a product of subject department structures based on the university-oriented system of Carnegie units, devised in the United States in the 1920s (Tyack and Tobin 1994).

If the schedule does not allow teachers to meet during the regular school day, they may become worn down and captives of their schedule—"prisoners of STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE time" (National Education Commission on Time and Learning 1994). Under these circumstances, collaboration becomes exhausting and contrived-tagged on rather than integral to ordinary commitments and working relationships. It is time for teachers to work with the structural grain, not against it.

Some of these structural problems can be solved by administrative ingenuity.

Routinely coordinated planning times can bring together teachers who teach the same grade or subject. Placing 1st and 6th grade teachers in adjacent classrooms can begin to break down stereotypes and the boundaries between the upper and
lower ends of elementary school. Peer tutoring can have the same effect, bringing together not only students of different ages, but also the teachers who supervise them.

In the end, however, it makes no sense to devote so much effort to working around basic structures that are so unsympathetic to professional collaboration.

Murphy (1991, p. 15) argues that restructuring “involves fundamental alterations in the relationships” among teachers, students, parents, administrators, and communities. For Sarason (1990, p. 10), these are relationships of power that we have avoided confronting, but we must now redistribute this power.

The Work of Restructuring Schools (Lieberman 1995) offers examples of new structures that encourage new ways of working. These include teacher teams, multi-age groups, and shared decision-making teams. To these we could add block scheduling; mini-schools or sub-schools, where no teacher meets with more than 80 students a week (Sizer 1992); and interdisciplinary programs that bring teachers of different subjects together. 5. Organizational learning

Working together is not just a way of building relationships and collective resolve. It is also a source of learning. It helps people to see problems as things
to be solved, not as occasions for blame; to value the
different and even dissident voices of more marginal members of the organization;
and to sort out the
wheat from the chaff of policy demands. Collaborative
cultures turn individual
learning into shared learning. This is what Senge (1990)
means by organizational learning. Learning organizations, he says, are
organizations where people continually expand their
capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new
and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where
collective aspiration is set free. . . . (p. 3)

Although organizational learning is becoming one of the
strongest inspirations for educational change (for example, Louis 1994,
Fullan 1993), the theory
has limitations that derive from its origins in the
corporate sphere. These limitations should make us cautious about transplanting it
wholesale into education.

For example, the commitment to continuous improvement can
easily degenerate into interminable improvement, where no one values heritage
and such vital
ingredients of schooling as tradition, continuity, and consolidation.

In such settings, only incurable change addicts prosper. Some teachers are
habitual explorers, voracious readers, enthusiastic
conference-goers, and willing
committee and task force volunteers. Others, especially
classroom teachers in
mid- to late-career, prefer to cultivate their own gardens, making small changes
with their own classes where they know their efforts will make a difference
(Richardson 1991, Huberman 1993). No one should be closed to change and
continuous learning. But in institutions that value cultural transmission and
stable socialization among their many goals, there are moments and places for
consolidation and routine.

Another principle of organizational learning that does not transpose well
from the corporate world concerns the dynamics of blame. That is, the idea that
“everyone shares responsibility for problems generated by a system” (Senge
1990). Schools and teachers, however, have to deal with many mandates they do
not control. To say that teachers share responsibility for the consequences of
badly designed tests or inappropriate curriculums is unrealistic and unfair. This
is not sharing responsibility; it is shifting blame to the victim. If organizational
learning is to help us in school renewal, we need to renew the concept in ways
more suited to public school realities. 6. Positive politics

Schools are intensely political places where power is everywhere. Teachers
exercise power over their students, administrators exercise power over teachers,
and the smarter teachers know how to manipulate or maneuver
around administrators. In addition, schools are becoming more and more subject to the pressures of diverse groups with single-issue interests. Business organizations, computer companies, chambers of commerce; environmental lobbies; fundamentalist religious groups; and pressure groups opposing sexism, racism, and violence against women are all competing for space and influence in today’s schools (Emberley and Newell, 1994). The moves toward site-based management are also making schools and what they do more overtly political.

Although many teachers feel that getting involved in politics is self-seeking and generally distasteful, not all politics is bad. Blase (1988) describes what he calls positive politics, where power is used with other people rather than over them. How can teachers apply positive politics to benefit their students? Following are some suggestions.

• Understand the political configuration of your school. Who has formal and informal power? How do they exercise it? How are resources allocated? This will help you steer clear of moral martyrdom—pursuing noble causes without considering whose interests they threaten, and whose support you need.

• Act politically to secure support and resources for the good of your own students and, indeed, all students. Use influence, persuasion, diplomacy, charm, self-mockery. Trade favors, in influence power brokers, build coalitions, lobby for support, plant seeds of proposals before presenting them in
detail, and find out how what you want meets the interests of others.

- Empower others to be more competent. Assist students through co-operative instruction, active involvement in innovation, and by making them partners in their assessment through self-assessment and peer assessment. Empower parents by communicating with them in plain language, building partnerships with them (even when they are a problem!), and informing them of change. Empower colleagues by collaborating with them, involving them in decision making, sharing leadership, and sharing with them your vulnerabilities and uncertainties as a leader as well as your successes.

- Embrace conflict as a necessary part of change. Productive conflict brings differences into the open, shows sensitivity to opposing interests and positions, avoids false or premature consensus, and promotes movement beyond early (and perhaps unfounded) anxieties about one’s own threatened interests.

- Reclaim the discourse of education. Challenge the business rhetoric that is consuming education and the way we think about it. Explain yourselves to parents and the public as well as you do to your students. Avoid defensive professional euphemisms. Instead, convey your principles through memorable phrases, vivid examples, and simple stories.

Teachers are highly skilled at explaining the world to their students but are often much less skilled at explaining to the world what they do with their students. Language is power—use it. And use positive politics to help you take charge of change rather than being its conduit or victim. Pursue each of these


Blase, J. (1988). “The Teachers’ Political Orientation Vis-à-Vis the Principal: The
Micropolitics of the School.” In The Politics of Reforming School Administration:


3.


[. . .] School cultures – a basic model

The fundamental problems faced by schools, to which their cultures constitute a solution, can be understood in terms of the twin concepts deriving from Bales’s (1952, 1953) studies of group dynamics. To solve a complex problem a group
has to maintain pressure to keep members on task and devise social controls to prevent distraction; simultaneously it must seek to maintain in the group some social harmony, which is easily disturbed by pressure to keep on task. For example, a member who proffers suggestions regarded as foolish by others is offended by the controlling comments from others pressing for task completion. Groups, then, deal with an instrumental function, or task achievement, but also with an expressive function, or maintaining good social relationships. Incompetent handling of either function might disrupt the group and its effectiveness.

The distinction can also be of value when applied to institutions. Schools have various instrumental functions, especially those directed towards student cognitive achievement. Such tasks require social controls over teachers and students so that they work together in orderly ways, concentrate on teaching and learning and avoid the ubiquitous possibilities of distraction and delay. Schools thus require what Lieberman and Miller (1984) call ‘control norms’.

This is the instrumental-social control domain of school life. In the same way, schools have an expressive task of maintaining social relationships so that they
are satisfying, supportive and sociable - the expressive-social cohesion domain of school life. In the present model it is assumed that these two domains, always in potential tension, constitute the core of school cultures.

An additional assumption is that in each cultural domain there is an optimal level for the effective functioning of the school. [...] Every school has to find some combination of, and balance within and between, the cultural domains of control and cohesion. A first typology of school cultures From this basic model a typology of school cultures is developed (Figure 1). At some point along each axis lies a theoretical optimal position between the extremes of the corners.

The school culture of type (A) in the south west corner is high in the instru mental domain, with exceptional pressure on students to achieve learning goals (including examination performance) and perhaps athletic prowess, but with weak social cohesion between staff and students. School life is orderly, sched uled, disciplined. [...] The tone (ethos) of the institution is custodial: in hard forms (a military academy) it could be described as coercive; in softer versions (the grammar school) as 'a tight ship' fostering ‘traditional values’. Reflecting the institutional inheritance from the nineteenth century,
this [is a] formal school culture.[

In the north east corner school culture (B) is characterised by a relaxed, care

free and cosy atmosphere. It places high emphasis on informal, friendly teacher-

student relations. The focus is on individual student development within a nur

turing environment. [. . .] The ‘child-centred’ primary school or the ‘caring’

inner-city secondary school with a strong pastoral system exemplify this type.

[. . .] In this welfarist school culture the students are happy at the time but in STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Figure 1 A first typology of school cultures. Instrumental domain • social control • HIGH OPTIMUM LOW B

Expressive domain

• social cohesion • OPTIMUM E D HIGH C LOW A

later life look back on their experience with resentment at the teachers’ failure to

drive them hard enough. In the formal school, by contrast, students are often

unhappy at the time, but later recall their experience with gratitude.

In culture (C) in the north west corner the high instrumental and expressive

emphasis creates a frenetic ethos. All are under pressure to participate actively in

the full range of school life. Expectations of both work and personal develop

ment are high. Teachers are enthusiastic and committed, being pedagogical
experimenters and innovators. In this pervasive intimacy, everyone seems to be under surveillance and control. [. . .] This [is a] hothouse school culture. [. . .]

In the south east corner (D) is a culture where both social control and social cohesion are exceptionally weak. For both teachers and students the school is close to break-down – a classic ‘at risk’ situation. This is a survivalist school culture. Social relations are poor, teachers striving to maintain basic control and allowing pupils to avoid academic work in exchange for not engaging in mis conduct. [. . .] The ethos is one of insecurity, hopelessness and low morale.

Few actual school cultures fall into the extreme positions described in these cameos - Weberian ‘ideal types’ of cultures that do not exist but help to interpret those that do. Real schools are locatable at any point in the space between the corners. Since schools are ‘loosely coupled’ institutions (Weick 1976), diferent parts of the school (including teacher subcultures and individual class rooms) could be located in a different segment from the rest of the school. In this model, the ideal school of the effectiveness literature is around the centre (E), striving to hold its chosen optimal position in the social control and social cohesion domains. Expectations of work and conduct are high
- the principal’s expectations of staff and the teachers’ of students. Yet these standards are not perceived to be unreasonable; everyone is supported in striving for them and rewarded for reaching them. For both teachers and students, school is a demanding but very enjoyable place to be. It must be recognised, however, that the staff and clients of schools in many other positions (except the south east corner) may well consider their school to be effective.

[. . .]

Nevertheless, the conceptual economy of the basic model provides too restricted a range for an adequate description of the dynamics of schools in their considerable variety of cultural forms. To capture the dynamics of school cultures, and in particular the complex interactions among teachers, a model of greater conceptual complexity is required. A second typology of school cultures

Institutional cultures (members’ values, beliefs etc.) stand in dialectical relation to their underlying architecture (social structures or patterns of members’ social relationships). A structural change often has cultural consequences; a shift in culture may alter social structures. Cultures and their architecture are subject to constant pressure towards change by internal and external factors. When for S C H O O L C U L T U R E , E
schools such pressure is unsought and unwelcome, it is this dynamic relationship between structure and culture that illuminates school change, be it improvement or deterioration. The impact of much externally imposed change is structural rather than cultural, since it is easier to legislate about people’s work situation and practices than their values and beliefs. Structures can often be determined by fiat; cultures cannot, for they are like corals – living, fragile, slow to form, sensitive to their ecology, easy to destroy, difficult to replace.

The second typology proposes an architecture of five underlying social structures – political, micropolitical, maintenance, development, and service. (The present analysis does not fully explore other structures, such as the moral.) The political structure refers to the character and formal distribution of power, authority and status. Beneath the formal organisation and its official positions is an informal network of individuals and groups who plot, plan and act together to advance their interests – the micropolitical structure (Hoyle 1982, 1986; Ball 1987; Blase 1991). The political and micropolitical structures interlock, often as a contest between the official functioning of the school and the unofficial...
manoeuvring of the staff groupings with distinctive subcultures.

Maintenance and development (Hargreaves and Hopkins 1991) are structures that arise from the school’s dual needs for stability and change. Some aspects of an organisation must persist over time: they become the taken-for-granted routines of social life which provide order and continuity for the community. Though maintenance structures are often hardly noticed because of their sheer familiarity, they are powerful in their impact; to challenge and disrupt them is often to alarm and confuse community members. At the same time, some aspects of school are subject to change, and to manage change requires structures of various kinds. The enduring bureaucratic systems designed for maintenance, such as committees and posts of responsibility, are often the first choice as development structures. To cope with change effectively, however, an organisation may have to devise different structures or temporary systems for specific, short-term development tasks. Maintenance and development structures, like political and micropolitical structures, are often in tension.

The service structure forges the social relations between the organisation’s
staff and its clients – in the case of schools, the relations between the teachers,

students and their families, and governing bodies – including the distribution of rights and duties of each.

This typology organises the possible variations in this architecture around two (Weberian ideal) types of school here called traditional and collegial. In the

literature about school cultures the terms collegial and collaborative are used interchangeably. This is unfortunate and potentially confusing. Collaboration
does not necessarily involve an institutional base to its structure, but refers to a disposition towards, or the enactment of, a style of relationship which may take place in a very wide range of structural conditions – total strangers can collabo
rate in brief and transient encounters, as when one helps an old lady across the road. Collegiality, far from being a synonym for collaboration, invokes an insti
tutional structure – the collegium, or ‘organised society of persons performing certain common functions’, in dictionary language. In this typology the term collegial refers to a type of institution, where particular forms of both structure and culture exist. This helps to avoid the danger of talking about school cultures as if they existed independently of structural bases.
By cross-tabulating five elements of architecture with two types of school, as in Table 1, ten structure-culture complexes are exposed. Each is expressed through a dual descriptor. The traditional school culture and senior teachers (including heads of subject departments in secondary schools) being like a monarch surrounded by barons. In describing its 'despotic political structure', Waller (1932) captured the essence of the traditional school.

This power is never absolute: the despotism is 'in a state of perilous equilibrium threatened from within and exposed to regulation and interference from without'. [. . .] The style for conducting relations between principal and teachers (and between teacher and students) is therefore consultative as well as feudal, to keep challenges at bay and temper accusations of tyranny or authoritarianism.

The consultation may be explicit, a seeking of views followed by a discussion before the monarch’s decision is made; but often it is implicit, a checking out of what people will accept without risk of rebellion. Today the feudal structure commands less assent from most teachers than it did in Waller’s time.

The micropolitical structure is fissile, inherently liable to break into groups as
the barons quarrel over status, power and resources (Cf. A. Hargreaves 1992).

The constant need for the countries to curry favour with the monarch (or to retire from court to social and physical isolation in distant parts of the kingdom) promotes a culture that is ingratiative (D. H. Hargreaves 1972); the teachers have to learn the art of pleasing, and avoiding displeasing, the principal by a variety of tactics - which simply replicates how students seek to control their relationships with teachers (Jackson 1968). [. . .]

The daily routines of the traditional school are conducted not in feudal terms but according to bureaucratic principles and procedures that provide the maintenance structure of most modern organisations. Rules and regulations guide decision making and the handling of problems. Action to maintain the system is

Table 1 A second typology of school cultures Traditional school Collegial school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political structure</th>
<th>feudal-consultative</th>
<th>egalitarian-participative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micropolitical structure</td>
<td>fissile-ingratiative</td>
<td>integrative-exclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance structure</td>
<td>bureaucratic-positional</td>
<td>delegative-rotational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development structure</td>
<td>individualist-hierarchical</td>
<td>institutional-collaborative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service structure</td>
<td>autocratic-deferential</td>
<td>contractual-accountable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The daily routines of the traditional school are conducted not in feudal terms SCHOOL CULTURE, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT
controlled on a positional basis: teachers have assigned offices with a designated sphere of authority and clear labels that indicate both the standing of the position and the specialist competence. Members know (or are supposed to know) who is in charge of what and to whom every one is accountable: to neglect one’s specialised duties is as dangerous as to arrogate to oneself the powers and privileges of another. [. . .]

In the traditional school, as in all bureaucracies, innovation is introduced with difficulty. Teachers are, on an individualist basis, free to innovate within their own classrooms, provided that either this does not break the system’s rules and regulations or breaches can be protected from the knowledge of superiors. [. . .]

The most successful ways to innovate are from, or with the support of, the top of the hierarchy: principals purport to have the best ideas for change. Much as a principal may enthuse about the innovation, teachers have to implement it; if they do not actively support it, they may use their potential to undermine or pervert it. In short, there is a weak development structure, which is often simply a hierarchical appendage to the more effective maintenance structure. Since levels of trust between staff are relatively low, change is accompanied by
increases in paperwork: records and minutes are required to keep everyone informed and to allay suspicions that changes might be made without consent.

[. . .]

Teacher–parent relations are a variant of the autocratic principle governing teacher–student relations. A sharp boundary exists between professionals and lay persons. [. . .] Teachers have specialised knowledge and skills to which clients are expected to defer: the service structure of autocracy (which is about the distribution of power) does not necessarily entail an authoritarian manner to the client, but does require deferential compliance. If clients (parent or child) prove to be intractable, lacking in sufficient deference, they may be invited to seek educational services elsewhere. The collegial school culture

The political structure of the collegial school is really quasi-collegial (Hoyle 1986). In pure collegial systems, members elect their head, power is shared subject to the statutes and ordinances, and responsibility for the college is a collective one. The headteacher in England and Wales is appointed, has legal responsibilities and is accountable for the conduct of the school to a governing body and so staff relationships cannot be fully egalitarian. Nevertheless, in a
collegial school the principal acts in practice as primus
inter pares, allowing – or
purporting to allow – all teachers equal rights to be
participative, always in dis
cussion and sometimes in decision making.

There is here the possibility in the micropolitical
structure of fission into STRATEGY, MARKETING,
CHANGE, CULTURE

competing interest groups, but (in contrast to the
traditional type) this is counter
acted by the integrative culture’s centripetal drive
towards consensus. As the
culture is participative rather than democratic, voting on
key policy matters is
avoided. If, through voting, a simple majority view were to
prevail, there would
be a risk of creating a ruling group with a substantial
disaffected minority. [. . .]

There may emerge a small deviant group of members who, if
they cannot be
integrated, are quietly excluded, being ignored or
tolerated as eccentrics. New
comers to the school are checked not just for their
technical expertise (as in the
traditional school) but also for their ‘fit’ in terms of the
ideological stance of the
school – and so may be offered an initial short-term
contract before entry into

this essentially exclusive culture.

A close integration of the social control and social
cohesion domains is
evident in the way the collegial schools defines its
mission. Policies tend to be
whole-school policies which are not accepted without substantial consensual support and commitment. The implementation of such policies is achieved by the trustful delegation of responsibilities and the regular but non-permanent rotation of duties among members, in place of the 'allocation by position' in the traditional school. The high level of trust leads to low levels of written communication and paperwork. [. . .] The looser framework of teacher role distribution provides a maintenance structure within which boring jobs of a routine but professional character are shared rather than falling to the lot of low status members. [. . .]

For teachers, the development structure is clearer, stronger and more salient than the maintenance structure; innovative initiative is not linked to hierarchical standing. The whole-school or institutional focus is supported by collaborative relationships through which members work together to implement any change designed to realise shared goals compatible with the school's mission. Leadership is distributed non-hierarchically, a match being sought between opportunities and individual talent and interest, wherever they lie, irrespective of status.

Innovation is public and team-focused; it transcends individual teachers and sur
vives their departure. [. . .]

Finally, in the service structure, relations with clients (students, parents, gov
ernors) tend towards the contractual, in recognition that all parties have both
rights and duties, and that sound working relationships spring from explicit
acceptance of such partnerships. Contract entails being accountable, but in a
mutual and comfortable form, based on relationships characterised by openness,
confidence and trust. Cultures in transition

Over the last hundred years or so, the general drift seems to be from the tradi
tional towards the collegial, spawning many mutant forms on the way. This evo
lution reflects many of the wider changes in society and other social institutions
especially between 1960 and 1980. Most schools, perhaps, are in some aspects tradi-
tional and in others collegial. Official policy may favour mixed types –
contemporary British policy on schools favouring traditional political structures
but collegial service structures. In Britain, cultures in transition are common
under the impact of the unprecedented scope and pace of educational reform.

[. . .]

Current changes in school cultures and architectures are often understood,
experienced and interpreted by teachers as a tension between the traditional and the collegial since these [...] are the roots of, and remain deeply embedded within, the professional conceptual frameworks used to make sense of school. As a result, some teachers, and especially principals, continue to strive towards either one of the ideal types or a pragmatic admixture. School cultures - effectiveness, change and improvement How might the two typologies contribute to the development of theory or research into school effectiveness and improvement? One of the key criteria for the quality of theory is its fertility in generating hypotheses for empirical test. The remaining section of the chapter is devoted to suggesting hypotheses that might be tested if operational and measurable versions of the typologies can be devised. School effectiveness Is one type of school culture more closely associated with school effectiveness than another? The answer depends on the criteria by which effectiveness is judged. In the first typology, the survivalist school least meets criteria for effectiveness, almost by definition. The other three types pose problems. The school with a welfarist culture is weak by academic criteria, with poor learning outcomes, but staff would assert their achievement in terms of expres
sive outcomes, which might include low rates of delinquency. The formal school culture, by contrast, is associated with high academic press, but assigns little value to the expressive domain. It could be hypothesised that where the students come from families committed to the school’s high academic expectations and are capable of meeting the academic targets, the school will be effective by the relevant criteria – fee-paying boarding and selective schools especially. On the other hand, where the students and their families have low academic interests, aspirations and commitments, and the students display low self-esteem, the failure to provide supportive social cohesion could make a formal school less effective in terms of academic outcomes – some inner-city schools, perhaps. The hothouse culture might be associated with selective or differential effectiveness:

for pupils wilting under excessive instrumental and/or expressive pressures, the school would be ineffective, but others might cope well with, or even flourish in, this ethos. Indeed, whilst there is a general question of whether school effectiveness correlates with school culture, there is an equally important question of STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE whether some cultures are more effective with certain kinds of teacher and certain kinds of student.
The school of a ‘balanced’ culture achieving some optimum position in both domains might claim to be the most effective, but only when the criteria of effectiveness assign equal weight to both instrumental and expressive outcomes.

It could be argued, of course, that many parents and politicians give more weight to the instrumental. The popular conception of the effective school in contemporary Britain would be to the west (and perhaps south west) of the E space in Figure 1. E is not necessarily the correct location for the collegial school culture, which with its emphasis on agreement, consistency and working together could in some variants assume hothouse and welfarist forms. Collegial cultures vary sharply in terms of culture content (Cf. Campbell and Southworth 1992) and mission, and so can be located anywhere to the north of E.

These tentative suggestions may be regarded as hypotheses: whether and in what ways school culture is associated with effectiveness needs to be put to empirical test. School cultures of particular types may be more attractive and satisfying than others to teachers and/or students and/or parents, and that may be important in itself. Research should test whether and in what ways school culture relates to a variety of outcome measures,
especially cognitive ones, but

not excluding the possibility that school culture might [. . .] be a variable irrelev

ant to some or all outcome measures. Linking school culture
to variations in
teacher values and practices is insufficient to throw light
on school effectiveness.

As Huberman (1992) sharply points out, innovations are not
introduced to improve professional capacity; they are
introduced to heighten pupils’ skills and capacities. True, we are not likely to get the second without the first, but
by getting different instruction, we may not necessarily
get more learning. [. . .]

Indeed, Huberman indirectly points to the fact that it is
easier to make hypothe

ses about the relationship of school effectiveness with
cultures of the first typol
ogy than with those of the second typology. One of the
strengths of the first
typology is that it embraces both teacher and student
levels, since both are
affected by the pervasive institutional dimensions of
social control and social
cohesion. The second typology is concerned with teacher
rather than school cul
tures: its greater sensitivity at the teacher level is
achieved at the cost of neglect
of the student level. Indeed, while it is possible to
investigate both teacher and
student versions of school culture in the first typology, it
is difficult to imagine a
student version of the cultures in the second typology that
would be anything
more than their perceptions of cultures and structures
operating at teacher level.
It is thus more difficult to make hypotheses about student cultures or student outcomes that might be associated with traditional or collegial cultures. Any linking of better student cognitive outcomes with the traditional and better student social outcomes with the collegial are likely to be weak. As we shall see, school culture, effectiveness and improvement below, when it comes to making hypotheses about student outcomes, the two typologies combined are more suggestive than either alone.

School change

Which type of culture most helps schools to cope with change, in what ways and under what conditions? In the first typology, survivalist schools are on the edge of breakdown, barely coping at all. Of the remaining three types, there is nothing to indicate whether one type is inherently more able to cope with change than others. Clearly if the external pressure is towards higher social control, traditional and hothouse cultures have the advantage; if the trend is towards greater social cohesion, welfarist and hothouse cultures have the edge.

The advantage of any school in the more central locations in Figure 1 over the corner locations is that it has, so to speak, less distance to move, and so fewer destabilising adjustments to make, to adapt to external shifts in instrumen
tal and expressive emphases. But schools in central positions are not necessarily flexible; their more central position may reflect confusion or incoherence over the two domains. But if the culture is intentionally balanced, then school leaders are likely to be alert to any impending change and to the need for any adjustment to unavoidable problems. Schools with organisational flexibility of a high order linked to an acute sensitivity to changes in the external environment seem to exist. In theory, a school with this capacity to detect, respond to and control change, whilst retaining some balance between social control and social cohesion, should be in a central position in Figure 1. It is a hypothesis to be investigated.

In the second typology, the advantage enjoyed by each type is again relative to circumstances. The traditional school type, with its strong maintenance structure, prospers well in stable circumstances; and if the principal’s authority is accepted and seen as the legitimate source of innovation, there can be a positive and effective response to externally imposed change. If these conditions do not apply, then the weak development structures may not bear the weight of innovation. The collegial school type, with its stronger development structure and col
laborative relationships that sustain teachers under stress, may be better placed
to handle rapid change. This is one criterion of effectiveness - which may or
may not correlate with effectiveness defined as student outcomes. Emergent col
legial cultures in British schools may indeed have the edge in successfully
implementing the changes following the Education Reform Act 1988, but if their
student outcomes remain unaltered then the schools, though changed, cannot be
said by standard criteria to be more effective.

Collegial cultures may handle many types of change well but only under spe
cific conditions. For example, when there is collective agreement to the extern
ally imposed change, it may be filtered through the school’s vision or mission
and so implemented. But if there is no such agreement to the change, the staff
may become bogged down in discussion or even division, with the effect of S T R A T E G Y , M A R K E T I N G , C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E
delaying implementation, allowing only partial implementation or even forcing
rejection of implementation on the grounds that the damage to staff cohesion is
too great a price to pay. The traditional school, by contrast, is more comfortable
with partial or selective implementation, since whole staff agreement to a
change is not a pre-condition of acceptance.
Indeed, the now common assumption that collegial cultures support change

must be qualified by a recognition that the collegial school’s egalitarian-participative structure may become a strong source of resistance to any externally driven change when staff are hostile to it. Welfarist and hothouse cultures that are strongly collegial are likely to be highly resistant to external change that is incompatible with their missions. Where collaboration among teachers takes the form of ideological convergence (rather than trust), where there is low toleration of divergent views (rather than respect for difference), then there are within the school reduced resources for accommodating unwelcome outside pressures. It is hypothesised that, given the emphasis of recent education policies, collegial welfarist schools will be most resistant to current demands for change— and some of those may be the low-achieving schools in inner-city areas (Ofsted 1993) where politicians are expecting reforms to have their greatest impact. A headteacher could revert to a feudal-consultative style to change the direction and philosophy of the school, but this would be perceived as reneging on the collegial culture, which could in itself provoke resistance. Even the introduction of a new head might have limited effects, since collegial cultures are averse to strong, charismatic...
matic leaders seeking to move the school to new values.

School improvement

School culture may be a cause, an object or an effect of school improvement:

indeed, all three are possible. It is said that school culture should be a target for change, on the grounds that in due course it will exercise an improving causal influence on other variables, and eventually on student outcomes, which in turn reinforce the culture. Indeed, the principal task for a school leader may be the management of the culture to such ends (Schein 1986).

For [many years] it has been urged, especially in North America, that collaborative cultures (variously defined) are superior to non-collaboration and better able to support school improvement. . . . Consequently teachers are enjoined to become more collaborative; and administrators may be tempted to contrive to promote teacher collaboration as a means of implementing politically and administratively led reforms (A. Hargreaves 1991). More recently, collaboration has been subjected to a more sceptical and analytical treatment (Little 1990); it has been argued that collaboration can be excessive and therefore damaging, and has been assigned undue importance as a means of increasing school and teacher effectiveness (Huberman 1993; A. Hargreaves 1993). Certainly the emphasis
given to social cohesion in extreme hothouse and welfarist cultures can be excessive; ‘collaboration for its own sake’ without regard to context or purpose makes SCHOOL CULTURE, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT a dangerous educational principle. But then the inadequate social cohesion characterising extreme formal and survivalist cultures also carries debilitating penalties. Schools need to find some optimal version of social cohesion - and of social control too.

In the models offered here, collaboration is possible in both traditional and collegial cultures. No school culture, and certainly not the collegial, can make exclusive claims to collaboration, but collegial schools have a firm architecture that fosters collaboration. Collegial cultures are, however, not reducible to collaborative relations, and it is dangerous to imagine that either collegial cultures or collaborative teacher styles necessarily entail certain structures, such as team or joint teaching. If the relationships between school culture and school improvement are to be tested empirically, it will be essential to look beneath the cultural features, such as collaborative attitudes, to their underlying structures.

In the collegial culture there are likely to be found not just examples of collaboration but also other cultural and architectural features
such as:

- commitment to a shared vision for the school, providing teachers with clear purpose and direction, and so potentially strong morale;

- co-ordination of policy to create a consistent environment and expectations for teachers and students;

- methods for improving curriculum continuity and progression for students, so that unplanned repetitions or omissions are avoided and teachers build on the foundations established by colleagues in related subjects or in earlier classes;

- practices that support mutual classroom observation and discussion of teaching and learning, allowing the sharing of both problems and good practice, experimentation with new ideas, and the encouragement of reflection;

- a means of reconciling the demands of professional development with those of school development.

Since these features seem less common (but not entirely unknown) in traditional school cultures, it seems reasonable to hypothesise that collegial cultures will be more supportive of school improvement. Though the warning voices from North America should be heard, British empirical evidence on collegial cultures (Southworth 1987; Nias, Southworth and Yeomans 1989; Campbell and Southworth 1992) offers few indications that schools are de-stabilising themselves and stifling teacher initiative by excessive indulgence in or pressure towards collaboration. There are important exceptions, as in the case of the collegial welfarist culture noted above; but these merely qualify rather than wholly falsify the
general hypothesis. In most circumstances collegial cultures should favour the
self-improving school – and also external consultancy, since they should foster
staff co-operation with advisers, if the intervention is designed as a collaborative
venture. Whether the collegial, improving school will be more effective in terms of STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE
of the quality of teaching and student achievement has yet to be firmly estab-
lished, but the factors highlighted in the previous paragraph contain what might
be key structural links between teacher cultures and student outcomes. No
school or teacher culture can be shown to have a direct impact on student learn-
ing and achievement, and claims to that end are vacuous. But the effects of
culture can be conceptualised as trickling down, so to speak, through the archi-
tecture – political and micropolitical, maintenance and development, and service
– until they eventually make some impact on what goes on in classrooms – and
the ways in which that is . . . conceptualised and investigated (Brown and McIn-
tyre 1993). Is the flow of culture trackable through research?

At a time when in Britain, as in other countries, there is a political interest in
the detection and improvement of under-achieving or ‘failing’ schools, the rela-
tionship between school culture and school
effectiveness/improvement needs

closer investigation. Improved techniques for depicting and measuring school
cultures are needed. At the same time better methods for mapping the process of
change, including the change from one type of culture to another, are also essen
tial. Only then can hypotheses on the possible forms and extent of advantage for
collegial cultures be tested; only then can the possibilities and limitations of
school improvement through cultural change be uncovered. Teachers are begin
ning to use culture within their professional vocabulary to discuss school
improvement and are increasingly being influenced by the growing academic
literature. But, like the researchers, they lack adequate conceptual frameworks
and investigative tools to explore school culture. For both researchers and practi
tioners, better models and techniques would generate enhanced conceptual,
methodological, heuristic and explanatory links between school effectiveness
and school improvement as well as hypotheses about their relationships that
could be put to empirical test. Note

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Source: Cambridge Journal of Education 28(1) (1998): 113-127. Abstract Schools and school systems in many countries face considerable pressures for change, partly from government directives but at least as significantly from a changing social context. This paper is an attempt to strengthen understanding of strategies for and constraints on school change based on a review of some of the theoretical literature in education and more generally. Our hope is that such a review will provide a realistic sense, neither wildly optimistic nor darkly pessimistic, of the possibilities for schooling in a period of important social
How schools cope with a world of change is clearly an issue of fundamental importance. We are bombarded with messages about the pervasiveness and importance of changes in our natural, social, economic and technological environments and their importance for schools. These discussions range from the popularisers, such as Naisbitt (1990), Ogden (1993) or Toffler & Toffler (1995), to the management theorists, such as Drucker (1992), Vaill (1990) or Handy (1994), to more philosophical or theoretical discussions, such as those of Giddens (1994) or Taylor (1991). Some of these analyses focus on discrete areas of change—for example, an ageing population, degradation of the natural environment or increased focus on human rights. Others take a broader view, talking about larger scale systemic changes. Some theorists see our society changing in quite fundamental ways. Post-modernism is one term in current use, though in many different ways; Hargreaves (1994) uses the term ‘post-modernity’ to distinguish a social situation from an intellectual viewpoint (which is his analysis of post-modernism). Giddens (1994) uses the term ‘high modernity’ to stress connections between present and past more than differences, while Taylor
(1991) speaks of the ‘malaise of modernity’. What these and similar analyses have in common is a much broader view of social change, one that sees import ant shifts underway in fundamental constituting elements of a society such as concepts of identity, approaches to politics, legitimating structures and epis temological underpinnings.

One doesn’t have to look very hard to find discussions of the implications of external change for schools. Typically, the authors of work on education reform will begin by noting various changes in the larger society that are, or should be, affecting the work of schools. For example, Dennison (1988) lists four 'domin ant factors': 'the reorganisation of the productive processes', increasing pressure from the public, restraints on government expenditure and 'the emergence of high technology in the classroom'. Henchey (1988) lists changing knowledge, communications technology, convergence of work and learning, growing comp lexity and increasing pluralism as key challenges for education. A recent OECD report cites globalisation and ageing populations, widely diffused information technologies, changes in the organisation of work and changing values as related to the creation of 'post-industrial' society (OECD, 1995, p. 4).
Andy Hargreaves has been one of the commentators on changing external forces and their impacts on schools who has adopted a broader view and also related it to the day-to-day realities of teaching and learning without being simplistic. His book Changing Teachers, Changing Times (Hargreaves, 1994) has an extended discussion of specific elements of social change and their implications for schools. Hargreaves cites seven key areas of change, all of which affect the needs of students and the situation of schools: the flexible economy; globalization; the decline of certainty in knowledge; the need for organisations that are less rigidly structured; changes in people’s sense of self and the increasing pressure on individuals to define and create themselves (an analysis developed more fully in Giddens, 1994); the growth of technological imagery and simulation; the compression of time and space. He notes that all of these trends contain inconsistencies and contradictions. They do not lead us forward in some direct way to a new world, but make it increasingly important for people to shape their own futures. In a later article Hargreaves (1995) further develops some of these paradoxes—for example that many parents have given up responsibility for the things they appear to value most, that businesses don’t use the skills
they demand schools produce or that globalisation is also leading to increased tribalism.

Not everyone accepts that change is as pervasive as Hargreaves suggests.

Beniger (1986) has identified more than 50 different claimed 'transformations' of society since 1945, suggesting that our readiness to embrace grand schemes of change may be greater than the changes themselves.

Historical change typically occurs over long periods of time, as confirmed by the expert who, when asked to identify the main results of the fall of the Roman Empire, noted that it was still too soon to tell! On the other hand, human life is also subject to sharp and unexpected discontinuities, whether natural disasters or surprising events created by humans. As Dror (1986) puts it, STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

There is a high objective probability of low-probability events occurring frequently. In subjective terms, surprise dominates. (p. 168)

and Nickerson (1992) makes a similar case. My sense is that, especially during recent years, we have been more often surprised by the ways in which technological advances have outdistanced our imaginations than by the ways they have lagged behind them. In any case, if the past gives us any clues at all as to what the future holds, the one thing that we can be quite sure of is that there will be surprises...some of the most significant developments are very likely to be those that no one foresees. (p. 6)

So, although there is little agreement on the precise nature and shape of social change, educators are likely to continue to
experience pressures from such changes. Still, a large portion of work on education change and reform continues to focus on the internal dynamics of the school, not its external relationships and situation. The discussion of change often proceeds as if the school were in charge of its own destiny and could itself determine what was to be done. Many of the leading books on education change and reform have little to say about social context and its implications for education. If these are mentioned it is typically in passing, at the beginning, as a measure of the urgency of change. The paradox of school change is sweeping and not always consistent. Schools, we are told, need to teach critical thinking or to renew emphasis on basic skills, or both. Schools need to deal with the realities of modern life for young people or to instill former discipline.

If educators have a surplus of anything, it is advice. It seems everyone has an opinion about schools—perhaps because everyone has gone to school and knows something about them. Both the popular and academic literature are full of ideas about what is wrong with schools and how to improve them. The advice is sweeping and not always consistent. Schools, we are told, need to teach critical thinking or to renew emphasis on basic skills, or both. Schools need to deal with the realities of modern life for young people or to instill former discipline.

Schools need to work more closely with parents or to become more professional organisations. Schools need to become mini-communities or
require the alleged
discipline of market forces. Schools need more options or fewer options or dif-
ferent options. Schools should be more autonomous or more closely regulated
by government. And so on.

Allied to the barrage of advice is the argument that schools have not changed
very much. Schools are often accused of failing to keep pace with social change.

School systems are described as still organised largely on the nineteenth century
lines which characterised their beginnings. C O N C E P T U A L I S I N G S C H O O L C H A N G E The age-graded, centrally controlled and highly bureaucratized system of public schools has survived largely in the form in which it was invented in the late nineteenth century. Virtually all of the successful changes in the system could be classifi ed as those that helped the system to expand, to extend its services or to become more ef cient. (Grant & Murray, 1996, p. 93)

Schools are also said to be highly resistant to change. In an oft-cited piece
Larry Cuban (1988) writes ‘so much school reform has taken place over the last
century yet schooling appears to be pretty much the same as it has always been’
(p. 341). One could cite dozens of examples of the same argument. The con
sequences are sometimes framed in almost apocalyptic terms: Certainly the environmental forces which public school of-
cials once were able to contain, and the con ict the institution was once able to channel or suppress now appear to be overwhelming it . . . . If that continues to be the case, the fate of the institution of public schooling will be determined largely by forces in the societal and institutional environment . . . . (Cibulka, 1996, p. 20)
Still others accuse schools of changing too much and too frequently: of being prey to every fad or bandwagon that comes along (Slavin, 1990). According to these critics, new tasks are assigned, new curricula developed, new methods of teaching proposed and new organisation forms are introduced too often.

Changes are adopted and then abandoned with a startling frequency and many of those are put into practice are said to be badly thought out and have pernicious consequences. Certainly, one group of reformers want schools to undo what are seen as the damages caused by a change to progressive teaching methods.

Although these claims seem contradictory, each also appears to have some validity. When we compare schools with other organisations, they do seem remarkably stable in their basic organisation and operation. In many other settings basic changes have occurred in the nature of staffing and the roles of staff, the basic technology being used, the physical structure and the organisation of resources. Hospitals have become intensive users of technology. Much banking now occurs at instant teller machines nowhere near an actual bank. Industrial settings use more equipment and fewer people. But most schools today would be pretty recognisable even to someone who hadn’t set foot in one for decades.
They are still organised around the agricultural calendar and the six hour day.

They still revolve around classes of children, grouped by age or subject, being taught by a single adult. Papers, pens and the chalkboard—now sometimes white, to be sure—are still the basic technologies. Grades, textbooks, examinations, marks, detentions and extra-curricular activities all seem remarkably similar to past practice.

Some problems or issues also seem to be continuous. One can easily cite many examples of issues that have been the subject of debate in schools for decades, such as the relationship between schools and work, programming for students not planning to go on to post-secondary education, grouping practices in the elementary grades, retention in grade and so on.

That stability, however, is far from the whole story. The experience of many educators of the last 20 years is one of continuous change, often externally imposed and soon succeeded by further change. The complaint of many in school systems is not that there have been too few changes but that there have been too many. The progressive movement of the 1960s was replaced by the ‘back to basics’ of the 1970s and early 1980s, followed by a whole variety of
other movements—accountability, increased testing, reduced funding, changes

in curriculum requirements, reorganisation of schools from primary and secondary to early, middle and senior (or vice versa), changes in the organisation of the school year (moving to semesters or moving away from semesters), changes in the school schedule (from 40 to 80 minute classes and back again), reductions in numbers or powers of school districts and local authorities, requirements for school-based planning, requirements for parental councils, parental choice of schools and so on. The entire apparatus of special education—the idea that schools can and should be effective with students with a wide variety of handicapping conditions—is only about 30 years old. Learning disabilities, mainstreaming, multiply disabled children, individual education programmes, all these substantive issues of today were essentially unknown until the late 1960s.

Attention to differences in gender, ethnicity, language, sexual preference and social class have brought a new series of issues around how we reconcile respect for difference with some sense of commonality (Riffel et al., 1996). Technology has become yet another major focus of change as schools develop computer capacities and curricula. The idea of teachers as
professionals, changes in labour
relations and increased certification requirements have made an important difference to schools. And let us not forget the constant additions to the work of school—sex education, drug education, conflict mediation, values and character building, life skills and so on.

The changes have intensified in the last 5-10 years, driven increasingly by the efforts of governments in many countries to alter school governance, curriculum, teaching practices and accountability systems (OECD, 1995). For example, schools in England and Wales have been on the receiving end of a barrage of government policy shifts—local management, the removal of many of the powers of local education authorities, the need to compete for students, a national curriculum with extensive national testing and publication of results, new sets of school leaving qualifications, dramatic changes in further and higher education with important implications for secondary schools, much greater powers for school governing bodies, compulsory school inspections and so on.

In the USA and Canada change has varied considerably across states and provinces, which have jurisdiction over education, but has been enormous in CONCEPTUALISING SCHOOL CHANGE
many settings. The buzzword ‘restructuring’, while it has many meanings (Elmore, 1992), at the least implies very substantial changes in schools. Many US states have rewritten their entire education law. Among the most common initiatives have been school-based management, parent councils, state testing, minimum competency requirements for graduation, takeover of failing schools, and significant changes in finance and racial integration policies. In Canada provinces have been extending provincial achievement testing, reducing the numbers and powers of school districts, imposing new curriculum requirements and freezing or cutting funding to schools. In several countries large-scale change models, such as Success for All, the Coalition of Essential Schools and Accelerated Schools, have become increasingly influential.

All of this has occurred in a climate, in recent years, of harsh criticism of schools, limited or reduced levels of funding and the replacement of a dynamic of hope and optimism with one of fear and frustration. Government policy documents typically take the view that school systems have failed to deliver what is required and that the failure is especially lamentable in view of the high level of spending on education. Many other reports in many different countries by
various commissions and interest groups make similar claims (Beare & Boyd, 1993). The general tone underlying much reform is negative—an effort to undo alleged damage.

Which is it? Are schools characterised by too much change or too little?

Unravelling the paradox requires some discussion of the nature of relationships between organisations and their environments generally. Understanding organisation-environment links

There is a general consensus in the literature on schools and on organisations generally that organisations must adapt to changes in their environments if they are to survive. This is the essence of an open systems model of organisations, which remains the standard conceptualisation. ‘When environments change, organisations face the prospect either of not surviving or of changing their activities in response to these environmental factors’ (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Biological metaphors are common in this discussion; organisations are compared with species or are described as living in ecosystems. Concepts of birth and death, survival and adaptation are often invoked. The work of leaders and managers is seen to be key to the ability of organisations to survive and prosper under changing conditions.

The matter of organisation response to environmental change
is, however, not nearly as simple as these metaphors suggest (Levin, 1993).

For one thing, the question of what constitutes the ‘environment’ of an organisation is not straightforward. Much of the literature treats environment as a kind of residual concept. For example, in a popular book of the 1980s, Bolman & Deal (1984) describe the environment as ‘everything outside the boundaries of an organisation, even though the boundaries are often nebulous and poorly drawn’ (p. 44).

Support for this all-encompassing sense of environment comes from data collected from school administrators. In one study surveys returned by 92 administrators identified a total of 752 different problems or issues facing the schools (Fris & Balderson, 1988). No single issue was ranked as most important by more than a quarter of the respondents, suggesting very little consensus on these matters. In another study 21 principals identified a total of 907 issues or problems in 16 different categories, although most of these concerned the internal operations of the school (Leithwood et al., 1990). In effect, the environment could be understood to include anything which might affect the schools, and that potentially means everything.

That people can list issues does not mean that they agree
on either their nature or importance. What one person sees as critical another may regard as largely irrelevant; what seems a threat to one is an opportunity to another; a problem located in the community by one person may be seen as residing largely within the school by someone else. Polling of the public also shows little agreement on the key issues facing education. Both Canadian and US polls of ‘the most significant problems facing schools’ typically show no issue being rated as the number one problem by more than 15% of respondents and there is little agreement even on the top five issues (Williams & Millinoff, 1990; Elam & Rose, 1995).

If everything is potentially important and time and energy are not available to address every issue, then it is important to understand the process through which some items are given salience over others—what might be described as ‘learning’. Recent years have seen the rapid growth of work around the idea of ‘organisational learning’ and ‘the learning organisation’. The idea here is to work to increase the capacity of organisations to learn about and respond to their changing situation. Peter Senge’s (1990) book The Fifth Discipline is among the best known earlier works in this field, but the idea has caught
on rapidly and there is

now a large popular and academic literature on
organisational learning (e.g.

Levitt & March, 1988; Simon, 1991; Argyris, 1992; Watkins & Marswick,

1993).

Organisational learning is an attractive idea, but not
without its problems.

Much of the work is highly abstract and does not deal with
real organisations

and the barriers they face. It tends to assume a world of
rational analysis and

optimising behaviour and one in which there is general
agreement on what needs
to be learned. The important question of what constitutes
‘learning’ in an organi

sation is sometimes glided over. The best available
evidence is that the process

of learning in organisations is a very uncertain one, for
three linked reasons.

First, the very complexity of the world makes it unlikely
that any simple or

straightforward understanding of events and circumstances
can be obtained, or

would be useful if it could be obtained. Second, there is
considerable research

which illustrates the limits of human ability to process
complex information.

And third, our organisational forms and practices also
place limits on our ability
to see and to deal with changes in the world around us. C O
NCEPTUALISING SCHOOL CHANGE

Political scientist Yehezkel Dror is particularly eloquent
in regard to the first point, the complexity of a changing world. In discussing what he calls 'policy adversities', Dror notes that these are very complex, include many interacting and dynamic factors, seem to be highly intractable, may be exogenous to government and involve inherent contradictions (1986, pp. 38–45). For example, schools are subject to pressures to reduce spending, increase services, put more stress on academic performance, keep more students in school, decentralise authority and meet regional or even national standards. It is not just that these pressures are inconsistent, but also that they interact with each other to produce even more complex patterns of demand and response. Peter Vaill has described the current setting for organisations as being akin to 'permanent white water' (Vaill, 1990).

Not only is the world immensely complex, but human ability to deal with complexity appears to be highly constrained. Recent literature in cognitive psychology and related fields has taught us much about the ways in which people form judgments and make decisions and the limits on our ability to do so. Dror (1986) is again particularly perceptive in describing the limits of human and organisational ability to understand and cope with complexity and adversity. For
example, people tend to overestimate the influence of immediate or visible causal agents—the obvious instead of the important. We tend not to see the importance of subtle and long-term changes, to infer causality when events are connected only fortuitously, to give too much weight to what we have seen or been told most recently and to be powerfully influenced by preconceptions and stereotypes (Kiesler & Sproull, 1982).

How people make sense of the world also depends greatly on the organizational setting (March & Olsen, 1989). What information is widely circulated and regarded as credible? What sorts of ideas are seen as acceptable and which are not? What communication patterns exist? What has been past practice? What myths and stories shape the way people think about their organisation? What language is commonly used (since what has no name is all but invisible)? All these factors will influence the way that people think about the world they inhabit.

McCall & Kaplan (1985), studying decision makers, describe various sources from which a sense of problem or issue may emerge, including organisational routines, values, other people and direct experience. They see the process of problem identification as interactive and as affected by
such factors as previous mental sets and emotional responses. From the very large number of problems which are thus perceived at any particular time, people select those which will be acted upon—again through processes which are not well understood. McCall and Kaplan identify influences such as receiving an instruction to do something, seeing the problem as being one’s own, seeing the possibility of a solution, the history of the issue, the perceived degree of crisis involved and the existence of deadlines. The kind of careful analysis prescribed in works on planning is not typical; in fact, priorities often get set by chance.

In an important sense identification or understanding of issues and changes is STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE always local. The literature on schools and change may talk in terms of macro trends—changing technology, changing patterns of work, changing modes of organising—but what people actually see in their daily lives are local and concrete manifestations of larger trends. We may all agree that ‘the global economy’ is an important change affecting education, but the meaning of this phrase will be quite different in a large urban centre and in a small rural community. Consider these instances, drawn from empirical research by the
authors (Levin & Riffel, 1997).

(1) A suburban high school has seen its community and student population change over the past 20 years from white and middle class to extremely diverse ethnically and economically. The teaching and organisational strategies that seemed successful two decades ago don’t work nearly as well now, but nobody is sure what to do about it.

(2) A rural school district, which at one time had half a dozen thriving towns, now really has only two communities that may have long-term viability as the rural population continues to decline and successful students move away to pursue jobs. The schools take pride in preparing young people but know that this means the continued diminution of their communities and way of life.

(3) An urban school district is trying to respond to a growing and increasingly well-organised Aboriginal community demanding to know why its children have been so unsuccessful in the schools. How does the district reconcile its commitment to education for all with particular needs and aspirations of its various sub-communities?

(4) A suburban-rural district used to be a series of small towns in which everyone knew everyone, but is now largely a bedroom community with many
foster homes and a high incidence of special needs students. Can an approach to schooling rooted in a close-knit community work under these circumstances?

(5) A First Nations school authority on an Indian reservation struggles with the meaning of quality education for native people and its implications for their traditional way of life. Now that they control their own schools, what should those schools look like? How do they increase graduation rates and participation in post-secondary education without losing their sense of identity?

These local circumstances are at least in part the result of much larger and longer term social trends, but it is the particulars that face people, not the larger trend. The maxim of ‘think globally, act locally’ is certainly applicable to change in education.

If ‘learning’ is a troublesome concept, so is the notion of ‘responding’ to change. A number of different explanations have been advanced as to why schools allegedly do not change. Some explanations focus on self-interest. For example, Marxists and critical theorists would assert that schools as presently constituted effectively advance class interests and that changes are not made because ruling elites benefit from the present structure and functioning of
schools (see Liston, 1988, for an extensive discussion of this literature). Much of

the rhetoric of educational reform in the last decade, with its stress on academic conceptual school change

standards and school choice, fits well within an explanatory framework of class interests (Barlow & Robertson, 1994). Another explanation which focuses on self-interest but from a very different political stance is that of provider capture,
in which school change is resisted by teachers and other professionals who benefit from the current system (Tyack & Tobin, 1994).

Quite a different perspective comes from analysts who look at the mismatch between proposed changes and the structure and governance of schooling. David Cohen is among the most eloquent proponents of this view. He argues that schools are highly decentralised, with the capacity to make changes distributed not only among levels of government but also within the school among administrators, teachers and students. Changes in learning require changes in people’s behaviour that must largely be voluntary, so that nobody is in a position to impose change in practice, even when there is agreement on changes in policy (Cohen, 1992). Changes in educational practice depend on changes in teachers’ knowledge, their professional values and commitments and
the social resources
of teaching practice, yet these are not often the focus of reforms, which are
themselves didactic in approach (Cohen, 1995, p. 15).

Moreover, in a period in which schooling is under attack from so many
sources it is hardly surprising that people inside the system see the merits of
stability and of conserving what seems to them to have worked well. Embracing
change in the abstract and for others is much easier than wholeheartedly accept
ing massive change in one’s own immediate circumstances! If teachers are
inclined sometimes to blame the problems of education on parents and students
or on government policies, this is not much different than governments blaming
the problems of the economy on teachers and schools. All of us are inclined to
want others to change so as to make our lives easier.

While the conventional view in the organisation theory
literature is that
organisations must respond to external change, others see the dynamic as con
siderably more complex. Many of these arguments fall under the rubric of ‘neo
institutionalism’ (Crowson et al., 1996), in which organisation functioning is
shaped by characteristics of institutions and institutional systems rather than by
rational analysis of self-interest. Institutional theorists
also point to the import
ance of networks or systems of organisations, in which all organisations of a certain kind become very similar to each other because of regulations, professional practices, legal requirements and other factors that may have nothing to do with them.

One version of this approach, originally developed in studying schools, is the 'logic of confidence' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977), which suggests that schools can remain substantively unchanged provided they are seen as embodying the right kinds of activities and processes, regardless of outcomes. Thus the changes in curriculum or the addition of new programmes and services serve to present the facade of response, while the heart of the instructional process remains unaltered. Testing students becomes a substitute for actually taking steps to improve learning.

Another perspective comes from work by Meyer & Zucker (1989) on what they call 'the permanently failing organisation'. They argue that organisations are places in which multiple competing interests are at play, of which goal achievement is only one, and that organisations may accept a state of more or less permanent 'failure' because of the pressures from various internal and external constituencies to avoid radical change. Failure to respond is not a problem
for such an organisation, but a characteristic of it. Since schools, as public organisations, are fundamentally subject to competing interests, a pattern of response which stresses placating interests over achieving goals would be expected.

Other theorists have asserted that organisations are simply incapable, regard less of will, of changing rapidly enough to accommodate external changes. Organisations are seen as substantially controlled by environments which the organisations may not understand at all. Proponents of this view stress the inability of organisations to understand or anticipate change, as well as the limited ability of organisations to adjust when change requires it. Kaufman (1985) notes that ‘... organisations by and large are not capable of more than marginal changes, while the environment is so volatile that marginal changes are frequently insufficient to assure survival’ (p. 131). Dror (1986) talks about the idea of ‘fuzzy gambling’, in which the odds are unknown and also shift over time, while the very rules of the game also change unexpectedly.

We are also drawn to accounts of organisational life that stress the importance of the mundane and the routine in shaping how organisations work. Among
the most eloquent writers in this vein is James March, whose work over several decades points out that what people do every day is shaped less by grand design or careful analysis or even passion than it is by what was done yesterday and the day before. March (1984) points out that a considerable amount of routine is necessary. While we focus our attention on heroes and change agents, none of the heroism would be possible without a base of ongoing activity that is not subject to change and re-analysis at every moment.

March also notes the paradox that effective adaptation to change will inevitably lead to less effective adaptation in future (March & Olsen, 1989). As a strategy is found to be effective, people become committed to it and the organisation develops it as standard practice (see also Miller, 1990). But as conditions change, the practice that was effective will become less so—what March calls the trade-off between exploration (or learning) and exploitation (or making use of what one has learned). Similarly, Kaufman points out that the idea of making an organisation more flexible isn’t necessarily helpful, since ‘it is a paradox that maintaining flexibility can itself shut off options and impose limits on flexibility’ (1985, p. 73).

The balance between stability and change has led some
writers to speak about

two levels of change—one in which practices or activities change and another,

higher level in which the organisation’s sense of itself and its fundamental

approach are altered. Cuban (1988) referred to these as first order and second

order changes; schools, he suggested, make the former but not the latter. Argyris

(1992) refers to single and double loop learning (the latter, much harder to do,

involving learning about learning). However, it may be very dif cult to assess

which practices are most helpful and effective and organisations can go through

long periods of looking for solutions without knowing when these may be

found. Implications

This brief foray through the literature shows that there is nothing simple about

the way that people in organisations, including schools, either learn about or try

to respond to a changing world. Our capacities to understand, to learn and to

respond are all limited in important ways. Yet change is occurring and schools

are faced with the problem of what to do. There is every reason to expect that

external pressures on schools will continue and even intensify. Somehow or

other schools and school systems will have to adjust to the contrary pulls of their

internal and external worlds.
Some readers may find this analysis depressing, since it focuses on limitations to human capacity and action. We believe that change always requires a balance between idealism and realism. Without ideals we would not begin, but if we do not also look at what is really possible, we are likely to be taken in by charlatanism. We have had a great deal in education of simplistic nostrums that are touted as solutions and then fail, to the cost of many. These are not helpful;

we need a better understanding both of what schools currently do and of what they might realistically do better. Such an understanding must be grounded in a thoughtful analysis of the overall situation in which schools exist—the changing social context that will shape the nature of education.

Coping, which we see as the currently dominant strategy, is most often a way of avoiding disaster, or at least minimising the effects of unwanted external changes on the organisation. The process of creation—asking new questions, finding new answers, approaching problems in new ways—really begins with openness to the possibility of change. Educators might think of themselves as engaged in a process of finding a future for schools. Their educational task is to harmonise social change and their evolving educational purposes. Their organis
sational tasks are less to make decisions about the future shape of systems and

more to create and maintain the conditions that allow a future to emerge.

We see the problems of education as being fundamentally problems of thinking and hence of learning. They cannot be addressed except through means that

lead to changes in thinking and to learning. Responding to change is an educational task, in which schools as institutions need to do the same things we say we want to do with students—think through problems, analyse data, debate options and values, develop and test strategies, learn from our experience. True,

there is no formal curriculum and no set of correct answers to be found in the back of the book. We will have to discover answers as we proceed and to discard what does not seem to serve our purposes. But surely this is what real learning is about and we should be excited by the opportunity to organise schooling in a manner that actually embodies the values we profess as educators.

Certainly the challenges are difficult ones. Research points clearly to the limits of rationalism, but there is no credible alternative to rationality as the primary human means of problem solving. As many of the writers cited in this
paper note, our abilities to think through and solve problems may be limited, but
they are all we have to work with and it is far from evident that we have tapped
them fully. The human capacity to comprehend the world, and to act in accord
with our comprehension, is in many ways quite limited. In other ways, however,
it is remarkable. We choose to focus on the positive potential, the ability of
people when motivated and supported to find ways of being in the world that are
more conducive to creating and sustaining the kind of schools, and the kind of
society, that most of us want. Acknowledgement

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Organizations (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass).

perspective, in: R. C ROWSON, W. BOYD & H. MAWHINNEY (Eds)


Conceptualising School Change


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CONCEPTUALIZING SCHOOL CHANGE 82 SCHOOL RESPONSE TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT* Benjamin Levin


This article explores the relationship between schools and school systems on the one hand, and, on the other, the world or environments in which they are located. How can we explain the degree to which and ways in which...
which schools respond, or fail to respond, to external change? How responsive are schools, and what role do administrators play in the pattern of response? The position to be developed in this article is that organizational responsiveness is limited and the role of administrators even more circumscribed, but that attention to human agency is still important albeit within relatively narrow limits.

One caveat needs to be entered at the outset. As will become clear, the very language we use to talk about these issues is problematic. Thus in this article I talk about “the environment of schools”, “external factors”, “changes”, and “pressures”. None of these terms is ideal; they encompass at best only part of the picture, and may actually be misleading in some ways. However, we appear to lack at the moment a better vocabulary.

There appears to be a general consensus in the literature on schools, and on organizations generally, that organizations must adapt to changes in their environments if they are to be able to survive. This is the essence of an open systems model of organizations, which is now the standard conceptualization. Textbooks in educational administration assert the importance of the external environment in influencing or shaping schools and school systems. 1-3
Nor is this attitude limited to education texts; it is found generally in the organizational theory literature, where survival is presumed to be contingent on successfully meeting environmental pressures. “When environments change, organizations face the prospect either of not surviving or of changing their activities in response to these environmental factors”.

It is also a truism that the world around us is changing rapidly and significantly. Indeed, this assertion has reached the status of cliché. The popularity of all sorts of writing related to strategic planning, organizational renewal, leadership, and the like are evidence of a widespread belief that rapid change requires response. This theme of organizational adjustment has been tremendously powerful in recent years, spawning a vast literature and substantial consulting and training industry dealing with effective management, whether in education or in other kinds of organizations. The role of administrators and managers in accomplishing this task is seen as central. The clearest statements of this position can be found in the literature on strategic planning and leadership. All of these works urge managers to pay attention to external forces which indicate the kinds of changes which their
organizations will need to make to survive and prosper. Education has been described in very similar terms. Schools are also seen as facing important external changes. Among the significant developments frequently noted in reports on education are: increases in the proportion of minority children in schools; changes in family structures and parental work patterns; changes in labour market structures and job opportunities; changes in the values of adolescents; changes in the legal requirements and constraints around education and, changes in technology. All of these, commentators agree, have important implications for the way schools should operate. The educational literature is literally full of works identifying changes to which the schools should respond. The educational literature is also full of work which emphasizes the important role of administrators in catalysing educational action. The idea of the administrator as the key to progress has gained considerable sway. School response to change How well have schools done in responding to the changes around them? Opinion on this issue appears to be divided. On the one hand, some have stressed the extent to which schools have remained essentially unchanged in the face of changes in their students, staff, mission, and potential strategies. In an
often-cited piece on this subject, Larry Cuban notes, “so much school reform has taken place over the last century yet schooling appears to be pretty much the same as it has always been”. 10 Guthrie, Garms and Pierce describe schools as “remarkably impervious to change”. 11 Timar writes that while “school reform has been a ubiquitous feature of schooling . . . little has changed. Since the advent of mass compulsory schooling neither the technology nor the core ideology of schooling has changed substantially”. 12 Goodlad’s massive study of American schools reinforced the view that schooling is uniform and unchanging. “Schools differ, but schooling is everywhere the same”. 13 On the other hand, some take the view that schools change too much and too frequently; that they are prey to every fad or bandwagon that comes along, and that ideas or programmes are adopted and then abandoned with a startling rapidity that can hardly be squared with the requirements of effective education. 14 Not only are new curricula regularly introduced, but there are also changes in favoured instructional strategies (the Hunter method, co-operative education, direct instruction), changes in organizational structures (school-based manage-
of teachers (peer coaching, clinical supervision), changes in mandates (special needs program ming, sex education, child abuse prevention), new programmes (French immersion, computer education, bilingual programmes), and so on.

In all of these areas schools have attempted to change what they do, often in very major ways. There is certainly a frequently expressed view that teachers feel rather overwhelmed by the amount of change they are facing.

Is it possible that schools could be both unchanging and changing too rapidly? How are we to understand the ways in which schools respond to their worlds? I want to suggest that most discussion of these issues has been simplistic. If we look closely at the relevant literature, it is evident that the relationship between schools and their external environments is much more complex, dynamic, and interactive than is frequently assumed. An overview of the literature on the whole, this entire issue of the nature of educational environment has not received very much direct attention in the literature. For example, major refer ence sources in the field such as the Encyclopedia of Educational Research, and the Handbook of Research on Educational Administration do not deal directly with this issue. Lam 15 and Fris and Balderson 16 have also
noted the lack of attention to the organization-environment relationship in education beyond a brief mention of its self-evident importance. There has, however, been considerable review of these issues in the general literature on organizational behaviour, on which the following discussion draws.

The discussion is organized around three questions. The first deals with what might be meant by the term “environment”. The second asks how the environment is perceived by people in organizations. The third concerns the kinds of responses which organizations make to a changing world.

What is the environment?

The term “environment” has been used with considerable variability in the literature. Gottfredson and White have argued that “few concrete methods for identifying an organization’s relevant environment have been suggested, and most theoretical discussions continue to be vague about what actually constitutes the task environment of an organization”. Lam points out that existing models have, “failed to capture the complexities and adaptability of the organization, and proved totally inadequate to account for the multiple contingency adaptation strategies that typify an organization’s response . . .” [p. 364].

A variety of category systems have been developed to
describe organizational environments. One common approach is to divide the environment into a number of sectors, such as social, political, economic, technological, or others. Graphic and to examine important changes in each sector. This technique is borrowed from the strategic planning literature, and has been used widely in education. A second approach involves the description of the environment in terms of characteristics such as complexity, uncertainty, or turbulence, with an attempt to match organizational responses to particular types of environments. There is little empirical work on these conceptualizations. A further problem with both these approaches is that the justification for the particular set of concepts or labels to be used is not provided. Why these terms instead of any number of others sets one might have used? As Warriner put it, “It is clear that such dimensions, no matter how operationalized, characterize but do not describe environments” [p. 156]. More typically, environment is used as a kind of residual category. For example, Bolman and Deal describe the environment as “everything outside the boundaries of an organization, even though the boundaries are often nebu
lous and poorly drawn”. Scott defines the environment as “In a general sense . . .
‘everything else’ – that is, everything that is not-system”. Thus everything is part of the environment of organizations, including schools. In fact, a number of theorists have suggested that there is no self-evident distinction to be made between the organization and its environment. Morgan has put forward the notion of organization and environment as figure and ground – linked in such a way that one cannot be thought of without reference to the other, even though we also recognize them as being somehow distinct. Support for this all-encompassing sense of environment comes from data collected from groups of school administrators. In one study, surveys returned by 92 administrators identified a total of 752 different problems or issues facing the school. As part of my own research, I asked four groups of administrators in an urban school division to do a brief brainstorming exercise and list external factors or pressures which they saw as influencing the schools. Each group was able, in about 20 minutes, to list 40 or 50 distinct items. A partial list of items from the four groups, which gives a sense of the range of issues, is given in Table 1.

The issues raised covered a very wide range, and do not fit
well under any of
the common categorization schemes. Many of the issues
listed have, for
example, political, economic, and social dimensions to
them. Although there
was considerable overlap in the items listed by each group, there were also many
differences. In effect, the environment could be understood
to include anything
which might affect the schools, and that potentially means
everything. More
over, understandings vary, not only across organizations, but among people in
the same organizations. Thus the same environment which is seen as turbulent
by one person in an organization, may be seen as placid by another. However, if
everything is potentially important and time and energy are not available to
address every issue, then it is important to understand the process through which
some items are given salience over others. SCHOOL SPONSORED BY A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT, STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Table 1 Partial list of influences on education

Influences

Budget Climate - drought freezing

Tourism Environmental

Physical space problems Technological changes

Society’s values Pluralism

Single parent families Day care
AIDS Environmental issues
Teenagers working Multiculturalism
School board actions Competitive job market
Extra-curricular activities Second language demands
Ageing population Peer pressures
Psychological influences Interest groups
Internal leadership Political climate
Child abuse factors Individual rights
Information overload Mainstreaming
Budget cuts Unions
Enrichment programmes Retraining
Ideology Marginalized groups
Clash of cultural values Student abilities
Working conditions Money
Time Legislation
Courts Teacher wellness
Inflation Accountability pressure
Department of Education Confrontation tactics
Bureaucracy Sexuality
Demands of business Job sharing
Drug abuse Family mobility
Racism Teacher morale
Bussing Diversified needs of students
Public perception of hierarchy Fund raising
Funding of private schools French school boards
Nostalgia Unemployment
Increase in leisure time Consumerism
Individual cynicism Inner city decay
American influence Rural-urban shifts
Pressure on politicians Impact of competition
High school review Effective schools research
Impact of Pacific Rim countries Aboriginal Justice Inquiry
Education as a lifelong concept No smoking policies
Many careers in a lifetime Decline in respect for law
Increase in school violence Big salaries to professional athletes
Shift in education finance methods Shift in transport boundaries
Growth of lotteries Decline of work ethic
Hours of TV watched Insensitivity to disaster
Decline of personal safety Development of street culture
Stretched social services Mounting debt - personal and national
Inability of our systems to keep up with pace of change
Expectations on school from parents/children
Social factors: single parent, sexual and physical abuse, poverty
Increased responsibility for school (school takes on parenting role) How do organizations and administrators come to understand their organization’s environment?

The understandings which organizations and the people in them have of what they are facing - what they think the world wants or requires them to do - are
clearly important.

Yet, in all the work which has been done on change in schools, not very much attention has been paid to how people in schools think about the environment in which their organizations exist. Boyan, reviewing educational research in this area, notes that “Just how these influences enter the system and exact their respective pressure still remains uncertain”. The study of administrators by Fris and Balderson is unusual in asking explicitly about the way in which external issues are identified as being important. Few other studies appear to have been carried out from the point of view of assessing the ways in which schools as organizations understand the environment.

The best available evidence is that the process is a very uncertain one, for three linked reasons. First, the very complexity of the world makes it unlikely that any simple or straightforward understanding of events and circumstances can be obtained, or would be useful if it could be obtained. Second, there is considerable research which illustrates the limits of human ability to process complex information. And third, our organizational forms and practices also place limits on our ability to see and to deal with changes in the world around
Political scientist Yehezkel Dror is particularly eloquent with regard to the first point, the complexity of a changing world. In discussing what he calls “policy adversities”, Dror notes that these are very complex, include many interacting and dynamic factors, seem to be highly intractable, may be exogenous to government, and involve inherent contradictions. For example, schools are subject to pressures to reduce spending, increase services, put more stress on academic performance, keep more students in school, decentralize authority, and meet regional or even national standards. It is not just that these pressures are inconsistent, but also that they interact with each other to produce even more complex patterns of demand and response. The emerging science of chaos has illuminated the difficulties in studying systems which, while they display certain stabilities or patterns at the aggregate level, are almost completely unpredictable at the micro level. From another perspective, Peter Vaill has described the current setting for organizations as being akin to “permanent white water”. If we return to the list of issues in Table 1, and begin to think not only about these as separate issues, but also about the possible interactions among them, it is clear that our
ability to understand all the forces at work, let alone to anticipate future events with any accuracy, is likely to be very limited.

Not only is the world immensely complex, but our ability to deal with complexity appears to be highly constrained. Recent literature in cognitive psychology and related fields has taught us much about the ways in which people form judgements and make decisions, and the limits on our ability to do so. Dror, again, is particularly perceptive in describing the limits of human and organizational ability to understand and cope with complexity and adversity. Keisler and Sproull, reviewing some of the literature, note such commonalities as the overestimation of the influence of plausible causal agents; the tendency not to see the importance of subtle and long-term changes; the tendency to infer causality when events are connected only fortuitously; the overweighting given to recent information, and the powerful shaping force of preconceptions and stereotypes, to list only a few. Table 2, adapted from McKall and Kaplan, summarizes some of the difficulties which researchers have uncovered affecting the ability to process and use information.

Nor can the perception of individuals be separated from the organizational
and social context within which they occur. The research also indicates that aspects of the organization, such as decision processes, norms, customs, and previous beliefs can have important effects on managers’ ability to focus on long-term and important changes. Work in history shows clearly how critical decision processes are influenced by the current ideology of the organization, by its patterns of interaction, or by such seemingly irrelevant matters as railway timetables (which Tuchman, among others, sees as having been critically important in setting off World War I). Educational systems remain fundamentally committed, largely for historical reasons, to standard forms of organization such as one teacher with a group of students of more or less the same age. Work on organizational learning is rather pessimistic about the ability of organizations to learn from their experience. Hodgkinson provides a particularly nice way of putting the issue with the metaphor of decisions as sandwiches of human calculation placed between a layer of affect on one side and ideology and value on the other. McKall and Kaplan, studying decision makers, describe various sources from which a sense of problem or issue may emerge, including organizational
routines, values, other people, and direct experience. They see the process of
problem identification as interactive, and as affected by such factors as previous
mental sets and emotional responses. From the very large number of problems
which are thus perceived at any particular time, people select those which will
be acted on—again through processes which are not well understood. McKall
and Kaplan identify in uences such as receiving an instruction to do something,
seeing the problem as being one’s own, seeing the possibility of a solution, the
person’s sense of the history of the issue, the perceived degree of crisis
involved, the existence of deadlines and others. They also note that priorities
often get set by chance.

If problem perception and strategy formulation are troublesome, what can be
said about the kinds of strategies which organizations actually adopt to cope
with change? Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture How do organizations actually respond to external pressures?

As noted, the conventional wisdom stresses the need for organizations to
respond appropriately to changing environments. It does seem evident that
organizations do take positive steps to try to understand, cope with, and control,
factors which might impinge on them. Thus schools have made the kinds of
changes in programmes and practices which were noted earlier. However, the evidence on the success of organizational adaptation appears to be at best anecdotal, and has a rather post-hoc character to it [pp. 433–55]. In the case of schools, all the changes mentioned do not seem to have muted the criticism to any significant degree; more attempts to respond might be thought to have brought more dissatisfaction. More frequently, organizations seem to attempt to maintain stability and avoid changing dramatically, typically through some process of manipulating the environmental factors affecting them. Many researchers describe strategies of \textbf{School Response to a Hanging Environment}.

Table 2 A few of the many information processing biases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bias/source of bias</th>
<th>Description/example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Estimation of the frequency with which events occur is influenced by how easily specific instances can be recalled. Chance events or cues may influence thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective perception</td>
<td>What one expects to see (biases) what one does see. People seek information consistent with their own views. People downplay information which conflicts with a consistent profile.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete information</td>
<td>Vivid, direct experience dominates abstract information. Personal experience outweighs more valid statistical information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data presentation</td>
<td>Items presented first or last in a series assume undue importance. Whether information is collected sequentially or all at once affects processing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Inconsistency       | People often do not supply a consistent
judgemental strategy across similar cases, even if they think they are doing so.

Law of small numbers Small samples are considered representative even when they are not.

Complexity Under time pressure, processing of complex information may be superficial.

Gambler’s fallacy Seeing an unexpected number of similar chance events leads to a belief that an event not seen will occur.

Source: Adapted from [28, p. 26].

such as mergers, co-opting, and goal displacement which are means used by organizations to avoid change in the face of changing external pressures. 19,29,34

Organizations may put a great deal of work into obtaining favourable legislation, or public subsidies, or changed regulations, all in an effort to protect themselves from undesirable changes.

This orientation is consistent with work in educational administration, which stresses the tendency of administrators to attempt to maintain the status quo in dealing with change. 2,35 Fris and Balderson 16 studied the adaption process in educational administrators, suggesting that “the information we have available tends to be enigmatic, if not contradictory”, and wondering if administrators were actually particularly concerned about external change, except from the point of view of avoiding surprises. Their research suggested that the primary orientation.
of school administrators was to system maintenance, and that the focus was on present demands rather than understanding the “big picture”. In the school division which provided the data in Table 1, it is clear that many of the items listed are not currently the focus of active consideration by the division or by schools within it, even though there is an awareness of the existence of these multiple issues.

Other formulations suggest that organizations may not need to respond to external change at all, or may only need to respond in symbolic ways. The well known work of Meyer and Rowan 36 and Meyer and Scott 37 suggests that in the case of public schools there is a “logic of con dence” which allows schools to remain substantively unchanged provided they are seen as embodying the right kinds of activities and processes, regardless of outcomes. Ceremonial com pliance with public mandates sustains public con dence and allows the organi zation to continue with its core activities unchanged. Thus the changes in curriculum, or the addition of new programmes and services serve to present the facade of response, while the heart of the instructional process remains unal tered.

Another perspective comes from recent work by Meyer and
Zucker on what they call “the permanently failing organization”. 38 They argue that organizations are places in which multiple competing interests are at play, of which goal achievement is only one, and that organizations may accept a state of more or less permanent “failure” because of the pressures from various internal and external constituencies to avoid radical change. The claim that organizations must simply respond to their environments is, Meyer and Zucker believe, misleading; in many cases organizations act deliberately to resist such response. Failure to respond is not a failing of an organization, but a fundamental characteristic of it. Since schools, as public organizations, are fundamentally subject to competing interests, a pattern of response which stresses placating interests over achieving goals would be expected. Yet another explanation of lack of change would assert that schools as presently constituted effectively advance class interests, and that changes are not made because ruling élites benefit from the present structure and functioning of schools. This argument has been made with considerable sophistication from a variety of perspectives, variously called Marxist, neo-Marxist, or critical theorist. 39
In this view, schools would make certain kinds of responses to external pressure if those pressures either were supported by, or at least did not threaten the position of dominant groups in society. Much of the rhetoric of educational reform in the last decade, with its stress on academic standards and school choice, fits very convincingly within an explanatory framework of class interests.

Other theorists have asserted that organizations are simply incapable, regardless of will, of changing rapidly enough to accommodate external changes. In what is called by Kaufman the “strong view” of environmental impact on organizations, these theorists hold that organizations are substantially controlled by environments which the organizations may not understand at all. Many theorists taking this approach borrow concepts from biology and evolutionary theory in explaining organizational survival.

Proponents of this view stress the inability of organizations to understand or anticipate change, as well as the limited ability of organizations to adjust when change requires it. They note that most organizations do not survive for very long. Schon argues that our institutions and our ideas about what is needed almost always lag behind changing situations. Kaufman notes that “... organizations by and large are not capable of more than marginal
changes, while the environment is so volatile that marginal changes are frequently insufficient to assure survival”. 29 The role of administrators in organizational responsiveness

All of this is a far cry from the heroic leadership theories mentioned earlier.

While it may be appealing to think of the fearless leader riding in to rescue the failing organization, the weight of evidence would suggest otherwise. For example, organizations may face simultaneous pressures in quite opposite directions, so that it is not at all clear what strategy might be most effective.

Mintzberg 43 has noted the degree to which organizational strategy emerges only retrospectively, and cannot be said to have been intended. Aldrich points out that people tend to rationalize their behaviour so as retrospectively to give events greater coherence than they had in relation to organizational goals. “Much of what happens in organizations is neither intended nor foreseen. Error, chance, and creativity play an important role . . .”. 18

Warriner puts it even more strongly: For the most part we have given up notions of special creation with respect to physical and biological phenomena; we no longer believe in intervention by a sentient creator in the historical process . . . But in the social realm we still believe in special creation albeit the creator here is the powerful human individual . . . . 19 SCHOOL RESPONSE TO CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Some of the same concerns are beginning to appear in the
educational literature,
in studies of administrators trying to become “educational leaders”. This process
turns out to be far more difficult, contradictory, and uncertain than earlier, more
enthusiastic work had suggested. 44
We are left with a picture which is very different from the conventional
wisdom introduced early in this article. Instead of having clear challenges identi ed by strong leaders leading to appropriate organizational change, it would be
more accurate to talk about murky situations in which organizations may take
steps, though not necessarily the right ones, to try to avoid having to change
very much. It is difficult to sustain either the myth of individual leadership or the
myth of organizational responsiveness, it would seem. One becomes rather more
sympathetic to Warriner’s view that organizational theory has placed too much
emphasis on the views and role problems of managers. 19
On the other hand, it would not seem desirable to make too pessimistic a
point of view. One might want to retain an important role for human action in
organizations, albeit a more limited one than some of us might like. Such a view
would spring from a sense of the relationship between organization and environ
ment as an interactive one. Hrebiniak and Joyce argued that: . . . classifying change as either organizationally
or environmentally determined is misleading and diverts research inquiry away from the critical, interactive nature of organization-environment relationships in the adaptation process. 45 [p. 336]

They go on to say that “even in the most constraining and debilitating case of environmental determination . . . organizational choice still exists as a separate, independent variable, important to the development of a dynamic equilibrium with the external environment” [p. 338]. 45 What is required is a model which takes account of human agency as it occurs in a particular social, historical, and ideological situation. The realm of human agency is bounded. Men (sic) produce society, but they do so as historically located actors, and not under conditions of their own choosing. 46 Implications for the study of schools

How, then, should we think about the ways in which schools respond to the worlds they inhabit? Clearly, a simple response model, whether it sees schools as heroic actors or hapless victims, does not do justice to the complexity of the situation. Rather, we need to think in terms of a complex interplay between so called external features, features of the school as an organization, and the specifics of a given time, place, and group of people. Pennings has described the STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE “clear need to conduct research revealing the role of the environment in shaping the design, mission and strategy of organizations” [p. 452]. 33 The remainder of
the article makes some suggestions about how such research could best be conducted.

The basic research model builds on Giddens’ comment about agency. One has to examine both actors’ sense of their own agency, and the conditions which bound that agency. If we continue to work chiefly from researchers’ externally generated conceptions of what the environment is, we are unlikely to learn very much more about how schools as organizations understand and respond to external events. I do not want in this article to engage in the ongoing debate over methods of studying education; I will simply assert that it will be necessary to adopt a perspective which takes into account from the very beginning the views and behaviour of people in organizations, but equally does not assign complete importance to subjective perception. As Giddens also notes, “social science stands in a relation of tension to its ‘subject matter’.”

We will need to pay serious attention to organizations as settings for human interaction, in which conceptual clarity and neatness of process are not dominant features.

I propose three aspects of study of the school-environment relationship following from the previous discussion. None is particularly novel, although
none seems to have been employed to a significant extent. Although treated sequentially, it should be clear that these themes are interdependent and that consideration of one will almost necessarily involve delving to some extent into the others as well. Treat the concept of "environment" as an essentially open one; consider empirically what the concept might mean in any given situation and for any given set of people. This suggestion implies that the meaning of environment needs to be developed in each particular situation. While one can, indeed perhaps one must begin such work with some dimensions or attributes in mind, it would be important to hold open the possibility of a wide range of relevant matters. These could include, for example, ideas, behaviours, objects, practices, rules, mandates, and understandings of people and organizations, both closely related to and quite distant from the focal organization. It would be important also, in light of the "strong view" of environments, to consider explicitly such elements as time span, directness, and breadth of influence, so as not to concentrate unduly on matters which are immediate and close at hand, while ignoring those which may be more powerful but both slower-acting and less visible. The concept of empirical consideration suggests that one needs to collect
various kinds of data to discover the nature of any organization’s environment.

The perceptions of people in the organization are doubtless one important source, but other avenues are also worthwhile. For example, one can look at external factors which influence the organizations’ resources; the expectations it faces; the mandates it has been given or has taken on; the particular tasks it assumes; the participants involved in and with it, and the processes used for various purposes. All of these would provide clues as to the kind of world which the organization inhabits. These can be traced through documentary and observational means, among others. Work which considered organizational responses over time, and across organizations would be valuable.

One outcome of such research should be a better sense of the range of matters to which schools pay attention. It is clear that a definitive “environmental map” cannot be created, any more than a given geographic map can be definitive for differing purposes or under differing circumstances. However, approaches with more sophistication and completeness than a simple set of six categories would be useful in helping both researchers and school administrators do a better job of thinking about the environment in which schools exist, and the choices we face.
in operating educational institutions. Give explicit attention to the processes through which organizations determine which aspects of the environment are most important and require some response.

As we have noted, at any given time only some aspects out of all the possible external influences are receiving the attention of an organization or its members.

The issue is to discover which ones, and why. This is a difficult task given the vagaries of human understanding and action which have already been described.

The required understanding cannot be developed without talking to people in the organization about their understandings, actions, and motivations. Human agency is a critical element of organization.

At the same time, people’s accounts need not be - should not be - the only source of data for such research. The research cited earlier indicates, in fact, that we should be cautious about accepting at face-value post-facto accounts of what organizations have done, and why they have done so, since actors’ understandings are often incomplete or fragmentary. Fortunately, there are additional investigative routes available. One of the most promising would be to search for physical evidence revealing which issues were given priority for action and, perhaps, why. For example, documents such as school board or administrative
council or school staff minutes, policy statements, communications from other
organizations, messages circulated to schools or staff within schools, the content
of professional development sessions, communications with parents and communities, or budget submissions would all provide important sources of evidence as to an organization’s priorities and perspectives; evidence which could also be used to shape the way in which one talked with people. Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture

Study the ways in which schools and school systems respond to external change and pressure, with particular attention to the role which administrators play.

Here we can return to our original suggestion, that schools are both unresponsive and too responsive. That, however, is too simple a formulation. It is clear that school administrators, like administrators in other organizations, do spend a considerable amount of time trying to deal with external pressure. It would seem that critics are less concerned about whether the schools react to social change than they are with what particular responses the schools make. We do not simply want schools to change, we want them to change in particular ways. Thus part of our ongoing study should be an attempt to learn more about the ways in which schools react to various kinds of changes. What kinds of adaptations are attempted, and why? Where did the initiative for change
arise, and why? Under what conditions do schools attempt to avoid internal change in favour of trying to alter external circumstances? In what circumstances does significant change in internal operations occur?

In many respects this may be the best developed of the three suggested areas of study, in that there are many studies of school responses to particular issues, some of which provide a great deal of depth and understanding. The whole literature on change and implementation could be reconsidered on the basis of what it tells us about schools and external change; less from the point of view of “what works”, than from the point of view of how things are understood and how responses or actions are formulated. A series of case studies of school reactions to particular sorts of pressures would also be helpful. It would be important in such studies to move beyond looking at changes which were largely imposed or ordered by other parts of the educational bureaucracy, such as school districts or legislatures, and to give more attention to patterns of response to such matters as changing demographics or labour markets or ideological currents. Starting from the standpoint of whether, how and why a number of schools or school systems had come to understand and manage such macro-level changes might be a useful
approach. Again, such studies could encompass both the views of individuals and the evidence of organizational action or lack of it.

While administrators may not be the white knights leading the charge towards goodness and truth, they do, nonetheless, play an important role in mediating the relationship between schools and their environment. Attention needs to be given to the way in which that role is carried out in various concrete situations. What role do administrators play in promoting or impeding change?

How important is leadership, and why? Here it would be important to take account of recent work on the moral role of administrators in attempting to shape organizations. 47

These suggestions are intended as part of a programme of study of schools’ responses to external change. They are intended to stimulate both further research and a debate over the nature and appropriate understanding of the issues. The ability of schools to be institutions which serve society is a critical issue, and one not to be glossed over lightly. Empirical work on schools’ strategies for dealing with a changing world will explicitly raise issues of purpose, power, and ideology. One’s approach to understanding these questions will be shaped by
one’s perspective in terms of the various explanations or stances described earlier. Responsiveness is and should be intimately bound up with the role of schools, whether one thinks of this as serving society as a whole, serving dominant interests within society, or serving

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School self review or evaluation, meaning the process whereby the school reflects upon and assesses its own work, can be a powerful strategy for school improvement. This chapter draws on the experience of the Guidelines for Review and Internal Development in Schools (GRIDS) project to explore a series of questions about the review and development process: a When is a school ready for self review and development? b What is the role of the head teacher? c How can the review and development process be managed? d Does self review reach the real issues? e What external support is required? What is school self review?

The term ‘school self review’ or ‘self evaluation’ is used here to mean the process whereby a school reflects upon and assesses its own work for the purpose of development with the ultimate aim of improving the teaching and learning process. Yet any such definition immediately raises questions. What is the school in this context? Is it the principal, a group of teachers or the whole staff? Does it or does it not include the pupils, the parents, members of the governing body and the local education authority (LEA)? What is the immediate purpose of such activity? Is it solely to promote internal school development, or to produce a formal report or account of the school for an external body, or both
of these? If a formal report is necessary should it be submitted as soon as the review stage is complete or once some development has been implemented?

Who should control the review - the principal and the teachers or representa
tives of the LEA? Should the review focus on the whole school or on a subgroup or particular task area? The shape of the review will be largely determined by the way these questions are answered. Yet, no matter how it is designed, self review should provide a mechanism whereby the people who work in the school rather than an external individual or group can make an assessment of it and decide what should be the priorities for development. It should foster and enhance the school’s capacity for problem solving.

School self review has been identified as one of six areas of focus for the OECD/CERI International School Improvement Project. In a state-of-the-art paper for the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Hopkins (1984) defined school based review as: ‘. . . a school improve
ment strategy that involves systematic diagnosis of school functioning by school personnel initiated for developmental purposes’. He went on to argue that the design and scope of any school self evaluation or review process was influenced by
its purpose (development or accountability), control (internal or external) and orientation (the problem-solving capacity of the school or a specific aspect of its functioning). He pointed out that the practice of school-based review was contentious and discussed the technical and policy issues that it raises in some detail. Currently there is quite widespread interest in school self review as this report revealed. Exemplar schemes can be found in both centralized and decentralized systems.

Hopkins (1984) reviewed 36 school-based evaluation or review programmes in 12 different countries: Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

Interest in school self review is especially strong in Britain. Elliott (1984) reported that 90 of the 104 LEAs in England and Wales had initiated discussions on school self evaluation and that 44 of these LEAs had produced some form of self evaluation guidelines for the schools. Birchenough (1985) discussed the principles and practice of school-based review in England and Wales and made a comparative analysis of three schemes that are currently in use.

This interest in school self evaluation or review exists in all the OECD member countries, especially Britain and Australia. It is essentially a product of
the late 1970s and 1980s and emanated from several factors, among which were
the growing realization that the school must be a prime focus for change efforts
and a concern on behalf of local and national governments that schools should
become more accountable. Whether or not these two broad purposes of review -
accountability and development - are compatible has long been a matter of
debate (Nuttall, 1981). School self review in Britain has developed out of earlier
work in curriculum development and school focused in-service education and
training for teachers (Bolam, 1982). It became clear that school improvement
strategies and school-based in-service activities required a preliminary diagnos
tic or review phase to establish the school’s present position and clarify what
action would be appropriate before new initiatives were introduced. The
research on school improvement is optimistic that schools can and do improve
(Clark, Lotto and Astuto, 1984; and Chapter 4 in this book). The aim in this
chapter is to highlight some of the factors that need to be taken into account if
school self review and development is to be a useful strategy for improvement. S T R A T E G Y , M A R K E T I N G , C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E The GRIDS project

Some key issues about the process of conducting a school self review and devel
opment exercise are discussed in this chapter. In so far as
the issues arose from a
particular approach to review and development it is a case
study, but it is hoped
that the issues have a wider relevance.

The chapter is based on a series of reflections about the process of conduct
ing a school self review or evaluation, arising from work on the first phase of
the Guidelines for Review and Internal Development in Schools (GRIDS)

project during the period 1981-1983. (For information about the second phase
of the project see Abbott, 1985.) This project was funded by the Schools

Council for England and Wales and was designed to help teachers who wished
to review and develop the curriculum and organization of their schools. From

the outset, the project team’s intention was to concentrate on the process of
conducting a review and development exercise, since advice about how
schools could do this was then in short supply. Most of the British guidelines

for teachers on school self review available at that time consisted of lengthy

check lists of questions but contained little or no advice about how to conduct

the review. All too frequently the exercise stopped at the review stage and no

action resulted. Survey feedback techniques might have provided a way
forward but these appeared to be heavily dependent upon skilled outside support which was in short supply and consequently would have been rather time consuming and expensive. Hence the decision of the GRIDS team to develop simple procedures which school staff could administer themselves.

The team worked collaboratively with staff in 30 primary and secondary schools in five LEAs, and out of this experience developed a set of process guidelines for school self review which have subsequently been published (McMahon et al, 1984). The guideline materials contained structured, step-by-step advice about how to conduct a review and development exercise, though schools were not intended to follow the suggestions slavishly but adapt and amend them as required. A major purpose was to help schools move from the review stage into development. The approach was underpinned by a series of key principles, one of which was that the staff of the school should be consulted and involved in the process as much as possible. Five key stages in the process were identified: getting started; initial review; specific review; action for development; and overview and re-start (Figure 1). The central practical recommendation was that the school should not try to tackle too much at once but should
adopt an incremental strategy.

In summary, the recommended procedure was to make a rapid
survey of what
was happening in the school and, on the basis of this, to
identify one or two
areas that the staff considered to be priorities for review
and development. Once
a priority had been agreed there should be a careful
assessment of what change
should be introduced; this should be implemented and
evaluated and work
should then start again on another priority area.

The five participating LEAs all told the project team at the
outset that they gen
uinely wanted to promote school review and development. In
turn, the LEAs
were advised by the project team to select pilot schools
that wanted to work on
school review and development, were prepared to pilot the
GRIDS materials and
were ‘ready’ to do so. (What was meant by readiness was
never clearly articu
lated.) A fairly strong support structure was provided both
inside and outside the
school. Each school was asked to identify a coordinator and
a small team of
teachers to work on the review and development exercise and
to promote owner
ship of it within the school. Each LEA was asked to
identify two people from
the team of officers and advisers, a supervisor and a
coordinator, to manage the
whole process and to support the individual schools.

The central project team adopted a particular style of working. To encourage

ownership of the project at LEA and school level, and because their own

resources were stretched (though there were four people in the team, only one of

them was working on the project full time), most of their strategic interventions

were directed at the LEA supervisors and coordinators. A series of two-day

workshop conferences to review progress and discuss draft guideline materials

were arranged for the LEA coordinators, and they in turn held meetings for

school coordinators. The project team had little face-to-face contact with the STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Figure 1: The five stages of the internal review and development process.

Stage I: Getting started
1. Decide whether the GRID method is appropriate for your school.
2. Consult the staff.
3. Decide how to manage the revision and development.

Stage 2: Initial review
1. Plan the initial review.
2. Prepare and distribute basic information.
3. Survey staff opinion.
4. Agree upon priorities for specific review and development.

Stage 3: Action for development
1. Plan the development work.
2. Consider how best to meet the various in-service needs of the teachers involved in the development.
3. Move into action.
4. Assess the effectiveness of the development.
Stage 3 specific review. 1. Plan the specific review. 2. Find out what the school's present policy/practice is on the specific viewpoint. 3. Decide how effective present policy/practice actually is. 4. Agree conclusions and recommendations arising from the specific review.

Teachers and usually communicated with them by mail via the central LEA team.

Approximately once a term the schools and LEAs wrote a report on the progress of the review and development process and this was the key mechanism for feedback to the project team.

Five questions that were highlighted during this experience of the school self-review process are discussed here. They are the following:

1. When is a school ready for self review and development?

2. What is the role of head teacher?

3. How can the review and development process be managed?

4. Does self review reach the real issues?

5. What external support is required?

These questions will arise whatever type of school self-review exercise is being undertaken. The advantages and disadvantages of guidelines are commented upon in the final section. When is a school ‘ready’ for self review and development?

Undertaking a formal self review or evaluation exercise is not a normal activity for a school. Though the outcomes can be very positive it consumes teacher time.
and energy and is potentially threatening. It is unlikely that anyone will fully understand the process at the outset. Given this situation, how does the school ever get started on a project of this kind? One way, of course, may be as a response to an external stimulus, for example a request by the local or central education authority that the school conduct some type of review or evaluation.

Alternatively, the initiative can come from an individual or group within the school; most usually it will come from the head teacher. It will certainly have to be agreed by the head. Why the head teacher decides to initiate a review at a particular time is problematic. It may be that he or she judges that it is necessary and timely, but it could also be motivated by other factors, such as a desire to gain additional resources or community support. It may simply be that the person is newly appointed and wants to promote change. Indeed, Fullan (1982) points out that '. . . the most successful examples of change occur when leaders are replaced with new leaders with different characteristics and a mandate for change’. Five of the head teachers of the 15 secondary schools involved in the GRIDS project had recently been appointed to the post and their involvement presumably reflected a belief on the part of themselves or the LEA that the early
years of headship are an optimum period for initiating change. However, in itself

the head teacher’s decision to go ahead is not enough.

The school must see it as necessary and appropriate. For example, a certain

period of time should have elapsed since the previous full-scale review; it is not

something that should be tackled every year, and the recommendations of any

earlier review should have been implemented. This last point reflects on the SCHOOL SELF REVIEW

credibility and track record of the head and senior managers, and underlines the

message that conducting a school review and development exercise depends as

much as anything else on the parties involved establishing a degree of mutual

trust and confidence. The head teacher must trust the staff and be prepared to let

them share in the decision making, and they in turn need to feel confident that

the head will take seriously any recommendations that they make. Where this is

the case, the head is more likely to gain staff commitment for the exercise.

Where the process of review and development requires that the teachers work collaboratively then it is obviously advantageous if they have had some

experience of doing this. A further point that seemed important was that the

school should be in a period of relative stability and not engaged in several other
major innovations.

Of course, these conditions are difficult to achieve. Realizing them will involve deciding on some priorities and agreeing that certain other innovations will not be taken up while the school is engaged in self review and development.

The head teacher cannot always do this alone and must be protected to some extent by the LEA. This is also difficult. It could be argued that British schools are currently suffering from innovation overload. Any one LEA is likely to be involved in 30 to 40 major national or local innovations, and each school alone could be involved in eight or nine innovations. In the 1984–85 school year national government produced several major reports, all of which have implications for the schools. Yet if the school review is to be productive it needs to be kept centre stage.

Finally, it could be argued that a school’s readiness for self review and development is dependent to no small extent on the availability of external support, especially from the LEA. The school can act on its own but it is likely to be in a much stronger position if the advisers and officers in the authority are aware of what is going on and are ready to provide encouragement, advice, in-service
training and resources on an ongoing basis. What is the role of the head teacher?

The central importance of the principal or head teacher as an agent of change has long been recognized. Certainly no whole school review and development exercise could get under way without at least the agreement of the head teacher.

Yet Loucks-Horsley and Hergert (1985) argue that 'The principal is not the key to school improvement. Although the principal is important, so are many other people’, and the GRIDS experience would broadly support this view. Certainly head teachers do not have to provide the day-to-day leadership and management of the review and development processes. Their role seems to be crucial at three stages: first they must agree at the outset that the exercise shall take place; second they need to demonstrate to the staff that they are actively monitoring and supporting the process and consider it worthwhile; finally they must be prepared to implement the recommendations for action. If the teachers’ recommendations are never implemented then the process will lose all credibility.

None of these tasks is as simple as it might at first appear; it is not sufficient to agree that the school should begin a review and development exercise without also considering how it is to be conducted. The GRIDS
project schools were asked to appoint a coordinator, and since this person was responsible for keeping an overview of the whole exercise and generally managing it the role was strategically important. The head teachers in primary schools where staff numbers are small (average seven) usually took on this role themselves, feeling that it was too important to be delegated and that they needed to work directly with the staff. In the large secondary schools, however, this task was invariably delegated, most frequently to a deputy head. Indeed, few secondary school principals would have had the time to do the job on a day-to-day basis. The head teacher’s key task is to delegate efficiently and to select as coordinator someone who has both the competence to do the job well and status in the organization, as well as credibility with the staff. While the self review and development exercise is in progress the head has to be seen to be actively supporting it. This means much more than receiving progress reports from the coordinator; it means demonstrating to the staff an ongoing commitment to the process. Possible ways for the head to do this are to discuss the progress of the review at staff meetings, join a working group, talk with teachers informally about what is happening, try to
obtain any necessary resources, and set target dates when recommendations should be considered.

The final task is to work with the teachers to implement the development work that has been recommended. The head teacher might not be doing the routine management of the self review and development exercise but he or she must become involved. Fullan (1982) sums this up neatly when he comments: ‘As long as we have schools and principals, if the principal does not lead the development of an effective organizational process, or if he or she leaves it to others, it will normally not get done. That is, change will not happen’. How can the review and development process be managed?

Coordinating a whole school review and development exercise is a complex task. This may seem to be self evident but it appears to be a fact that is often overlooked. The teachers who adopted the GRIDS approach to school review found that it was time consuming, lasting a minimum of a year. For much of this period they were working in small groups or teams, yet many of them found themselves undertaking tasks (for example as group leader or researcher) for which they had no previous training or experience.

The process appeared to work best in those schools where: S C H O O L S E L F R E V I E W
a the basic principles underlying the exercise were clearly agreed;

b a timetable was drawn up and adhered to;

c the coordinator ensured that the whole process was carefully planned and monitored and the momentum sustained;

d the leaders of the working groups had status in the organization and the groups were integrated into the existing decision-making machinery of the school;

e appropriate methods of collecting and analysing data were selected. Basic principles

It will be impossible to predict at the outset exactly what will happen during the course of the review. Nevertheless, it seems important to set out the broad working parameters clearly at the outset, e.g. what is the purpose of the exercise?

How will the teachers be consulted and involved in it? What will happen to any data that are collected? Once some basics have been agreed they can provide a structure for the work and should give the teachers a clearer notion of the process. Timetabling

A school-based review and development exercise will take time and this is a commodity that is always in short supply. One of the basic GRIDS principles was that the demands made on key resources such as time, money and skilled personnel should be realistic and feasible for schools and LEAs. School coordinators were advised to draw up a timetable at the outset and set realistic targets
within this. Once deadlines for the production of reports and dates when recom
mendations would be discussed had been agreed the coordinator was better able
to monitor the progress of the review. The timetable was also a powerful moti
vating factor for the teachers. Change is a slow process — commonly three to five
years is spoken of as a minimal period for implementation yet planning the change must not take this long. Loucks-Horsley and Hergert (1985) state this succinctly: ‘Acting is better than planning. Protracted needs assessment can be worse than none at all’. The GRIDS process suggested a notional timetable of a year, and experience showed that certainly in smaller schools and in many larger ones this timetable was feasible. Teachers could conduct a quick review of the school, agree on priority areas, make a detailed review and assessment of each of these, produce a plan for action and begin to implement it within that timescale. A great deal can happen during the course of a school year — at least one cohort of children will leave the school and another one will join, and teachers leave and are replaced. Implementing the developments arising from the review can take years but if the review stage lasts for more than a year several of the key personnel may well have changed and the original purpose of
the exercise may be forgotten. STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE Monitoring

One person, usually the head or deputy in the school, must coordinate the whole exercise and monitor what is happening. He or she will need to keep one step ahead of everyone else, trying to obtain any necessary resources, thinking through the implications of particular suggestions, advising and supporting group leaders, encouraging groups to meet deadlines and keeping everyone informed about what is happening. Not an easy role but one that is crucially important if the process is to work successfully. Working groups

Much of the work of investigating present practice in a particular area, assessing its effectiveness and drawing up recommendations for development work, will probably be done in small groups or teams. In the GRIDS primary schools the whole staff (about seven people) frequently worked as a group, but in large secondary schools this obviously was not possible. The success or otherwise of these groups was influenced by two key factors. First, the quality of the leaders and, second, the extent to which the group was integrated into the normal decision-making machinery of the school. It was not sufficient for the leaders to be competent administrators though, of course, this was necessary: they also
needed to have some status in the organization and have credibility with their peers if the recommendations were to carry weight. The group also needed somebody to report to.

Problems could occur if the review teams were not integrated with the existing decision-making machinery. For example, a review team investigating the school policy on record keeping and assessment needs to have clear links with the regular meeting for heads of subject departments.

A further management task is to provide support and training for group leaders and their teams. The group leaders will find themselves chairing meetings, drawing up agendas, writing minutes and reports and trying to build into an effective team a group of people who may not have worked together before.

These tasks will be quite new to some of them and some training in group skills and team building could be valuable. Handling data

Some of the difficulties that the schools using the GRIDS approach encountered were due to the teachers’ lack of basic research skills. The data collection methods that they selected were occasionally inappropriate. For example, one team devised a lengthy questionnaire containing many open-ended questions and the members then found themselves unable to analyse the
vast amount of information that they collected. Another team (in a different school) attempted to questionnaire all the parents rather than just a sample. The most difficult problem was to identify and agree criteria for assessing the effectiveness of their present practice. These are all instances where an external consultant should be able to provide useful advice and practical help. Though teachers and others can learn how to collect and analyse data by actually doing it, the task can be unnecessarily time consuming and frustrating unless some basic ground rules have been applied. Does self review reach the real issues?

One of the main criticisms that can be made about school self review and development is that the process is insufficiently rigorous and bypasses the key issues. Protagonists of this view argue that teachers will only select ‘safe’ topics to investigate and will not be overly critical of their own practice. In fact this was not the experience with the schools using the GRIDS approach. The topics that the teachers selected as priorities for development were usually those where they felt dissatisfied with present practice (though they were encouraged to work on areas of strength in the school as well as weaknesses). The head teacher or LEA adviser did not always share the teachers’ perception that
the area or topic under review was in fact a top priority for development, but he or she usually recog
nized that the teachers were concerned about it (eg primary teachers’ anxiety about maths). The teachers investigated hard topics to do with the curriculum and organization of the school, and collected large amounts of data. Admittedly, much of the data about classroom practice were based on teacher self report and records rather than observation and analysis of teaching, but this may come as confidence in the review process grows. The GRIDS review was intended to promote internal school development and the teachers were free to criticize their own practice where appropriate. Had they needed to produce a formal report for use outside the school it is likely that they would have been more circumspect.

Nevertheless, the schools would undoubtedly have benefited from some external validation of their review and development work. Identifying and agreeing criteria against which to measure the effectiveness of present practice was a difficult task, especially in the more creative areas of the curriculum. One way of overcoming this might be to consider asking individuals or a group (eg LEA advisers or head teachers) to make an independent assessment of work in
the priority areas, the conclusions that have been reached and the recommenda
tions for development. What external support is required?

A school staff can undertake a school self review and development exercise

without any external help, but it is difficult to do this. External consultants can

provide advice and expertise that the staff may lack; they can provide an object

ive opinion about the process or give their perception of the effectiveness of a

particular practice and they can provide ongoing encouragement and support. STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Nevertheless, conducting a school review and development exercise is poten

tially very threatening, and many teachers will be unwilling to involve consult

ants from the outset. Two broad types of support seem to be necessary – the first

is best provided by the LEA. Ideally someone in the LEA office should be aware

of what the school is doing, understand the processes involved and be able to

supply resources where necessary and advice about where to get further help.

Above all else, this person needs to monitor what is happening, and provide

ongoing support and encouragement. Fullan (1985) recognizes this when he

says. ‘For school based improvement efforts to work central office staff must

take an active interest in them by providing direction, assistance, and prodding
and by expecting and asking for results’. One very practical way of helping is to try to provide some extra hours in the school. Teachers cannot realistically be expected to continue to use their own free time for school improvement work.

Even a small gesture like the LEA agreeing to a one-day school closure so that the teachers can meet for discussion can not only enable the process to move forward but also be a powerful motivational factor for the teachers as it demonstrates that review and development is considered important and useful.

The second type of support is that provided by a general educational consultant, college or university lecturer, teacher centre warden, teacher, etc. The GRIDSS pilot schools only rarely involved a consultant to advise on the process. Usually they invited an ‘expert’ to advise them about how to move forward in the particular area they had selected as a priority. The task of setting up a consultancy relationship can be fraught with problems on both sides. The key recommendation for potential consultants is that they should attempt to familiarize themselves with the review and development process that the school has been following, and that they should attempt to clarify the dimensions of the consultancy from the outset. Schools need to be similarly clear
about their expectations

and concerns. Are guidelines useful?

A serious criticism of the GRIDS materials, and of many
other guidelines, is that

they are based on a rational, problem-solving model of
organizational behaviour.

Hence they do not approximate to the real world as we know
it, where things

happen by accident or chance, where micro-political issues
cannot be ignored

and where formal planning can on occasions seem almost
impossibly difficult.

Nevertheless, if teachers or anyone else want to tackle
something like a full

scale review and development exercise but have no real
ideas about how to

begin, suggestions in the form of guidelines can be useful.
Time spent trying to

establish procedures for conducting a review would probably
be better used to

investigate existing practice and to implement the
subsequent development

work. Some teachers used the GRIDS materials as a form of
check list on the

review and development process. Since the approach was
broken down into

clear stages they were better able to identify where they
were at any time and S C H O O L S E L F R E V I E W

could see how to re-start the process if it was interrupted
(eg to prepare for a

school concert). For a whole series of reasons teachers are
more likely to read

and use a short handbook of suggestions that seem practical
and relevant than a
dozen research papers. However, in the final analysis the
usefulness of any
guidelines for school review and development must be
assessed in terms of the
product. In the long term, if they do not help teachers to
improve the teaching

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Longman for the Schools Council: York STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE 84 BEYOND ‘MANAGED CHANGE’ Rethinking how schools improve 1 Karen Seashore Louis

Source: School Effectiveness and School Improvement 5(1) (1994): 2–24. The following paper argues that existing models of change management in education are more appropriate for understanding small scale innovations than larger reforms. Results from two studies of schools engaged in major transformations are used to illustrate some of the differences between previous and current findings. A model of organizational learning as an alternative is presented, and some implications for both practice and theory in school improvement are discussed. Introduction

Over the last decade the challenges to educators, both from within and outside the profession, have been numerous and often conflicting. Much of the time the difficulties appear overwhelming, as schools are confronted with seemingly endless challenges such as changing demographics, a sense that student engage
ment and faith in education is declining, and problems of attracting and retaining high quality faculty and administrators to work in an embattled professional setting. Yet, this is a time when there are serious opportunities for reforming the existing system. Much recent energy has gone into a wide range of commission and research reports that delineate the problems and provide clear images of excellence. There is strong motivation to act on these reports at national, regional and local levels, and many countries are enacting educational reform efforts that require improved performance in return for more autonomy at the school level (Louis, Lagerweij and Voogt, 1993). Moreover, we are well past the stage of good intentions: There are a substantial batch of tools in the form of well documented, research-based programs based on the ‘effective schools’ and ‘effective teaching’ programs, as well as other research-based efforts at major reform. What do we know about changing schools? There are many ways to approach the implementation of a reform. If we look at private industry, for example, we see a number of strategies to promote rapid ‘turnaround,’ but few are relevant to schools. Schools cannot, for example, engage in massive changes in leadership in order to ensure that changes in
policy are carried out, as do many businesses in distress. Even if there were no administrator unions, there are not enough qualified replacements available. Nor can education authorities cut back on unprofitable products to acquire more profitable ones: Their line of business is set by law and they must deal with existing constituencies. Thus, the tradition of studying change in schools has tended to fall into a pattern that is more consistent with studies of other public sector agencies than with private organizations.

Within this tradition Elmore (1978) identifies a number of underlying assumptions from a review of policy research and other literature on educational programs. Change strategies based on a systems management perspective make the following assumptions: Organizations operate rationally and are goal directed; they are hierarchically structured; subunits can cooperate to maximize overall performance; and some form of management by objectives will enhance goal attainment. This implies that change processes are enhanced by goal setting, monitoring and accountability. Where change is viewed as a bureaucratic process, the emphasis shifts to the need to alter the system, in particular the domains of delegated discretion that exist in any formal organization staffed by professionals.
Bureaucracies are characterized by nature of their formal and informal routines, and, thus, careful re-examination of the definition of both roles, responsibilities, and procedures is key to effective change. The organizational development model assumes that interpersonal relationships dominate organizational life and the change process. The model's focus is on individual motivation, the work group as the key unit of change, and the belief that too great a focus on efficiency will undermine effective change processes. Instead the emphasis is placed on developing consensus and commitment to change, cooperation, and interpersonal support.

A key premise of a conflict and bargaining change model is the centrality of competition for power and scarce resources. Bargaining is the main mode of which rarely results in overall agreement. Miles and Louis (1987) review the empirical literature on change, and note that it can be classified as focusing on a number of topics: The characteristics of the innovation, the characteristics of schools that are associated with effective implementation of innovations, the characteristics of the environment and the characteristics of the change process, including how the change manager should operate within the four frames outlined by Elmore.

As these reviews show, most of what we know from research
about how to change schools falls into a paradigm that might be best called managed change,

whether it involves engineering a planning process, an organization chart, STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

people or power. 2 Most critically, the main focus of research is on identifying factors that improve the probability that an innovation will be successfully implemented and maintained, more-or-less as intended by its initiators. In most cases, organizational change is defined as a small-to-medium scale program,

often imported from a source outside the organization, although increasing attention is being paid to larger efforts to ‘restructure’ schools. Questioning the image of ‘managed change’

The image of ‘managed change’ as an effective strategy for school improvement has been explicitly challenged by critical theorists such as Giroux (1988), but also by recent empirical research on school improvement that falls outside of a critical theory framework. In particular, studies of restructuring schools raise questions about the degree to which the traditional ways of thinking about change management apply to efforts to make a major transformation. 3 Challenges from the urban high school study Louis and Miles (1990) studied change processes in urban high schools that were attempting to implement organization-wide reforms
based on the ‘effective

schools’ research. They focus on the role of the principal
in the change process,

but argue that conventional images of leadership in the
change process don’t

apply: Change is largely unmanageable, at least in the
sense that is projected in

administrative textbooks. It is, rather, messy, uncertain,
and circular: We have come to think of school improvement
as a braid in which a collection of reform programs and
plans becomes melded with the exiting political and
cultural setting; At best, changes are based on steady and
patient efforts to work within the school as it exists,
while maintaining a vision what can be . . . (p. 15)

The image of change presented is evolutionary and
non-synoptic, full of unpre
dictable ‘normal crises’ and choices that cannot be
anticipated ahead of time.

The schools studied were chosen, in part, because they did
not have princi

pals with a larger-than-life reputation of being able to
turn a nest of vipers into

an academy of scholars. Nevertheless, the principal was
critical, but the form

that leadership of change took was not at all heroic, nor
did it play by the book.

Among the unanticipated findings are that the most
effective schools engaged in:

• Action before planning. “In each of the most effective

schools major activities, including restructuring and the
initiation of signi cant (and sometimes costly) new
programs took place without committee meetings, and with no
written plan supporting the decision” (p. 201). B E Y O N D
‘ M A N A G E D C H A N G E ’

• Generating vision from activities rather than basing
activities on a vision. “More often, a vision emerges as
themes become more linked, successful, and owned by people
at all levels in the school . . . (p. 207).” “A saga that provides justification for the particular mix of actions evolves as the program themes change, and . . . helps to reinforce the meaning of the change effort.” (p. 213).

- Developing a school-specific vision within an externally mandated program. “. . . developing a vision in schools typically involves building on . . . opportunities that come from outside. Leadership involves integrating compatible themes available from different programs” (p. 223).

- ‘Minding the store’ or a preoccupation of school-leaders with day-to-day management of change. Change managers engaged in regular scanning for problems, and exhibited “a wide range of coping efforts, matching them to the difficulty of the problem at hand . . .” (p. 283).

These patterns violate all of the assumptions embedded in the alternative visions of ‘managed change’ outlined above. They are non-linear and non-rational, do not focus on changing the structure of the school, give no clear emphasis to building stronger interpersonal relations in the school except as is necessary in order to get the work done, and are political only in the sense that the school may challenge or confront outside agencies in order to obtain needed resources.

To expand further, classic and more recent writings on school improvement emphasize the need for leaders to maintain at least an oversight role throughout the change process, which involves initiating careful, preferably data-driven problem analysis, a careful choice of solutions, the development of explicit implementation plans, and active monitoring of implementation (Eastwood and Louis,
1992). In the United States, many local and state reforms are based on the assumption that this is the process, and that it will be centrally coordinated within the school or the district. In contrast, although Louis and Miles frame their findings in terms of the commonly used concepts of leadership and management, the behaviors of effective leaders that they identify are less familiar. They are:

- Stimulators – people who get things started, but then turn the action over to others;
- Story-tellers – people who help others in the schools to discuss and understand the meaning and larger significance of what they are doing as they work on school improvement; the story becomes the ‘braid’ referred to above;
- Networkers – people who spend their time coordinating and creating opportunities to get people and programs together in ways that contribute to the emerging school effort; and
- Copers – people who focus daily on problem scavenging, and who develop a wide variety of coping styles to address the unending yet largely unpredictable stream of barriers to change. Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture

The notions of ‘evolutionary planning’ and ‘coping’ presume that large-scale change will be typically unpredictable and disjunctive. In these circumstances, the leaders focus on helping staff to confront, make sense of, and interpret the emerging circumstances in which the school finds itself so that both teachers and administrators can work with each other and those outside the school to reach goals that are never very well-defined. Challenges from the
teacher quality or work life (TQLW) study

The sense that our understanding of the change process may not be effectively captured by the traditional images of managed change is further tested by another recent study of eight restructured high schools (Louis, 1992; Louis and Smith, 1991, 1992; Rosenblum, Louis and Rossmiller, 1994). The study focused on how teacher’s work was altered in schools where significant change efforts had been underway for some time and, again, the data suggested that the roles played by the leaders in the schools did not center on issues that are traditionally emphasized in the ‘managed change’ literature.

Teachers in the study agreed that, no matter how talented the staff, schools with ineffective principals are unlikely to be exciting -- and can become exciting quite rapidly after the arrival of a supportive principal. But teachers described the effective principal’s role largely as a facilitator, freeing the staff and the school to reach its own potential. In particular, teachers argued that good change leadership consists of (see Louis, 1992, Rosenblum, Louis and Rossmiller, 1994):

- Providing Consistent Policies to Delegate and Empower -- Principals who created healthy environments for teachers “make teachers invent solutions to problems -- they aren’t the only problem solver.” The effective principal, “can leave the building without things falling apart or hitting
snags, and has staff empowered to respond to crises.”

- Spending time on the Details of Life in the School - Leadership in the eight schools was not efficient. Administrators were proactive, anticipating emerging problems. They hung around, so they “know what’s going on in the classrooms, in the lunchroom, etc.” They had an open-door policy, and encouraged drop-in visits.

- Modeling Risk Taking - To stretch professionally, teachers must take risks in the classroom. Over and over again the teachers in these schools claimed that they were willing to do so because their principal was also willing to “bite the bullet when necessary [and] make tough decisions.” One aspect of risk taking was the principal’s personal willingness to confront bad teaching, coupled with supportive programs to help less effective teachers improve.

- Providing Leadership about Values - Teachers were clear that the principal set a tone for developing a vision and a value orientation in the school. The BEYOND’ MANGED’ principal must understand and reflect the best in community ethical standards and values, and to “make clear what is valued – don’t keep faculty guessing about what is important.”

- Emphasizing Caring for Students - The theme of caring as a significant aspect of teachers’ work has been developed elsewhere (Noddings, 1984). The high schools all had climates and student-teacher/student-administrator relationships that were more like excellent elementary schools than like traditional secondary schools. Principals reinforced the importance of, as one teacher put it, “... lending your ego for a kid to learn . . . you are [not] only teaching a subject . . . [but] teaching kids . . . 4

- Actively Using Knowledge and Ideas. In addition to what teachers told us, we also observed that the principals in these schools had another characteristic that differentiated them from principals in traditional schools: They were active and persistent users of ‘educational knowledge’ - not just research reports, but also good ideas emerging from practice. They were themselves linked into local and national networks for exchanging ideas, and also placed a high emphasis on getting their teachers involved in such networks.

As teachers in the TQWL study saw it, effective change management did not
involve much oversight of the process (except to ensure that teachers’ responsibilities for change were consistently reinforced), or much attention to the specifics of restructuring. Although the good change managers were sensitive to teacher’s collective and individual needs (attention to the details of school life), they did not dwell on organization development, nor use any of its accepted techniques. The notion of risk-taking seems to imply elements of a conflict perspective, but there were no well-defined interest groups in most of the schools, and the concept of bargaining was largely absent. Thus, the image of change portrayed is not well captured by any of the four frameworks described by Elmore.

What comes through in these descriptions is the attention to values, both at the grand level (‘caring for kids’) and at the daily level (reinforcing small behaviors because they are involved in the daily life of the school). Surprisingly, teachers appreciated their principals as intellectuals, and saw this as a major feature of their success in changing the school. Without being overly idealistic, we were surprised to find that teachers in these schools (not all, but a surprising number) also operated as intellectuals to a greater degree than in more typical
schools. Engaging in reflective discussions about educational issues and philosophies was not a daily occurrence, but was also not unheard of. Organizational learning as an alternative perspective

The descriptive findings from the two studies were not anticipated, and did not, therefore, confirm an already established theoretical framework of change. To explain them more fully requires delving into literature that has rarely been applied in educational settings. Theories of organizational learning help us to understand why restructuring may proceed well in some schools, but not in others, and it does so in ways that are overlooked by the ‘managed change’ literature. The organizational learning framework emphasizes the cognitive and behavioral transformations that occur in individuals and groups as part of the emergence of new organizational patterns. Although the frame is poorly developed in educational studies (see Dalin, 1978 for an exception), it has potential for helping to think about the problem of how schools change basic assumptions about ‘what it is we do here’ when demands for significant reform are made. A definition

Although the concept of the ‘learning organizations’ has recently been popular
ized by Senge (1990), discussions of organizational learning go back to the cybernetic models of the early 60s (Cyert and March, 1963) and received considerable attention in the 70s as Argyris and Schön’s (1974) psychological model of ‘single and double loop learning’ became well known. However, more recent formulations emphasize that learning involves the creation of socially constructed interpretations of facts and knowledge that enter the organization from the environment, or are generated from within. This emphasis distinguishes the organizational learning literature reviewed here from studies and theories that are derived from the individual cognition tradition. Some key assumptions and their implications for reforming schools. Recent theories also rest on another assumption: The learning that takes place in groups cannot be reduced to the accumulation of the learning of individuals. Organizations cannot learn in the absence of ‘social processing’ of information (Louis and Dentler, 1989; Louis, Lagerweij and Voogt, 1993). Organizations also use information in the same way that individuals do. Hedberg (1981), Senge (1990) and others, for example, point out that learning involves not only psychological adaptation, but also active use of knowledge by the organization to improve its fit with the environment. Organizational memory
- the conservation of collective experience as necessary for learning is also important. 6 Organizations develop and maintain learning systems that not only influence their immediate members, but are then transmitted to others by way of organization histories and norms. (Fiol and Lyles, 1985: 804. See also Levitt and March (1988))

Thus, when thinking about schools and restructuring, we are increasingly drawn beyond 'managed change' to the argument that changing education will involve more than improving the credentials and inventiveness of individual teachers, the climate, or the leadership capacities within a school. And, it is, perhaps, not an 'improvement process' that must be managed, but rather, collective norms and procedures for processing and dealing with new ideas that must be addressed.

A second assumption is that organizational learning can range from an accumulation of random events, occurring when individuals locate factors that result in a useful statement of cause-and-effect (as implied by Lindblom, 1959) to systematic, where many individuals view the collection and processing of information from both predictable and less predictable sources as part of their daily work. Where organizational learning is more systematic, an interpretive frame work is required to simplify the complexity of the world with which the members must collectively deal.
In schools, for example, we would be more interested in cases where the faculty as a whole, or large sub-groups of the faculty engaged in regular efforts to gather information and improve practice (e.g., develop a knowledge base), as compared with changes in practice that occurred as a consequence of a one-time contact between a teacher and an ‘expert,’ or the chance meeting of two colleagues at a social event (Shrivastava, 1983). In both cases learning occurs, but in the latter the chance that school-wide improvement will occur is more remote.

Systematic organizational learning occurs within an organizational paradigm, or an elaborate, widely shared theory or frame of reference that guides and organizes actions (Simsek and Louis, in press). But, learning is also the source of information about anomalies that may challenge the paradigm and ultimately contribute to its replacement. Organizations and communities of organizations vary widely in the degree to which they are tolerant of anomalies.

Schools are widely viewed as being ‘institutionalized’ (Meyer and Rowen, 1977), which means that the external characteristics of schools have come to be more important measures of ‘goodness’ than objective information about performance. For example, it is difficult to challenge the
existing structure and
organization of time in U.S. high schools, even in the face of considerable evid-
ence that it may contribute to poor performance, because people expect that in
high schools instruction will take place in a set number of periods between
approximately 8 in the morning and 3 in the afternoon. As a number of
observers have noted, institutionalized organizations require a 'paradigm shift' if they are to begin to do things differently (Bartunek, 1984; Mohrman and Lawler,
1985; Bartunek and Louis, 1988; Simsek and Louis, in press). Mature organizations like schools often do not respond to a crisis ("We've weathered this before - just wait and it will go away.") or engage in searches for information that will provide evidence that performance is actually o.k. The essence of transformative change is to break these unresponsive reactions to crisis to reshape or reframe members' understanding of mission, identity and basic operations. The process of transformation is full of con-ict and anxiety,
and ambiguity, but eventually "groups whose perspectives have been incorporS T R A T E G Y, M A R K E T I N G, C H A N G E A N D C U L T U R E ated in the new understanding should experience a sense of comfort and 'right
ness . . .' " (Bartunek and Louis, 1988). O Organizational learning, change, and structure
A critical question for school reform is: How are serious anomalies discovered within schools? Organizational learning provides a framework that helps to interpret some of the empirical findings from the two studies discussed above.

Daft and Lengel (1984) emphasize the concept of information richness, a condition that increasingly characterizes schools in which practitioners and administrators have access to a growing density and variety of information that has implications for their work. Information richness can be handled in traditional ways: Schools can sift and reduce the data available to them to an amount that can be easily processed. Alternatively, they can confront the need to design interpretive systems to increase the flow of information into and within the organization and to increase opportunities for social interpretation of information through discussion. 9

Daft and Huber (1987) expand on these themes. They define multiple forms of the organizational learning process (each of which corresponds to a theory of planning). 10 There is the kind of incremental adaptation that is based on small scale adjustments to changing conditions. In this form, learning occurs through largely unanalyzed small changes (Lindblom, 1959). There is also a more intel
lectual learning style, in which the organization deliberately develops knowledge about the relationship between its actions and outcomes. As Lundberg (1989) points out, this is often related to efforts to significantly improve strategies for goal attainment without challenging their paradigm. A deeper form of learning, however, is assumption sharing, which involves changing the pattern of commonly held theories-in-action. We might define this as an opportunity for the development of a consensus about the existence of an anomaly, and a construction of a new reality—that is, a major shift. This type of learning is an integral part of the ‘evolutionary planning’ process identified by Miles and Louis (1990: 201) in urban high schools, and of necessity must incorporate attention to values as noted in the TQWL study.

Daft and Huber also argue that it is necessary to get away from traditional structural approaches to thinking about learning and information (which often emphasize problems of distorted learning, such as ‘information overload’) and use a more constructivist mode, which emphasizes the role of organizations as makers of meaning, and information as meaningless until it is interpreted. This corresponds well to Louis and Miles’ (1990: 211-213) emphasis on the need to
use stories to help define coherence in programs that are not pre-planned, but emergent.

A third main point of their article is that where environments are relatively richer in information, and where information is more difficult to interpret and understand - a situation that increasingly characterizes schools and school districts - the organization must adopt a self-designing learning style. This means emphasizing assumption sharing, interpretive approaches, and trial-and-error, and it goes to the heart of why teachers in the TQWL study valued their effective principals as intellectuals and as risk-takers. For organizations exposed to high information richness and equivocality, Daft and Huber also argue that there is a need to develop decentralized communication structures, dense interpersonal networks for sharing and discussing information, and many formal and semiformal efforts to integrate knowledge across the informal groups (meetings, special integrative roles, etc.). This contrasts markedly with the structures we tend to find in U.S. school districts which, although often loosely linked internally (Weick, 1976), nevertheless exercise boundary control over flow of information into the school or district, and in larger systems, emphasize hierar
chical flows of information and routine, and regulated data systems (Wahlstrom and Louis, 1993). 11 Conditions for organizational learning and school reform

The discussion above has referred, parenthetically, to a variety of conditions that affect schools’ ability to learn and change. A summary of the most important would include: Decentralization

Most authors agree that serious organizational learning requires considerable decentralization (Bartunek and Louis, 1988; Daft and Huber, 1987; Senge, 1990): . . . decentralized structure features such as collateral or parallel groups or matrix structures . . . are more likely than traditional ones to foster the development of alternative viewpoints in an organization. If new viewpoints and structures that support them are not present . . . the organization is more likely to enter into decline than a renewing transformation. (Bartunek and Louis, 1988: 110)

Decentralization may increase learning but impede transformation because, although decentralized organizations tend to be innovative, changes tend to occur within existing programs or by introducing small scale projects. The authors emphasize that strong lateral relationships need to be overlaid on the decentralized organization that permit unified action when the circumstances demand it.

Most models of organizational transformation emphasize the need for strong,
effective leadership (Burns, 1978; Bartunek, 1984; Tushman and Romanelli, 1985). The argument is similar in most cases: The organizational leaders, or the ‘dominant elite’ have the primary influence over both the opportunity to reframe the underlying metaphysical assumptions. As Bartunek (1984) points out, they may not initiate the new ideas in all cases, but they clearly determine the receptivity of the organization to alternative interpretations. Although decentralization may be necessary, systemic change also demands more central direction in the form of formal and informal communication and influence, largely because the process is fraught with anxiety and conflict.

Thus, transformational change appears to demand influence from both leaders and subordinates, and frequent adjustments between the degree of decentralization versus coordination and integration. This may account for the dissension, at least in the U.S., between advocates of reform based on centralization/national goals, etc., and those who advocate decentralization/school-based management and choice as the means to improve schools. It also accounts for the finding from the TQWL study suggesting that teachers valued strong leadership on the part of the principal in part because it routinely affirmed their own responsibility.
and accountability for change.

The organizational learning literature explores this further, suggesting that decentralized designs demand integration through informal communication networks (Daft and Huber, 1987; Senge, 1990). Without these, leaders find it difficult to exercise influence, or help units of the organization to coordinate their activities (See Lawrence and Lorsch, 1967). Handy (1990) argues that leadership in future organizations, including schools, will have to exhibit stronger conceptual skills than in the past, where knowledgeability, decisiveness and 'good instincts' may have sufficed. However, they will also have to internalize the fact that they are 'post-heroic' in the sense that they neither have sufficient information to lead by themselves, nor will the people who work in 'learning organizations' be the type who will function well under authoritative superiors.

These perspectives help to explain the form of leadership identified in the TQWL study, which bears little resemblance to the images of transformative leadership developed by Burns (1978) and Bennis (1989). In contrast, the leadership style described by Handy, and exhibited by the principals in restructured schools involves "... a mixture of activities, including those of a teacher, a
consultant, and a trouble-shooter (Handy, p. 167; see also Senge, 1990, ch. 18).

According to the TQWL study, the style may be aptly described as a shift away from leadership behaviors that are traditionally masculine toward those more closely identified as feminine.

March (1991), argues, based on Cohen and Levinthal (1990), that the tendency of the educational literature to blame the lack of change in education on the ‘culture of schools’ or resistance is misplaced. Rather, teachers’ ability to look for new paradigms that might be effective is limited by the absence of an inventory of prior knowledge that would permit them to use radically new ideas intelligently” (p. 29). The “absorptive capacity” of schools to take in and use new ideas is, according to this view, hindered by the low investment in research and development. (Others might argue that the research knowledge base is adequate, but the development and dissemination systems that would permit teachers to have easy access to needed knowledge are absent in many countries.) The environment Most learning theories suggest that the environment is the major source of information about problems in organizational performance. Furthermore, because existing patterns of schooling are
institutionalized, change cannot occur without the environment also accepting the existence of anomalies, and an acceptable alternative to existing practice. Herein lies a genuine dilemma for school reform: Although schools are extremely dependent on support from their local setting, changes in the environment are not, by themselves, sufficient to produce real reform in schools. The relevant constituencies must first accept and agree upon an alternative vision of schooling. This is far more difficult a process than generating a sense of crisis. Furthermore, an alternative vision of schooling imposed from outside rarely generates learning and real change unless compliance with external constraints is coupled with a shift in interpretive perspective. When compliance occurs without learning, the changed behaviors may disappear as soon as the pressure or other external stimulus subsides (Bartunek and Louis, 1988; Berman and McLaughlin, 1977). A number of authors argue that there is always a need for sustained pressure and support for change from outside the school (Huberman and Miles, 1984; Dalin, 1993), but one might also argue that a continuing need for pressure and support implies that effective learning has not taken place. High levels of regulation may repress the ability of
organizations to respond to
new information readily and usually increase centralization within the organi
zation to protect the core functions of the agency/school from interference
(Schön, 1979).

The impact of the environment is moderated by its degree of complexity.

Learning occurs largely through observations of the experience of other similar
organizations (Levitt and March, 1988): where trial-and-error is con ned to
experiences within a single unit, it is inef cient and of poor quality. Population
ecology theories suggest that organizations that are situated in a competitive
environment develop more ef cient systems of diffusing major innovations but

where, as is the case in education, the environment is non-competitive, learning
from others is often reduced. The politics of reform and restructuring: the limits of learning
Incremental learning goes on continuously in effective schools that share the
dominant paradigm, but it is typically of the adaptive or intellectual types
described above. Second order learning, which involves challenges to the para
digm and possible paradigm shifts, will not occur without a sense that ‘business
as usual’ cannot persist (Schön, 1979), and external pressures that make the
crisis apparent. Yet the kind of dramatic learning that involves giving up old ways of thinking cannot occur without the emergence of real alternatives (Kuhn, 1970, Simsek and Louis, in press).

Schools are becoming increasingly aware of the crisis, both as a result of failures to meet the needs and demands of changing student bodies and of external pressures from constituencies. However, only a few rudimentary new paradigms have emerged, none of which have broad acceptance among teachers, administrators, politicians and professionals. The political nature of school restructuring is not avoidable, since schools represent a major public good. Educational systems and schools are expected to be everything to everybody, irrespective of other national or cultural differences, and schools often become the scapegoat for almost every social, cultural, economic and political problem. Selecting a new vision of schooling that will satisfy all constituencies and meet all of the expressed goals is impossible. What this means is that any school restructuring has to face a particularly difficult challenge of political selection before it is able to settle into a new routine of learning. The dark side of interpretive learning Senge (1990) claims that many organizations suffer from ‘learning disabilities’
because they make false assumptions about how well they know and can control their environment, and the value of their own experience as a learning tool.

Levitt and March (1988), however, present a more skeptical view. They point out that the rich and complex interpretive process advocated by Daft and Huber may mitigate against real changes in basic assumptions: The frames that are used for interpretation are often so flexible that they allow a lot of change in practice without disturbing myths and beliefs that have value to organizational members. Also, they point to the problem of ‘superstitious learning’ which occurs where the relationship between action and effect is weak. For example, in periods of externally defined crisis in education public attitudes toward the possibility of reform may be pessimistic. Change in routines, no matter how promising, are unlikely to lead to rapid changes in the public’s perception of the quality of education. This is particularly true where efforts to evaluate reforms are premature. Under these circumstances routines will be changed frequently in a fruitless attempt to find some that work. The fact that routines are changed frequently means that they are also less likely to work. The learning that occurs is,
therefore, misleading.

This may account for the fact that it is quite typical for schools to respond to environmental pressures by faddish adoption of untested programs which are just as rapidly stored in the closet. The result in the rapid recycling of poor quality innovations that do little to improve organizational performance (Nelson and Sieber, 1976). Another common phenomenon is that changes are made so rapidly that philosophical incompatibilities between them are ignored (at least for short periods) within the school, causing increased confusion and depressing learning. Ambiguous information about success may have other effects, including ‘paradigm peddling’ and ‘paradigm politics:’ Ambiguity sustains . . . efforts to promote . . . favorite frameworks, and the process by which interpretations are developed makes it relatively easy for conflicts of interest within an organization to spawn conflicting interpretations . . . disagreements over the meaning of history are possible, and different groups develop alternative stories that interpret the same experience quite differently. (Levitt and March, 1988, p. 324)

Discussion and implications for school restructuring and reform

The challenge outlined at the beginning of this paper implies a change in basic assumptions about current educational practice as opposed to tinkering with the system. The question is whether the calls for reform will add up to a period of minor adaptations within the existing vision of schooling, or to a genuine reconsideration of the anomalies and the presentation of a well
formulated alternative.

Within this challenge we can turn to the issues outlined above to derive some significant implications for how we should both think about, enact and study restructuring. Implications for policy and practice

Schools currently exist in an environment of high information richness in two senses. First, many ideas or rudimentary paradigms sprout within and outside schools, creating a rich source of new ideas and practices. Second, the educational system has become more receptive to information in and around the school since, during what is perceived, at least in many countries, as a crisis in the school’s ability to meet the needs of individual students, and the increasing social aspirations about the proportion of students who must ‘succeed’ in school. If our societies are to remain robust and adaptive.

Teachers and administrators in schools, as well as policy makers, believe that they must change. But, before they are able to do so, some learning issues must be addressed. School (re)structuring An image of schools as learning systems began to emerge from studies such as those discussed in detail at the beginning of this paper, and with it a better understanding of how learning may be related to reform. The image of an effect
ive change process focuses on the ambiguity of practice and knowledge, the
need for ‘doing’ and ‘discussing’ as the means to learning, the importance of
interpretation in the context of the school’s history, and not segregating informa-
tion or people in ways that impede decentralized sharing. Above all, there is a
need to ground thinking about change in a clear value system. It also leads to the
conclusion that changing actions (experimentation) may create changes in para
digms, rather than vice-versa.

The problem for schools is that this style of processing information is dif-
cult to maintain because it assumes opportunities for information sharing, inter-
pretation and story telling. This is how universities are organized (to some
extent), and most R&D labs/scientific research organizations – as well as some
industries (Kanter, 1983). This is a serious challenge to current models of
schoolings, in which teachers work almost exclusively with pupils and rarely
with each other. In the absence of opportunities to interact, theories of organ-
izational learning would predict a low capacity for change and development. In
particular, even when schools are decentralized they usually lack the dense com-
unication networks and the easy access to outside ideas that are required for
learning. Alternative paradigms may be located and developed, but unless schools can internalize anomalies for themselves, learn about new paradigms and adapt them for experimentation, restructuring will come to nothing.

Reform proposals in many countries focus on the decentralization of authority and accountability from the ministries of education to local schools. However, I would argue that the restructuring of schools is an important precursor to real transformational change rather than the focus of change itself, and that decentralization is not by itself a very powerful instrument for reform. If we cannot design schools so that basic assumptions about teachers’ work can be shared on a regular basis, can we expect schools to become self-designing over the long run? If schools are to become learning organizations they will require a profound change in the use of time so that teachers and administrators have the opportunity to work together to begin the real restructuring that will affect the paradigms surrounding the central tasks of the school: Creating a system that will ensure a higher level of learning for all children.

Beyond Managed Change

The image of educational change embodied in Miles and Louis’s book on urban high school reform is that of a long journey with only a
primitive map, and an explorer’s willingness to alter planned routes as new information becomes available. The goal does not change, but the itinerary does.

In order to achieve this image of evolutionary transformation, schools must address their embedded dysfunctional learning habits. We have referred above to supersitious learning, to the rapid in-and-out of innovations that prevents real learning, and to the circulation of poor but popular ideas that occur in decentralized systems such as the United States. Presumably other, albeit different, learning problems exist in more centralized systems.

Some of these result from the paucity of the R&D base that is readily available to schools, and the relative isolation of knowledge production unit (universities) from the knowledge application units (schools). But some also result from patterns that are unrelated to the lack of useable information. One example is the emphasis on the teacher as an autonomous professional whose skills at ‘clinical judgement’ demand consultation with peers on only rare occasions. This results in the development of disjointed shadow curricula within each classroom - some of which may be good, but all of which are a consequence of incremental rather than thoughtful school-wide adaptation. Another is the over-dependence of many
systems on 'quick fix' solutions from outside experts: last year a new instructional
model that is touted to fix all reading problems, this year an emphasis on 'total
quality management', and next year an 'outcomes based education' model. Edu-
cators accept outside pressure to implement and 'show results' in unreasonably
short time frames, rather than argue that rapid measurable change in children as a
consequence of changes that affect a small percentage of the child’s life are unrea-
sonable. Unless schools recognize these bad habits, restructuring to provide more
opportunities for learning will be ineffective.

The environment for education is, at this point, highly likely to reinforce
superstitious learning and the worst kinds of paradigm peddling. If policy
makers at the district and higher levels do not attend to the need for schools to
break the futile cycle of continuous innovation-implementation-discontinuation
of many small innovations, which reinforces teachers’ sense that "nothing will
really change," the promise of the rhetoric of sweeping transformation of
schools is unlikely to prevail. Part of this effort to give schools the break that is
required to develop serious learning environments must come from efforts of the
educational leadership, whether it be located in the central government or in
school districts, to challenge the public’s hope for instant success. Retraining leaders

The expectations that most teachers and principals have about the nature of leadership in schools are inconsistent with the image of leadership presented in Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture, the organizational learning literature. In traditionally organized schools (at least in the United States but, presumably, in some other countries as well) principals and teachers both want the former to ‘be in charge’ and to take responsibility for buffering teachers from outside pressures. Most principals insulate themselves from the day-to-day world of the school, and spend their time managing crises to the exclusion of coaching and consulting (Rosenblum, Louis and Rossmiller, 1991). Principals also fear that decentralization will bring more responsibilities for guiding and creating visions, which are important functions in the learning organization, but fail to give the school real control over decisions (Alexander, 1992).

This suggests another arena in which restructuring could founder. Without intervention to improve the abilities and confidence of sitting principals (in addition to redesigning selection and preservice training for school leaders), we will fail to attract the full energies of people who are
critical to the organizational
learning process.

As noted in the discussion above, the leadership task in a
learning organization is both subtle and unstable. On the one hand, one
must empower and del
gate; but on the other one must also become a raconteur
who leads through
building value consensus and vision, and an intellectual
who provides the stimu
lus for others to seek and interact with new information.
The dialectic between
strong leadership and delegation is never resolved in the
learning organization,
at least according to the literature: it requires
individuals who are able to operate
in the forefront and the background at different points in
time. In addition, there
is the tricky question of how to encourage teacher
leadership without underm
ing pedagogy and the focus on classroom work. This is not
the task that most
school leaders aspired to when they decided to apply for
the position!
The agenda for helping principals cannot remain
decentralized. In most coun
tries, including the United States, which has among the
highest academic
requirements for pre-service administrative training,
almost no attention is paid
to the needs of the mid-career principal faced with an
entirely new set of circum
stances and demands. We are dependent on mid-career
professionals to create learning organizations, but lack a shared systematic understanding of the conceptual and skill needs of people faced with organizational circumstances that are very different from those that they faced when they became school leaders. 15 Conclusion

Although the above discussion points to weaknesses in schools, the organizational learning framework shifts the discussion of these weaknesses away from finger-pointing (teachers are lazy and poorly trained; educators resist change because they want to protect their turf) to structural and cultural conditions that make it almost impossible for educators to respond meaningfully to the challenges with which they are presented. This is frequently just as true of newly established schools, which have not considered what organizational conditions are required to maintain a vital, learning environment, as of more conventional schools. For example, experimental schools with a significant pedagogical reform agenda may still provide no common planning time during the working day, and make no special provisions for gaining access to new ideas from the field, or for information about their own performance (Louis and King, 1993). What is important for practice is to continue to point out, both to
Teachers, administrators and policy makers at various levels, the resources - largely time, access to new ideas, and support for development of new ways of organizing - needed to make change happen.

On reflection, if we look back at Elmore’s different frames, we find that the organizational learning perspective does not contradict any of them - in practice.

Teachers and administrators still need to know how to plan and make decisions (albeit in a very different way), to decide how to organize and divide up the work, to interact with each other to maximize both personal and organization objectives, and to manage the inevitable conflict associated with change.

However, the focus is very different if one adopts an organizational learning perspective: instead of concentrating on any of the above, they are treated as means to a larger goal, which is renewing the capacities of the school to redesign itself to meet student needs. Implications for theories of organizational change in education

We have emphasized the implications of the organizational learning concept for policy and practice in restructuring. But, the discussion also challenges two major schools of change theory in education, while providing a possible basis for resolving their differences. One stream has viewed educational organizations
as anarchic, and change as a random event. These are the theories that label education organizations as ‘organized anarchies’ and change decisions in these organizations as ‘garbage cans’ (March and Olsen, 1976).

However, the dominant second stream is the ‘managed change’ perspective described above, in which organizations are seen as rational and goal-directed while change is purposeful and by choice. Both view administrators as primary initiators and change agents; their difference lies in the actions to be taken by these change agents.

The first group of theories argue that accumulated unplanned decisions to change made by competent and well-intentioned people will result in a natural, (usually beneficial or at least neutral) evolution of practice. The role of administrators is limited. Cohen and March (1976), for example, describe the role of the college president as one who is driving a fast car on ice: keeping the vehicle from going off the road is the most that one expects. On the other hand, the ‘managed change’ perspective ascribes a more strategic decision making role to the administrators, but has typically treated the implementation of delimited programs rather than major change. Neither of these streams has dealt with the

The image of change that emerges in the organizational learning paradigm

has elements of both managed change (organizational learning is affected by

structures and leadership) and anarchy (the emergence of alternative paradigms

and the selection of a new paradigm is a chaotic, largely unpredictable process).

This promises the possibility of synthesis, rather than continuing dissension. It is

beyond the scope of this article to outline the synthesis, but I would suggest that

beginning with the role of change leadership and management, as I have done

here, provides a helpful entry point. The application of organizational learning

theories may assist in identifying aspects of the change process that are more

and less manageable, and may also suggest ways in which the subjective aspects

of change may map on to more traditional approaches to directing change, such

as strategic planning. Notes

1 This paper was presented at the annual conference of the International Consortium for School Effectiveness and Improvement, Norköping, Sweden, January 3-6, 1993. An earlier version was presented at the International conference on School Restructuring sponsored by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, March 5-7, 1992. Its
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I am grateful for the contributions of Hasan Simsek, and to the comments of two anonymous reviewers.

2 Miles and Louis (1987) locate research traditions that fall outside “managed change”, but have rarely been applied in education. I am elaborating on one, the organizational learning perspective.

3 Since beginning this paper, at least one book that makes similar arguments has been published. See Fullan (1993).

4 In six schools restructuring was initiated by a female principal, while in a seventh the male principal explicitly espoused a philosophy that “the caring quotient contributes to the intelligence quotient.”

5 For example, “normative re-educative change strategies” (Zaltman and Duncan, 1976) focus on the need to change the opinions and thinking of individual members of a social group in order to change the group. See also Sims and Lorenzi, 1992.

6 Interestingly, the two schools that performed least well in the case studies outlined by Louis and Miles had either no “organizational memory” of effective changes in the past, or bitter and negative memories. In other words, they had no models to guide
future behavior.

7 The notion of organizational paradigm is derived from Kuhn’s work on scientific paradigms. See Simsek (1991) for a review of the literature drawing this connection.

8 Schön (1979), in his discussion of public organizational learning, also suggests that a “sense of impermanence” in agencies may be critical to the ability to experiment and alter typical paradigms of government behavior.

9 In all likelihood, most schools will need to do both.

10 See also Lundberg (1989), who developed a rather similar typology of forms of organizational learning, and Louis and Miles (1990), who characterize planning processes using similar terms.

11 School systems in the U.S. are loosely linked compared to most other countries. However, in general, despite the current rhetoric of school-based management and beyond, there are as many pressures toward tighter linkages. See Wahlstrom and Louis (forthcoming) for more discussion and cases of the highly centralized character of innovation adoption in school districts.

12 I hasten to add that the traditional associations of behavior with a “masculine” or “feminine” model should not be used to type-cast individuals. After all, as Hofstede (1980) points out, Swedish male executives are, as a group, more feminine in their
value system than American female executives.

13 For example, Sizer’s Coalition of Essential Schools constitutes one alternative, but incomplete paradigm for secondary schools, while James Comer’s work with elementary schools provides an alternative but also incomplete model for elementary schools; Handy (1990) proposes another that is based on his call for a paradigm shift in all organizations while Giroux (1988) calls for a markedly different vision. I would argue that most of the current alternative paradigm models are incomplete because they do not address all aspects of the needed changes in schools. For example, neither Sizer nor Comer deal systematically with needed changes in leadership and governance.

14 A clear example of both peddling and politics can be found in the furor within the psychiatric profession in the late 1970s over the definition of homosexuality as a mental disorder. Rather than draw on scientific evidence, the U.S. profession put the issue to a vote - a strategy for paradigm change that caused many groups to get involved in lobbying for one side or the other.

15 The situation facing school leaders in the former Soviet Union is particularly difficult. Here, not only have official values changed dramatically, but decentralization is occurring with little or no support. This is an issue to
which policy makers in the


In M.B. Miles, M. Ekholm and R. Vandenberghe (Eds.) Lasting School Improvement:

Exploring the process of institutionalization. Leuven: Acco.


This article examines the nature of organizational learning and the leadership practices and processes that foster organizational learning in Australian high schools. A path model is used to test the relationships between school-level factors and school outcome measures in terms of students' participation in and engagement with school. The importance of reconceptualizing schools as learning organizations to promote successful school change is discussed.

The general consensus, after years of educational reform initiatives to improve schools and schooling, is that too little changes too slowly (Deal, 1990; McLaughlin, 1998; Murphy & Hallinger, 1993). This is particularly so in a context where too much is implemented too quickly. Fullan (1995) has argued that the multitude of initiatives and the rapidity with which they are implemented "creates constant overload, fragmentation, and mystery. Even the most reform-minded educators have difficulty figuring out what is meant by the latest fads as they burn out attempting to find coherence and meaning" (p. 230).

In Australia, the current move to restructure schools as site-based managed (SBM) organizations echoes efforts in other countries such as Canada, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom, where indifferent results of these initiatives are provoking considered criticism from respected educators and researchers. In reviewing the evidence for a connection between enhanced teaching and learning and decentralization, Fullan (1995)
found no increase in student involvement in learning or improved teaching strategies. This lack of connection between governance structure reforms and the core mission of schools was previously reported in North America by Hallinger, Murphy, and Hausman (1991) and in Australia by Bishop and Mulford (1999). The empirical evidence in the literature indicates that successful SBM initiatives are rare and those that do succeed go far beyond SBM.

More recently, Wohlstetter, Van Kirk, Robertson, and Mohrman (1997) reported their findings from a study of American, Canadian, and Australian schools that were involved in curriculum and instruction reform and had been operating under SBM for at least 3 years. They concluded that decentralized management works best when there are conditions in place that support organizational learning and integrating processes. Actively restructuring, as opposed to struggling, schools could be differentiated in terms of availability of resources such as power, knowledge and skills, information, rewards, and the nature of leadership and the existence of instructional guidance mechanisms. The model they developed indicates that actively restructuring schools have more of the conditions in place that support organizational learning,
which enables the adoption of more innovative teaching practices.

This article focuses on conceptualizing schools as learning organizations. It reports on a study that examines the nature of organizational learning and the leadership practices and processes that foster organizational learning in Australian high schools and develops a model to test the interrelationships between these factors and their impact on student outcomes. By student outcomes we mean student engagement and participation in school. The Leadership for Organisational Learning and Student Outcomes (LOLSO) project is a collaborative research project funded during 3 years (1997-1999), and extended during 2000-2001, by the Australian Research Council. The project was designed to address the need to extend present understandings of school restructuring initiatives that aim to change school practices with the intention of supporting enhanced student learning and development of students. It focused on investigating the nature of leadership contributions to the stimulation of organizational learning and inquired about the effects of both leadership and organizational learning on desired secondary school student outcomes. The partners in
the Tasmanian Department of Education; and the Centre for Leadership Development, University of Toronto.

The 96 secondary schools in this project include public secondary schools from two states, South Australia and Tasmania. A random sample, stratified by size, of 50 schools was drawn in South Australia and represented slightly more than half of the public secondary schools in that state. The remaining 46 schools represented the full population of public secondary schools in Tasmania.

The first phase of this project entailed identification of the school and leadership characteristics and processes that are associated with high schools operating as learning organizations. A teacher and principal questionnaire was developed drawing on school and nonschool literature on organizational learning and the work in schools of Leithwood and Jantzi, Centre for Leadership Development, Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture, University of Toronto. The Organisational Learning and Leadership Questionnaire was administered to approximately 25 teachers teaching Year 10 classes selected at random from a staff list. Survey data from 2,503 teachers and their
principals drawn from 96 secondary schools provided information on the nature of organizational learning in high schools, sources of leadership in the school, and leadership and school management practices of the principal and the management team.

In the second phase of this project, the Participation and Engagement Questionnaire was administered to classes of Year 10 students identified by the school coordinators as being representative of the general Year 10 student population. Survey data from 3,500 Year 10 students from the projects’ 96 schools yielded measures of student family educational environment, student views of teachers’ work in the classroom, and student outcomes such as attendance, students’ self-concept, and participation in and engagement with school.

Version 6.0.3 SPSS statistical software package was used to develop working les containing the data from teacher and student questionnaires for each state. Several data reduction procedures were employed including rating scale analysis from the Quest program (Adams & Khoo, 1993) to reduce the number of questionnaire items to be analyzed to those that fitted the Rasch scale and to establish unidimensionality for each section of the two questionnaires; exploratory factor
analysis with principal component extraction and varimax rotation to help

develop scales underlying the constructs to be used in further analysis; and prin

cipal component extraction to confirm scales. Reliability estimates for each scale

from both questionnaires were calculated using Cronbach’s alpha. All scales

indicated a high reliability in the range of alpha = .74 to .92.

The nature of the relationships between school leadership, organizational

learning, and student outcomes have begun to be explored, and the results of

some of these investigations have been reported (Silins & Mulford, in press;

Silins, Mulford, Zarins, & Bishop, 2000; Silins, Zarins, Mulford, & Bishop,

1999). Conceptual framework and constructs of the study

The conceptual framework for this study is rooted in the current organizational

learning and leadership literature. The variables selected for this study have been

drawn from the existing LOLSO principal, teacher, and student database gener

ated by the responses from two questionnaires: the Organisational Learning and

Leadership Questionnaire and the Participation and Engagement Questionnaire. Organizational learning

The concept of schools as learning organizations has evolved in response to the
difficulties experienced in bringing about school reform. During a relatively
short period of time, support for the importance of organizational learning in organizational learning and school change has grown (Chapman, 1997; Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998; Louis, 1994; Mulford, 1998). Schools that function as learning organizations in a context of rapid global change are those that have systems and structures in place that enable staff at all levels to collaboratively and continuously learn and put new learnings to use. This capacity for collaborative learning defines the process of organizational learning in schools. Marks, Louis, and Printy (2000) have identified six dimensions of this capacity for organizational learning—school structure, participative decision making grounded in teacher empowerment, shared commitment and collaborative activity, knowledge and skills, leadership, and feedback and accountability (p. 3).

A review of the empirical work that is available from countries as wide apart as the Netherlands, Canada, Britain, the United States, and Australia (Berends, Heilbrunn, McKelvey, & Sullivan, 1998; Bishop & Mulford, 1999; Bodilly, 1998; Shepard & Brown, 1999; Van Den Berg & Sleeegers, 1996), although not always specifically addressing organizational learning, does suggest that common themes are emerging about secondary schools, which are
successfully restructuring for

change. These themes include a school’s commitment to, and
ownership of, trans

parent, inclusive, collaborative efforts that include
greater use of distributed leader

ship; taking the initiative rather than always reacting;
focusing on the learning needs

of all students; and recognizing and acting on the need for
all staff to be continuously

learning.

From an extensive review of the noneducational (Argyris &
Schon, 1978; Marquardt, 1996; Senge, 1990; Watkins & Marsick, 1993) and
educational

(Fullan, 1993; Leithwood et al., 1998; Louis, Marks, &
Kruse, 1996; Mitchell,

1995; Sackney, Walker, & Hajnal, 1995; Smylie, Lazarus, &
Brownlee-Conyers,

1996) literature, we defined learning organizations as
schools that (a) employed

processes of environmental scanning, (b) developed shared
goals, (c) established

collaborative teaching and learning environments, (d)
encouraged initiatives and

risk taking, (e) regularly reviewed all aspects related to
and uncencing the work

of the school, (f) recognized and reinforced good work, and
(g) provided

opportunities for continuing professional development. This
definition provided

the seven constructs representing organizational learning
items incorporated in

the questionnaire. Subsequently, the questionnaire was
piloted, revised, and then administered to teachers and principals in the project. Teachers and principals responded to items representing these seven dimensions on a self-report 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The seven-factor structure used to generate the questionnaire items was not supported by the observed data. Exploratory factor analysis, using principal components analysis of responses on organizational learning items and varimax rotation indicated the most likely structure of the organizational learning construct. The LOLSO project data supported a four-factor nested model of organizational learning, which we have employed in this study (Mulford & Silins, 1998; Silins, Zarins, & Mulford, 2001). The four-factor solution was then tested using a confirmatory procedure employing the structural equation modeling software, LISREL 8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1989). A four-factor correlated nested model indicated the best fit for both the South Australian and Tasmanian data using the LISREL confirmatory procedure. The advantages of a nested model is that it justifies the combination of the four factors as four dimensions of one general factor, organizational learning.
The four dimensions are reported in Table 1, together with examples of the items that operationally define them. The dimensions characterize a school's capacity for organizational learning as:

- **Trusting and Collaborative Climate**: The extent to which collaboration is the norm and discussions among colleagues are open and candid; staff seek information to improve their work, and staff are valued.

- **Taking Initiatives and Risks**: The extent to which staff feel empowered to make decisions and feel free to experiment and take risks; the school structures support teacher initiatives, and the administrators promote inquiry and dialogue and are open to change.

- **Shared and Monitored Mission**: The extent to which the school culture encourages critical examination of current practices and continuous learning for improvement; staff keep abreast of external events that may affect their school; curriculum is aligned with the school’s vision and goals.

- **Professional Development**: The extent to which staff engage in ongoing professional development; professional reading is a source of learning, and so are other schools; developing skills to work and learn in teams is seen as important; external advice is sought as appropriate, and school leaders provide all the support they can to promote professional development.

Approaches to leadership that support the development of schools as learning organizations find more in common with cultural, collaborative approaches in which teachers are viewed as partners than with the technological, hierarchical, rational planning models (Sheppard & Brown, 1999). One such approach is the transformational model of leadership that encompasses many of the leadership
practices identified as promoting successful school restructuring (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). Research describing productive forms of leadership has referred to aspects of this transformational model of leadership, for example, leadership that is empowering (Reitzug, 1994), sensitive to local community aspirations (Limerick & Nielsen, 1995), supportive of followers (Blase, 1993), building collaborative school cultures (Deal & Peterson, 1994), and emphasising the importance of developing a shared vision (Mulford, 1994). The transformational conception of leadership includes developing a mission and vision for the school and maintaining its relevance for all concerned, developing and maintaining a school culture supportive of the school’s mission and the work required to STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE.

Table 1 Conceptual and operational definitions of a four-factor nested model of organizational learning

Organizational learning factors:

1. Trusting and Collaborative Climate The extent to which the school’s climate and culture is one that supports collaborative work, sharing of information, and open communication. Discussions among colleagues are honest and candid. Overall there is mutual support among teachers. Most of us actively seek information to improve our work. We are tolerant of each other’s opinions. Colleagues are used as resources. There is ongoing professional dialogue among teachers.

2. Taking Initiatives and Risks The extent to which the school leaders and school structures support experimentation, empower teachers to make decisions, and teachers feel valued and rewarded for taking the
initiative. The school leaders protect those who take risks. The administrators are open to change. School structures support teacher initiative and risk taking. The administrators empower staff to make decisions. There are rewards for staff who take the initiative. People feel free to experiment and take risks. Staff are valued.

3. Shared and Monitored Mission The extent to which teachers participate in all aspects of the school’s functioning—including school policy decisions and review—share a coherent sense of direction, and acknowledge the wider school community. Teachers have the opportunity to participate in most significant school-level policy decisions. We have a coherent and shared sense of direction. We critically examine current practices. Teachers and administrators work in partnership to learn and solve problems together. We actively share information with the parents and community. The effectiveness of the teaching program is regularly monitored.

4. Professional Development The extent to which staff keep up with best practice and are encouraged and given time to develop professionally; external advisers, professional reading, and other schools are sources of learning; developing skills to work in teams and share knowledge is seen as important. We monitor what is happening outside of the school to find out about best practice. Good use is made of professional readings. Groups of staff receive training in how to work and learn in teams. Good use is made of membership of teacher professional associations. We make use of external advisers, for example, subject associations, project officers, and consultants. Adequate time is provided for professional development. Staff engage in ongoing professional development.

Organizational Learning and School Change

achieve that mission, and nurturing the capacity and commitment of staff (Duke & Leithwood, 1994). This view of leadership also includes structuring the school to facilitate achieving its mission and goals, ensuring the continuous improvement of programs and instruction, building and maintaining high levels of support for the school among parents and the wider community, and provid
ing administrative support for achieving the school’s vision, mission, and goals (Leithwood & Duke, 1999).

The LOLSO project identified the nature of principals’ practices that promote organizational learning by constructing and employing questionnaire items that were drawn from the transformational model of leadership (Duke & Leithwood, 1994). The following categories of items relating to the principal were included:

setting the tone of the school, the nature of the decision-making structures, the level of individualized support and intellectual stimulation provided, establishment of school direction and goals, and performance expectations. Analysis of responses using confirmatory factor analysis and analysis of covariance structures employing the maximum likelihood estimation process with the LISREL 8 program (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1989) provided empirical evidence for conceptualizing leadership practices that promote organizational learning as transformational (Leithwood et al., 1999; Silins et al., 1999, 2000). The nature of the principals’ leadership and practices was defined and confirmed as a six-factor nested model (Mulford & Silins, 1998). This justifies the combination of the six factors as six dimensions of one factor, transformational leadership.
These six factors have been employed in this study and are reported in Table 2 together with examples of the items that operationally define them. The transformational nature of principals’ leadership practices that promote organizational learning are described by the following six factors:

• Vision and Goals: The extent to which the principal works toward whole staff consensus in establishing school priorities and communicates these priorities and goals to students and staff, giving a sense of overall purpose.

• Culture: The extent to which the principal promotes an atmosphere of caring and trust among staff, sets a respectful tone for interaction with students, and demonstrates a willingness to change his or her practices in the light of new understandings.

• Structure: The extent to which the principal establishes a school structure that promotes participative decision making, supports delegation and distributive leadership, and encourages teacher autonomy for making decisions.

• Intellectual Stimulation: The extent to which the principal encourages staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it, facilitates opportunities for staff to learn from each other, and models continual learning in his or her own practice.

• Individual Support: The extent to which the principal provides moral support, shows appreciation for the work of individual staff, and takes their opinion into account when making decisions.

Table 2 Conceptual and operational definitions of a six-factor nested model of principal’s leadership

Principal’s leadership:

1. Vision and Goals Works toward whole staff consensus in establishing school priorities and communicates these priorities and goals to students and staff, giving a sense of overall purpose. Gives us a sense of overall purpose. Helps clarify the specific meaning of the school’s mission.
in terms of its practical implications for programs and instruction. Communicates school mission to staff and students. Encourages the development of school culture supporting openness to change. Helps us understand the relationship between our school’s mission and the department’s initiatives and policies. Works toward whole staff consensus in establishing priorities for school goals.

2. Culture Promotes an atmosphere of caring and trust among staff, sets a respectful tone for interaction with students, and demonstrates a willingness to change his or her practices in light of new understandings. Shows respect for staff by treating us as professionals. Sets a respectful tone for interaction with students. Demonstrates a willingness to change his or her own practices in light of new understandings. Models problem-solving techniques that I can readily adapt for work with colleagues and students. Promotes an atmosphere of caring and trust among staff. Symbolizes success and accomplishment within our profession.

3. Structure Supports a school structure that promotes participative decision making, delegating and distributing leadership to encourage teacher autonomy for making decisions. Delegates leadership for activities critical for achieving school goals. Distributes leadership broadly among the staff representing various viewpoints in leadership positions. Ensures that we have adequate involvement in decision making related to programs and instructions. Supports an effective committee structure for decision making. Facilitates effective communication among staff. Provides an appropriate level of autonomy for us in our own decision making.

4. Intellectual Stimulation Encourages staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it, facilitates opportunities for staff to learn from each other, and models continual learning in his or her own practice. Is a source of new ideas for my professional learning. Stimulates me to think about what I am doing for my students. Encourages me to pursue my own goals for professional learning. (continued) O R G A N I Z A T I O N A L L E A R N I N G A N D S C H O O L C H A N G E

Table 2 Continued Encourages us to develop/review individual professional growth goals consistent with school goals and priorities. Encourages us to evaluate our practices and refine them as needed. Encourages me to try
new practices consistent with my own interests. Facilitates opportunities for staff to learn from each other.

5. Individualized Support Provides moral support, shows appreciation for the work of individual staff, and takes staff’s opinions into account when making decisions. Takes my opinion into consideration when initiating actions that affect my work. Is aware of my unique needs and expertise. Is inclusive, does not show favoritism toward individuals or groups. Provides moral support by making me feel appreciated for my contribution to the school.

6. Performance Expectations Has high expectations for teachers and for students and expects staff to be effective and innovative. Has high expectations for us as professionals. Holds high expectations for students. Expects us to be effective innovators.

- Performance Expectation: The extent to which the principal has high expectations for teachers and for students and expects staff to be effective and innovative.

Distributed leadership

Our concept of distributed leadership relates to Ogawa and Bossert’s (1995) concept of leadership as a quality of organizations. We support the idea that leadership is a ubiquitous characteristic of organizations that is inherent in the roles and structures of the organization and can be recognized in the emergent organizational relationships. Within an organization, influence is exerted through social interactions. Leadership, as a relational concept, can permeate every level of the organization, and the extent of its influence can ebb and flow according to the extent organizational members choose to, or find opportunities to, exert influence. The bottom line, however, is that all members of schools and
their communities can lead and so affect the performance of their schools.

This concept of organizational leadership has its genesis in the work of a group of researchers in the 1960s from the Institute for Social Research of the University of Michigan. Ogawa and Bossert (1995) reported that these researchers established that organizations can be distinguished on the basis of the different levels of leadership that exist, that these levels vary over time in any one organization, and that under some conditions, the overall performance of organizations is positively related to the level of organizations’ total leadership (Cartwright, 1965; Tannenbaum, 1962).

We hypothesized that organizational learning provides the conditions that support the continual improvement of a restructuring school’s overall performance and that these conditions are positively related to the level of total leadership that exists in the organization. In other words, the emerging model is that schools that are characterized by high levels of total leadership are most likely to have in place conditions that promote high levels of organizational learning, which enable them to function as high-performing, restructuring schools.

For this study, we have drawn from the LOLSO project database teacher
responses to a questionnaire item asking them to identify all sources of leadership in their school and the strength of their influence. A list of 12 possible sources was presented. The list included principal, deputy principal, assistant principal, learning area coordinators/department heads, individual teachers providing leadership informally, teacher committee/teams set up to provide leadership, the whole staff working together, school counselor, students, school council, union representative, and parents or members of the community. These 12 categories of sources were used to define the concept of distributed leadership. The total leadership in any one school would be represented by the principal’s leadership together with distributed leadership. Internal school variables consist of five constructs. Organizational learning (the extent to which teachers perceive the school to be functioning as a learning organization defined by the four factors identified in Table 1), leader (the construct representing teachers’ perceptions of the nature of the principal’s practices in terms of six aspects of transformational leadership identified in Table 2), and
distributed leadership (the construct representing the extent to which leadership is perceived by teachers to be distributed in the school over a number of possible sources) are three of the five internal school variables used in this study. The LOLSO project database provided observed measures for two more constructs that were considered worthy of inclusion in this study—active leadership and teachers’ work. Active leadership represents the extent to which the leaders in the school are perceived by teachers as visible, accessible, and actively involved in the core work of the school, including monitoring and reviewing the progress of students. Teachers’ work represents students’ perceptions of teachers’ work in the classroom including their liking of the way teachers instruct, the extent they relate instruction to future life, the variety of instructional activities employed, the extent teachers discuss students’ work with them, the organization of their classes, the expectations that they will do their best work, and the extent to which students are challenged in class. Student outcomes Improved student outcomes must be a primary goal of any school reform and restructuring. We have focused on student engagement and participation in school as measures of student outcomes. There is evidence
that student engage
ment with school is a predictor of student achievement and is important for learning that requires committed effort by each student (Ainley, 1994; Leithwood, Dart, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1993; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999; Neumann, 1989). These studies suggest that student participation in and engagement with school have multiple, desirable benefits and are worthy of further elucidation. It is a compelling argument to suggest that if students are participating in school, have a positive academic self-concept, and are engaged with school, they will be more successful academically. Student participation in and engagement with school are both direct and indirect measures of educationally significant variables. There is some evidence that they are reliable predictors of retention in school, which is an explicit goal of current school restructuring (Finn, 1989; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998; Silins & Mulford, in press), and they appear to affect the maintenance of positive academic self-concept, which is a desirable educational goal in itself (Craven, Marsh, & Print, 1997). Research suggests that alienation of students from school can be a critical step leading to failure to complete their schooling. This problem of alienation or disengagement is especially important for middle and senior
high school stu

dents (Finn, 1993; Neumann, 1989). Alienation and
disengagement can be

counteracted by participation in and engagement with
school. Such involvement

is likely to have bene ts across a wide variety of
educationally relevant out

comes for students (Kinney, 1993; Leithwood, 1998; Marsh,
1992). The greater

the student participation in and engagement with school,
the less likelihood of

alienation, the consequences of which are detrimental to
the student, the school

community, and society as a whole (Marsh, 1992; Marsh &
Craven, 1997).

For the LOLSO project, we adapted as dependent variables a
conceptualiza
tion of student identi cation with school employed by
Leithwood et al. (1993)

and drawn from Finn (1989). This conceptualization contains
two elements:

student participation in school, which is largely
behavioral, and student engage

ment with school, which is largely psychological. We have
employed these con

 structs as student outcome measures in this study:
participation—representing

the extent of students’ participation in school including
absences, misbehavior,

getting homework done, amount of time spent on homework,
participation in

e xtracurricular activities, number of activities,
preparedness to do extra school
work, and involvement in classroom/school decisions and setting own learning goals—and engagement—representing the extent of students’ engagement with school including students’ perception of the way teachers relate to them, the ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING AND SCHOOL CHANGE extent of identification with their school, perceptions of their relationship with their peers, and their perceptions of the usefulness of their schoolwork in later life. It was hypothesized that such variables were likely to be reliable predictors of student achievement and school retention, which are common goals of school restructuring. School context variables Socioeconomic status (SES) and school profile. When examining predictors of school outcomes, the contexts of schooling need to be taken into account (Stoll & Fink, 1996). Students’ social class background, school sector, and school size have been identified as factors that influence student performance (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986; Lee & Smith, 1993). Mother’s and father’s occupation collected from students, as well as Australian Bureau of Statistics measures of economic resources and occupation level, were used to control for SES. The variable school profile accounted for the size of the school in 1997 and the type of school—country or metropolitan.
All variables used in this study were drawn from the LOLSO project data base. The study reported here examined the nature and strength of the interrelations between a total of nine variables chosen to expand our understanding of the nature and processes of organizational learning. The nine variables employed in this study represent three categories of variables: school context variables (SES, school profile), internal school variables (leader, active leadership, distributed leadership, organizational learning, teachers’ work), and student outcome variables (participation, engagement). Path model and analysis

Latent variable path analysis with partial least squares (PLSPATH Version 3.01) (Sellin, 1990) allows the testing of models in which variables have been selected on the basis of theory and logical argument to predict and explain the effects of variables on one or more criteria (Sellin & Keeves, 1997). The main aims of developing the path model are (a) to test the construction of the latent variables from observed or manifest variables, (b) to examine causal relationships between the constructs of the model, and (c) to estimate the magnitudes of the hypothesized relationships. A path model represents the concepts and their interrelations as an attempt to bring them into a structured and meaningful order. Model building
forces clarification of the ideas and theoretical assumptions involved. The theoretical model thus developed is verified or rejected using empirical data and considered methods of measurement and analysis appropriate to the context of the phenomena being examined. Developments in model building using structural equation modeling have provided the opportunity for examining interrelationships among variables not as simple bivariate relationships but as multivariate relationships that more closely represent the complexity of the real world (Keeves, 1986).

PLSPATH is based on the use of partial least squares estimation procedures and is conceptually related to principal components analysis, canonical correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The word partial refers to the fact that initially, PLSPATH calculates an estimate for each latent variable (such as leader, organizational learning, student engagement), which is derived from the corresponding manifest variables (measured by questionnaire items) by partitioning the hypothesized inner model into its component constructs. Once the program has estimated these values for each latent variable, the paths between the latent variables are computed by calculating least squares estimates for all variables.
In the model. All relationships involving manifest variables and latent variables are presented in the form of a path model and are displayed graphically in a way that represents all relationships identified in a given setting (see Figure 1). The manifest variables on which information is gathered in the questionnaires are shown in rectangular boxes. The latent variables developed from the manifest variables are represented by ellipses. Analysis commences with a fully recursive model in which succeeding variables are influenced by all preceding variables. This allows for the subsequent deletion of insignificant paths. In the LOLSO studies, both cluster and random sampling techniques were used in collecting data. This means that it is not appropriate to apply estimates of significance, which assume just simple random sampling. The technique of jackknifing is used in PLSPATH to provide standard errors of the parameters being estimated, thus avoiding assumptions of simple random sampling and organizational and school change.

Figure 1: Final path model of variables influencing student participation in and engagement with secondary school. (S) Distributed Leadership Teachers' Work (I) School Profile (S) Active Leadership (I) National Learning (0). K2 19 Participation • 47: (K) % % % % % % % % % % % % inflating multivariate normal distribution for the observed and the
latent variables. The jackknife standard errors of the estimated path coefficients can be used to assess the magnitude of effect of a particular variable (Ross & Wilson, 1997). In refining the inner model, a path coefficient had to exceed twice its standard error as estimated by the jackknife procedure. In refining the paths between the latent variables and the manifest variables (the outer model), the estimated loadings in the model were retained when they exceeded twice their standard errors as estimated by the jackknife procedures.

The evaluation of a model in PLSPath analysis is basically in terms of the proportion of variance explained ($R^2$). PLSPath also provides the $Q^2$ statistic, which is useful as a test criterion because it is related to the stability of the model and to sample variability. It is derived as the jackknife analogue of $R^2$. A tested model has more predictive relevance the higher $Q^2$ is, and modifications to a model may be evaluated by comparing $Q^2$ values.

A nine-variable model was developed to examine the influence of leadership variables on organizational learning, and the impact of leadership and organizational learning through teachers' work on students' participation in and engagement with school. The variables selected for the study were based on the
literature on leadership and organizational learning and Leithwood et al.'s (1993) adaptation of Finn’s (1989) conceptualization of student participation in and engagement with school. A combination of contextual external and internal predictors of organizational learning were hypothesized (from the larger data base). External predictors were SES and school profile (type and size of school).

The internal predictors were principal’s practices (leader) and leadership team’s behavior (active leadership), distributed leadership, organizational learning, and teachers’ work. Table 3 presents a description of the variables in the model. SES and school profile are school characteristics; leader, active leadership, distributed leadership, and organizational learning involve teacher-level data aggregated to the school level; teachers’ work involves student-level data aggregated to the school level to provide the students’ view of classroom instruction.

Student outcomes measures are based on students’ views of their participation in and engagement with school, aggregated to the school level. The path model was tested using a latent variable partial least squares path analysis (PLSPATH) procedure (Sellin & Keeves, 1997). The initial design of the model was fully recursive, and each variable was positioned as it was pre...
dicted to influence the succeeding variables (and be influenced by preceding variables) in the model. Along with the contextual factors (SES and school profile), leader, active leadership, distributed leadership, organizational learning, and teachers’ work were depicted as mediating variables by their placement between the external variables and the criterion variables of participation and engagement.

Analysis proceeded in two stages. First, the outer model was refined by successively deleting the manifest (direct measure) variables that did not contribute to explaining the latent variable (construct). All measures that had a loading (in Strategy, Marketing, Change and Culture Organizational Learning and School Change).

Table 3 Description of variables in the model of factors influencing organizational learning and student outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable description and coding</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>Estimation loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socioeconomic status (outward mode)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother’s occupation (Occm)</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father’s occupation (Occd)</td>
<td>5.22</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence category (Ecres)</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/occupation category (Edocc)</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School profile (outward mode)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area (country or metropolitan)</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size in 1997 632 283 .92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leader (outward mode)

Teacher level of agreement on six aspects of principal’s leadership practices in the school: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = in between, 4 = mostly agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Goal 3.57 .44 .98
Culture 3.63 .54 .96
Structure (Struc) 3.68 .40 .95
Intellectual stimulation (Inst) 3.34 .43 .95
Individualized support (Inds) 3.50 .50 .94
Performance expectations (Perf) 3.89 .36 .87

Active leadership (outward mode)

Teacher level of agreement on eight aspects of administrative involvement in the school’s activities: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = in between, 4 = mostly agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Administrators have positive presence (Adpos) 3.64 .58 .95
Administrators visible (Advis) 3.75 .57 .93
Administrators easily accessible (Adacc) 3.92 .47 .93
Administrators interested in student progress (Adstpr) 3.50 .50 .96
Administrators observe or inquire (Inclact) 2.71 .52 .89
Administrators work with teachers (Adtch) 3.00 .44 .93
Administrators discuss educational issues (Adiss) 3.86 .39 .89
Administrators review student progress (Revst) 3.54 .42 .86

Distributed leadership (outward mode)

Teacher identification of the leadership sources in the school and their strength of influence: 1 = minimal, 2 = moderate, 3 = considerable, 4 = very strong.
Deputy principal (DP) 3.04 .44 .50
Department heads/coordinators (Coord) 2.84 .23 .56
Individual teachers (Indtch) 2.68 .26 .67
Teacher committees/teams (Tchteam) 2.57 .28 .77
Distributed leadership (outward mode)
Whole staff working together (Whst) 2.64 .41 .83
School counselors (Cnsll) 2.17 .46 .50
Students (Stud) 2.08 .27 .64
School council (Cncil) 2.20 .34 .53
Parents/other community members (Parents) 2.08 .30 .65

the same sense as a principal components analysis) of at least twice their stan
dard error and equal to or greater than 0.40 were retained. Once the outer model
was stable, the inner model was re ned. Again, all paths were deleted where the
path coef cient (similar to regression coef cient) was less than twice its stan
dard error or less than 0.10.

STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Table 3 Continued

Variable description and coding

Mean Standard Estimation deviation loading

Organizational learning (outward mode)

Teacher level of agreement on four outcomes related to organizational learning: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = in between, 4 = mostly agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Collaborative climate (Collab) 3.58 .27 .91
Taking initiatives and risks (Risks) 3.27 .33 .96
Teacher participation and engagement (Paren) 3.38 .37 .96
Professional development (Prodev) 3.09 .25 .90

Teachers’ work (outward mode)

Student level of agreement on the way teachers work in the classroom: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = in between, 4 = mostly agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Like the way teachers teach (Lkinstr) 3.01 .35 .85
Relate schoolwork to future life (Futlife) 3.32 .27 .64
Use variety of activities (Varact) 3.13 .29 .88
Discuss work with student (Disuk) 3.18 .30 .83
Classes well organized (Org) 3.36 .29 .86
Expect best work (Bestwk) 4.07 .22 .69
Constantly challenged in class (Chall) 3.18 .21 .80

Participation in organizational learning (outward mode)

Student indication of participation in school: 0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = frequently, 4 = always.

Not absent from school or class (Notab) 2.04 .23 .54
Extracurricular participation (Expart) 2.01 .44 .77
Number of extracurricular activities (Numac) 2.05 .43 .66
Do extra work (Exwk) 2.35 .32 .61

Making decisions and setting goals (Goalset) 3.02 .19 .71

Engagement with school (outward mode)

Student level of agreement on six aspects related to engagement with learning: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = in between, 4 = mostly agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Student teacher relationships (Studteach) 3.12 .29 .91
The focus of this study is on school-level factors associated with leadership, organizational learning, and student outcomes. Analysis of the data was restricted at the outset to the school level because information that would allow complete nesting of the student data within teachers, and teachers within schools, was not available. The school-level model presented indicates the way in which teachers, students, and principals work and think in the school. Aggregation to the school level has an inherent meaning in this study because the teachers and leader are providing information about the same leader and his or her operation in the school. Furthermore, leadership concepts used in this study represent qualities of organizations (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995) and must have as their unit of analysis the organization. Because the function of leadership is to affect the performance of organizations, leadership parameters are set at the organizational level to influence organizational outcomes. Aggregation bias will attenuate the size of the same level relationships in the model—this will affect the relationship between teachers’ work and the two student outcome measures, participation and engagement. The
correlations between the remaining variables and the student outcome measures will not encounter problems of aggregation bias because information on these variables is derived from different sources. However, the regression-adjusted coefficients will be affected by those variables that are subject to aggregation bias. Nevertheless, there is no way in which data collected at different levels can be analyzed unless students are tied to teachers. Results Table 3 reports the significant estimated loadings of the observed variables for each construct in the model. The strength of the loadings indicates which of the manifest variables predominated in the definition of their construct. In the final model, distributed leadership and participation were the only constructs for which some of the observed variables defining them failed to reach the criteria for retention in the model. That is, their estimated loadings did not exceed twice their standard errors. Distributed leadership was defined by nine of the observed variables: deputy principal, coordinators/heads, individual teachers, teacher teams, whole staff, counselors, students, councils, and parents. Principal, assistant principal, and union representative were not significant contributors to this construct. Similarly, for participation misbehavior,
getting homework done and
amount of time spent on homework failed to reach the
criteria and were
dropped. The observed variables that contributed signi-
cantly to participation
were absences, participation in extracurricular activities, number of activities,
preparedness to do extra schoolwork, and involvement in classroom/school
decisions and setting own learning goals. For all other
constructs in the model,
the observed variables contributed signi cantly.

Table 4 Direct, total and indirect effects and correlations
of latent variables in uencing student outcomes

Variables Direct JknStd Total Indirect Correlation effects
p error effects t effects i r
School pro le: R 2 = .31 (d = .83)
Q 2 = .29
SES .56 .07 .56 — .56
Leader: R 2 = .07 (d = .96) Q 2 = .03
SES — — –.15 –.15 –.06
School pro le — — –.24 –.26 –.24
Active leadership: R 2 = .82 (d = .42)
Q 2 = .81
SES — — –.13 –.13 –.12
School pro le — — –.24 –.24 –.30
Leader .90 .02 .90 — .90
Distributed leadership: \( R^2 = .43 \)
\( (d = .75) \quad Q^2 = .40 \)
SES — — –.09 –.09 –.14
School profile — — –.16 –.16 –.31
Leader — — .59 .59 .62
Active involvement .63 .07 .65 — .65
Organizational learning: \( R^2 = .84 \)
\( (d = .40) \quad Q^2 = .83 \)
SES — — –.12 –.12 –.22
School profile — — –.22 –.22 –.33
Leader .30 .09 .83 .54 .84
Active involvement .36 .09 .59 .24 .86
Distributed leadership .36 .05 .36 — .78
Teachers’ work: \( R^2 = .08 \) \( (d = .96) \)
\( Q^2 = .04 \)
SES — — –.03 –.03 –.07
School profile — — –.06 –.06 –.09
Leader — — .23 .23 .27
Active involvement — — .17 .17 .24
Distributed leadership — — .10 .10 .09
Organizational learning .28 .09 .28 — .28

Table 4 shows the variables that exerted an effect on both the outcome variables and the other latent variables in the model. Direct, indirect, and total effects are reported along with the jackknife standard errors and correlations.
Three variables emerged as direct predictors of organizational learning: leader (p = .30), active leadership (p = .36), and distributed leadership (p = .36). As well as the direct effect, leader exerted the strongest indirect effect (i = .54) on organizational learning through its very strong direct effect (p = .90) on active leadership and strong indirect effect (p = .59) on distributed leadership. Leader exerted a dominant total influence on organizational learning.

Organizational learning was the only direct predictor (p = .28) of teachers’ work. However, organizational learning mediated indirect leader effects (i = .23) and, to a lesser extent, indirect active leadership effects (i = .17).

Teachers’ work exerted a direct influence on participation (p = .41). School profile, however, was the strongest direct, and negative, predictor (p = -.51) of participation. The negative path indicates that the smaller metropolitan schools and the country rather than city schools are associated with increased participation.

Participation was a moderate direct (p = .25) predictor of engagement, as was SES (p = .18), although to a lesser extent. Teachers’ work, however, exerted the strongest direct influence (p = .77) on engagement. Indirect influences on
engagement worthy of note were organizational learning ($i = .24$) and leader ($i = .20$).

The strong direct influence ($p = .56$) of SES on school profile indicated that students with higher SES backgrounds were associated with the metropolitan and larger schools. Schools profile had a direct and negative ($p = -.26$) effect on leader, indicating that the smaller city schools and country schools were more likely to be associated with the transformational practices represented by leader.

Table 4 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Total Indirect Correlation effects p</th>
<th>error effects t</th>
<th>effects i</th>
<th>r</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in school: $R^2 = .47$ $(d = .73)$</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>-0.30</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School profile</td>
<td>-0.51</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.54</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>-0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active involvement</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributed leadership</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational learning</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ work</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with school: $R^2 = .80$ $(d = .45)$</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SES</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School profile -- -.18 -.18 -.03
Leader -- .20 .20 .27
Distributed leadership -- .09 .09 .08
Organizational learning -- .24 .24 .25
Teachers’ work .77 .03 .07 .10 .87
Participation .25 .05 .25 -- .53

Note

knStd refers to the jackknife standard error of the direct effects path coefficient. d is the residual standard error. SES = socioeconomic status. Dashes indicate no effect.

The best estimate of the proportion of variance of organizational learning accounted for by school leadership in this model can be calculated by multiplying the path coefficient of the direct effect of leadership on organizational learning by their correlation. The total leadership in this model consists of leader and distributed leadership. The proportion of variance of organizational learning accounted for by leader is 25% (.30 × .84) and by distributed leadership is 28% (.36 × .78). The total proportion of variance of organizational learning accounted for by the total leadership in schools in this model is 53%.

The combined effect of variables in this model explained 80% of the variance of engagement. This means that the final model as
accounts for 80% of the variation in engagement that occurs between the 96 schools in this sample. The large amount of variance explained and the stability of the outcome measure reflected by the high $Q^2 (.79)$ indicates a well-defined and stable model. Also, this model explains nearly half of the variance in participation, 47%.

The size of the loadings and variance explained are measures of the strength and validity of the items and scales used in this model. Because these are high, the scales and items are serving a meaningful purpose in this model, and we can have confidence in their validity (Kaplan, 1997). Discussion

In this study, organizational learning has been defined in terms of four categories of school characteristics. These categories have been identified and defined (see Table 1) through an empirical investigation of the nature of organizational learning in Australian secondary schools. Organizational learning is promoted in schools in which staff communicate with each other in an open and supportive way and actively seek information to improve their work. In these schools, leaders ensure that structures and systems support and reward initiative and experimentation. Teachers are active participants in all aspects of school
functioning such as school policy formulation, review of current practices,
establishing future directions, and sharing information with parents and the
community. Organizational learning is more likely to occur in schools where
staff are looking out for opportunities to increase knowledge and improve skills
and are provided with sufficient resources and time to develop professionally.
Transformational leadership practices have been recognized for some time as
playing a key role in enhancing school processes (Beare, Caldwell, & Millikan,
1989; Leithwood, 1994; Silins, 1992, 1994). In our study, principals’ transfor
mational practices, directly or indirectly, influenced every school and outcome
variable except students’ participation in school. These results continue to
support the crucial role of principals in restructuring schools and their role in
promoting organizational learning.

Three aspects of school leadership were addressed in relation to organiza
tional learning. These were the principal’s leadership practices, described in STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE
terms of transformational leadership behaviors; the leadership team’s behavior
in terms of visibility, approachability, and extent of involvement in the core
work of the school; and the extent to which leadership in
the school emanated from a variety of levels and sources including students and the community. The school as a learning organization is defined by the level and quality of leadership that characterizes the everyday work of the school. This organizational leadership represents the total leadership that can be discerned in a school’s function at any one time. It was hypothesized that the level of total leadership is positively related to the level of organizational learning in a school and that through the involvement of teachers in the school and through their instructional work, organizational leadership and learning effects will affect students in the school. Pounder, Ogawa, and Adams (1995) made these interrelationships explicit. “Leadership affects school performance by shaping the organization of work, developing solidarity among organizational members, managing schools’ relations with their external environments, and building members’ commitment to their schools” (p. 567).

The final path model (see Figure 1) graphically displays the relationship between leadership and organizational learning and their impact on secondary students’ participation in and engagement with school. Clearly, the level of leadership and the level of organizational learning in
secondary schools are strongly interrelated. The level of leadership operating throughout any one school, and its community, is a strong predictor of the level of organizational learning generated in the school. Once the conditions for organizational learning begin to be established in a school, a positive and reciprocal effect of organizational learning on leadership as well as leadership on organizational learning is likely to emerge. Such a developmental approach is likely to help overcome the difficulties noted by others (Lortie, 1975; Martin & Willower, 1981) regarding school organization and the work of teachers and principals being such that there is little time to focus on collaboration, teamwork, and reflection.

This study has demonstrated that the influence of leadership on organizational learning has two important dimensions that provide insights into the nature of the conditions that foster organizational learning: the leadership behaviors of the principal and the leadership team in the school as well as the extent to which leadership is distributed throughout the whole teaching staff. Although our results indicated a strong indirect influence of the leadership practices of the principal on the extent of distributed leadership in the school, there was no direct
effect of the principal’s approach to leadership on distributed leadership. This supported our interpretation that there are two separate and distinguishable characteristics of schools as organizations that need to be developed and nurtured with resources and professional development support. The principal’s transformational behavior, together with the leadership team’s positive presence and involvement in the core work of the school, will encourage leadership to emerge from an increasing range of sources in the school and community.

Although as much as 43% of the variance of distributed leadership is explained by these administrative leadership variables, other influences must operate such as the leadership capacities of staff and the kind of systems and structures that exist in the school to support and enable staff to apply their leadership capacities to the school’s benefit.

Our study examined the influence of school-level factors on school performance measured in terms of students’ participation in and engagement with school. The level of organizational learning affected teachers’ work with students in their classrooms. Organizational learning and the instructional work of the teachers mediated the school effects on student outcomes. All the leadership
factors were indirect predictors of the work of teachers in the classroom, mediated by the same conditions defining organizational learning. Furthermore, the principal and the leadership team influenced students’ engagement with school significantly, indirectly, and importantly through teachers’ instructional work. This indirect effect of leadership on school outcomes has been well supported by other studies (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1998; Silins, 1992; Silins & Murray-Harvey, 1999). Our results indicate that the instructional work of teachers, together with organizational learning, is a significant mediator of leadership effects on student outcomes.

Studies that do not include measures of teachers’ instructional work as mediators of leadership effects on student engagement may not uncover the full effect of school leadership on student outcomes. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) argued that student engagement (a broader measure of student outcomes than academic achievement) might be more susceptible to influence by those outside the classroom. They were doubly disappointed not to find stronger effects of principals’ leadership mediated by school conditions other than teachers’ instructional work on student engagement. Our results confirm the pivotal role of teachers in any
restructuring initiative that aims to affect the development of the students.

Teachers’ perceptions of the nature of principals’ leadership as well as administrative teams’ leadership were critical to promoting organizational learning and more student-centered classroom instruction. The influence of these two dimensions extended to students’ engagement with school but not to student participation. The strongest predictor of students’ participation in extracurricular activities, school decision making, and setting students’ own learning goals was the area and size of school. The smaller metropolitan schools and the country schools were more likely to involve their students in these activities. However, once we control for size, students’ perceptions of the way in which teachers’ work in the classroom were a major influence on students’ participation in school.

The direct influence of SES on students’ engagement with school indicated that students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds tended to be among the students who established positive relationships with their teachers, identified with their school, and saw schoolwork as useful to their future life. However, the overwhelming influence of teachers on students’ engagement indicated that although students’ family backgrounds advantage some students, their
perceptions of the work that
teachers do with them provides their greatest opportunities
for school success. STRATEGY, MARKETING, CHANGE AND CULTURE

Finn (1989) hypothesized that active participation and the
successful experi-
ences that participation can bring result in student
engagement. Active participa-
tion in school appears to be the minimum requirement for
school achievement
(Finn, 1993). However, the relationship between
participation in school and
engagement with school is not at all clear. Neumann (1989)
had indicated that
the factors that lead a student to identify emotionally
with school are not well
understood. Finn (1993), in a large study of eighth-grade
students, found there
was a low correlation between participation and engagement. Our findings show
a moderate correlation but indicate strongly that teachers’
interactions with stu-
dents in the classroom have the more important in uence on
students’ engage-
ment with school. There is evidence to suggest that
nonachievement outcomes
such as participation in and engagement with school can be
important factors in
student success, academic and social, at all levels of
schooling (Finn, 1993; Finn

The in uence of distributed leadership did not extend to
either of the student
outcomes (engagement or participation). Whether all staff had the opportunity to
exert leadership in the school was not a predictor of students’ participation in or
engagement with school. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999) also found no signi cant
effects of teacher leadership on student engagement. It is possible to argue that
distribution of leadership across all levels of the school may operate to capture
teachers’ attention away from their core work of teaching and learning to
become more involved in wider school issues. Perhaps beyond some optimal
level of distributed leadership required for maximizing organizational learning,
diminishing returns set in for the school in terms of teacher influence on students. It may be that whereas present constructions of teachers’ work fail to
integrate school-level with student-level demands, diminishing returns will con
continue to inhibit the goals of restructuring and reform. Contemporary views of
schools, teachers, and teaching limit what schools can achieve, engendering
repeated attempts at reform frustrated by besieged teachers.
Our findings help to focus on the need in restructuring schools to promote learning and engagement for both adults and students. However, to do this in a way that
promotes organizational learning, current school structures will have to be reorga
nized to provide time for the development of knowledge and skills and the acquisi-
tion and examination of information (Fullan, 1995, p. 232). Donahoe (1993); Fullan (1995); Wohlstetter, Smyer, and Mohrman (1994); and Marks et al. (2000) have anticipated the radical reform required in the working conditions of teachers to enable schools to function as learning organizations. Even more fundamental is the need for society to reconstruct what it means to be a teacher. The professionalization of teachers involves a change in the way society as a whole thinks about the role of teachers. Schools cannot become learning organizations if teachers’ work in schools is not associated with opportunities to behave as a member of a learning organization, that is, providing leadership in the school and its community.

Wohlstetter and her collaborators (1994) have supported a view that schools need to work on changes that help them become learning organizations first and organizing and school change SBM schools second. Their work has highlighted the difficulties that schools face when undertaking necessary and inevitable changes within the systems and conditions that exist in schools today. The accumulating evidence indicates that the establishment of SBM alone does not ensure the wide-ranging changes necessary for improved performance. On the other hand,
organizational learning can provide schools with a culture and a way of working that can improve school outcomes for students while restructuring schools.

Conclusion

In this study, we have explored the nature of organizational learning and the processes that promote organizational learning in Australian secondary schools.

Our hypothesis was that the conditions under which overall performance of an organization is positively related to its level of total leadership are the same as the conditions required for organizational learning. We introduced a measure of school performance in the form of student participation in and engagement with school to test this hypothesis. We have found that the conditions for organizational learning are very much the conditions that are associated with the establishment of the three school leadership variables: principal transformational leadership, actively involved administrative teams, and distributed leadership.

Organizational learning is a significant mediator of principal and leadership team effects on teachers’ work and on student outcomes. However, the conditions for the improvement of overall school performance in terms of student outcomes differ in that the distributed leadership dimension is not a significant
contributor to student participation in and engagement with school. We have speculated that distributed leadership within the current schools’ structures and systems may affect teachers as an additional burden, which may stretch teachers to their limits. Reaching such limits makes it imperative that we reconstruct schools and our view of teachers’ work to allow teachers to contribute the full range of leadership learning organizations require.

The evidence is accumulating to suggest that higher performing schools are functioning as learning organizations (Fullan, 1995; Leithwood & Louis, 1998; Marks, Louis, & Printy, 2000; Silins et al., 2000; Silins et al., 1999). Schools that engage in organizational learning enable staff at all levels to learn collaboratively and continuously and put these learnings to use in response to social needs and the demands of their environment. The concept of schools as learning organizations is a promising vision that can make a valuable contribution to guiding the direction of future school change. Note 1 Readers interested in the link between student participation and engagement and student academic achievement are referred to the chapter by Silins and Mulford (in Adams, R. J., & Khoo, S. T. (1993). Quest—The Interactive test analysis system.

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