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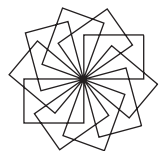
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Editorial Note

The Global Challenges in Primary School Leadership

THIS special edition of the journal focuses on leading primary and elementary schools and brings together the work of scholars from around the world. It is an appropriate focus for this issue since, internationally, this is an important time for primary education now we are a little more than half way through the time period set for the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goal (UN MDG) Number 2, which is to achieve universal primary education by 2015, in order to ensure that children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling (UN, 2008a). The UN Millennium Development Goals Report for 2008 (2008b) notes that there has been sound progress in some MDG areas, even in some of the more challenging regions, and that in all but two regions, primary school enrolment has reached at least 90 per cent. Nonetheless, very serious challenges remain since 113 countries have thus far failed to achieve gender parity in both primary and secondary school enrolment, and only 18 are likely to achieve this goal by 2015 (UN, 2008b: 4).

Even more worryingly, Unicef notes that, despite the rise in school attendance referred to above, if we took a snapshot of the state of education across the globe the image would shock many, since current estimates place the number of out-of-school children at 93 million – more than the entire population of the Philippines. The majority of these children are girls, and almost 80 per cent of them live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Indeed, quality education remains a distant dream for many of the world's children, even though it is a fundamental human right enshrined in international commitments. Thus, while the number of out-of-school children is substantially lower than it was in 2000, quality education still remains elusive for millions (Unicef, 2008).

Western or developed countries do not, of course, tend to face the extreme challenges of many nations in the developing world since they can boast a well-developed educational infrastructure, and virtually all children attend both primary and secondary schools and there is a growing profile of attendance in tertiary education. For these reasons it seems almost churlish to say that school leaders and administrators in the developed world still face significant challenges. Nonetheless, we must note that recent decades have witnessed major changes in curriculum, systems of governance and methods of funding. In particular, the international movement towards local or devolved management has brought challenges that were unthinkable only a generation ago. This has been especially problematic for primary and elementary school leaders since funding per pupil is often significantly lower in primary schools than in secondary schools, and primary and elementary school leaders may well have major teaching commitments to integrate with roles as chief executives of what, in some nations, have effectively become small businesses.

Despite the fact that primary education faces these multi-faceted dilemmas, as noted by

several of the commentators in this edition, research into school leadership has tended to address general issues and we still lack an empirical base for primary leadership studies. This gap in our knowledge has begun to be addressed in recent years, and the contributions offered here are intended to add to that literature.

In the first article in this edition, James P. Spillane, Bijou Hunt and Kaleen Healey, of Northwestern University, USA, address core issues relating to managing and leading elementary schools in terms of both the formal and informal organisation. Using a distributed framework, they examine the work of leading and managing elementary schools attending to both the formal or designed organisation and the informal or lived organisation. They examine how the work of leadership and management is distributed across people, both formally designated leaders and individuals without such designations. Beginning with the leader-plus aspect of a distributed perspective, the paper examines which school actors have formally designated responsibility for leadership and management work and the nature of these responsibilities. They proceed to examine the informal or lived organisation and scrutinise how school staff experience leadership and management on the ground. Focusing on the practice aspect of a distributed perspective, they explore the prevalence of other leaders in the lived experience of the school principal, examining who is leading when the school principal is not and the prevalence of co-performance of leading and managing practice. Attending to variation across elementary schools and types of leadership and management activities, the authors argue that how responsibility for the work is distributed depends on the school and the activity type.

Helen Wildy, of the School of Education, Murdoch University, and Simon Clarke, of the Graduate School of Education, The University of Western Australia, present tales from the outback, where school leaders work in isolated circumstances. The authors present research in Western Australian which aimed to identify in the experiences of novice primary principals challenges for which improved preparation is required. Their research highlights the impact of context on principals' work and the need for aspirants to develop deep insights into how the distinctiveness of contexts influences what principals can, and must, do. Wildy and Clarke argue that principal preparation needs to incorporate knowledge about social, economic, political and geographic features of school settings, how communities operate and how principals can work effectively with community partners. The article focuses on challenges encountered by novice principals in remote communities where the principal's ability to be sensitive to contextual circumstances is fundamental to maintaining diversity. The authors argue that principals are challenged by these exotic settings as much as by the distance, the desert and the difference, for all of which they are ill prepared.

Allan Walker and Cheng Yin Cheong of The Chinese University of Hong Kong examine leading international primary schools and seek an agenda for building understanding. The authors note that the number of international primary schools around the world is growing at a remarkable rate and that such schools operate across a range of contexts and face issues that simultaneously mirror yet diverge from primary schools within static national boundaries and systems, and from their colonially shaped forebears. Moreover, international primary schools no longer necessarily cater just for an expatriate elite but for an increasing number of 'local' students who bring very different values, family expectations, linguistic backgrounds, learning styles and belief structures to the schools. In this way international primary schools display characteristics similar to intercultural primary schools within more

static national systems. However, the success of an international primary school, like any other school, is unavoidably related to how it is led, and the writers correctly point out that research has increasingly focused on school leadership in general, and has been conspicuous by its absence in the international schools arena including primary schools.

Jeffrey Jones, of CfBT Education Trust, and Brian Fidler and Andrew Makori of the University of Reading explore life after first headship in England. This article reports findings emerging from a national study of primary head teachers in their second headship in England which investigated their reasons for moving schools; their choice of second school; and a comparison of their experiences as head teachers of the two schools. The authors note that the number of head teachers choosing to move to a second headship, and their positive experiences, suggest that further stages should be added to the current conceptualisations of the career of the head teacher. The authors suggest that reasons head teachers gave for taking up a second headship were threefold – personal, school-focused and externally driven – and were especially to provide a fresh challenge and to prevent feelings of stagnation. Movement between schools was complex and the clearest overall trend was a move to larger schools. The findings suggest that second headship should be considered as a valuable means of contributing to the continuing development of head teachers. Head teachers should consider a second headship as a possible extension to their headship career. However, it is pointed out that school leaders may need to plan their career before and during their first headship in order to obtain their desired second headship.

Gabriella Torstensson and Mark Brundrett, of Liverpool John Moores University, explore the challenges to primary school leadership of HIV/AIDS in Botswana and point out the inadequacy of school effectiveness models in the context of pandemic. The article focuses on the effects of HIV/AIDS on education in Southern Africa and is based on a study of several countries in the region but in particular on investigation into the situation that obtains in Botswana. They argue that much of the response to the pandemic at both school and system level has been influenced by the dominant Western educational paradigm of School Effectiveness. However, the findings of the multi-level study that underpins the paper are presented at the pupil, classroom and school, and leadership levels and conclusions are drawn about the efficacy of current leadership approaches to AIDS. The paper subsequently problematises some of the conventional wisdom that defines the response to the immense dislocation caused by HIV/AIDS, especially in relation to the ways in which schools should be led and managed, and they conclude by suggesting that more culturally sophisticated, locally defined approaches to school leadership may be required.

In the final article, Kenneth Leithwood and Brenda Beatty – respectively of Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Canada, and Monash University, Australia – ask how successful school leadership improves student learning. They suggest that school leaders live in emotionally ‘hot’ climates since their teaching colleagues bring strong commitments to their work, and most feel passionately about teaching as a ‘calling’, love their students, but hate all the paper work they have to do. They suggest that principals and others in school leadership roles are implicitly discouraged from taking on any consideration of these emotions as a serious part of their work, and that teachers’ emotions are more typically viewed as a troublesome distraction on the path to a cooler set of preferably ‘rational’ considerations. They argue that the emotional ‘ecology’ of schools ought to figure prominently in leaders’ views of how to do their work. In advancing this argument, they are not adding more to the job of school leaders. Rather, they claim that to successfully make and implement these

seemingly rational decisions of necessity depends on leaders' sensitive engagement with the emotional realities of everyone within their organisations, including themselves. They go on to provide a synopsis of research about several sets of teacher emotions that have significant consequences for teaching and learning in schools and which are susceptible to what leaders do; describe how leaders influence teacher emotions indirectly, through teachers' working conditions; and identify leadership practices and abilities with the potential to nurture positive teacher emotions directly.

The items outlined above are deliberately eclectic in nature and articles from a wide range of contexts have been included in order to reflect the international nature of the journal and the breadth of challenges facing primary school leaders. Most of the contributors are senior academics, some with very significant administrative roles in major universities; all are extremely busy people. It is always a pleasure to work with such talented colleagues and I thank them for their efforts to make this a successful edition.

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Managing and Leading Elementary Schools: Attending to the Formal and Informal Organisation¹

James P. Spillane, Bijou Hunt and Kaleen Healey

Abstract: *Using a distributed framework, we examine the work of leading and managing elementary schools attending to both the formal or designed organisation and the informal or lived organisation. Using data from one mid-sized urban school district in the USA, we examine how the work of leadership and management is distributed across people, both formally designated leaders and individuals without such designations. Beginning with the leader-plus aspect of a distributed perspective, the paper examines which school actors have formally designated responsibility for leadership and management work and the nature of these responsibilities. Turning our attention to the informal or lived organisation, we examine how school staff experience leadership and management on the ground. Focusing on the practice aspect of a distributed perspective, we explore the prevalence of other leaders in the lived experience of the school principal, examining who is leading when the school principal is not and the prevalence of co-performance of leading and managing practice. Attending to variation across elementary schools and types of leadership and management activities, we argue that how responsibility for the work is distributed depends on the school and the activity type.*

Introduction

The policy and professional environments of schools have shifted considerably in the last few decades in response to the increasing concerns about student achievement. The standards movement and high stakes accountability in the USA have contributed to foregrounding matters of teaching and learning in debates about schools and their improvement. The press for school principals to lead and manage improvements in instruction has increased from all sectors – policy, professional and public. In addition to the expanding responsibilities of their daily job, school principals face many new challenges in managing and leading instruction with inadequate preparation. Further, scholarship in educational administration has little to report on the actual work of managing and leading instruction.

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In this paper, we take a distributed perspective to examine the work of leading and managing elementary schools, with particular attention to instruction and curriculum. We examine the distribution of responsibility for leadership and management from the perspective of different school staff, including from the perspective of the principal's work day (Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Pareja & Lewis 2008). As an analytical framework for studying the practice of leading and managing schools, a distributed perspective does not negate or undermine the role of the school principal. Further, given that we apply a distributed framework in our empirical work, we begin with the assumption that responsibility for leadership and management is distributed and the critical question is not whether it is distributed but *how* it is distributed.

After outlining the conceptual ideas that informed our work, we describe the research study on which this paper is based. Turning our attention to findings, we begin with the leader-plus aspect of a distributed perspective, examining who has a formally designated leadership position, and their responsibilities. Our analysis suggests either considerable co-performance or parallel performance of leadership and management activities across formally designated positions rather than a neat division of labour. Next, focusing on the lived organisation we examine who actually takes responsibility for leading and managing from the perspective of both the school staff and the school principal's work day. Continuing to focus on the school principal's work day and honing in on the practice aspect of a distributed perspective, we show that practice involving collaborated distribution – the principal co-performing an activity with one or more others – was on average commonplace among the 23 principals in our study, though some principals co-performed hardly at all while others did so extensively. Comparing and contrasting different types of leadership/management activities, we argue that the distribution of responsibility for leading and managing depends on the type of activity. Throughout the paper we pay careful attention to between-school variation.

Conceptual Framework

Our research on school leadership and management is motivated by a consideration for both the formal and informal dimensions of organisations (Homans 1950; Dalton 1959; Blau & Scott 1962; Downs 1967; Meyer & Rowan 1977). Schools, like all organisations, can be thought about along two dimensions – the *formal or designed* organisation and the *informal or lived* organisation (Meyer & Rowan 1977; Brown & Duguid 1991). Both are critical in examining school leadership and management. We use a distributed perspective to frame our research on leadership and management (Spillane 2006; Spillane & Diamond 2007). In framing research on leadership and management, a distributed perspective allows for attention to both the formal and informal organisation and moreover attends to relations between these two dimensions.

The Formal and Informal Organisation

Scholars of organisations are concerned with the regularities in organisational members' behaviour that are due to the social or organisational conditions of their situation as distinct from their individual characteristics (Blau & Scott 1962). Hence, both the normative structure (i.e., shared norms) and relational structure (i.e. patterns of social interaction) are key considerations for organisational theorists.

Scholars have long recognised that organisations have both a formal and informal

dimension. By formal or organisation we mean the organisation as represented in formal accounts of and formal documents (e.g., organisational charts, job descriptions) about how work gets done in schools. The formal organisation is captured in organisational charts and other documents that identify formally designated leadership positions, their responsibilities, committee membership and organisational routines. The formal organisation or the organisation as designed refers to the formal structure as represented in formally designated positions (e.g., principal, assistant principal, mentor teacher, literacy specialist), organisational routines (faculty meetings, grade-level meetings), committee structures (e.g., school leadership team, literacy committee), and so on. The organisation as lived refers to the day-to-day life of the organisation as experienced by school staff. While these two aspects of the organisation are related, they are not mirror images of one another – the designed organisation is not always a good guide to the lived organisation (Brown & Duguid 1991).

The informal or lived organisation refers to how the organisation is experienced from one day to the next by organisational members. It concerns how school leaders and teachers actually work – how work gets done in the schoolhouse rather than how it is formally intended or designed to be carried out.

Researchers have long concluded that the informal organisation is not a mirror image or reflection of the formal organisation (e.g., Homans 1950; Dalton 1959; Downs 1967; Meyer & Rowan 1977; Brown & Duguid 1991); there is a great divide between the two, though recognising the great divide is not tantamount to rejecting a relationship between these two dimensions. As a result, formal organisational arrangements are frequently loosely coupled to what happens in the day-to-day practice on the organisation floor (March & Olsen 1976; Weick 1976; Meyer & Rowan 1977). Formally designated leaders, for example, often don't behave as their job descriptions suggest they should behave, or the chains of command represented in organisational charts don't reflect what actually happens on the ground. It is important to note here that this is not just or simply a matter of intentional subversion of organisational designs or rules; indeed in some respects the formal organisation lends legitimacy to the organisation even if it does not reflect what organisational members actually do (Meyer & Rowan 1977).

Examining leadership and management practice from the perspective of the formal organisation involves focusing on formal accounts of the organisation that are captured in organisational charts, formal job descriptions, and organisational members' own telling of what they do and how the work of the organisation is accomplished. We can use these accounts to understand several aspects of leadership and management practice in schools as designed, including formally designated leadership positions, the duties assigned to these positions, and formal organisational routines.

Still, these formal accounts do not necessarily yield a comprehensive understanding of how the work of leading and managing *actually* gets done in schools; that is how the organisation is experienced or lived by organisational members (Brown & Duguid 1991). Attending to the organisation as lived necessitates consideration of the day-to-day practice of leading and managing the schoolhouse; that is, how school staff actually experience leading and managing practice as it unfolds in their everyday experiences (Orr 1996).

Both the designed organisation and the lived organisation are critical in understanding the practice of leading and managing elementary schools. While the informal or lived organisation gets up close with the practice of leading and managing, the designed organisation is critical because aspects of the designed organisation, such as formally

designated leadership positions and formal organisational routines, more or less structure the practice of leading and managing from one day to the next. Indeed, we contend that we need a conceptual framework that doesn't simply focus on the formal or informal organisation, but that offers a lens for looking at *both* in tandem. Both are critical to understanding the work of leading and managing in the schoolhouse. Indeed, we need a framework that accommodates attention to relations among the formal or designed organisation and the informal or lived organisation – how they work in tandem or in interaction. Aspects of the designed or formal organisation as they become instantiated in practice – the lived organisation – structure the practice of leading and managing – the organisation as lived. Of course, these formal structures are a product of the lived organisation or leading and managing practice (Spillane & Diamond 2007).

A Distributed Framework for School Leadership and Management

A distributed framework not only incorporates both the formal and the informal organisation but it also offers a way of conceptualising or framing *relations* between the organisation as designed and the organisation as lived (Spillane 2006; Spillane & Diamond 2007). A distributed perspective includes two aspects: the leader-plus aspect and the practice aspect.

Leader-plus Aspect

The leader-plus aspect recognises that leading and managing schools can involve multiple individuals, not just those at the top of the organisation or those with formal leadership designations. Those who do the work of leading and managing the school do not reside exclusively in the principal's office or the school organisation chart. School leadership and management potentially involves more than the work of individuals in formal leadership positions – principal, assistant principal and specialists. Individuals who are not formally designated leaders also provide leadership and management in the distributed leadership paradigm.

Various studies have shown that school administrators do not have a monopoly on leadership and management work (Heller & Firestone 1995; Camburn, Rowan & Taylor 2004). Focusing on the designed organisation as represented in formally designated leadership positions, research suggests that in addition to school principals and assistant principals, other formally designated leaders who take responsibility for leadership and management work include subject area specialists, mentor teachers and other professional staff (Camburn et al. 2004).

By casting nets that go beyond the formal or designed organisation, some studies show that individuals with no formal leadership position – mostly classroom teachers – also took responsibility for school leadership and management (Heller & Firestone 1995; Spillane, Diamond & Jita 2003; Spillane 2006). Teachers contributed to an array of leadership functions, including sustaining an instructional vision and informally monitoring programme implementation (Firestone 1989). Prior work suggests that the distribution of responsibility for leading and managing the school differs depending on the leadership function or organisational routine (Heller & Firestone 1995; Camburn, Rowan & Taylor 2004; Spillane 2006; Spillane & Diamond 2007) and the subject matter (Spillane 2005).

The Practice Aspect

The practice aspect of the distributed framework foregrounds the practice of leadership, but frames it in a particular way: it frames leadership *practice* as a product of the interactions of

school leaders and followers, and their situations. Practice takes form in the intersection of these three elements. This latter point is especially important and one that is frequently glossed over in discussions about distributed leadership. Rather than viewing leadership practice through a narrow psychological lens where it is seen as the product of an individual leader's knowledge and skill, the distributed perspective defines leadership practice as taking shape in the interactions among people as mediated by aspects of their situation. Interactions, then, not simply actions, are core in our framing of practice (Spillane, 2006).

We have identified three arrangements by which the work of leadership and management is distributed across people:

- division of labour
- co-performance
- parallel performance (Spillane 2006).

Division of labour refers to situations where a single leadership position (e.g., assistant principal) has responsibility for a particular leadership/management function or activity (e.g., maintaining an orderly school building). Co-performance refers to situations where two or more individuals perform, interdependently, a leadership/management function or routine. Parallel performance refers to situations where people perform the same functions or routine but independently, without any coordination among them.

Through the analysis of situations involving co-performance of leadership and management work, we have identified three types of leadership distribution – collaborated, collective and coordinated (Spillane et al. 2003; Spillane 2006). *Collaborated distribution* characterises practice that is stretched over the work of two or more leaders who work together in place and time to co-perform the same organisational routine or task. *Collective distribution* characterises practice that is stretched over the work of two or more leaders who co-perform a leadership routine by working separately but interdependently. *Coordinated distribution* refers to situations where a leadership routine involves activities that have to be performed in a particular sequence.²

Using a distributed framework, we begin by focusing on the leader-plus aspect, attending to both the formal or designed organisation and the informal or lived organisation. We also attend to the practice aspect by exploring situations that involve co-performance.

Research Design

We draw on data from a mixed-method randomised trial designed to evaluate a leadership development programme in a mid-sized urban school district, enrolling nearly 34,000 K-12 students, which we call Cloverville.³ The randomised trial involved a delayed-treatment design where half of Cloverville's school principals were assigned to participate in the professional development programme with the other half assigned to receive the treatment at a later time. For the purpose of this paper we look at all schools regardless of whether their principal was assigned to the treatment or comparison group. Further, we rely mostly on data collected in spring 2005, prior to the start of the treatment.

²See also Gronn (2000) for a similar though somewhat different categorization.

³Cloverville is a pseudonym.

Data Collection and Instruments

Baseline data were collected from school principals and 2,400 school personnel (including teachers) in 52 schools in a mid-sized urban school district. The sample included elementary, middle, high and special schools. As a mixed-methods study, data collection methods included experience sampling method (ESM) school principal log, end of day (EOD) principal log, a principal questionnaire (PQ), a school staff questionnaire (SSQ), observations of school principals, in-depth interviews with school principals, and school principals' responses to open-ended scenarios.

For this paper, we restrict the analysis to 23 of the 30 elementary schools for which we have both ESM log data and the SSQ data. Of the 17,178 elementary school students, the 23 elementary schools on which we focus our analysis enrolled a total of 13,162 students (see Table 1). The first dataset contained responses from principals that were collected using experience sampling methodology (ESM). The ESM log captures behaviour as it occurs within a natural setting. ESM is a technique in which principals are beeped at random intervals throughout the school day, alerting them to fill out a brief questionnaire programmed on a handheld computer (PDA). Among other things, principals reported on where they were, what they were working on, whether they were leading or co-leading the activity, and with whom they were co-leading – administrators, teacher leaders, specialists, teachers, and so on. If they were not leading the activity, school principals reported on who was leading. Because the principals are prompted to submit this information by random beeps, we can estimate how they spend their time across the six-day sampling period.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics for whole district and elementary schools

	Whole district*	Elementary schools in district [‡]	Elementary schools in analysis [‡]
Total number of students	33,811	16,776	13,162
Average number of students/school	704	559	572
Average student:teacher ratio	14	13	13
Percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch	60	65	60
Percentage minority enrolment	72	71	65

* The one alternative and three special schools are not included in the counts; N=48.

[‡] All elementary schools in the district, including those with and without ESM data; N=30.

[‡] Elementary schools in the district in which principal participated in ESM; N=23.

In this study the principals were beeped fifteen times a day for six consecutive days during spring 2005. Forty-two participating principals provided multiple days of data. For these 42 school principals, the overall response rate to the beeps spread out across the six-day sampling period was 59 per cent.⁴ The response rate among the population of interest in this

⁴This response rate included all principals, regardless of their participation rate.

study – elementary school principals – was slightly higher at 64 per cent.⁵ We also analysed data collected using a school staff questionnaire (SSQ) that was mailed to staff members in all schools. The overall response rate for the SSQ was 87 per cent. Elementary school staff had a slightly higher response rate at 89 per cent. In this survey, school staff indicated the specific leadership roles they fulfill in the school as well as the percentage of their time that is assigned to this role. These data provide us with an estimate of the number of formally designated leaders in each school, along with an estimate of how much time they spend on management and leadership-specific responsibilities. On the SSQ, school staff also identified from whom they sought advice about mathematics and language arts using a social-network-type question.

Data Analysis

For the ESM data, responses from the principal were summed over the six-day period. For each principal, we calculated the proportion of time spent leading and leading alone, and not leading and co-leading with the different types of leaders. This was done by adding up the number of beeps where the principal reported each outcome of interest and dividing by the total number of beeps. To calculate sample-level percentages, we followed the same steps, but summed the ESM data across all principals rather than each principal individually. Pearson's chi-square test of independence was used to assess whether paired observations on two variables were independent of each other. This test for independence is thus testing the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the expected and observed results. Given that we are examining two categorical variables in each chi-square test (leading vs. not leading; administration vs. instruction and curriculum; one subject vs. another), and that expected values do not fall below five, Pearson's chi-square test is an appropriate test for assessing independence among groups. The SSQ data analysis required aggregating the individual responses to the school level in order to calculate school-level percentages and further aggregating responses across all schools to calculate sample-level percentages. In particular, we examine the percentage of staff with formal leadership assignments, calculated as the total number of staff who indicated that they held a leadership/management role divided by the total number of staff that completed the SSQ. We analyse data from social network questions by identifying respondents as being leaders in maths and/or reading based on the reports of their peers, using a measure called in-degree centrality. In social network analysis, in-degree centrality is a measure of the number of ties directed to an actor from other actors. In an advice network, an actor's in-degree indicates the number of people who approach that actor for advice. For purposes of identifying leaders, we make the assumption that any actor who provides advice to three or more others is a leader. We acknowledge that this is an arbitrary cut-off so we also calculated the percentage of ties for which formally designated leaders were responsible.

Research Questions

Attending to the formal and informal organisation and applying a distributed perspective, we take up five research questions:

⁵The elementary school sample includes all elementary school principals, including one principal with an individual-level response rate of just 25 per cent. All other elementary school principals had individual-level response rates of 40 per cent or higher.

- Which individuals have formally designated leadership positions in elementary schools and what are their responsibilities?
- Who actually takes responsibility for leadership and management work?
- To what extent does the practice of leading and managing involve co-performance?
- Do patterns of distribution vary from one school to the next?
- What types of leading and managing work are distributed across people and involve co-performance?

Findings

We examine the extent to which and how responsibility for leadership and management work was distributed in the 23 elementary schools in our study, developing six main assertions. First, we show that multiple formally designated leaders have responsibility for leadership and management, though most are part-time rather than full-time leaders, and many hold multiple positions. Second, we show that the responsibilities of individuals with different formally designated leadership positions often overlap, suggesting considerable co-performance or parallel performance rather than a neat division of labour. Third, turning our attention to the lived organisation, we show that formally designated leaders do not always figure prominently in who actually takes responsibility for leading and managing from the perspective of school staff, with individuals with no leadership designation emerging as key players. Our analysis shows considerable variation across schools in the extent to which the formal or designed organisation matches the informal or lived organisation. Fourth, continuing to focus on the lived organisation, this time from the perspective of the school principal's work day, we show that the actual work of leading and managing involved multiple others, many of them with no formal leadership designation, though we note variation across principals. Fifth, focusing on practice, we show that *co-performance* of leading and managing activities was relatively commonplace in schools, though some principals engaged in co-performance hardly at all while others did so extensively. Sixth, we show that the distribution of responsibility for leadership and management work differs by the type of activity.

The Formal Organisation: Formally Designated Leaders

The formal organisation includes, among other things, formally designated leadership positions and formal organisational routines (e.g., faculty meetings, grade-level meetings, teacher evaluations). We examined one aspect of the formal organisation in this paper – formally designated leadership positions. An analysis of the data from the school staff questionnaire (SSQ) suggests that elementary schools in our sample have an array of formally designated leaders. Overall, 27 per cent (247 of 932 respondents) across the 23 elementary schools reported holding a formally designated leadership position, including assistant principal, mentor teacher, teacher consultant, school reform coach, and so on. Including the school principal, on average, elementary schools in our study had 11.7 formally designated leaders, ranging from 5 to 17 depending on the elementary school (see Table 2 for additional details).

Table 2: Formal leaders per school

	N	Mean per school	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Formally designated leaders	270	11.74	2.88	5	17
Full-time formally designated leaders	106	4.61	1.62	2	8
Full-time formally designated leaders with just one leadership role	50	2.17	1.07	1	4
Ratio of full-time leaders to all other staff	106	0.13	0.04	0.06	0.21

Whereas some of these positions are full time in a single formally designated position, most are part-time positions, and individuals often reported holding multiple formally designated positions. Defining full-time formally designated leaders as those who are not the primary instructor for any class during a typical day and who reported having at least one formally designated position, we found that in Cloverville approximately 34 per cent of formally designated leaders (83 of 247) are full-time leaders. Including the school principal, the average number of full-time leaders per school was 4.6 with 11.1 per cent of the professional staff having a full-time formally designated leadership position (Table 2).

Looking across the 23 elementary schools, we see that the percentage of school staff with a full-time formally designated leadership position ranged from 5 to 17 per cent of the school staff. The ratio of full-time school leader to all other staff then ranged from roughly 1:5 to 1:19.⁶ In other words, while one school had one full-time leader for every 5 staff members, others had one full-time leader for every 19 staff members.⁷ Most schools, however, had a full-time leader–staff ratio of between 1:6 and 1:11. Still, our analysis suggests substantial between-school variation in the number of full-time leaders for each staff member. A simple correlation analysis reveals that this variation is associated with student demographic and achievement characteristics. Schools with higher percentages of students meeting or exceeding standards in reading and maths on the previous year’s state assessment had fewer full-time leaders.⁸ Additionally, schools with greater percentages of black and low-income students had more full-time leaders.⁹ These correlations are sizable and significant, but because we are utilising just one year’s data we are unable to determine the causal mechanism.

The average number of people assigned to a particular formally designated leadership position differed depending on the position. For example, on average there were more master/mentor teacher positions per school (5.78) than either reading coordinator positions (1.30) or mathematics coordinator positions (1.22) (see Table 3). Focusing on full-time

⁶The lowest ratio of full-time leaders to all other staff was 1:4.88 and the highest ratio was 1:19.

⁷All other school staff includes all individuals who responded to the survey but did not indicate that they held a formally designated leadership position.

⁸For reading, Pearson’s $r = -.531$, $p < .001$; for math Pearson’s $r = -.485$, $p < .05$.

⁹For the percentage of Black students, Pearson’s $r = .684$, $p < .001$; for the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch, Pearson’s $r = .577$, $p < .001$.

formally designated leaders, however, we notice that there were on average more full-time master/mentor teachers (1.57), teacher consultants (1.48), whole-school reform coaches (1.39), and assistant principals (1.30) than reading or mathematics coordinators (Table 3).

Table 3: Mean number of formal leaders per school, by role

	Formal leaders	Full-time formal leaders	Percentage of leadership timespent in role	Proportion of full-time formal leaders reporting only leadership role
Assistant principal	1.70	1.30	67.21	0.33
Whole school reform programme coach/facilitator	2.78	1.39	33.85	0.04
Special programme coordinator (e.g., Title I)	2.57	1.00	48.46	0.00
Reading, literacy or English programme coordinator/chair	1.30	0.65	43.75	0.04
Maths programme coordinator/chair	1.22	0.48	34.14	0.00
Other subject area programme coordinator/chair	3.13	0.91	44.65	0.22
School improvement coordinator	2.57	1.13	46.88	0.07
Master/mentor teacher	5.78	1.57	39.50	0.22
Teacher consultant	3.52	1.48	37.15	0.04
Other	2.17	0.74	42.08	0.04

Among the 83 full-time formally designated leaders, almost one third (32.5 per cent) indicated that they were assigned to just one leadership role. Hence, nearly two-thirds of full-time formally designated leaders held multiple leadership positions. Among these full-time leaders indicating multiple leadership roles, the mean number of formally designated leadership roles was 3.4. As we might expect, elementary schools in Cloverville were more likely to have someone full time in the assistant principal position than in any other formally designated position (excluding the school principal), with 33 per cent of full-time formal leaders reporting Assistant Principal as their sole leadership role. Mentor teachers are also more likely to be full time, comprising 22 per cent of the full-time leaders with just one role. In contrast, just 4 per cent of full-time leaders with just one role are reading coordinators, another 4 per cent are whole-school reform coaches, and none are math coordinators or special programme coordinators (see Table 3).

Formally Designated Leaders' Responsibilities

Another aspect of the formal organisation concerns the responsibilities attached to formally designated leadership positions as reported by individuals who hold these positions. Examining the responsibilities that formal leaders report performing, we find evidence of responsibilities overlapping positions. Rather than a neat division of labour for leadership and management work, we find that leaders in different positions report various responsibilities with considerable overlap among positions. Figure 1 displays the mean

number of leaders in a school performing each activity at least a few times per month. On average, 6.8 leaders per school shared information or advice about classroom practices with teachers as part of their formally designated leadership position, and 6.2 leaders per school indicated that they examined and discussed student work with teachers. These activities were also the most likely to be co-performed or parallel performed, as 100 per cent of schools had multiple formal leaders sharing advice about classroom practices with teachers, and 95.7 per cent (22 of 23) of schools had multiple formal leaders examining and discussing student work with teachers. In contrast, on average just 1.8 leaders per school indicated that they evaluated teachers on criteria related to the school's improvement plans as part of their leadership position, and fewer than half of the schools (43.5 per cent) had more than one formal leader performing this task. Our survey data does not allow us to tease out whether these overlapping responsibilities involved co-performance or parallel performance. As might be expected, our analysis suggests that some activities (e.g., evaluating teachers) are more likely to involve a clear division of labour than others.

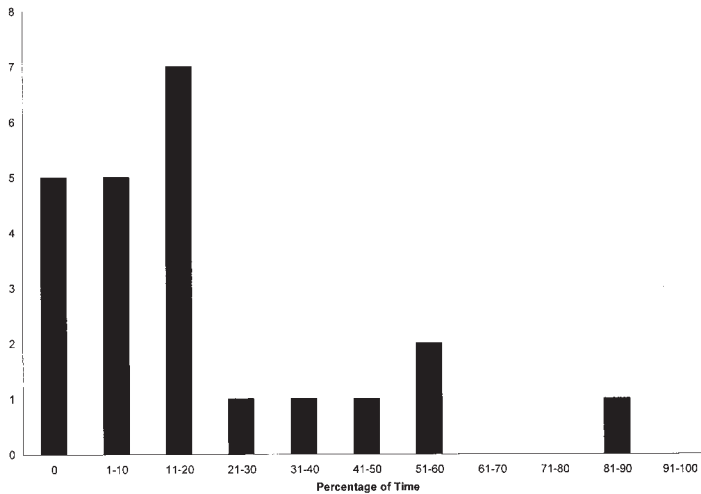


Figure 1: Mean number of formal leaders per school (excluding the principal) performing leadership activities (n=23).

Overall, these data support earlier research that shows responsibility for school leadership and management is distributed across multiple people holding different formally designated leadership positions. In addition to the school principal, other full-time and part-time leaders report responsibility for managing and leading Cloverville's elementary schools. Further, our analysis suggests that rather than a neat division of labour there is considerable overlap in responsibilities across different formally designated leadership positions though there is some variation here depending on the type of activity.

The Lived Organisation: Who Takes Responsibility?

The designed organisation is not always a good roadmap to the informal or lived organisation. Individuals who have formal leadership designations may not engage in the

work of leading and managing. Further, school staff with no formally designated leadership position may work on managing and leading the school. Hence, relying exclusively on formally designated leaders' reports has limitations (Spillane et al. 2008). To understand school leadership and management we have to tap into the informal organisation as well as examine its relations to the formal organisation.

Confining our focus to leading and managing instruction in mathematics and language arts, the two subjects that consume the bulk of the elementary school curriculum, we get a sense of how school staff experience leadership and management. Across the 23 schools, the mean number of leaders was 3.7 for languages arts and 3.1 for mathematics. There was tremendous variation between schools ranging from 1 to 11 leaders for language arts and from 0 to 12 leaders for mathematics. On average, 8 per cent of school staff were identified as key advice-givers in language arts and 7 per cent as key advice-givers in mathematics. The percentage of staff identified as leaders ranged from 0 to 17 per cent of the school staff in mathematics and from 3 to 16 per cent in language arts, depending on the school.

Of those individuals identified by school staff as the key advice-givers in either language arts or mathematics, 45 per cent had a formally designated leadership position whereas 55 per cent held no such position. In other words, roughly half of the key advice-givers for language arts or mathematics had no formal leadership designation. On average, schools had 2.0 informal leaders for language arts and 1.7 for mathematics, but this ranged from 0 in several schools to 10 in another (for language arts; for maths the maximum was 9) (see Table 4). More striking is that only 43 per cent of the language arts coordinators and 36 per cent of the mathematics coordinators in our sample were identified by school staff as key advice-givers for mathematics (see Table 5).

Table 4: Informal leaders per school

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Informal leaders	0	14	3.0	3.1
Informal maths leaders	0	9	1.7	2.1
Informal language arts leaders	0	10	2.0	2.2

Table 5: Presence of formally designated leaders in language arts and maths networks

	N	Language arts leaders		Maths leaders	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Principal	23	1	4	1	4
Assistant principal	39	5	13	5	13
Whole-school reform programme coach/facilitator	64	10	16	10	16
Special programme coordinator (e.g., Title I)	59	8	14	6	10
Reading, literacy or English programme coordinator/chair	30	13	43	2	7

Maths programme coordinator/ chair	28	3	11	10	36
Other subject area programme coordinator/chair	72	4	6	6	8
School improvement coordinator	59	8	14	8	14
Master/mentor teacher	133	25	19	20	15
Teacher consultant	81	9	11	10	12
Other	50	8	16	6	12

One issue here concerns the alignment or match between the formal and informal organisation, what we term the formal–informal organisational congruence. Our analysis above suggests that the formal and informal were not closely aligned, with formally designated subject area leaders not figuring as prominently as one might expect in the advice networks for these school subjects.

To further explore the match between the formal and informal, we investigated the proportion of advice-seeking relationships for which formally designated leaders had responsibility. Our analysis suggests considerable variation across schools, with formally designated leaders figuring much more prominently in some schools than others in the advice network as experienced by school staff. Across the 23 schools, formally designated leaders account for between 6 per cent and 90 per cent of mathematics advice relations and from 3 per cent and 90 per cent of language arts advice relationships (see Figures 2 and 3). Hence, while formally designated leaders were responsible for very few of the advice giving interactions about language arts in one school, they were responsible for 90 per cent of these interactions at another school. In this latter school the formal and informal organisation are more closely aligned or there is formal–informal congruence, at least with respect to language arts instruction.

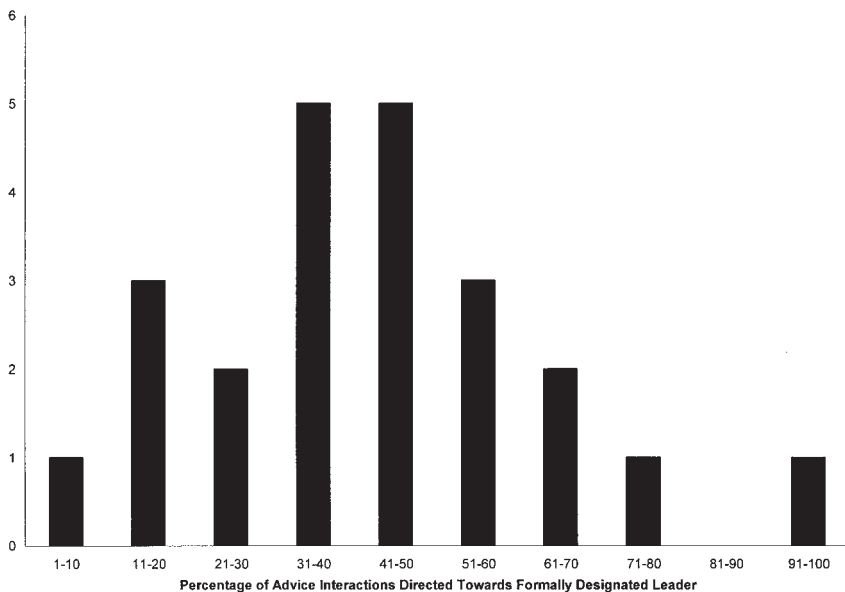


Figure 2: Frequency distribution of percentage of mathematics advice interactions directed towards formally designated leaders (n=23)

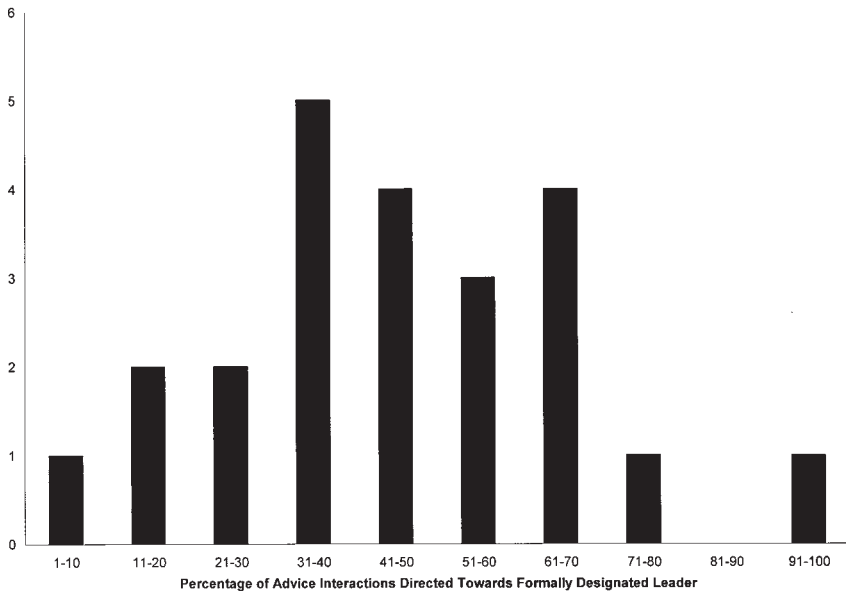


Figure 3: Frequency distribution of percentage of language arts advice interactions directed towards formally designated leaders (n=23)

The Lived Organisation: The School Principal's Work Day

We get another take on the informal or lived organisation from an examination of the school principal's work day. Analysing data from the ESM log completed by the principals of the 23 elementary schools over six days in spring 2005, we get a sense of how responsibility for leadership and management work is distributed across people in the school principal's work day. Considering that, on average, Cloverville's elementary schools have 3.6 full-time leaders in addition to the school principal, this sample provides only one take on the practice of leading and managing. Still, the literature suggests that the school principal is a key actor and therefore by examining how school principals spend their time we can get a sense of how the work of leading and managing is distributed across people.

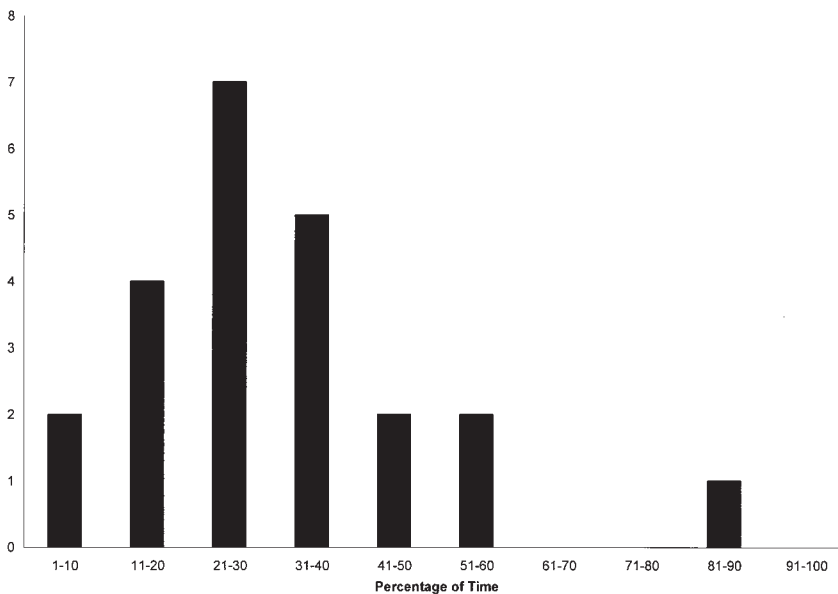
Cloverville's elementary principals reported that they were leading 71 per cent of the activities they were participating in when beeped at random (see Table 6). Thus, for over one-quarter of their work day, school principals were participating in an activity where someone else was taking responsibility. As we will discuss below, this differed depending on the activity with school principals more likely to be leading administration-type activities (79 per cent) than to be leading instruction and curriculum-related activities (58 per cent) (see Table 6). Hence, even when viewed exclusively from the school principal's practice, other individuals emerge as important actors in the work of managing and leading the school.

Table 6: Percentage of activities not led, led, led alone and co-led* by principals

	% Not leading	% Leading	% Leading alone	% Co-Activity leading
Any activity	29	71	52	48
Administration	21	79	55	45
Instruction and curriculum	42	58	44	56

* Note that the percentage of activities led alone and co-led is calculated as a percentage of the time the principal reports leading an activity.

As we might expect, there was considerable variation between elementary schools in the percentage of activities the principal was not leading (see Figure 4a). Excluding one outlier, while some principals reported that someone else was leading over 50 per cent of the activities they participated in, others reported that someone else was leading only 10 per cent of the activities, and the modal category was 20–30 per cent (Figure 4a).

**Figure 4a:** Frequency distribution of percentage of principals' activities led by someone else (n=23)

When these school principals reported not leading the activity, the individuals they identified as leaders included classroom teachers (with no formal leadership designation), other professional staff, subject area specialists, teacher leaders, and assistant principals, among others (see Table 7). Our analysis of how elementary school principals spend their day suggests that the actual work of leading and managing involved multiple others, many of them with no formal leadership designation. Indeed, individuals with no formal leadership designation led over one-quarter of all the activities that school principals reported participating in but not leading (Table 7).

These data suggest that when leadership and management are examined from the perspective of the lived organisation as experienced through the school principal's work day, other formally designated leaders and individuals without such designations take responsibility for the work.

Table 7: Percentage of activities led by someone other than the principal and co-led with principal

Leader	%
Classroom teacher	26.0
Other professional staff	25.0
Other	18.0
Subject area specialist	17.0
Teacher leader	14.0
Non-teaching staff	11.0
Assistant principal	11.0
District staff	5.0
Parent	5.0
Student	4.0
Community member	0.1
<hr/>	
Co-leader	
<hr/>	
Co-leading with any co-leader	48
Classroom teacher	32
Teacher leader	25
Other professional staff	23
Non-teaching staff	18
Assistant principal	16
Student	15
Subject area specialist	9
Parent	7
Other	4
District staff	4
Community member	3%
Co-leading with one person	61%
Co-leading with two or more people	39%

Co-Performance in the Principal's Work Day: Collaborated Distribution

Focusing in on the practice aspect, we examined situations where school principals reported co-performing a leadership or management activity with one (or more) others in the same place and at the same time.¹⁰ When elementary school principals reported leading the

¹⁰We draw a distinction here between individuals who were present and co-leading with the school principal and individuals who were present but not co-leading the activity. School principals reported on both types of individuals.

¹¹School principals could identify more than one type of co-leader for any one activity depending on who was co-performing with them. Hence, the numbers in Table 7 add up to more than 100 per cent

activity they were participating in, they were not always going it alone. Overall, school principals reported co-leading almost half (48 per cent) of the activities they were leading (see Table 7). Principals reported co-leading 61 per cent of their activities with just one other individual, while they reported co-leading 39 per cent of activities with two or more individuals. When school principals in Cloverville reported they were co-leading an activity, they identified classroom teachers most frequently as their co-leaders (see Table 7).¹¹ Specifically, school principals identified classroom teachers among their co-leaders for over 30 per cent of the activities involving co-performance. Indeed, actors with no formal leadership designations including students, parents, and classroom teachers figure rather prominently in co-performing leadership and management activities with the school principal. For over 50 per cent of all co-leading situations, school principals identified at least one of the following as their co-performers: students, parents and/or teachers. Again, this analysis underscores the importance of going beyond the designed or formal organisation to take into account how the practice of leading and managing is stretched over formal and informal leaders. Others identified by school principals as co-performing with them included teacher leaders, assistant principals and subject area specialists (see Table 7).

As one might expect, the prevalence of co-performance of leadership and management activities differed by school. The solo performance of leadership and management activities by the school principal was more prevalent in some schools than others. One principal reported co-performing between 81 and 90 per cent of activities, while two others reported co-performing between 71 and 80 per cent of their activities (see Figure 4b). In contrast, a principal reported co-performing less than 10 per cent of activities whereas two other principals reported co-performing between 11 and 20 per cent of their activities. The modal category, as well as the median, was 51–60 per cent, suggesting that half of the principals co-performed over 50 per cent of the leadership and management activities they engaged in (Figure 4b).

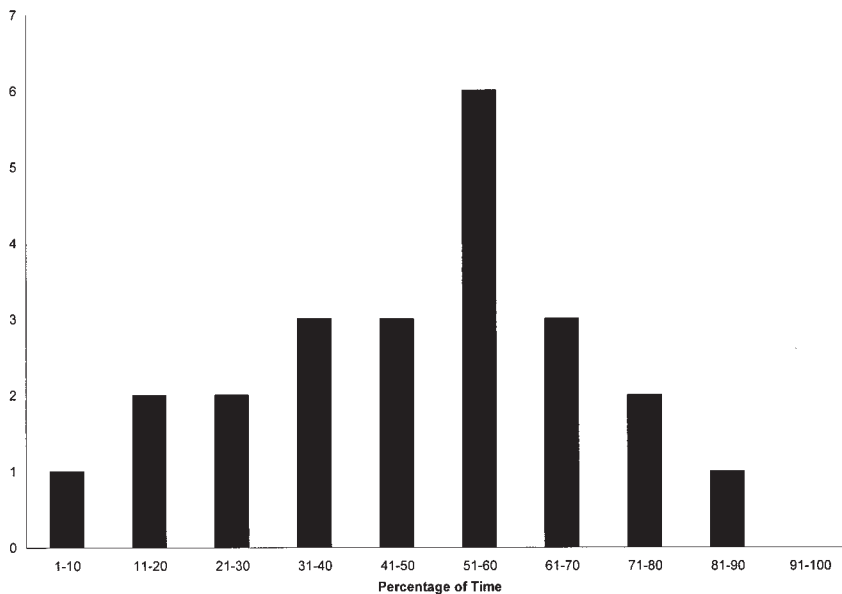


Figure 4b: Frequency distribution of percentage of principals' activities co-led with someone else (n=23)

There was also variation between the 23 elementary school principals with respect to whom they identified as co-performers. For example, two principals did not report co-leading any activities with a regular classroom teacher, and the range among those principals who co-led with regular classroom teachers was anywhere from 11–20 per cent to 71–80 per cent of the activities (see Figure 5a). Similarly, five principals did not report co-leading any activities with an Assistant Principal (AP), and the range among those principals who co-led with an AP was anywhere from 1–10 per cent to 81–90 per cent of the activities (see Figure 5b). Similar variation is observed with respect to other types of co-leaders (e.g., subject specialists, teacher leaders).

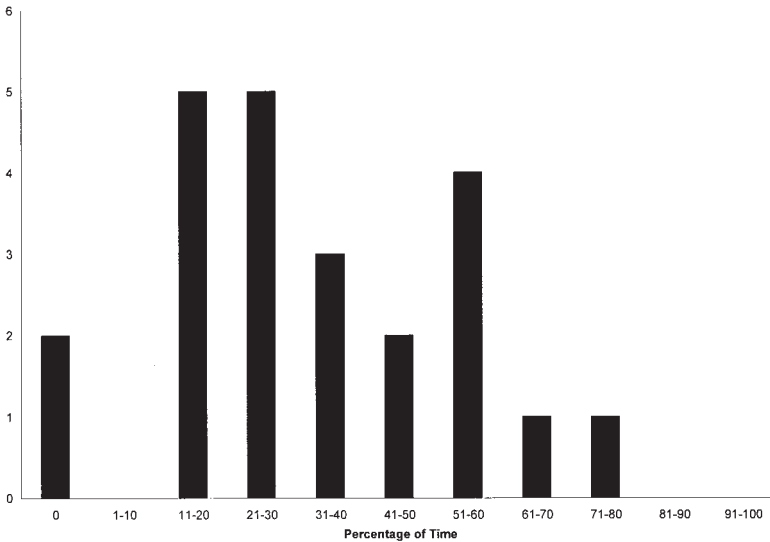


Figure 5a: Frequency distribution of percentage of principals' activities co-led with a regular classroom teacher (n=23)

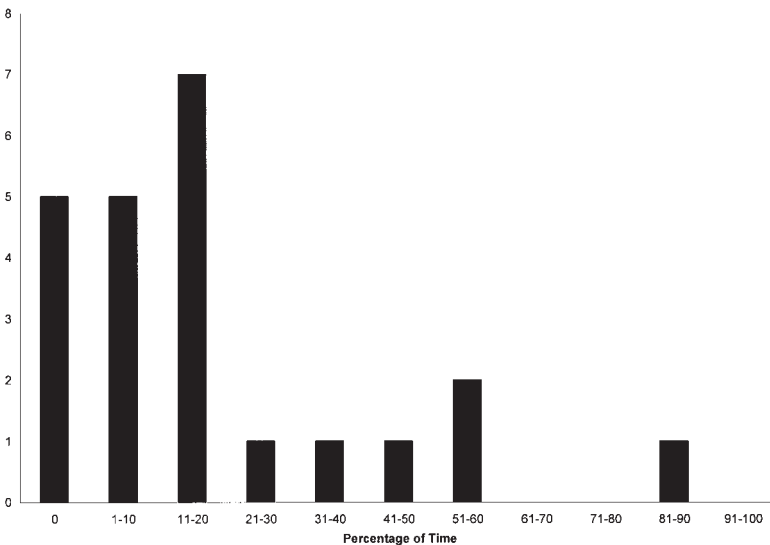


Figure 5b: Frequency distribution of percentage of principals' activities co-led with assistant principal (n=23)

Even when Cloverville's principals reported leading the activity they were participating in, they frequently reported co-leading that activity with someone else. Still, there was considerable variation between principals in the prevalence of co-leading and with whom they co-led, suggesting that how the practice of leading and managing is stretched over people differs by school.

Activity Type and Responsibility for Leading and Managing

As discussed earlier in the paper, prior research suggests that *how* leadership and management work is distributed depends on the type of activity. While our earlier analysis of formally designated leaders' responsibilities by position suggests considerable overlap, we did find some variation depending on the type of activity or responsibility. For example, on average roughly two formally designated leaders (usually assistant principals) reported having responsibility for evaluating teachers, whereas on average almost four formal leaders reported modelling instructional practices (see Figure 1). When examined from the perspective of the designed organisation, some leadership and management activities were more likely to involve more formally designated leaders than others.

Turning our attention to practice through the lived experience of the principal, in this section we examine relations between the type of leadership and management activity and *how* the practice was stretched over people. We focus on two types of activities that made up the bulk of school principals' days – administrative-type activities and instruction and curriculum-type activities.¹² The 23 elementary school principals reported leading significantly more of the administration-related activities (79 per cent) they participated in than instruction and curriculum-related activities (58 per cent) ($p < 0.001$) (see Table 6).

Overall, the 23 school principals reported co-performing or co-leading nearly half (48 per cent) of the activities *they reported leading*. However, Cloverville's school principals were more likely to report co-performing some types of activities than others. Overall, Cloverville's elementary school principals reported co-performing 45 per cent of administration-type activities while co-performing 56 per cent of instruction and curriculum-type activities ($p < 0.05$) (Table 6).

These differences in how leadership and management practice was stretched over the school principal and other leaders depending on the activity type become even more pronounced when we consider between-school variance. First, while principals reported leading anywhere from 50 per cent to 100 per cent of administration-related activities, they reported leading from 0 to 100 per cent of instruction and curriculum-related activities. In other words, the between-school variance for leading instruction and curriculum-related activities was twice that for leading administration-related activities. Second, there is also slightly more between-school variation in school principals' reports of co-leading for instruction and curriculum-related activities than there is for administration-related activities. Specifically, principals reported co-leading anywhere from 1 to 80 per cent of administration-related activities, while they reported co-leading from 0 to 100 per cent of instruction and curriculum-related activities.

¹²Respondents chose from a total of four types of activities. Administration activities accounted for 68 per cent of all activities; Instruction & Curriculum activities accounted for 20 per cent of all activities; and Professional Growth and Fostering Relationships accounted for 6 per cent and 7 per cent of all activities, respectively.

Finally, the individual with whom the principal co-performed also varied by activity type. While the percentage of activities co-led with a regular classroom teacher did not differ much for administration compared with instruction and curriculum, we do note that principals co-led more administration-type activities (30 per cent) with other professional staff than instruction and curriculum-type activities (9 per cent) ($p < 0.01$) (see Table 8). Principals co-led more instruction and curriculum-type activities (30 per cent) with a teacher leader than administration-type activities (21 per cent) ($p < 0.10$) (Table 8). Variability between schools in the actors with whom school principals co-performed leadership and management activities also differed depending on activity types.

Table 8: Percentage of activities principals co-led by co-leader and activity type

Co-leader	Administration % (n=300)	Instruction and curriculum % (n=80)
Co-leading with any co-leader	45	56
Classroom teacher	33	34
Other professional staff	30	9
Teacher leader	21	30
Non-teaching staff	20	18
Assistant principal	16	18
Student	16	9
Subject area specialist	10	10
Parent	6	3
District staff	5	4
Other	4	3
Community member	2	3

Focusing in on instruction and curriculum activities, there was also considerable variation by activity type. For example, school principals reported leading 85 per cent of the 'review student work' activities they participated in but only leading 54 per cent of the 'plan curricula' activities ($p < 0.10$) (see Table 9). School principals were much more likely to be co-performing with someone else during activities such as 'discuss teaching/curricula' compared with activities such as 'observing classroom instruction' or 'reviewing student work' ($p < 0.01$) (Table 9).

Table 9: Percentage of instruction and curriculum tasks principals did not lead, led, led alone and co-led

Task	% Not leading	% Leading	% Leading alone	% Co-leading
Review student classroom work	15	85	55	45
Review data	17	83	47	53
Standardised testing	20	80	50	50
Discuss teaching/curricula	23	77	13	87

Review lesson plans	25	75	100	0
Review instruction materials	27	73	36	64
Provide student instruction	31	69	0	100
Plan curricula	46	54	57	43
Model a lesson	50	50	0	100
Plan/implement professional development	50	50	33	67
Other	53	47	100	0
Observe classroom instruction	69	31	76	24

How leadership and management practice for instruction and curriculum-related activities was distributed also differed depending on the school subject. Elementary school principals led more instruction and curriculum activities that had to do with language arts (61 per cent) than those related to mathematics (48 per cent) (not statistically significantly different) (see Table 10). School principals co-performed more activities related to mathematics (60 per cent) compared with activities related to language arts (48 per cent), though this difference was not statistically significant. The only subject-area difference that was statistically significant was language arts compared with 'Not subject specific' ($p < 0.10$).

Table 10: Percentage of activities principals did not lead, led, led alone, and co-led by subject

Subject	% Not leading	% Leading	% Leading alone	% Co-leading
Math	52	48	40	60
Language arts	39	61	52	48
Not subject specific	39	61	30	70
Other subject*	42	58	46	54

* Other subject includes science, social studies, special education, other subject, and multiple subjects.

Our analyses suggest that the type of leadership and management activity is an important consideration in examining how the practice of leading and managing is stretched over school leaders. Leading and managing a school involves diverse administration-related activities such as budgeting, student discipline, and building maintenance, as well as instruction and curriculum-related activities including monitoring instruction and teacher development. The type of leadership and management activity appears to be an important variable in understanding the way in which the work of leading and managing is distributed over school leaders.

Discussion and Conclusion

Taking a distributed perspective and attending to the formal and informal organisation, we examined how the work of leading and managing the elementary schoolhouse is distributed across people. Our analysis contributes to the knowledge base on elementary school leadership and management in at least two ways. First, this paper gives a sense of how responsibility for leadership and management work, albeit based on data from a single school district, is distributed in elementary schools documenting considerable variation

between schools. Second, the work reported (along with other ongoing work we are engaged in) helps advance theorising and methodological work with respect to how leadership is distributed – stretched over people – in schools.

With respect to substantive findings, overall, our analyses of data from 23 urban elementary schools support a number of working hypotheses or assertions. The work of managing and leading the schoolhouse is distributed over multiple school staff; some formally designated leaders, others informal leaders. Schools in the study had 10.7 formally designated leaders in addition to the principal, some who are full-time, most of whom are part-time. Looking at the lived organisation, we found that responsibility for leading and managing was also distributed over actors with no formal leadership designations, though the extent to which it was varied tremendously from one school to the next. Moreover, some formally designated leaders featured less prominently in the lived organisation than one might expect considering their formal designations. Hence, in some schools the formal or the designed organisation was not a good roadmap to how leadership and management happened in practice – in the lived organisation as experienced by school staff. While we found that the formal and informal organisation with respect to language arts and mathematics was relatively well aligned in some schools, it was weakly aligned in others.

Focusing in on the practice aspect more closely through an examination of the school principal's work day, we found that overall co-performance made up nearly half of the activities they reported leading, though we found much variation between schools. The extent to which the work of leading and managing the schoolhouse was distributed across two or more actors, however, differed depending on the type of leadership and management activity. Actors with formal leadership designations as well as actors with no formal leadership designations take responsibility for school leadership and management.

With respect to theoretical and methodological work, this paper identifies at least two important dimensions in which the distribution of responsibility for school leadership and management differs between schools. We have maintained that efforts to examine whether different patterns of distribution might be associated with (perhaps predictive of) instructional improvement and student achievement first necessitate careful descriptive work that identifies dimensions in which responsibility for leadership and management is arranged in schools. Efforts to establish causal links have to be grounded in theoretically sophisticated and empirically solid understandings of how the work of leading and managing is arranged in schools. In this paper, we offer two potentially important dimensions in which the work of leading and managing differs across schools; leader–staff ratio, and the match or congruence between the formal–informal organisation. We suggest that these two dimensions may be important 'measures' (leader–staff ratio and the formal–informal congruence) of how leadership and management is distributed in schools and we are currently examining relations between these (and other measures) and critical school outcomes.

As we noted at the outset, taking a distributed perspective to frame investigations of school leadership and management is not about establishing whether leadership and management work is distributed or not. Rather, using a distributed framework involves investigating *how* the work of leading and managing is distributed, identifying key dimensions in which schools differ (or in which the same school differs over time) in order to identify different arrangements or configurations by which the work is accomplished. Further, it also involves attending to how these arrangements are sensitive to the particular leadership and management activity.

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Tales from the Outback: Leading in Isolated Circumstances

Helen Wildy and Simon Clarke

Abstract: *In this paper, we present Western Australian research aimed to identify in the experiences of novice primary principals challenges for which improved preparation is required. Our research highlights the impact of context on principals' work and the need for aspirants to develop deep insights into how the distinctiveness of contexts influences what principals can, and must, do. We argue that principal preparation needs to incorporate knowledge about social, economic, political and geographic features of school settings, how communities operate and how principals can work effectively with community partners. We focus on challenges encountered by novice principals in remote communities where the principal's ability to be sensitive to contextual circumstances is fundamental to maintaining diversity. Principals are challenged by these exotic settings as much as by the distance, the desert, the difference, for all of which they are ill-prepared.*

Introduction

Australia is a uniquely diverse society. Its population has been determined by waves of migrants from Britain, Italy, China, Greece, Vietnam, South Africa and the middle east over 200 years together with Australia's indigenous inhabitants, whose presence dates back at least 40,000 years. Our history, geography and economy, as well as the diversity of our population, combine to shape a distinctly Australian culture. Recent research indicates that distinctive features of Australian culture are reflected in the way leadership is exercised and what is regarded as acceptable and effective practice (Casimir, Waldman, Bartram & Yang 2006). For example, Casimir and colleagues argue that the egalitarian relationships preferred by Australians are characterised by high levels of trust, consultation and clear lines of communication that promote an awareness of self-worth. Parry and Sarros (1996) found that Australian leaders, unlike their American peers, are expected to relate individually with their followers. Successful leaders care for their followers, responding to their emotional needs, providing principled direction, and engendering feelings of self-worth in the workplace (Dalglish & Evans, 2007).

¹We use the term 'indigenous' to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission, 2000).

Not only is Australia uniquely diverse and culturally distinctive, it is also sparsely populated. Its 21 million inhabitants are located around the coastal southern and eastern areas of a continent similar in size to the United States, Europe and China. Table 1 shows the population of Australia in relation to that of China and the United States.

Table 1: Population profiles of Australia, United States, Europe and China

Country	Australia	United States	Europe	China
Population	21m	304m	728m	1,331m
Percentage urban	89	81	72	42
People/km ²	3	33	71	141

Source: Data from Central Intelligence Agency (2008) and United Nations Population Fund (2007).

Although similar in size to the United States, Europe and China, Australia has a small, mostly urban population. Western Australia, which comprises one-third of the country's landmass, has a population of 2 million, of whom 1.5 million live in the capital city, Perth. The population density of Australia, at 3 people per square kilometre, is 0.2 per cent of the density of China: that is, China has 2,000 people for every person in Australia.

Remote Schools in Western Australia

According to the Australian Constitution, school education is a State and Territory responsibility. The Commonwealth Government's responsibility is principally for funding, and this capacity enables it to some extent to co-ordinate policy and fill gaps in provision and quality. The Australian national goals of schooling were stated in the 'Hobart Declaration' of 1989, the first national collaboration. State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education revised these national goals in the 'Adelaide Declaration' of 1999. The goals are that schooling should develop fully the talents and capacities of all students; students should, by the time they leave school, have attained high standards of knowledge, skills and understanding through a comprehensive and balanced curriculum in the compulsory years of schooling; and schooling should be socially just so that students' outcomes from schooling are free from the effects of negative forms of discrimination and of differences arising from students' socio-economic background or geographic location (Adelaide Declaration 1999).

Education in Western Australia is provided by three sectors: the state education authority, Western Australian Department of Education and Training (WADET); the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA); and a loose affiliation of schools that are neither public (state) nor Catholic, linked to the Association of Independent Schools of WA (AISWA). WADET provides for the bulk of students in a total of 805 schools. Of these, 26 schools are classified as remote. In 2008 a total of 253,838 students were enrolled from Kindergarten (aged 3 years) to Year 12 (aged 17 years), and of these 1,603 students were catered for in remote schools. CEOWA provides schooling for a total of 69,180 students in 158 schools, and of these 1,016 students are catered for in 9 remote schools. AISWA provides schooling for 58,068 students in 159 schools. Of these, 796 students are catered for in 12 remote schools. Overall, the 3,415 Western Australian students between the ages of 3 and 17 are catered for in 47 remote schools. Table 2 summarises this information.

Table 2: Numbers and proportions of students in remote schools, by sector

	Government	Catholic	Independent	Total
Number of remote schools	26	9	12	47
Number of students in remote schools	1,603	1,016	796	3,415
Total number of schools	805	158	159	1,122
Total number of students	253,838	69,180	58,068	381,086
Percentage of schools that are remote	3.2	5.7	7.5	4.2
Percentage of students in remote schools	0.6	1.5	1.4	0.9

Source: All data were supplied by the respective sector during June 2008.

The absolute number of either schools or students is not large. However, the relative proportions are of interest. For example, that 0.9 per cent of the students in the state are educated in 4.2 per cent of the schools indicates that these remote schools are mostly very small, reflecting the small and isolated communities they serve. A total school enrolment of only 30 students aged between 5 and 17 in 12 school year groups is not uncommon, and one school has an enrolment of only 7 students. The figures for Western Australia are similar to those overall in Australia, although less extreme than in the Northern Territory and more extreme than in the populous states of New South Wales and Victoria (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2000).

Defining remoteness is somewhat contentious. For example, in their *Australian Council of Deans of Science* report, Harris, Jensz and Baldwin (2005) identify five categories – highly accessible, accessible, moderately accessible, remote, and very remote – based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) codes developed by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Every location in Australia is given an accessibility/remoteness value between 0 and 15, based on the physical road distance to the nearest service centre. However, the National Education Performance Monitoring Taskforce (NEPMT) based their codes on the geographical location of students' homes at the time they completed Year 9 (Jones 2000). This classification incorporates Metropolitan, Provincial and Remote categories, each with a number of sub-categories. Subsequently, the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) created another categorisation as a standard for Australia, the School Geographic Location Classification (Jones 2004), using the same categories as the NEPMT classification with population defining the first two and ARIA categories defining remoteness, updated every five years (Jones 2004).

Despite the complexity of categorising schools, there is no doubt about the low levels of student performance in schools classified as remote. The National Inquiry into Rural and Remote Education reported that country students, particularly indigenous students, are less likely to finish school than their metropolitan counterparts. It is also reported that attendance of indigenous students is low, falling at times to 20 per cent (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2000). Panizzon and Pegg (2007) examined large-scale national and international assessment data across Metropolitan, Provincial and Remote categories. They found that, although Australian students overall scored relatively high on PISA and TIMSS, the performance of remote students fell far below the OECD means in reading, mathematics and science. Their examination of the Australian National Benchmark for

Reading and Numeracy presented further evidence of the gap in student achievement across geographical locations. They reported the results of a National Survey in 2005 showing that teachers in remote schools are six times more likely to report high staff turnover than their metropolitan colleagues. They found that teachers' need for professional development increased 'substantially' with distance from metropolitan and provincial cities (Panizzon and Pegg 2007: 14). The poor achievement of these students is likely to be exacerbated over time because of their increasing isolation. Panizzon and Pegg (2007) explain that the current urban drift is being spurred by corporate rationalisation such as the closure of banks in small towns, government policy such as reductions in trade barriers, and declining opportunities for young people to access higher education.

Leading the Remote School

Western Australian remote schools are typically led by novice principals. Historically, young teachers are appointed to their first postings in small schools with the expectation that they will learn their craft in settings considered less complex than large urban schools. In the same way as novice teachers are 'sent bush', novice principals take up their first postings in the rural or remote small schools, expecting that they will progress from there to larger and more urban school locations. However, the remote school has characteristics that present challenges for novice, and experienced, principals. The principal has a teaching role, as well as all the administrative responsibilities of colleagues in larger schools but without the support of deputies or assistants (Lester 2003). The 'double load' has implications not only for their workload (Clarke 2003) but also for their sense of efficacy. Novice principals have experience in the classroom but none in the principal's office and the contrast between their confidence and skill in the two settings, often within the same day, is noticeable (Wildy & Clarke 2008b). The teaching principal is required to meet shifting curricular expectations, to master and apply new technologies, and also to be the leader of learning. Importantly, the principal of the remote school is required to provide a robust and relevant educational programme to meet the needs of students, as do colleagues in larger schools.

We draw on earlier work (Wildy 2004) which describes the challenges of one remote school to provide the context of our paper. This school is 1,200 kilometres from the nearest regional centre and caters for 37 students aged between 4 and 15 with three teachers, two Aboriginal Islander Education Officers, one special needs assistant, a part-time registrar, a gardener and a cleaner. If a staff member is sick or goes to the regional centre for professional development, there is no replacement available. The school is in a community for which an entry permit is required. The school site is enclosed by a two-metre wire fence and padlocked gates to keep out dogs and dingoes. Apart from the three classrooms – labelled Small children, Middle-sized children and Older children respectively – there are separate buildings for the library, workshop, home economics, two shower blocks and two toilet blocks. Students are showered and given breakfast after a fitness routine, before starting school each day. A dirt road through the desert provides access to the school, and a mail plane comes several times a week. Apart from the roadhouse and the medical centre, the school provides the only form of employment in the community.

Teachers recruited to remote schools rarely stay beyond the minimum period for preferential transfer, partly because of the poor standard of housing (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2000). Just as teacher turnover is high, so is principal turnover and it is not uncommon for two or three principals to occupy a post within one school year.

Although the absolute number of remote schools is not large, principals beginning their careers are likely to spend time in a remote school. The remote school experience is therefore more prevalent than the numbers would indicate.

We are interested in how the novice principal fares in the first year in the job given the unique features of the remote school. We are particularly interested in the challenges for which they would have liked a better grounding because they have no formal preparation before taking up these positions. Novice principals expect, and are expected, to learn on the job. Such a journey to the principalship, although depicted in the literature (Su et al. 2003) as an 'apprenticeship model' with associated on-the-job theoretical and practical learning (Belmonte 2007), is often characterised by variety, novelty and serendipity (Wildy, Clarke & Slater 2007), without a grounding in leadership theory, practice or reflection. Our paper is set in a challenging professional context devoid of preparation programmes.

Other contexts are as challenging as the remote school for the novice principal. For example, Tredway, Brill and Hernandez (2008) recount stories of novice urban principals in the San Francisco Bay area who had 'solid preparation' and were participants in a leadership induction programme. The Californian city contexts were characterised by 'poverty, scarce resources, long term neglect of school resources, bungled bureaucratic responses to low achievement and 50 years of failed school reform to address the inequities of race and class' (Tredway et al. 2008: 213). The researchers found high drama and dysfunction and they depict the novice principal struggling with fear of mistakes, issues of identity and inability to tackle the questions of race and equity. These descriptions are not dissimilar to those of novice principals in Western Australian remote schools, for which these principals have had no preparation and little induction.

Method

This paper draws on data generated over a 12-year period in three different research projects relating to principals at work. The first project aimed to generate standards for school leaders and was funded by two Australian Research Council grants (1996–97 and 2003–05), and small grants from the state education authority (www.det.wa.edu.au/education/lc/framework.html). We interviewed 200 principals of primary and secondary schools in the wide range of settings in four education districts, including rural and remote contexts, in the state of Western Australia. Using the interview data, we generated 196 narrative accounts, which were subsequently rated and described by principals (Louden & Wildy 1999a, 1999b; Wildy & Pepper 2005). These data underpinned the leadership framework adopted by the state education authority.

The second research project was a pair of parallel studies, in two states of Australia, each funded by the respective state education authority, investigating the unique challenges faced by principals of small schools (Clarke & Stevens 2004; Clarke & Wildy 2004; Wildy 2004; Wildy & Clarke 2005). This combination of studies generated sets of 58 and 50 narratives respectively from a total of eight case studies, including two remote schools.

The third piece of research used as a data source for this paper is part of the International Study of Principal Preparation (ISPP), a three-phase project in which we have engaged since 2004 (Clarke, Wildy & Pepper 2007; Slater Boone, Nelson, De La Colina, Garcia, Grimaldo, Rico, Rodr_guez, Sirios, Womack, Garcia & Arriga 2007). The ISPP is a study conducted with colleagues in England, Scotland, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Jamaica, South Africa

and Turkey designed to address the question: How useful are principal preparation programmes to novice principals? In Phase One, research partners mapped the principal preparation programmes in their local context (see for example, Cowie & Crawford 2007; Slater et al. 2007). The mapping exercise showed that leadership programmes for aspiring and in-post government principals in Western Australia are provided by a Leadership Centre, a collaborative venture between relevant professional associations and the Department of Education and Training. Other programmes offered by the five Western Australian universities are the Master of Education by coursework and the Master of Education by research as well as the Doctorate in Education (Clarke et al. 2007). All of these programmes are undertaken on a voluntary basis by aspirants and principals in-post and none is considered by the employer to privilege the participant. Phase Two of the ISPP project is designed to identify through the experiences of principals in their first year of appointment those challenges for which they would benefit from improved preparation (Wildy et al. 2007). Our contribution to the second phase of the ISPP was undertaken in 2006, during which we visited five novice principals in small schools in Western Australia – one of these was located in a remote school. The 2006 study generated 15 narratives (Wildy & Clarke 2008a; 2008b). Phase Three of the ISPP is a large scale, cross-cultural survey of preparation for principals administered across the participating countries.

In all three research projects we adopted an interpretive orientation to capture the perspective of principals. We interviewed principals in their schools and observed the everyday activities of principals, teachers, students and community members. Visits to remote locations required at least an overnight stay at the principal's home so that we experienced, albeit for a short period, something of the conditions influencing the principal's work, which sensitised us to the challenges they were facing.

For more than a decade we have positioned our research in the narrative inquiry tradition, bearing in mind the debate about data representation emerging from ethnography and phenomenology and applied in educational research (Connelly & Clandinin 1990; Richardson 1994). The writing and study of narratives is a theoretical and analytical tool to aid understanding complex issues of human behaviour. We believe the narrative is an effective means of showing, in an integrated way, the complexity and context of principals' work (Wildy & Loudon 2000; Clarke & Wildy 2004).

Each narrative account is a creative reconstruction of information from observations, informal conversations and formal interviews, written in the first person from the perspective of the principal, with a title, a theme, and some dramatic action over time (Clandinin & Connelly 1991). The action is set in a context and imbued with the emotion – feelings, attitudes, moods – of the narrator. Although information in the narratives is accurate, the narratives are *fictionalised* to provide anonymity for the principal and the community. Furthermore, the fictionalising process serves to make general the particular, without losing the richness of the contextual detail (Noddings & Witherell 1991). We make general, rather than particular, statements in some instances such as using generic names like line manager instead of personal names. We include distracters without altering the verisimilitude of the data, to confuse a reader who tries to identify the principal. For example, the school depicted as having 20 students might have 24 or 18 students enrolled. Our research does not focus on the issue of gender like other studies of the principalship (for example, Brooking 2008; Gilbert, Skinner & Dempster 2008), and we deliberately obscure the principal's gender in each narrative. We have found that the narratives we write provide

vicarious experience for the reader, building on the reader's tacit professional knowledge by contributing to theory for both understanding and improvement (Clarke et al. 2007).

For this paper, we trawled our sets of narratives derived from visits to remote schools in each of the projects, and we chose three narratives: one is from the total set of 196 narratives from the standards project (1996–2005); one is from the 108 accounts that comprise the studies of small school leadership in Western Australia and Queensland (2004); and one is from the 15 accounts generated in the second phase of the ISPP study in 2006 conducted in Western Australia. The narratives were selected from the 319 available accounts because, we believe, they portray in a powerful way, facets of experience of novice principals for which they perceive their current level of pre-appointment preparation to be inadequate. The contribution made by these narratives to understanding the challenges faced by novice principals for which improved preparation is required is dealt with in the next section of the paper.

We have chosen a unique context – the remote small primary school in Western Australia. To analyse the narratives accounts we adopt a contextualised perspective that situates such a school as a source of constraints, conflicts and opportunities (Hallinger 2003; Gurr, Drysdale & Mulford 2005). In particular, we examine what Hallinger refers to as a 'mutual influence process' (2003: 346) by which our novice principals mediate their context in the actions they follow and the decisions they make.

Findings

We have long argued that, in relation to the work of the school principal, context counts (Louden & Wildy 1999a; Clarke & Wildy 2004; Wildy 2004; Wildy & Clarke 2005). In this paper we present data that illustrates some aspects of the context of the remote school. In particular, we examine what we call *place*, teasing out some issues that relate to extreme settings. We have come to understand through our research that, for novice principals in the settings investigated, *place* has the most profound impact on their work. Possessing the knowledge and understanding of *place* means that school leaders can read the complexities of their context. Sensitivity to context is especially important for, though not restricted to, principals in small, isolated, remote settings. These communities tend to be distinguished by a distinctive sense of place because they are imbued with particular societal and cultural values, some of which may appear unusual from the urban perspective that many principals acquire before appointment.

The first narrative, *Fragile*, presents the physicality of the place to which the novice principal is appointed. The school is located in a desert, several hundred kilometres from the next school, and is now separated from the community it serves. The physical isolation of the school matches the professional and personal isolation of the principal.

Fragile

Our school is surrounded by breathtaking emptiness. We are remote, isolated and difficult to reach. I live alone although I have the comforts of home: music, TV and video. I don't rent videos from the roadhouse because most of them are violent or pornographic. The newspapers come by plane, days late. My social life is limited. The three teachers are young and struggling in their first appointments. The community is 'dry' so I can't have a glass of wine at the end of the day. Visitors need permission to enter the community. Once a term I drive several hundred kilometres to one of the closer

schools to network with principals. The trips are adventures, but as a confident driver I can get out of trouble when things go wrong. The school is my focus and I am beginning to feel I belong. I like the independence and autonomy of being a principal in the desert.

Until last year, the shop was located close to the school. People came into the school grounds and filled their water containers from the school's water cooler after they had been to the shop. Since the shop has been relocated to the other side of the community houses, only people with children or grandchildren come to the school. Our everyday links with the community have been weakened.

I hadn't felt vulnerable in my job until my first performance management meeting. My line manager told me that he didn't think my community relationships were developing strongly. I came away thinking I was a useless principal. That night I cried, the first and only time I have cried since I arrived seven months ago. I thought about the ways I try to develop relationships. I sit on the grass and chat with the old people making baskets. I visit homes when I need to talk to families about why children are not at school. I need to have a good reason for going into houses. Building relationships takes time. In remote places we are joined by fragile threads. We all need encouragement and nurture, even if in public we seem robust.

This principal, at the start of the second year of appointment, is reflecting on the impact of *place*. Personal comforts are modest: clearly there are no cinemas, restaurants, parks, beaches, gyms, sporting clubs, shopping centres; and the newspapers are out of date. Social life is limited: the principal lives alone; visitors are rare; alcohol is banned; and friendships are unlikely with members of the community who prefer violent and pornographic videos. Opportunities for professional connections are minimal: the school is physically separated from the community and the shop; teaching colleagues are young and preoccupied with their own struggles; the nearest fellow principal is half a day's drive away; and the line manager is complaining about the principal's skills in building relationships. Despite these fragile threads, this principal puts on a brave face. Despite the disappointing feedback from the line manager, the novice principal is beginning to feel a sense of belonging, and is even noticing some advantages of living in the desert: there are opportunities to be independent and autonomous. However, the principal recognises that nurturing support and encouragement are needed by everyone in this context.

What features of *place* are depicted in this narrative for which the novice principal would benefit from more thorough preparation? Unlike others who might take up such an appointment, this principal appears to be undaunted by the 'breathtaking emptiness' of the landscape. Similarly, unlike others who might be sent to such a location, this principal seems to possess the personal resilience to cope with physical and professional isolation. However, the ability to build community relationships and, more importantly, to show leadership in the school and broader community, would need to be more robust if this principal is to make a positive impact on students' learning (Cowie & Crawford 2007). Particularly in a context characterised by tenuous links and fragile connections, a clear direction and firm commitment to strengthening the relationships between the school and the community would be a minimum requirement (Gilbert et al. 2008).

When the principal is as vulnerable as the one portrayed in *Fragile*, it is hard to see how a school vision will be developed collaboratively with the community, or how priorities for school goals will be established, or how leadership will be shared without a strong

community partnership (Leithwood 2005). However, it would not be surprising if this principal were to feel disconnected from the line manager who might be perceived to underestimate the challenge of building community relationships. Cynicism and anomie are not unusual, according to Kannapel & DeYoung (1999), when centrally derived policies and expectations geared towards urban issues are imposed on rural and remote contexts. Notwithstanding the perceptions of the principal, robust local partnerships that are well resourced, flexible, sustained and empowered are particularly important to ensure education provision meets local needs and, at the same time, satisfies national standards (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2000).

We argue here that surviving the harsh reality of the remote school, while a significant and laudable achievement in itself, is not sufficient for successful leadership. Nor is it enough to be resilient and have good intent. What is required for leading in remote contexts, as it is for all contexts, is a vision for schooling and the skill to put the vision into practice. The next narrative, *Thinking laterally*, illustrates the constraints of the small remote primary school context on improving students' learning.

Thinking Laterally

We are supposed to focus on improving students' literacy and numeracy but first we have to get students to come to school and then engage them in learning. In our community we have 20 students enrolled but many others don't ever come near the school. Our teachers are new graduates with high expectations and clear goals about what they want to achieve. I applaud their aspirations but I need to temper them with the reality of our context. It's no use thinking about benchmarks when students are not even familiar with sitting in classrooms.

We do many activities outside, with a hands-on approach, using the bush experiences as learning opportunities. For example, through bricklaying, jewellery making, welding, drawing we introduce language and number concepts. However, parents want literacy 'white fella way' for their children. They expect their children will write and get jobs and earn money. This is difficult when English is not spoken at home or anywhere in the community – no street signs, no shops, no vehicles. I took four students into town once so they could practise paying for goods, speaking with strangers and behaving appropriately in public. Our students' performance against national literacy and numeracy benchmarks continues to be desperately low.

Before I took up my appointment I visited the school. It was the end of the school year and the teacher was handing written reports to parents. The reports were left lying on the floor. No one could read them. This year I noticed that students enjoyed using the video camera to record what they were making in the workshop. This is the way to report to parents, I thought. During the year, the students made video clips of excursions, jewellery they made, stories they wrote and so on. They put these together and we asked parents to come to the school to view what their children were doing. This seemed to me to be an appropriate way to report to parents. I want teachers to stretch their minds and think laterally about delivering the curriculum to students in this setting. I want them also to think about what counts as progress.

The principal, towards the end of the first year, is reflecting on the challenge of offering an appropriate educational programme in this context. The constraints are clear: students do

not regularly attend school; they are not used to the practices of schooling, even the formality of sitting in a classroom; they are learning English as a second language and English is not spoken outside of the school. The tension for this principal, as for all principals in such settings, is that they, and their schools, are judged by the students' performance against national benchmarks. The positive features of the setting are that teachers are young and energetic and they have high expectations for students' achievement, as do the parents. The principal mediates these expectations without underestimating the capacity of students to learn. The principal is resourceful and models teaching strategies for the less experienced teachers: being outside of the classroom; using practical activities; linking to the world outside the community; and using images rather than words to convey to parents their children's achievement. However, the time required to become literate 'white fella way' is likely to be longer than this principal will be at the school. Getting a job and earning money, goals all parents have for their children, seem beyond reach in the light of low student performance against national minimum standards for literacy and numeracy.

What features of *place* are depicted in this narrative for which the novice principal would benefit from more thorough preparation? Unlike others who might take up such an appointment, this principal appears prepared to cope with students' lack of familiarity with formal school routines, and parents' lack of literacy. However, the tolerance of poor attendance and low student performance is not consistent with teachers' expectations, parents' aspirations, or the explicit goals for schooling of this nation (Adelaide Declaration 1999). Although some might question the validity of national performance data in settings with small enrolments (Linn, Baker & Betebenner 2002), and blame lack of trained staff, appropriate materials and inadequate professional development (Howley, Carnes, Eldridge, Huber, Longun, Kolter & Turner 2005), the principal's primary responsibility is the educational programme. Demonstrating strong and shared leadership, taking responsibility, and being accountable are features of the principalship required here, as elsewhere, if any progress is to be made in students' learning. Preparation programmes are needed that move principals beyond acceptance of the status quo, to a firm and explicit commitment to raising literacy and numeracy performance to allow these students, in particular, to access mainstream education and career paths.

We argue here that recognising and accommodating conflicting expectations, valuable though it is, does not progress students' learning opportunities sufficiently to improve the life choices of indigenous students. Proactive, energetic and determined action by the leader – with teachers and parents, and supported by the educational authority – is required. Such a belief would be a cornerstone of a preparation programme. The next narrative, *The Jesus story*, demonstrates opportunities that emerge from the challenges of the remote school context.

The Jesus Story

One morning just before lunch, a Year 3 student ran into my office asking me to come quick. In the middle of the classroom I saw an angry parent waving an iron bar in the air in front of the teacher, yelling in language. The students were cowering at the back of the room. I said: 'Stop! Come outside and talk.' I kept talking to her as I moved closer, between her and the teacher, and the students. As she went to hit the desk in front of the teacher, I caught the bar and took it from her. Again I said: 'Talk outside.' We sat on the grass outside the room. She said her child was being teased. I said she should talk to me about these things. For a few minutes she was calm, then she worked herself into a rage. She jumped up and threw a rock

through the classroom window, shouting she would take her children out of the school. I agreed and called them. I asked her to leave the grounds immediately with the children. She left threatening to burn the school.

I thought the incident was over but an hour later she came to my office. I told her I was disappointed, particularly about the damage to the school. I said I had to report the incident to the police. As she left again, she saw the teacher and apologised for threatening him. Her children appeared at school the next day. I now had time to follow up her claim that her child was being teased. The child had committed a small indiscretion and had been corrected gently by the teacher.

A week later when the police were in the community I gave them the report but I did not press charges. When I told her she was relieved. Later in the year, she asked me if she could run the concert at the end of the year. As a child, she had been educated at a mission school and spoke beautiful English. She told the teacher that she wanted to tell the Jesus story.

The principal reflects on a dramatic incident that has a positive outcome. The principal skilfully de-escalates a potentially life-threatening situation. Clearly, the principal shows resilience in handling the violent situation and mediating through to a satisfactory conclusion. However, this principal also has the cultural sensitivity to understand the place of violence in this setting. The principal's primary concern is the safety of students so taking the iron bar and getting the parent out of the classroom is the first action. Allowing the parent to save face by sitting on the grass, talking calmly, agreeing that the children should leave the school, and deciding not to press charges all indicate that this principal respects the local culture and understands how to deal with different priorities and behaviours.

What features of *place* are depicted in this narrative for which the novice principal would benefit from more thorough preparation? Unlike others who might take up such an appointment, this principal has a sophisticated appreciation of the culture of the community: violent outbursts over personal slights are not uncommon; ritual stone throwing is normal. A preparation programme designed for novice principals in such remote settings would emphasise cultural diversity, above all. Furthermore, a preparation programme would focus on interpersonal skill development, balancing decisiveness with support, persistence with collaboration, flexibility with tact, and ensuring fairness to all parties (Wildy 2004; Wildy & Pepper 2005). Preparation programmes would need to inculcate the belief that short-term actions have long-term consequences, and that plans and visions for the long term will also incorporate everyday manifestation of the desired outcomes. In the narrative *The Jesus story*, though, the principal could not have predicted the outcome, yet the decisions and actions taken fostered the growth of a relationship between the school and the parent that allowed the parent the opportunity to demonstrate good will. The incident and the way it was handled illustrate the process of mutual influence (Hallinger 2003) through which skilled principals mediate their context.

Concluding Comments

In this paper we argue that dealing with place presents a formidable challenge for novice principals, accentuated by the distinctive circumstances of remote schools in Western Australia. This is especially the case at the initial stage of novice principals' appointments. Novice principals are developing a cognitive map of the complexities of the situation in which they find themselves – particularly, the people, the problems and the issues, as well as

the culture of the school and its community. Notwithstanding the extent of the challenge, we argue it is imperative for the principal of a remote school to develop acute sensitivity to the school and community environment. Not only does this sensitivity assist the principal to identify with the sense of a place engendered by living in it, but it is also essential for understanding what must be done at the school in the short term and for envisaging what might be accomplished at the school in the longer term. For these reasons, we advocate that principals' preparation programmes embrace a contextually oriented understanding of school leadership. Principals who are finely attuned to the sense of place are adept at recognising the constraints, conflicts and opportunities that are brought to bear on their professional endeavours and are better equipped, therefore, to make a difference to the performance and vitality of the schools and communities they serve.

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Leading International Primary Schools: An Integrative Agenda for Building Understanding

Allan Walker and Cheng Yin Cheong

Abstract: *The success of an international primary school, like any other school, is inevitably related to how it is led. Although research has increasingly focused on school leadership, in general it has been conspicuous by its absence in the international schools arena – this includes primary schools. The purpose of this article is to encourage discussion and research into international primary school leadership. To do this, the article discusses reasons for the growing interest in international primary schools, argues that research in the area is underdone, reports the findings of a simple study in the area, and suggests a basic integrative framework that may inform future research efforts. The key message is that research into the leadership of international primary schools should take an integrated, not an isolated or detached, form.*

The number of international primary schools around the world is growing at a remarkable rate. These schools operate across a range of contexts, and face issues that simultaneously mirror yet diverge from primary schools within static national boundaries and systems, and from their colonially shaped forebears. International primary schools no longer necessarily cater just for an expatriate elite but for an increasing number of 'local' students. These groups bring very different values, family expectations, linguistic backgrounds, learning styles and belief structures to the schools. In this way international primary schools display characteristics similar to intercultural primary schools within more static national systems. However, international school students, both local and expatriate, tend to come from more economically and educationally privileged backgrounds; their teachers and leaders are 'imported', predominantly from English-speaking societies.

The purpose of this article is to encourage discussion and research into international primary school leadership. The success of an international primary school, like any other school, is unavoidably related to how it is led. Although research has increasingly focused on school leadership in general, and on an assortment of national settings, it has been conspicuous by its absence in the international schools arena – this includes primary schools. For our purposes, leaders include school principals along with middle-level leaders, such as vice-principals, heads of departments, level coordinators and similar positions formally designated by a school. This is not to discount the role of other teacher leaders without formal designation, but it serves to focus discussion.

The article has four main sections. The first section aims to set the scene by providing a number of reasons for the growing interest in international schools. This section includes Bunnell's (2008) argument that international education is now entering its *second phase* of development. The second section suggests that research specifically into the leadership of international primary schools is generally underdone. It also touches upon some recent literature in the general area of educational leadership. It is not our purpose to review this literature – this has been ably done by others (Day & Leithwood 2007). Rather, it is to emphasise that school leaders do make a difference, and that context influences the meaning and exercise of leadership.

The third section reports on international primary school leadership data collected from reflective journals kept by a group of middle leaders in ten of these schools. Basic findings are organised around three major themes – *purpose and potential, leading and home and away*. The focal messages from across these themes are then synthesised as a set of cross-theme patterns. A dominant message flowing across these conclusions is that a research agenda may best be guided by an integrative framework, not one that isolates leadership from the context within which it is practised. This theme is framed, illustrated and briefly discussed. It is suggested that questions flowing from an integrated approach to research may inform understanding and practice in international primary schools.

Interest in International Schools

Interest in the place and workings of international primary schools has grown tremendously since the late 1990s, be it on a somewhat 'ad hoc' basis. This interest has been spurred by at least four interrelated factors, all of which point to the need for a deeper understanding of how the schools are led.

First, the overall number of international schools has grown exponentially.¹ As national borders become more permeable, organisations jostle for improved global positioning, and large numbers of different cultural, ethnic and national citizens are internationally mobile, the need for international schools has grown. This trend has been further fuelled by the dramatic demand for schooling in the English-language medium in many parts of the world. As the number of international schools grows, so does interest in how they work and what they are designed to achieve. Studying and understanding any aspect of international schools is difficult partly because they tend to act independently, or on some level of affiliation with pseudo-national professional or curricular associations.

Second, the increase in the number of international schools has happened at the same time as many of these schools have struggled to shed their colonial legacy. International schools no longer cater exclusively to a colonial elite but, rather, to a new, much more cosmopolitan elite who bring with them different values, different needs and different demands. ISC Research Limited (2008) claims that only about 20 per cent of students in international schools now come from expatriate families, and that the remainder are drawn from the wealthiest 5 per cent of local populations. For example, international schools in Hong Kong now draw large proportions of their enrolment from well-off local Chinese families. For their children, these

¹In January 2007, there were 4,563 international schools serving over 2,000,000 students in 187 countries. Bunnell also notes that the number of international schools worldwide is growing by about 100 schools per month, and that the number of such schools has grown by 44 per cent in Africa alone (Bunnell 2008).

groups seek international perspectives, English-language expertise and a less structured system than that provided in the majority of local schools. They also bring, however, expectations and values that may not fit neatly with schools shaped by mono-national systems and staffed predominantly by native English-speaking staff. In short, interest in international schooling is generated by the changing face of the schools themselves, and their important role in educating a new, much more cosmopolitan and differentiated elite.

An addendum to shifting international school demographics is that policy-makers in some societies have been forced to recognise the importance of accessible international schools in their existing education system – especially if they cannot meet the demand for high-quality English-language schools themselves. Governments in countries such as China, Korea and Hong Kong, for example, actively encourage new international schools both legislatively and financially.

Third, there is an increasing awareness within national systems themselves of the importance of students being globally aware. This is seen as imperative to promoting peace and international harmony, and providing children with a global career. Interest in international education has accompanied the complex multiculturalism increasingly prevalent within developed societies (Walker & Dimmock 2005). Interest in international schooling has, in turn, accompanied the changing cultural and ethnic make-up of schools within certain societies, and is calling for an internationalisation of the curriculum.

The fourth reason relates closely to those given above, but deserves separate mention. The remarkable growth of the International Baccalaureate (IB) and its early-years partner the Primary Years Programme (PYP) within national systems as well as across international contexts has amplified interest in how they work (Pound 2006). In 2004, there were 1,771 'IB World' schools in 122 countries with a total enrolment of 200,000 students (Hill 2004, cited in Bunnell 2006a; also see Bunnell 2008). The expansion of the IB has spurred interest in international education within international schools themselves, and within national and state systems – what Tsuneyoshi (2004) labelled in Japan as 'internal internationalisation'.

The growing interest in international schools is not viewed positively by all observers. Some continue to see them as only slightly removed from the institutions established to privilege the European colonial elite, in that these schools continue to serve a new 'transnational capitalist class' (Sklair 2001) or what could be labelled 'colonialists without boundaries'. These new colonialists comprise not just the fading remnants of the 'white' traditional colonial but also a new breed of more culturally diverse expatriates and, increasingly, elite groups from within the host society itself. Such perceptions may be part of the reason for the apparent widening of the gap between international schools and the local national systems. As the IB magnet continues to attract more and more disciples internationally, the importance of national systems becomes less important; whether this, and the breach it might create, is important is yet to be seen.

The Second Phase of International Education

In sum, the place, role and purpose of international primary schools is undergoing increasing scrutiny. Discussion of issues and problems around international education and international schooling are becoming more common and more sophisticated. Much of this new discussion can be related to Bunnell's (2008) argument that international education is entering what he labels a 'second phase'. To use his words: 'There are visible signs that international education is now moving towards a more ordered, structured and outwardly

worldwide system' (2008: 419). Bunnell describes the first phase as 'uncontrolled expansion' and then summarises the 'second phase' through five different (though intimately interrelated) movements. He offers five movements as a conceptual framework for further study.

The first of the movements progresses towards some types of formal alliance for international education. Related initiatives appear as attempts to pull together the disparate entities and systems that currently comprise international schools, through a more concentrated reflection and dialogue on the purposes and meaning of international or global learning citizenship. The shape an alliance may take is contested, and continues to evolve. Whether alliances will attempt to mirror existing formal (even national) systems, build around the IB World School network, or base themselves around more loosely coupled network models has yet to emerge.

The second movement involves the creation of educators trained specifically for international schools, rather than the present practice of importing them from a limited number of 'home' systems. The third movement challenges the very meaning of international education itself. This movement challenges traditional notions of international schools as merely being places that bring students from different cultures together – in other words, the assumption that being at an international school automatically equals providing an international education. Bunnell (2008) invokes numerous issues to describe this movement: for example, whether intercultural learning is too often 'left to chance', whether international schools really understand culturally influenced learning styles, and whether the motive for profit sometimes outweighs the learning mission. The fourth movement challenges the spread of international schools beyond (largely) Western societies. The fifth movement touches upon the establishment (or not) of some 'common' or universal set of standards to guide international schools.

Within these movements are a number of complex issues for international primary schools – issues that touch the operating heart of schools and their leaders. Accompanying the range of issues is an interest in a deeper understanding of international education, international schools and all that entails, including how the schools are led.

Leadership and Research in International Schools

The growth of interest in international education as it morphs into its 'second phase' does not necessarily indicate a concomitant increase in the amount or, more precisely, the evenness of empirical investigation into their workings. As Bunnell notes, 'It is surprisingly true to say that international schools have had little in the way of formal research' (2006a: 387). He attributes this partly to the 'secrecy' surrounding international schools, but it may also relate to their elitist nature, their original separation by nationality, problems of access and population identification, or the diffuse nature of the schools themselves, even in restructured geographic areas. As Blanford and Shaw state, 'The standard international school defies description – there are so many different categories and constitutions (2001: 14; also see Bunnell 2006b).

Although the general lack of research seems to be increasingly addressed, the unevenness of issues investigated remains a concern. The increased general research interest in international schools is apparent in the recent publication of *The SAGE Handbook of Research in International Education* (Hayden, Levy & Thompson 2007); the increasing sophistication of books in the area, such as *International Education in Practice* (Hayden, Thompson & Walker 2002); and articles in the field's key journals – *Journal of Research in International Education* and

International Schools Journal. Despite these advances, research across different areas is noticeably uneven, as illustrated by Bunnell:

It is perhaps surprisingly true to say that international schools have had little in the way of formal research. The 'dearth of written material available within the public domain' has been referred to as a striking feature ... The body of literature is surprisingly limited in its scope and extent, given that these schools suffer from a number of inherent management problems. (2006a: 387)

Our interest in international schools focuses on leadership within such schools and, more specifically, their primary schools. Little has been written about the leadership of international schools (Blanford & Shaw 2001), including how it plays out in the primary context. For example, in the previously mentioned handbook, no single chapter is dedicated to school leadership, and the term does not appear explicitly in the subject index. This is not to criticise the Handbook *per se*: it is an excellent if not groundbreaking contribution. Nor is it to claim that leadership is not touched upon by a number of authors (e.g. Stout 2007) within the collection, or addressed elsewhere – for instance, Jabal (2006) explicitly addresses international school leadership from their alumni's perspective. The claim is simply that the leadership of international schools, across levels, has not received the attention it deserves.

This lack of attention is somewhat surprising given interest- and research-driven progress in the more general field of school leadership, and also in the increased awareness of the special place primary schools hold in education (Southworth 2004). In the broader literature, the influential role of school leaders in effective schools is firmly established. Following a review of successful school leaders, Leithwood and Riehl claimed that 'Leadership has significant effects on student learning, second only to the effects of the quality of curriculum and teachers' instruction' (2005: 4). Recent research has produced a basic typology, which includes a set of practices demonstrated by successful school leaders that appear common across different contexts (Leithwood & Jantzi 2005; Leithwood & Levin 2005; Day & Leithwood 2007). The basic typology comprises *Setting Directions, Developing People, Redesigning the Organization, and Managing the Instructional Programme*. Although common across contexts in a generic form, their enactment differs significantly, but is not dictated by the context within which leadership is exercised. Efforts to create environments for successful school improvement have recently converged on the notion of continuous learning within the school context and, consequently the type of leadership necessary to build and sustain learning (Bredeson 2003; Huffman & Hipp 2003).

School effects research has also established that leaders most effectively influence school outcomes *indirectly* through multiple variables (Hallinger & Heck 2003). Or, as Southworth notes, 'Effective school leaders work directly on their indirect influence' (2005: 102). He described these as a collection of processes and strategies that include 'the careful deployment of school structures and systems', ultimately through the interrelated strategies of modelling, monitoring and dialogue (Southworth 2005: 78). In the Asia-Pacific region, Cheng, Mok and Chow recounted that 'leaders are often perceived as the key actors mobilising their institutions and members at the site-level to face up with those challenges and make educational services and provision more quality effective and accountable' (2003: 922).

While recognising that leaders do make a difference, it is important to note that how they make this difference is contingent upon the context within which they lead (Day &

Leithwood 2007). Leadership is constructed within a social milieu comprised of multiple, overlapping and constantly shifting contextual factors. These include, but are not restricted to, demographic, linguistic, cultural, political, historical and economic influences (Walker, Hallinger & Qian 2007). For example, successful leadership in the vertically aligned cultural systems typifying East Asian societies may look quite different from descriptions of leadership observed in many Western settings (Walker 2007).

School leaders do influence the effectiveness of their organisations, but these effects are mediated and moderated both by the internal and external context of the school and by the leaders' own beliefs and predispositions. Regardless of context, leaders influence outcomes through similar channels, but what they do and how they do it differs according to the organisational, personal and cultural context. The context that interests us here is international primary schools. Our assumption is that leaders require a set of basic leadership and management skills and knowledge, regardless of context (Day & Leithwood 2007). Beyond these, however, we appear to know little about what may distinguish leadership in international primary schools.

The next section attempts to partly redress the lack of knowledge about leadership in international primary schools through presenting findings from a very basic exploration into this context.

Research Context

To initiate discussion of leadership in international primary schools, participants involved in a year-long leader development programme in Hong Kong² were asked to reflect on the meaning of leadership in their schools through a formal, semi-structured journaling process. The leaders completed five journals over the term of the programme and used these to stimulate discussion within programme-established networks and their schools.

The programme included primary school leaders from ten international schools in Hong Kong. Altogether ten primary school middle leaders (eight men and two women) completed the journal section specifically relevant to international school leadership. The schools involved share the same governance body, use English as their Medium of Instruction (MOI) and admit students on the basis of English competence. The schools range in size from approximately 200 to 900 students. Although the proportions differ among schools, the student population across the system is predominantly local Chinese, but still includes large numbers of expatriate children. The staff is hired mainly from the UK, Australia and New Zealand, with a small percentage or number of North Americans and local Chinese. Principals and middle leaders are drawn almost exclusively from English-speaking Western countries (as were all leaders involved in this research); all primary principals come from these countries.

Four journal sections targeted understanding of international school leadership. These were included to help participants develop their understanding of what it means to be a school leader – that is, to define or refine their role in an international school. Comments were sought in three main areas:

²Details of the programme (Leading Upstream: A Learning Programme for Front-line Leaders in International Schools) can be obtained from the contact author or from www3.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/eldevnet/Upstream.asp.

- the purpose and potential of international primary schools
- leadership in international primary schools
- similarities and differences between leader roles in international schools and in the schools of their home country.

The first area aimed to locate their comments on international schools through questioning the purpose of these schools. We began with purpose because this is the heart of leadership, which therefore drives action. The second area focused more specifically on leadership, and the third area attempted to reinforce this focus through requesting comparisons.

Data were organised under the different areas, and themes were identified within these areas. These themes were then used to inform a set of issues that could help drive initial research into international primary school leadership. We are well aware of the severe limitations of the research presented here. Our purpose was not to identify reproducible findings but, rather, to draw on the insights of a group of practising middle-level international school leaders in order to inform the direction of further research.

Purpose and Potential

The leaders were asked to express their understanding of the purpose and potential of international primary schools. Three dominant interrelated themes emerged – these were labelled *intercultural awareness* (TP1), *global knowledge and preparation* (TP2) and *curriculum flexibility and balance* (TP3). These are explained below.

(TP1) Intercultural Awareness

The leaders see their schools as ideal places to promote intercultural awareness. The following response captures the essence of this theme: '[the school is] a place where both students and staff from various backgrounds and ethnicity can celebrate as well as learn to accept and respect national and cultural differences'. The leaders believe that the purpose of (their) international schools is not only to provide equal opportunity for students regardless of background (cultural, ethnic or socioeconomic), but also to help 'instil respect for people across the world' in order to 'create a better world by overcoming national differences'. In terms of teachers, one participant described international schools as places perfectly built for 'sharing best practices from teachers from around the world'.

(TP2) Global Knowledge and Preparation

The second purpose-related theme was that international education should provide students with opportunities to access diverse knowledge, and thus enhance their opportunity to construct a life and career within a global rather than a single local community. To make this happen, participants stressed the importance of flexibility, knowledge and respect. One participant enlarged upon this by suggesting that international schools equipped students with 'the skills to learn and acquire knowledge both individually and collaboratively'. The idea here seems to be that international primary schools provide an ideal opportunity for knowledge to move beyond subject-specific skills and content, to an opportunity for knowledge that fosters the development of skills and knowledge that are transferable across contexts and cultures.³

³This may be attributable to the fact that all the primary school leaders involved in the study were in the throes of implementing the Primary Years Programme (PYP).

(TP3) Curriculum Flexibility and Balance

The third theme focused specifically on the need for international schools to provide a curriculum flexible enough to allow students to succeed in both local *and* global contexts, and to be able to survive and thrive in a rapidly hybridising society. This theme is differentiated from TP2 above in that it suggests a necessary balance between the local and the global, rather than just emphasising the global dimension. The leaders touched upon the importance of 'living locally' while still being able to 'operate globally', and also on the role of the local society and culture in students' lives. The latter point is noted as an area from which the leaders remained somewhat detached, at least personally.

Given the focus on flexibility and global transferability, and that a greater proportion of students in most schools use Chinese (Cantonese) at home, it is surprising that next-to-no mention was made of the importance of the local language. It is particularly puzzling given that primary schools accept students who remain in their formative stages of language development. The lack of mention may be explained in at least three ways. First, the schools involved in the study have strict English-language entry requirements and therefore do not see this as an issue. A second explanation may be that the leaders involved, who are all from Western English-speaking societies, do not see the importance of languages other than English. In some ways, the absence of language sensitivity appears to contradict TP3. Third, leaders may see learning Chinese as a 'home job', or up to parents, whereas the school's role is to teach English. Regardless of the reason, the fact that most students enter the schools with English as a second or another language, and that all the schools involved in the study now mandate the study of a second language, indicates that this area would benefit from further investigation. It is difficult to see how local students can remain in touch with their community (which must now include the Chinese Mainland) if their mother tongue is not seen as important.

There also appeared to be a lack of recognition that many local students see international schools as an alternate pathway to success and/or extending their school education.⁴ For example, local primary students who were born, or moved, overseas often return without the prerequisite local language skills and so are forced to seek entry to an international school. Likewise, even if they do have the language, if they have acculturated within different foreign schooling systems, they may find they do not 'fit' into local school models.

Leading

Participants were asked to reflect and comment specifically on leadership in international primary schools. This was designed to focus their earlier comments more explicitly on leadership. Two major themes emerged, both related to the varied national and ethnic or cultural background of their school communities and how this influenced the shape of their leadership. One theme focused on *leading for student learning* (TL1) and the other on *leading intercultural (and international) teams* (TL2).

⁴Due to the nine-year free education policy, the majority of students in Hong Kong have been guaranteed a place to study in local education until Secondary 3. From Secondary 4 onwards, if they are unable to continue their studies in local education, they might have to seek alternative education opportunities, such as international schools. Therefore, it might explain why none of the participants from primary schools expressed the opinion that international education is an alternative pathway for those who could not continue their study in traditional local education.

The basic philosophy underpinning the emergence of the two themes appeared common. Their leaders' logic suggested that, first, leaders in international primary schools need to be keenly aware of the cultural differences students bring to school. Second, and equally important, they need to know the influence these cultural differences have on how and why students learn, and how the school can work effectively with this information. Third, leaders therefore need to 'equip themselves with a wider knowledge of different societies, particularly internationalism, in order to lead teaching effectively'. Fourth, at the same time, particularly given the increasing number of 'local students' in their schools, they must also cater to local interests, especially when implementing changes in curriculum. The first theme relates to leading for student learning.

(TL1) Leading for Student Learning

The leaders involved in the study stressed the importance of teachers knowing as well as 'seeing how students from different national and cultural backgrounds learn', and being able to apply teaching methods appropriate to these learning styles. Difficulties associated with this were openly acknowledged; they related mainly to the wide range of styles and ingrained cultural, national and educational beliefs that the teachers brought to their work. Therefore, an important part of leading in an international primary school – according to the leaders involved in the study – is to find ways to help their teachers teach more effectively: first, through facilitating a deeper understanding of their students' culturally embedded values and norms, and then by helping the teachers recognise how these values and norms can manifest themselves in the classroom. The leaders also expressed the importance of providing support for teachers that would allow them to develop a rich assortment of culturally appropriate teaching methods so that they could cater to the students' diverse values and norms. The leaders were also plainly aware of the possible needs of 'third-culture' children (Koshy, Davies, Denny, Ford, Fitzsimmons, Wong, Williams & Syed 2002). As one leader wrote, 'we've got to remember that many of our kids are a mixture of cultures – you know, mum's Korean, dad's a Brit and they live in China – so it's not just one culture'. Other leaders pointed out that leading learning in international schools should not be restricted to cultural awareness and culturally appropriate pedagogy. A singular focus on culture and/or ethnicity alone is perceived as detrimental in that it can detract from the awareness of other factors that influence learning, such as the students' ability, home context and stage of development. The issue of leading language curriculum and learning was touched upon only briefly beyond some fleeting mention of specific pedagogies useful for building language competence.

(TL2) Leading Intercultural (and International) Teams

Leaders appeared particularly mindful of leading staff from different cultural backgrounds. Staff includes both professional and support staff. Only a small percentage of teaching staff (other than teachers of Chinese) come from the local community – the vast majority of teachers are hired from predominantly English-speaking societies. In contrast, support staff members are usually hired from the local community.

The leaders stressed the importance of understanding cultural differences among staff. They held that, as leaders, they must understand, respect and 'value the cultures and cultural-related ideas brought to work by their staff'. This is seen as essential for leading staff from diverse backgrounds and for effectively developing a cohesive and functioning team.

They see their role as providing support and care for all staff and emphasise the importance

of helping new staff, regardless of their background, to settle in and establish themselves in a new and sometimes strange environment. This concern seems to apply mainly to other expatriate teachers. Successfully integrating newly hired staff appears linked to the need to understand their new team members' 'expectations and prior experience in order to practice effective communication and so avoid misunderstandings which can easily result'. In some schools, understanding is seen as a particularly important factor in reducing high staff turnover. The leaders believe that support includes providing opportunities for teachers to gain new and different knowledge and experience in order to be 'happy and so do well in school'.

As with student learning, leaders believed that team building involves more than accounting for cultural difference. They noted that the (national) systems, as well as the cultures where teachers are trained and socialised, make 'more difference to how teachers teach and how they relate to each other than most people think'. Although it is unclear what this means, one leader went on to note that such differences stretch well beyond 'curriculum content and requirements' and into 'fairly fundamental notions of flexibility and governance'.

The leaders made little mention of their leadership connecting with their students' homes. This is somewhat surprising given the importance they appear to give to understanding the influence of student background and culture on learning and leading. It is difficult to see how such understanding can be comprehensive without an adequate home-school connection. It may be that the middle leaders see parent issues as the principal's job. However, when asked to compare their international school leader experiences with those in their home countries they seemed much more aware of parental expectations.

Home and Away

The leaders were asked to identify similarities and differences between their role as a leader in an international school and schools they had worked in, in their home countries. They were asked to consider these in terms of possible personal leadership improvement strategies. It may be important to note that only one participant claimed experience in an intercultural school in their home country so some points of comparison may be missed. Two main themes emerged; these were *learning, teaching and curriculum* (TH1) and *basic leader skills* (TH2).

(TH1) Learning, Teaching And Curriculum

Participants identified both similarities and differences. It should be noted here that all the primary schools involved in the study were beginning to implement the Primary Years Programme (PYP) in place of the English curriculum, and that this could well influence responses in this area. The leaders claimed that parts of the PYP curriculum are the same as that in their home countries, but this varied in line with where their 'home' was.

The leaders recognised that teaching approaches should account for and adjust to the varied prior abilities and knowledge of their students. Although this is seen as important in any context, they believe the nature of the needs appear to vary, often along cultural lines. As they see it, the range of national and, to a lesser extent, ethnic backgrounds that influence learning styles are more pronounced in international schools. This shifts the emphasis, if not the shape, of their leadership. What they do as leaders is also influenced by the number of students using English as a second or third language. Again, they see one of their key roles as helping teachers build teaching repertoires suitable for multiple student constituents. In line with this, they believe that they have more flexibility and 'freedom to show initiative' in international schools than they do in their home countries.

A further comparative theme concerned parental and community expectations of schools. Leaders appeared struck by the extremely high expectations for academic success held by international school parents when compared to their home countries. They described their school communities as, 'focused unmistakably on improving outcomes for children'. They are of the opinion that both parents and students in Hong Kong international primary schools hold much higher expectations of teachers than their counterparts at home, and that these expectations focused predominantly on exam-based academic achievement. A number of leaders noted, however, that this emphasis definitely differs by ethnic and/or cultural group.

(TH2) Basic Leader Skills

In terms of basic administrative tasks, at least in structural terms, leaders see little to no difference between those needed at 'home' or those required in international schools. Their specific 'leader' responsibilities include team development, mentoring and supporting, ensuring cohesive teamwork and quality planning. Despite the apparent similarity of these generic tasks the middle leaders identified differences in terms of the form and intricacies of these tasks, when enacted in international primary schools. For example, one leader suggests joint planning can be difficult because of the different 'habits' of her team members; these habits appear related to both cultural and national backgrounds. As she explains, 'some wait to be told their part whereas others are more accustomed with jumping in and having a say in everything'. When it comes to enacting leadership, once again the participants feel they have more time and flexibility to work things through in international schools than they do in their home countries.

It was interesting to note that certain issues appeared to become more apparent to the leaders when they were asked to compare leadership in different contexts, such as parental expectations, awareness of language needs, and thinking in terms of important leadership skills. Each of these areas had been neglected or skimmed over in previous questions. It is also worth repeating that only one participant had worked in a multicultural environment in his or her home country, whereas currently all work in an intercultural team of one sort or another, and with a variety of student cultures. Within such an environment they openly recognise the need for awareness of the cultural differences within their teams. A number of participants specifically pointed out the importance of putting different management structures into place in order to work effectively with team members from different cultures.

Cross-Theme Patterns

Recalling the basic nature of the research and restricted purpose of the study, a number of patterns from across the different themes can be seen. These begin to define what leaders see as important in international primary schools.

- Leaders understand the cultures (values, norms and beliefs) their students bring to school and, equally importantly, the ways these influence how the students learn.
- Leaders understand that their student populations are not intellectually, ethnically, culturally or nationally homogeneous, and that disproportionate attention to one or another of these groups may disadvantage the learning and opportunities of others.
- Leaders recognise the importance of addressing the complexities associated with language learning and use (in terms of mother-tongue and MOI) in their schools.
- Leaders do not just influence academic outcomes, but place considerable emphasis on building an international consciousness for a 'better world'.

- Leaders believe students need to be multiskilled cognitively, academically and socially to work and live successfully in a globalised world.
- Leaders work with parents and other community groups, which hold high academic expectations for their children.
- Leaders are familiar with culturally sensitive teaching methods and support teachers developing an array of suitable techniques at their disposal.
- Leaders lead staff of different cultural and national backgrounds; this requires knowledge of these backgrounds and how they shape relationships, and it requires the skills to bind intercultural teams.
- Leaders hold an array of generic management and leadership competencies but the enactment of these competencies is influenced by context.
- Leaders help new staff settle into their new school and life in order to establish effective communication – they are concerned with the overall well-being of their staff.
- Leaders provide development opportunities so teachers are both aware of and have the capacity to teach students from different cultural and national backgrounds.
- Leaders have considerable flexibility in what they do and how they lead.

Individually and collectively these patterns expose a number of worthwhile research locales. The most noticeable of these is that researching international primary school leadership is not about establishing yet another separate field or agenda; rather, it's about locating the leadership agenda securely within the broader international schema. By definition, primary school leadership is melded within the shifting montage of international schools and as such is about leading learning, building mindsets, developing staff, providing resources and working in human relationships. Put even more simply, how school leaders lead is (or should be) driven by what students need, and how teachers and school communities can best provide this. We now focus on this theme. This does not imply that other themes are neither identifiable nor important, but that the theme of integration is considered an important starting point for framing research.

Defining an integrated international leadership research agenda can be done a number of ways. One way is to set the stage as simply as possible through addressing five basic guiding questions – Who? What? Why? Where? and How? – relevant to students, teachers and leaders of international primary schools, and then looking for their integrative relationships. These questions are shown in Figure 1, along with a number of factors that may influence how and in what manner the questions are posed. These general questions can relate to each other vertically as well as horizontally.

International Primary Schools

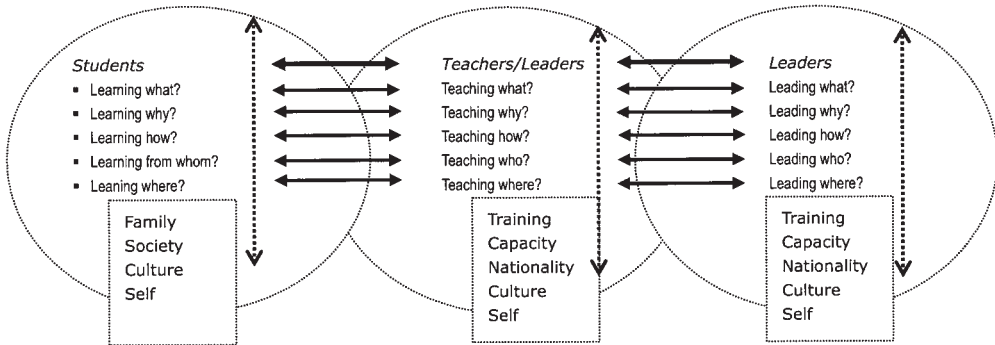


Figure 1: Integrated research into leadership in international schools

Each cell can house multiple integrative issues that reach across roles. For example, the ‘how’ question targets the form and nature of various connected student learning, teaching and leadership processes. Table 1 illustrates simply how this might work using examples in line with the data discussed earlier – other sample questions might easily be substituted.

Table 1: Sample questions that may be asked about ‘Learning How?’

Students	Teachers	Leader
How does culture influence learning style(s)?	How can pedagogies be harnessed or adapted to suit different learning styles? How can these be balanced in the classroom? How can learning styles be tapped to add richness to the classroom?	How can school policies support different and appropriate approaches to learning and teaching? How can cross-cultural teams work together successfully to better meet diverse learning needs? How can the school help new teachers develop the capabilities necessary to understand cultural influence and develop relevant pedagogies? How do leaders role-model and monitor student learning?
How does language influence learning?	How can language difficulties be overcome in classrooms?	How can interactions with the broader community strengthen understanding

	How can respect for the influence of mother tongue make teaching more effective?	of the influence of language on learning? How can worthwhile learning opportunities be provided for teachers and other staff?
How does family background influence learning?	How do family expectations impact teaching approaches?	How can the school engage the broader community in the school and in classrooms in meaningful ways? How can diverse family backgrounds be integrated into school and classroom life to provide support for internationalism?
How does societal context influence learning?	How do expectations of success differ across societies? How can diversity be used to promote international and ethical thinking and skills?	How can the schools be relevant both locally and internationally? How can the school promote respect for diversity through its curricular offerings?

The above discussion has suggested that research in international primary schools should flow through integration rather than the separation of fields and areas. In other words, what do leaders, specifically those in international schools, need to know, understand and do to promote school success across multiple dimensions? How do they establish the conditions necessary for themselves, teachers and students to consciously reflect on internationalism, and so prepare students from an early age to operate successfully and ethically across cultural and societal contexts? Why is it important to provide students (and teachers) with an international perspective? How is effective leadership enacted in international primary schools in order to set organisational direction, develop people's capacity, structure a school, and manage a learning programme, when teachers and students operate within different cultural and/or national frameworks? Where does this leadership take place – in the staffroom, the classroom, the community? Who are the leaders in an international primary school? The bottom line is that leadership research should work intimately with, not compete with, other vital areas. For example, research can be integrated usefully in at least three ways.

First, leadership research complements investigation into student learning in international schools, and into developing global intelligence. More research is needed into how cultural values influence learning, especially in the early years, and what types of teaching approaches would be most suitable for each different culture. Further research could show leaders how they could establish the conditions in which these approaches could grow, and

then 'spread' the capacity school-wide to make them work. Although some work has been done in these areas, notably in terms of how students learn, little is known about how leaders can spread awareness and increase capacity in this area – especially given that they are normally socialised within the same 'different' cultures as their teachers. Some available research does draw on leading and teaching in intercultural settings, but this tends to come from the study of different ethnic groups in urban areas. These groups are severely disadvantaged by a collection of factors, and thus may not be compatible with international school students (Walker & Dimmock 2002; Walker 2005). Whether this work holds legitimacy in international schools is open to question even though the two domains share some common issues.

Second, the meaning and exercise of leadership is inexorably tied to what international education means and looks like. The meaning attached to international education and schools and the intentionality of their purposes will help determine, and be determined by, the leadership of these schools. As such, questions around the definition, formation and operation of international schools may be a useful avenue for a simultaneous investigation into learning, teaching and leadership in primary schools. Furthermore, this investigation could be expanded to include situations where students progress to either international or to 'home country' secondary schools and then universities.

Third, given the fact that most primary teachers and leaders are trained within national systems before entering international schools, it seems important to try and understand whether and how issues around ideology, training and socialisation influence performance and fit. In terms of both of these, for example, do students, teachers and leaders from particular systems appear to adapt more smoothly and effectively into their roles in international schools than others? Are some prepared to lead more productive, culturally balanced teams? If so, why? Could this be related to the preparation they receive, the type of leaders selected or the ways they are socialised?

Conclusion

The aim of this article is to raise awareness of leadership in international primary schools and outline a basic agenda for possible future research. We first suggested a number of reasons behind the increase of interest in international schools and argued that there is currently a shortage of research into the leadership of these schools. We then presented some findings from a very basic study in the area. The purpose of the study is to identify some of the reoccurring contours leaders currently working in international primary schools see in their work. After identifying a number of themes we outlined a set of conclusions, which emerged from across the themes and, in turn, identified what we saw as the dominant message flowing from the conclusions. The message is that research into the leadership of international schools should take an integrated, not an isolated or detached, form. We then attempted to explain this position by posing and illustrating some questions, which may be useful for guiding future research into the leadership of international primary schools.

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Headship Careers in Primary Schools: Life after First Headship

Jeffrey Jones, Brian Fidler, Andrew Makori

Abstract: *This article reports findings emerging from a national study of primary headteachers in their second headship in England. The study investigated their reasons for moving schools; their choice of second school; and a comparison of their experiences as headteachers of the two schools. This is the first large-scale study of headteachers in a second headship. The numbers of headteachers choosing to move to a second headship, and their positive experiences, suggest that further stages should be added to the current conceptualisations of the career of the headteacher.*

The research design involved a national representative survey of primary school headteachers who were in a headship beyond their first. Questionnaire responses were obtained from 86 primary headteachers – a 74 per cent response rate. Follow-up telephone interviews with 20 of them obtained more detailed responses on the research questions.

The reasons that headteachers gave for taking up a second headship were threefold – personal, school-focused and externally driven. The over-riding reasons were to provide a fresh challenge and to prevent feelings of stagnation. Movement between schools was complex and the clearest overall trend was a move to larger schools.

Headteachers generally considered themselves more effective in their second school than their first and there were many accounts of the re-energising effect of taking on a new post.

The findings suggest that second headship should be considered as a valuable means of contributing to the continuing development of headteachers. Headteachers should consider a second headship as a possible extension to their headship career. They may need to plan their career before and during their first headship in order to obtain their desired second headship.

Introduction

It is interesting that this article is being written at a time when, according to the National College for School Leadership, ‘we have better headteachers than ever before in this country but they are in short supply’ (NCSL 2006a: 40). Nearly one-third of primary and secondary headships are re-advertised because no suitable candidate comes forward.

So, how do we respond positively to the challenges of headteacher supply brought about by the retirement boom, negative perceptions of the job, an extended apprenticeship leading to headship, and national and regional variations? Most of the thinking on this important issue has been directed at increasing the flow of new entrants to headship but, as previous studies

of teacher supply have indicated (Fidler 1993), it is also important to consider the retention of current staff. In this respect the large numbers of headteachers who retire prematurely should be considered. Such consideration of how to reduce early retirements focuses attention on the motivation and development of current headteachers and draws attention to the lack of a career structure for headteachers. Ironically, whilst there is a career structure to reach headship there is no career within headship. It is on one aspect of a career structure for headteachers that this article is concerned.

Headteachers' Careers

Headteachers' careers do not fit a conventional pattern. The traditional sociological career is expected to be a series of promotions over time through a series of hierarchical positions (Gunz 1989). In this sense there is a conventional career to reach headship, but not within or after headship. However, the expectations of careers in general have begun to change recently. In the commercial world in the late 1990s the discussion has been of the demise of careers with a single big organisation planned by its HR department (King 2004). Instead, careers are expected to be much more fragmented, with individuals being expected to play a much larger part in developing their own career and be much more flexible about expectations of what constitutes a career over a working lifetime.

As has been observed previously (Gronn 1999) individual teachers appear to adopt one of two stances to this process. There is a group of planners who begin with a vision of how their career might develop and plan their actions accordingly. The other group are much more serendipitous in their approach to their career. They have no overall career development plan and thus chance and opportunities play a larger part in their career path. Indeed, for this latter group it may only be in retrospect that a pattern is discernible.

In both these cases inevitably chance will play some part in whether individuals are planners or serendipitists, but the existence of recognised career routes will guide both groups. Planners will take this into account in their planning and those who discover career openings will more readily recognise them and also find it easier to recognise possibilities when they are pointed out by others. When career routes are changing or there are no accepted career routes, career planning is much more difficult. This is the situation for headteachers once they achieve headship. A further change following the Education Reform Act in 1988 was the demise of the number of LA advisor and inspector posts that heads could have moved on to, and posts in higher education in teacher training have become increasingly lower paid compared to headship.

If there are no career routes within or after headship this means that the default is that heads once they are appointed remain in the same school for the remainder of their career. How long individual heads would serve then would depend on the age at which they were first appointed. For heads appointed at an early age, this would imply a very long period in the same school. Whilst this may be suitable for some heads and some schools, there is evidence that this is undesirable for at least some heads and some schools (Fidler & Atton 2004). Various forms of system leadership have been proposed as career development for heads in addition to the headship of a school (NCSL 2006b). However, the length of time carrying out this same role would present similar issues. In this article second headship – that is, the move of a headteacher from one permanent headship to another permanent headship in another school – is examined as one career option, particularly for those who wish to remain as head of a school. The research presented here is intended to provide more details of this option and contribute to future career planning by headteachers and others.

In studying headteachers' careers there are two complementary perspectives (Crowe 1992). Firstly, there is the system perspective, which considers the needs of organisations and the system. This is the view that administrators and policy makers are likely to adopt. Secondly, there is the individual perspective of each headteacher on their career as they experience it. The system perspective gives an overall view of trends in headteacher supply and demand. This is likely to influence the situation as experienced by headteachers, but in individual schools there may be contrary trends.

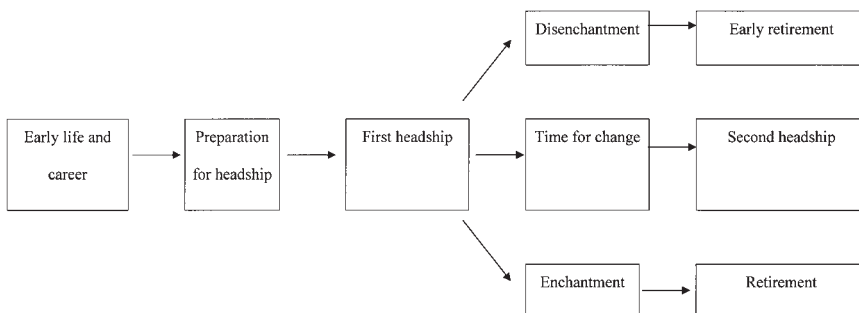
Research on the Careers of Headteachers

Until relatively recently, very little research literature has been available on the careers of headteachers. Whereas a great deal of literature has existed on preparation for first headship, there was rather less that analysed the period that headteachers were actually in post. Since the late 1990s, a small number of studies have examined the experiences of headteachers who have spent varying lengths of time in post, and have identified different phases or stages within the period of headship (Oplatka 2004).

These studies identified a number of similar features of headteachers' experiences, whilst naming the periods and their distinctive features slightly differently. In addition to the biographical studies of secondary (Ribbins & Marland 1994) and, later, primary headteachers (Pascal & Ribbins 1998), there have been two cross-sectional studies of headteachers who have served for differing lengths of time (Day & Bakioglu 1996; Reeves, Mahony and Moos 1997) and one longitudinal study of secondary headteachers (Earley & Weindling 2004).

The headteachers described their experiences during their period of headship and the researchers sought to identify common patterns and foci from their descriptions. Whilst there are some differences of emphasis in these formulations in the early and middle periods of headship, it is in the later periods of headship that the different emphases are most evident (Weindling 1999). Figure 1 illustrates how headship passes through a series of phases, culminating in either a period of 'disenchantment', often brought about by ill health or stagnation (Day & Bakioglu 1996); a period of 'enchantment' (Ribbins 1999), during which time the headteacher enjoys success and job satisfaction; or a 'time for a change' (Reeves et al 1997). On the basis of a longitudinal study of secondary school headteachers, Weindling (1999) suggested that the plateauing effect that led to disenchantment was far less likely to occur if the headteachers had moved on to a second headship. Whilst these possible late stages in headship have been suggested, the research findings are insufficiently robust as to be able to identify the relative frequencies with which these three possible outcomes might occur.

Figure 1: Major career stages of headteachers.



The 'period of disenchantment' is exemplified by those headteachers who feel that they have been in a particular post long enough and now envisage early retirement (Day & Bakioglu 1996). A small-scale study by Flintham (2003) of 14 headteachers who had retired prematurely discovered that their personal replenishment resources had begun to fail. On the other hand, a group of high-profile headteachers interviewed by Ribbins and co-authors were more likely to identify a period of 'enchantment' when they felt that they were at the peak of their professional abilities, towards the end of their respective careers (Ribbins 1999). Reeves et al (1997) identified a 'time for a change' for headteachers between five and ten years in post and during which there would develop a need for a new challenge as well as worries about keeping fresh.

There were small numbers of headteachers in their second headship in these studies but the major emphasis was on the stages or phases within first headship. However, a study of the professional development of women principals in Israel investigated one group of seven elementary school principals who had gone on to a second principalship (Oplatka 2001). A major finding from this study was the self-renewal effects of moving from the headship of one school to another in mid-career. It appeared to be the effects of having to adjust to the transition between organisations that led to the elements of self-renewal and reinvigoration.

Background

Previous surveys have provided estimates of the number of headteachers in primary schools that went on to second or further headships and the number that aspired to do so.

Hill (1994) conducted a survey with a 78 per cent (287) response rate of all primary heads in one typical county LEA in 1989. He showed that the demographics of heads and schools were representative of primary heads in England at the time. Of these heads, 40 per cent were in a headship beyond their first. Almost 90 per cent of large headships (over 350 children) were held by second heads.

When the sample were asked about their aspirations and expectations for the future there was a substantial difference between the 18 per cent who hoped to be in the same job in five years' time compared to 45 per cent who expected to be in the same job. On the other hand, there was little difference between the number who hoped to move to a larger headship and those who expected to do so (18 per cent and 16 per cent respectively). Unfortunately, the results were not analysed separately for first and second headships but heads of larger schools were more likely to be unsure of their future.

Two recent studies of headteachers have produced estimates of the proportion of primary school headteachers who were in a headship beyond their first. These were both national statistical surveys intended to give reliable estimates of a number of features of school leadership in England. The response rate from the sample for both surveys was less than 50 per cent and so there is potential for considerable non-response bias. The proportion of headteachers in primary headships beyond their first revealed by these two studies is 30 per cent in 2001 (with a similar percentage hoping to move to another headship) (Earley and Weindling 2004) and 32 per cent in 2004 (with 36 per cent hoping to move to another school, although this figure was for heads of all phases) (Stevens, Brown, Knibbs and Smith 2005). The study reported in this article only investigated headteachers in their second headship and so the findings don't give any further evidence on the proportion of heads in this group.

Investigation

This article will mainly examine second headship from the perspective of individual headteachers, although it will also examine the value of such moves from a systems perspective. Whilst many of the issues in career planning will be common for both primary and secondary schools, there are issues that have a greater effect on career planning in primary schools. Probably the most obvious of these is the case of small schools with a teaching head. Not only is this a most demanding job, but there is limited assistance that can be given by other posts of responsibility in the school – both because they will be few in number but also because they will have full teaching loads. There are career decisions involved in taking on such posts but there are also particular implications for moving on to second headships from such schools.

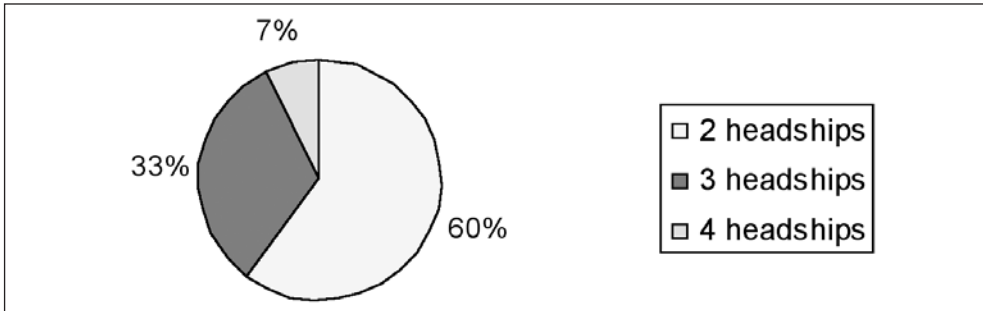
There is no national database of headteachers in a headship beyond their first and so a sampling frame had to be compiled. A cluster sampling approach was adopted. A purposive representative sample of Local Authorities (LA) was selected and LA personnel (e.g. inspectors/advisers) were asked for details of headteachers known by them to be in a headship beyond their first. Forty local authorities from the nine government regions in England provided details. In this way, details of over 800 primary school second heads were obtained. These were randomly sampled, and postal questionnaires were sent to second heads in 124 primary schools in total.

A small number of the headteachers turned out to be ineligible either because they were not in a second permanent headship, or they had not yet taken up post, or they had already left headship. A response rate of 74 per cent of primary school second heads provided 86 valid responses. Of these, over 80 per cent offered a telephone interview, and 20 such interviews were conducted. Headteachers who had been in post for three years or less were selected for this more detailed follow-up, as their recollections of the transition were likely to be freshest. The aim was to gain further details from the sample of their reasons for seeking a second headship, their choice of school, and their assessment of their success in second headship.

Findings

Number of Headships

The questionnaire asked about how many headships each individual headteacher had held. A surprising number of the headteachers in this survey had gone on to further headships beyond their second (Figure 2). Clearly, a few of these relocations may have been enforced as a result of school closures and mergers, as opposed to a personal decision. Since this research was primarily concerned with the headship that followed first headship, those who had progressed beyond their second school were only asked about their experiences in second headship. Thus, the study only has information on why headteachers moved to the headship following their first.

Figure 2: Number of primary headships held

In the sample, 55 per cent of the second heads were female and 45 per cent were male. The age on appointment to first headship varied between 27 and 54, with a mean age of 38 years. These figures are very close to those of all heads (Bright and Ware 2003). This would tend to suggest that those who go on to further headships do not achieve their first headship at a much earlier age than other headteachers. This is also the case for those who move on to further headships beyond their second.

Just over half of our sample reported that they had expected to go on to a second headship when they took up their first headship. Although this is a retrospective account it can be taken as some evidence of a 'planned' approach to their career. Those appointed under the age of 35 were slightly more likely to expect to proceed to second headship than more mature headteachers. There were slightly higher results for those who went beyond second headship.

The length of time that headteachers spent in first headship varied between 1 and 19 years, with a mean of 5.7 years and median value of 5 years. Those who went on beyond second headship spent between 1 and 15 years in first headship, with a mean of 5 years and a median of 4.25 years. Thus, those who continued to headships beyond their second spent just under a year less in their first headship than those in second headship as a whole.

Progression to a succession of headships could mean that headteachers spend only relatively short periods of time in a number of schools. When second heads were asked about how long they thought headteachers should spend in a school before contemplating a move to another headship, many pointed to the need to take into account their individual circumstances but, in general terms, a consensus developed around a preferred period. Often, this was expressed as the time for one cohort of children to pass through the school. When expressed in terms of number of years, the range was generally between five and seven years.

Nine out of ten of the second heads had moved directly from their first school to their second, while the remaining 10 per cent had held various posts between headships – for example, with a local authority, in an interim headship or as school improvement advisers. Those who moved directly between headships were appointed to their second headship within an age range of 31 to 55, with a mean age of 44 years and a median of 45 years. There was a view that obtaining a second headship over about the age of 50 would be more difficult, as governing bodies might see age as a barrier. This might be due to their perception that older headteachers have less energy or because they wished to appoint a headteacher who would serve for many years. In the event, in this sample, 16 of the 76 who moved directly between schools were appointed at the age of 50 or above.

Those who had gone on to a further headship beyond their second (and moved directly from first to second headships) were appointed to their second headship within an age range of 31 to 52, with mean and median ages of 43; 5 of the 30 were appointed to their second headship at age 50 or over.

Reasons for Seeking Second Headship

When asked to indicate the main reason for their move to second headship, the largest group of headteachers cited predominantly personal reasons (66 per cent). A further group said that the reason was concerned with their first or second school (27 per cent), and a small final group (6 per cent) said that external circumstances were their main reason.

Personal

The 20 headteachers who took part in telephone interviews expanded on their reasons for moving on to a second headship. By far the most likely reason given by headteachers was associated with taking on a new personal challenge and of seeing a change of school as a way of doing that. The quotations are identified by the gender of the headteacher and their sampling number.

I wanted to go and take another school and get that to be as successful as the school I was about to leave (F124)

A few went on to explain their need for a new challenge by observing that they had completed a phase of improvements in their current school and that they either could not see further changes they could make, or that they did not feel that they wished to be the one to make the next round of improvements.

I'm the sort of person I think who needs to be in a school where I've got a lot of work to do to develop and change it. I'm not necessarily a very good person at being in an established school and making it better. (M093)

Often, the move from first to second headship was precipitated following deep contemplation about what they hoped to do for the rest of their career. Thoughts about spending the remainder of their career in an extended period of headship in the same school had prompted the decision of some to assume another headship.

I became a head at quite an early age. I have to think carefully about what I'm going to do for the next 25 years and I can't imagine being a head for 25 years. (M089)

Whereas the majority of headteachers were content in their first school and happy to remain there, a small number of others from the sample had particular reasons to change school. Some headteachers, chiefly of challenging schools, regarded their present workload as unsustainable in the longer term and wished to move to a school with a more realistic workload. There were also those in very small primary schools who found it stressful and frustrating trying to combine the role of headteacher with a substantial teaching commitment. Their wish was to move to a larger school that offered more time for school leadership and a smaller teaching commitment.

Certainly when I was looking for schools – I knew what I didn't want and I'd had experience of a small school and I didn't want to be a teaching head any more – that perhaps restricted my choice a bit. (M089)

For male and female headteachers alike, the change of school could be brought about by family circumstances such as the need to relocate because of the work of their partner.

Some headteachers identified the prospect of increased salary as one of their reasons for seeking to move schools, whereas others were eager to point out that their particular move had not resulted in any salary increase. The latter group tended to be those who had been relatively highly rewarded in their first headship but who felt the need for a fresh challenge and so had moved despite an initial personal financial cost.

School

School-related reasons for moving from a first to a second headship could be concerned with either a 'push' from the first school or a 'pull' from the second school. As part of their reasoning, some headteachers suggested that their first school was in need of a fresh impetus that a new headteacher might be able to provide. Often, headteachers expressed a view that it would not be in the best interests of their first school for them to remain there.

there came a point where I thought actually this is too comfortable – I'm not doing well for the school. (F062)

A few could see that the future of their first school was either uncertain or under threat and so took the opportunity to move to a second school with a more certain future.

For a few heads it was the attraction of a particular type of school, or even sometimes the attraction of a particular school, which led them to move to that school.

It's a bigger school and I felt that, to be a fully rounded head, I needed to have the Early Years and Key Stage 1 experience. (M078)

External Circumstances

For a few headteachers, the move to a second school was an enforced one, usually because their first school closed or was subject to an LA reorganisation. With the benefit of hindsight, these headteachers spoke positively about the fresh impetus a change of school had brought, although they would not have sought the move without the external threat.

A very small number of headteachers were sought out to head a particular second school. This was likely to be a failing school for which a successful headteacher was required who would be able to bring about the required improvement to allow the school to move out of its failure category.

I had a phone call from a senior officer in the LEA and he said to me would I like to go and have a look at this school. And I did go and have a look at it and I absolutely loved it. (F080)

Choice of School

Just over two-thirds of the headteachers in the survey said that they were more selective in their choice of second school than their first. A further 28 per cent said that they were equally selective.

I do think if you're moving when you're already a head, you've got to feel really enthusiastic about the school you're going to. (F007)

Whereas a small number were looking for a specific school, the majority sought a school of a particular type, and only 13 per cent considered a wide range of schools. After making their choice, over half made only one application before being appointed.

Almost four-fifths of headteachers surveyed chose a school for their second headship that they expected to be quite different to their first school and only 22 per cent chose a school that they expected to be essentially similar to their first.

For me personally, I also wanted a larger school and different challenges – not a school that had a high number of free school meals and lots of SEN children; I wanted to look at the other end of the spectrum, to schools that were high achieving. (M016)

The movement between schools was complex (Fidler, Jones and Makori 2009). In certain respects, there was an overall change in the profile of schools between headships. For example, generally, second schools were much more likely to be in a suburban location than first schools and much less likely to be rural. Only 45 per cent had first and second schools in the same type of location. There was a smaller overall movement from denominational to non-denominational schools, with 57 per cent having first and second schools of the same denominational type, and there was also a clear movement to larger schools. Some heads only sought schools of a particular denomination whilst others specifically sought a non-denominational school for their second headship. Almost three-quarters moved to a larger school, with 20 per cent moving between similar-sized schools and only 6 per cent (n=5) moving to a smaller school. For many headteachers of small schools with a high regular teaching load in their first headship, this was one of their criteria for moving to a second headship.

Other overall trends were less clear (Fidler et al. 2009). In terms of school performance, for example, second schools were more likely to be described as 'coasting' with fewer 'struggling' or 'failing'. But there was a good deal of movement of headteachers between performance categories, with only a quarter heading first and second schools in the same category. Half of those in higher performing school categories moved to schools in lower performing categories for their second headship.

In the interviews, headteachers were able to expand on their choice of second school. In addition to providing challenge, the most common factor cited by second heads was that they had to feel that they personally could make a difference in their new school. There were a number of kinds of school where it was clear what sort of difference was required, such as schools in challenging circumstances, schools experiencing temporary difficulties and coasting schools. In such cases, headteachers had to decide whether they were the one to lead the school in making changes. However, there were other successful schools where any judgement about making a difference was more problematic. Indeed, some headteachers indicated that they wouldn't wish to consider such schools because they couldn't envisage being able to make a difference, whereas other headteachers had reached a different conclusion. They also wanted to be able to make a difference and they recognised that this might not be in terms of noticeable increases in test results, and so they had looked at such schools with a broader view of improvement. Headteachers in such schools had been able to identify features that they could improve in these successful schools, such as special needs provision or broadening the curriculum.

some of those schools can be coasting schools because it's fairly easy to get high results if everything's set in place, everything perfect for them. Hence my second headship was a very successful school but even then there are things we can do and develop. (M016)

There were two further points of note concerning second heads' choice of school. The first was that there were some headteachers who wanted to move to a second school that had particular characteristics absent in their first school, such as educating the whole primary age range. The second was that there were a small number of headteachers who only decided on a second headship when a vacancy at a particular school was advertised. For these headteachers, there were only a very small number of schools that would have been tempting enough for them to apply.

Overall, about one-third of headteachers followed another second head in their second school. The proportion was higher in larger schools. This tends to suggest that larger schools may have an expectation of appointing an experienced headteacher when a vacancy arises.

A small number of recently appointed headteachers said that it was too early to judge their success in second headship, but 95 per cent of the remainder judged themselves either to be as successful as in first headship (48 per cent) or more successful (46 per cent). Only 6 per cent (n=4) thought they were less successful.

Headteachers didn't directly tend to mention thinking about the potential risks before applying for second headships, but a small number hinted at it. Obviously, leaving a successful first headship and moving to a second headship involves some degree of personal risk – for example, that the second headship might be less successful, or that he or she might be less happy in the new school.

... after I got the job – thinking what happens if I make a hash of it and what happens if I'm not actually as good as I thought I was? OK, I did well there but was that because of the people, the circumstances, the particular time in that school's evolution that I was the right fix for them at the right time – can I reproduce that somewhere else? (F062)

Headteachers who were finding second headship more challenging than they expected were now more aware of the possible risks. The pressures from their governing body and their local authority to make speedy improvements in schools that were failing exacerbated their feelings of insecurity in the role. It was the expected speed that many saw as unreasonable and which fuelled their sense of vulnerability.

Further Career Advancement

When asked about their future career plans, of the 51 headteachers who were in a headship after their first, the majority of those over 50 years of age expected that they would retire when they left their current headship. A few expected that they would do part-time work either in education or outside education in their retirement. Of those under 50 years of age, 43 per cent (16) expected that they would move on to a further headship, and only 30 per cent (11) expected to retire from their second headship. The remainder expected that they would be involved in other work within education.

Discussion

Previous research has indicated that up to about a third of primary heads in England have moved to a headship beyond their first. However, this research shows that about 40 per cent of them also moved on to a headship beyond their second. This is the first indication of a career 'within headship' rather than only a career 'up to headship'. By far the largest proportion of second heads had voluntarily chosen to move to a second headship. Whilst this was most likely to be a personal choice, some cited the needs of their first school as a precipitating factor. Only a very small number were forced to move – for example, because their first school closed or merged – and an equally small number were 'invited' to take a second headship, usually by their local authority.

By far the most common reason that headteachers gave for choosing to move on to another school when they did was to gain a fresh challenge. The common belief held by these headteachers was that they had brought about major improvements in their first school but had now reached a point where they feared a period of relative stagnation, where the future pace of change in their school would be much slower. A number feared the consequences for themselves, and for their school, if they became too comfortable in their existing situation.

Many of the participating headteachers made the move to second headship at this stage of their career because it offered a welcome alternative to spending the remainder of their career in their first headship. Some had anticipated that this would mean spending an extensive period of time in a single headship and that it would be in the same school and with many of the same people that they currently worked with. Clearly an assumption that was widely shared but only articulated by a few was that above a certain age either they would not want to move schools or they would not be able to obtain another headship because appointing bodies were unlikely to select them. In a sense, headteachers were identifying a 'window of opportunity' when the timing was right both for them and for their first school to progress to a second school. Despite feeling personally that the time was right, a small number had delayed their move in order to complete planned developments in their existing school.

Whilst it is difficult to speculate about any covert age discrimination in appointments to headship made by more than 20,000 school governing bodies, there is evidence from respondents in this study that many appointments to second headships are made to those over the age of 50 and a number appointed over the age of 50 have subsequently gone on to a further headship after their second. Thus, being 50 years of age does not appear to be a barrier in at least some schools. For those who have an interest in a particular school, however, it will be the decisions of an individual governing body that will be crucial.

For those headteachers with no intention of moving to a second headship when they first became head, it was often their developmental experiences whilst in their first post that prompted their interest in, and developed their confidence to apply for, a second headship. Opportunities to assist and work with headteachers from other schools allowed these headteachers to compare their skills with their peers and to decide that they had the capability and capacity to take on a second headship. These headteachers confronted what some of their peers had only vaguely contemplated – namely, the potential risks of moving from a successful headship to another school where the same levels of success were not guaranteed. Some noted that they had been able to bring about substantial improvement in their first school because they had found the internal situation and external context was appropriate for them, at that time. A few acknowledged the part played by luck and that this might not be repeated or continue.

For many, the potential risk of moving to further headship was balanced by what they saw as the bigger threat of complacency that might develop if they stayed. Some respondents remarked that they had already begun to repeat or refine practices that they had done before. The tendency to 'tinker' meant insufficient stimulation, and the headteachers described their worry of being bored. Some also described a reduction in their energy levels and/or their inclination to make changes for their personal benefit rather than to meet the needs of the school. Either way, they feared that there would be a negative effect on their school. These fears were often echoed by their experiences if they took over from a long-standing headteacher. In such cases they identified improvements that were needed.

In the interviews, most headteachers indicated that the move to a different school had an energising and reinvigorating effect. Even those headteachers who had moved to schools facing particular challenges welcomed the change and stimulation a new context had provided. This was also strongly articulated by those who had an enforced move to a second headship following some form of school reorganisation, as well as those who had made the choice voluntarily. For some, however, this feeling of renewal and reinvigoration had come at a price, particularly in their first year. Most remarked that their workload in their first year was higher than they expected, and that adapting to a new school was more demanding than anticipated.

Many of those in the headship after their first did not envisage staying until retirement from that post for the remainder of their career. Just over four out of ten of those under 50 years of age envisaged a further headship as their next career step. Thus the career of headship for many in the future will involve at least three headships.

Only 2 of the 86 heads would not recommend those in first headship to think of a second headship, and almost two-thirds would definitely recommend it. Most considered themselves more successful in second headship than their first, and a small number saw their first headship explicitly as a period for learning about headship before moving to a second headship. In addition to their learning in first headship in order to carry out their job, a small number of heads mentioned that they explicitly tried to prepare themselves to take on another headship. This could involve both acquiring skills and also trying to increase their credibility to be appointed to the kind of school that they desired. There were a number of instances where experiences before first headship were important in securing a particular second headship. This suggests that headteachers will increasingly need to plan both their careers before headship and their careers in headship.

Amidst the personal satisfaction of change to second headship, however, there were those who considered that not all heads should feel pressured to move on to a second headship. They counselled that heads should only move to a second headship if they felt the time was right for them and they had identified another school that they were keen to move on to.

Conclusions

This work lends support to the notion of second headship as a further career stage for many primary headteachers – possibly an increasing number, as the succession planning issues for schools take hold. This promises to provide a valuable opportunity for self-renewal for experienced headteachers. A major reason and frequently reported motive articulated by most second heads was their need for a fresh challenge. They also generally considered that a new headteacher would be good for their existing school since such a change could provide a much needed new impetus.

It is not clear how far second headship could offer an extension to a headship career that would be suitable for all headteachers. Many of the second headteachers felt that they became bored if they carried on doing the same things for too long, and not all headteachers may be like that. On the other hand, the small numbers of headteachers who had an enforced second headship when their existing school was subject to local reorganisation also found the experience stimulating. This would tend to suggest that more headteachers should consider a second headship as part of their career development.

There were examples that showed some headteachers had planned their headship career to include a second headship, and there were examples where headteachers had ensured that their development whilst in their first headship would facilitate a move on to a second headship. Finally, there were a few headteachers who aspired to head a particular type of school, and the extension of their headship career was to enable them to take on such a post. Particularly for this latter group, career planning both before and during headship may be important to ensure that the head has the credentials to be appointed to the headship of their choice.

If headteachers are appointed at an earlier age in future in England because of the substantial number of headteachers who are expected to retire over the next few years, the development and reinvigoration of headteachers will become more and more important. It is clear that a second headship can offer such mid-career renewal for many headteachers.

Finally, it is worth noting that although the principal considerations here have been of the positive effects on headteachers of a second headship, the evidence of the effects on schools is also positive, although there were some schools that had difficulty in appointing a successor. Heads not only considered that a fresh impetus from a new headteacher would be beneficial for their original school but also that there were a number of instances where the additional skills of an experienced headteacher were needed in the second school that they headed.

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The Challenges to Primary School Leadership of HIV/AIDS in Botswana: The Inadequacy Of School Effectiveness Models in the Context of the Pandemic

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Abstract: *This article focuses on the effects of HIV/AIDS on education in Southern Africa, and is based on a study of several countries in the region but with especial investigation into the situation that obtains in Botswana. We argue that much of the educational development and the response to the pandemic at both school and system level has been influenced by the dominant Western educational paradigm of school effectiveness. The findings of the multi-level study that underpins this paper are presented at the pupil, classroom, and school and leadership levels, and conclusions are drawn about the efficacy of current leadership approaches within the context of AIDS. The paper subsequently problematises some of the conventional wisdom that defines the response to the immense dislocation caused by HIV/AIDS, especially in relation to the ways in which schools should be led and managed, and we suggest that more culturally sophisticated, locally defined approaches may be required.*

Introduction

The disease that has come to be known as *Human Immunodeficiency Virus or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)* first emerged in the early 1980s. HIV refers to the virus, which is transmitted mainly but not exclusively through unprotected sexual contact, and AIDS refers to an advanced form of the condition, which follows infection and is characterised by a severe breakdown of the body's ability to fight disease. HIV/AIDS now constitutes a global pandemic that has impacted on individuals, families and national and regional economies through the stress it places on key social systems. Nowhere has this impact been greater than in sub-Saharan Africa, where a number of factors have elided to create a crisis of previously unimagined proportions.

This article focuses on the effects of HIV/AIDS on education in Southern Africa, and is based on a study of several countries in the region but with especial investigation into the situation that obtains in Botswana. We commence by arguing that much of the educational development and response to the pandemic at both school and system level has been influenced by the dominant Western educational paradigm of school effectiveness. The findings of the multi-level study that underpins this paper are then outlined and the impact of AIDS is presented at the pupil, classroom and school and leadership levels. Finally, we

draw conclusions about the efficacy of current leadership approaches to AIDS. A number of key contentions are placed in front of the reader including:

- HIV/ AIDS has impacted all areas of social life in the region including, and especially, education.
- Education and educational institutions have been viewed as central to ameliorating the effects of the pandemic.
- An essentially Western notion of school effectiveness has been artificially imposed on the educational approaches employed in the fight against the disease.
- It is open to question whether more nuanced and local solutions might not be more effective in addressing the effects of HIV/AIDS.

In essence, we attempt to problematise some of the conventional wisdom that defines the response to the immense dislocation caused by HIV/AIDS, especially in relation to the ways in which schools should be led and managed, and we suggest that more culturally sophisticated, locally defined approaches may be required.

The Emergence of HIV/AIDS

Since HIV/AIDS was first discovered in 1981, infection rates have soared from just a few cases in 1997 to approximately 39.5 million in 2006, with 4.5 million new infections alone in that same year (UNAIDS & WHO 2006). Sub-Saharan Africa, which is hardest hit and hosts 63 per cent of the world's AIDS-infected people, has its epicentre in Southern Africa, with an infection rate of 33.4 per cent in Botswana (Seipore 2006), 30.2 per cent in South Africa (Department of Health, South Africa 2006), 24 per cent in Zimbabwe (UNAIDS 2005) and 10–25 per cent in Zambia (Ministry of Health 2005). In the age group of many primary children's parents (30–35), infection rates continues to escalate (Seipore 2006), leaving many school-age children orphans. Worldwide, 13.2 million children were orphaned between 1992 and 2001. By 2005, Sub-Saharan Africa had 12 million orphans alone (UNAIDS & WHO 2006). In that same year, 57,964 children were registered as orphans in Botswana (NACA 2005). Already in the late 1990s Zambia had more than 130,000 child-headed families, and 860,000 South African children had become teacherless (Coombe 2001). While early predicative studies suggested that AIDS would have an impact on the supply, demand and financial resources available to education – the goal, content and process within schools (Kelly 1999) – later studies, which indicated that early studies had grossly overestimated AIDS' impact, concluded that since the teacher death and orphan ratios were still relatively low within each school, the education system would have the capacity to cope with the increased mortality rates (Bennell 2005). Conclusions like these and others that suggest that the AIDS pandemic has stagnated, as the new infection rates now mirrors death rates (UNAIDS & WHO 2006), do not sufficiently take into account the loss of human life and the potential societal development that these people would have contributed. Nor do they sufficiently reflect the qualitative impact that AIDS is having on pupil and classroom-level factors that correlate positively with academic achievements and the consequent long-term implications on all pupils' learning and attainments.

Efforts of governments and numerous charities, aid organisations and HIV/AIDS education programmes have been developed and delivered; testing centres are established and condoms distributed with the aim of trying to curb these trends and mitigate the impact. Though these efforts have played a vital role, still the infection rates continue to rise in all continents of the world (UNAIDS & WHO 2006). Whilst keeping children in education and

helping them to strive for high academic grades have been recognised as an important key to keep children HIV negative, the current content and form of education has not sufficiently made a dent in the current HIV/AIDS trend.

The School Effectiveness Response

In a globalising, market-driven and swiftly changing world, economic competitiveness between nations is increasingly influencing educational goals and policy development. Despite its status as a 'developing' rather than 'developed' region, Southern Africa is by no means immune to these trends. The increasing market orientation of education has led to a growing need for regular feedback about the status of pupils' attainment at different levels of the education system, and data is often used to inform and modify practices and in international league tables. School effectiveness research (SER), which, through statistical means, tries to identify and measure universal process variables that correlate positively with academic tests scores of basic skills in maths and language, after contextual factors have been controlled, has often been used as a tool to obtain comparative data.

SER models, with a dominant perspective that views schooling as a 'black box' for experimentation and empirical analysis (Bollen 1996), have, arguably, led to a greater understanding of the many factors influencing pupils' attainment at different levels of schooling. However, whilst the limited focus on a small number of measurable outcomes can enhance the transferability and comparison between nations, Fidler (2001) argues that this narrow focus has deflected attention away from the broader curriculum, higher-order learning, and moral and social aspects of learning. Moreover, taking the emphasis on measurable outcomes as de facto, the paradigm has been challenged for its conservative orientation and failure to engage in the debate about the important educational and human values and goals that are required in a changing society and globalising world (Slee, Weiner & Tomlinson 1998). Nevertheless, policy makers and inspectorate systems in different countries have used both methods and findings from SER as a vehicle for macro-political change and to hold schools accountable (Hamilton 1998), as well as to compare schools across national and cultural borders, and as benchmarks to improve schools.

In the context of Southern Africa and with specific reference to the impact of HIV/AIDS, school effectiveness approaches have impinged on, and helped to frame, the educational response to the developing crisis, since many national and international agencies have moulded their response around the notion of making intervention strategies and, crucially, funding contingent upon comparatively easily measurable outcomes. In the context of the overarching hegemonic influence of SER approaches such strategies are understandable and are designed to ensure both impact and accountability. However, Hamilton (1998) and Ball (1998) argue that the use of such SER strategies may, in many instances, lead to an overemphasis on short-term thinking and superficial solutions in the form of best-fit all-DIY school improvement packages. Effectiveness processes are also increasingly migrating across national borders through international educational aid packages to developing countries without taking the local context into account. However, not only might the aim of universality at the process level be questionable between countries where schools are challenged by contextual factors such as war, poverty, inequalities and discrimination, but the appropriateness of using universal findings to secure quick measurable results, in contexts such as a growing AIDS pandemic, where long-term large-scale behaviour change may be the only solutions to turn the trend around, may also be debatable.

The succeeding sections of this article unpack some of the ways in which these dominant transnational approaches to intervention, dependent as they are on a limited number of measurable outcomes, may ignore important critical contextual factors with an inevitable impact on the efficacy of the relevant initiatives.

The Relevance of the School Effectiveness Model of Leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa

At the heart of the school effectiveness research paradigm is the search for a universal educational organisational model that will yield consistently similar results when transferred to different context (Creemers 1994). Through statistical means SER studies seek to unpack the black box of schooling and explore the relationship between school organisation and the extent they achieve their goals, by identifying the universal process variables that correlate positively with high academic test scores of basic skills in subject areas such as maths and language and to measure and establish the effect associated with attendance at a particular school (Cuttance 1985). By focusing primarily on narrow educational outcomes, the use of sophisticated statistical analysis and controlling for context, it is suggested that the universality and transferability of these variables are enhanced. Whilst the focus on narrow academic tests scores of basic skills arguably enhances the transferability, as goals within these areas are more readily agreed, such a narrow definition of an effective school makes education terribly impoverished (Rose 1995). Moreover, it may detract attention away from the broader curriculum and higher-order learning (Fidler 2001), and in the eyes of teachers, children and the public, the value of these subjects is emphasised at the expense of other important areas of learning and contextually sensitive educational outcomes. Such an imbalance can cause a value shift that can lead to marginalisation of many students whose talents and interests lie outside these subjects, as well as relating learning to the needs of the context.

Factors that are assumed to have an impact on pupils' test scores in subjects such as maths and language are statistically tested using Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression analysis or multilevel modelling, to establish the extent that these process variables, the so-called 'school effect', enhance pupil's progress beyond the average expectations (Sammons, Hillman & Mortimore 1995). The magnitude of the school effect, which is the effect associated with attendance at a particular school, can thus be defined as the difference between a school's average level of performance against expected standards, after adjusting statistically for the characteristics of the school's intake (Willms 1992). The SER paradigm is therefore concerned about the extent that schools differ from each other and are consequently identified as 'effective if their pupils perform at a higher level than the average school' (Cuttance 1985: 13). Hence the magnitude of an individual school's effect is directly related to the performance of schools with a similar background and resources. Consequently, school effects are more easily detectable in schools systems with greater variance between schools (Rutter 1983; Tymms 1993; Hill & Rowe 1996). Rutter (1983) thus concluded that the magnitude of the school effect is therefore dependent on the type of educational system, the variance between schools and the choices of process variables.

The SER paradigm is thus a search for a highly reliable model of education that will yield consistently similar results when transferred to different contexts (Creemers 1994). Many SER studies are based on the Carroll (1963) model, which defines the 'degree of learning as a function of the time actually spent on learning divided by the time actually needed by the

pupils' (Creemers, Sheerens & Reynolds 2000: 283). The degree of learning is thus based on pupils' aptitude, perseverance and ability to understand, and the quality of instruction and opportunity to learn, as well as the extent that actors at the school, regional, national and contextual level enhance classroom-level factors (Carroll 1963). At the pupil level this would be translated into pupils' background, motivation, aptitude and willingness to spend time on learning and on the classroom-level quality of instruction and teacher behaviour. The latter would be measured through the effective use of grouping, assessment and feedback, and resources, along with the structuring of learning experiences and the ability to create an orderly learning environment with high expectations. At the school, regional and national level, Levine & Lezette (1990) suggested that the degree of learning is influenced by the way that the school culture, policies, rules, educational goals, curriculum, assessment and monitoring system and leadership enhance variables at the classroom level. Though it was hoped that the synchronisation of levels would shed light on how they affect each other, researchers found that this is not as clear-cut as envisioned. Reynolds & Teddlie (2000) thus advocated a need to study the interface between the levels.

With the introduction of contextual variables into SER studies Teddlie, Stringfield & Reynolds (2000) suggest that the SER paradigm has taken a giant leap towards universality and transferability. Contextual variables, which can be defined as 'the differential effect associated with certain variables (specifically SES of student body, community type, grade-phase of schooling and governing structure) upon scientific properties of school effects' (Teddlie et al. 2000: 163), are said to have an impact on pupils' outcomes beyond the individual pupil's or teachers' effort, capacity or background (Willms 1992). In reviewing contextually sensitive studies, Teddlie et al. (2000) found that the contextual variables of 'SES', 'Community type', 'Grade-phase' and 'Governing structure' have yielded the clearest results. Contextual variables such as 'SES' are measured through the proportion of high and low SES of the student population, often using state-available indicators such as free school meals or government aid (Teddlie, Stringfield & Desselle 1985), while the 'Community type' sensitive studies have explored suburban, inner-city (Witte & Walsh 1990), urban, suburban and rural community effects (Hannaway & Talbert 1993). Governance-type sensitive SER studies have explored the effect of private vs. government funded schools, and state schools vs. church schools (Coleman, Hoffer & Kilgore 1981; Willms 1996). Moreover, studies have found that there is an effect associated to links between one or more contextual variables (Cuttance 1988; Hannaway & Talbert 1993), as well as links between contextual variables and effective process variables (Teddlie & Stringfield 1993). Brophy & Good (1986) argue that schools can now be compared more accurately as controlling for particular contextual variables enhanced the generalisability of the school effect. Whilst this may be true, Brown (1998) argues that the use and measurement of the most common contextual variables are over-simplistic and too Western, and are thus insufficient to compare schools across national and cultural borders. Similarly to the measurement of the magnitude of school effects, Shavit & Williams (1985) found that contextual variables are hard to detect statistically in a homogeneous educational system or in areas and countries with a low level of variance between schools. Hence, when transferring SER to developing countries with centralised educational systems and a low level of autonomy, an effect may be hard to detect statistically, thus not supporting the notion of generalisability. Nevertheless, such factors may still have a substantial effect on teaching and learning, and achievements, thus supporting Rea & Weiner's (1998) argument that the strength of the introduction of contextual variables into SER does not lie within controlling for their effect, but rather in

understanding their impact on teaching and learning. Although Teddlie et al. (2000) suggest that the context of community type may be the most crucial variable when conducting SER studies in developing countries, with the increasing migration of school effects across national borders, Reynolds (2000) calls for greater international collaboration to investigate the relationship between school effects and the local context, and the development of country- and region-specific contextual variables.

With the increasing migration of 'effectiveness variables' from the West to developing countries through aid packages, and the focus of many nations to develop an SER-inspired monitoring system, this paper seeks to respond to Reynolds & Teddlie's (2000) call to develop country- and regional-specific contextual variables, by exploring AIDS as a contextual variable and its impact on the pupil, classroom and school level. Secondly, it seeks to identify what implications the HIV/AIDS may have as a contextual variable when conducting SER in developing and transitional countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence.

Methodology

In an almost uncharted territory of the research field of HIV/AIDS and education, we argue that there is a need to first understand the varying way in which AIDS influences the different levels of the education system before one can begin to identify appropriate and valid indicators to control for the context of AIDS. Not only may a conventional SER study in a centralised education system such as Botswana fail to detect any statistical significant compositional effect – as the variance may be too low, and the quantitative impact of AIDS on pupil's overall grade still too low – but, as the process of identifying processes that will support the mitigation process is still in its early infancy, it is unlikely that these processes are yet sufficiently developed to show any effect. As the impact of AIDS on pupils', teachers' and headteachers' outcomes are likely to be detected earlier by means of qualitative evidence than by detecting a statistical effect, this research is designed as a qualitative embedded multilevel case study of the impact of AIDS on the pupil, classroom and school level of the Botswana education system.

A non-probability approach was used to identify the research population, which comprised 197 Year 4–6 pupils, teachers and headteachers, in six schools in six different community types in one high (46.4 per cent) and one low (28.2 per cent) HIV/AIDS-prevalent district in Botswana. The population also included regional advisors and directors at the ministerial level. To allow the study to be representational of Botswana community types, schools of average size, with average to high academic scores, were selected in an urban mining town, in a fringe area of large town, in a large, long-established village, in a small village with electricity, in a small village without electricity, and in a small rural village without electricity. No schools in remote area dwellings participated due to distance and the need for four-wheel-drive transport.

Several research methods were used to elicit information from respondents at the different levels. A combination of the bottom-up 'draw-and-write' technique and unstructured interviews were used at the pupil level to elicit pupils' perception of the AIDS impact on themselves, their family, their community and their school life. This method was selected as it encourages children to be relaxed and feel capable. It breaks down cultural and linguistic barriers and allows powerful emotions to be expressed (Pridmore & Bendelow 1995), and it provides a platform for discussion around their experience. And, most importantly, it allows for contextualisation of education to be based on pupils', teachers' and headteachers'

experiences and expertise rather than through already assumed variables. Unstructured interviews were conducted during the drawing session to establish further meaning and verification about the pictures. The inclusion of a few structured questions allowed the findings to be anchored in national statistics and research (ABT 2002; BIDPA 2003). Semi-structured interviews were used with the adult population to establish the impact of AIDS on their lives and at the different levels of schooling.

Data was firstly analysed at each school by level, gender, age, and community type, starting with the pupil level, and then through Hycner's (1985) phenomenal data analysis schedule, where units of meanings were identified at each level and later combined to explore their particular impact on each other. Data was coded by the school number, grade level, and the respondent's individual number: for instance (4/5/21) or for a teacher (T6/2/4). Trustworthiness of data and analysis was established through methodological, theoretical and combined level triangulation, as suggested by Denzin (1970): through verification and interpretation of data of one level by respondent at another level; through a few structured questions that allowed the data to be anchored in national statistical data and previous quantitative research; and through the use of mixed methods. The data will be presented in the following section by level.

Findings

The Impact at the Pupil Level

A review of pupils' drawings and statements portray HIV/AIDS as a 'powerful killer disease that can't be stopped' (1/4/25), one that 'does not choose its victims' (1/4/24), as it 'kills mother, father, sister and brother' (2/4/21). An overwhelming number of pictures showed young and old, with lesions, highlighted ribcages and the bedridden, coffins with remaining family members grieving by the graveside and many young children fending for themselves or being cared for by relatives. HIV/AIDS also featured strongly in children's perception of the future, where 36 per cent of the pupils thought that AIDS would destroy the country to such a degree that 'Botswana would be a damaged country ... like the land when they started life' (3/4/25), because 'people would have died of AIDS' (4/5/20), where even 'the children will be dead' (5/5/19) or left to fend for themselves. Although 31 per cent of children perceived a positive future, where Botswana would be a rich country with big cities, 'with many shops' (1/4/23) and where 'school will be bigger and decorated nicely' (1/5/11), the positive visions were dependent on the eradication of AIDS or the identification of a cure. Similarly, AIDS featured strongly in the 16 per cent who wished for a positive future or the 16 per cent who perceived a dual future, where the potential and wished-for future was dependent on the discovery of a cure for AIDS, or large-scale behaviour change. Whilst almost all children in this study described AIDS as a cause of great fear and a major threat to themselves, their family and community life, both now and in the future, only 85 of the 167 children has seen or knew people who were suffering from AIDS and only 38 of those pupils had close immediate and extended family members who suffered from AIDS.

Although only 11 per cent of pupils interviewed mentioned that they had lost one or two parents to AIDS, the orphan ratio in the schools varied from 1 per cent in the high-prevalence urban area to 18 per cent in the low prevalence area. Whilst prevalence figures may be linked to the risk that pupils' parents may be infected – as in the high prevalence (46.4 per cent) area, where an average of 40 per cent of women in the age group 25–39 are HIV positive

(UNAIDS & WHO 2006) – the orphan ratios within the schools were higher in the rural areas, with a prevalence rate of 28.2 per cent (NACA 2005), where the majority of children lived in single-family households. Whilst many studies have focused on the impact of AIDS on orphans, the findings indicated that pupils' lives, well-being and ability to learn were affected from the time they suspected that their parents might be suffering from AIDS. Children with sick family members often became anxious or depressed, withdrew, felt unaccepted by society, and lost confidence and control as their lives became shaped by the sickness patterns of the parents. Many children lost hope in the future and began to show symptoms of grief when the parents' illness became so severe that they no longer could guide or show their love as before. Orphans were described as being sad, tearful, struggling with their work, and lacking confidence and money for uniforms and school equipment, thus supporting the findings of Siegel, Karus & Raveis (1996) that the pre-death period is often filled with higher levels of anxiety and depression than the post-death period. This affected their well-being, their hopes and beliefs in the future, and their ability to concentrate and spend time on learning at home. However, in contrast to neighbouring countries, where schooling is not free and many children will have to leave school to contribute to the family income, only two children described how they knew of two boys who had dropped out of school to support their families when parents were ill and passed away. Consequently, it is likely that the impact of AIDS may reduce the educational level of the next generation's parents in neighbouring countries faster than it would in Botswana, where both school and ART are free. Hence, both the family and the national SES would influence the context of AIDS influence on pupils' well-being and learning. Though the orphan ratio was lower than earlier studies predicted, all but a handful of pupils described high levels of fear and anxieties about being pressured into risky behaviour, becoming infected, parents' being HIV positive, and become sick or becoming orphans. Children in urban areas, and in particular those from nuclear or one-parent households, described greater levels of fears and more horrific stories of what happened to orphans. Whilst this might initially be seen to be linked to level prevalence, descriptions showed that it was more closely linked to family constellation, community cohesion and cultural values in the different community types. More individualistic values, limited connection with extended families, higher levels of stigma and limited ability to contribute to the community were linked to the higher levels of fear of becoming infected and becoming an orphan in the urban areas, whereas closer links with extended families, close-knit communities, higher ability to contribute to the family and the community, and the visibility of what happens to those who become orphans was linked to lower levels of fear in the rural areas.

Children's fears of becoming orphans and becoming infected was exaggerated by the inability to talk to parents and loved ones about their concerns, as described by this Year 5 boy: 'We are twelve in our family. Two are sick and one has died. I didn't talk to them about the sickness. I wanted to talk about it. I can't talk to anybody' (5/5/15), and unnecessarily by incorrect knowledge or use of terminology. As much of the common vocabulary used to describe AIDS symptoms is linked to common colds, flu and children's diseases, teachers described how many children become agitated and anxious as soon as parents and people around them begin to display these symptoms. The misuse of word such as sock for condom and blankets for having sex, meant that many children who normally share beds with siblings were worried that they might become HIV positive. Pupils' fears of becoming infected revealed cultural gender identity perceptions. Girls commonly described fears of being pressured into having sex, being unable to negotiate safe sex, not having their voices

and views respected and being forced into having sex in exchange for money, while many boys and some girls described the link between alcohol and the inability to stand up for their rights and wants. Some boys also described the risk of becoming infected through fights and through caring for younger HIV-positive siblings. Boys and men were perceived to have more partners and being the bearer of AIDS. This notion was substantiated by the national BIDPA (2003) study, which found that boys and men took pride in having many girlfriends, while girls and women would have an extra affair as a security. Tlou (1996) explained that sexuality and fertility is closely linked to women's status in society in Botswana, and motherhood is perceived as a passport to adulthood and the only way that girls can prove their fertility. Hence, many young girls find it difficult to negotiate safe sex even though they have high levels of knowledge of AIDS transmission and prevention. Pupils in the rural areas, who had not made links between the high level of AIDS symptoms and deaths in the community through AIDS education in schools, showed fewest strategies to protect themselves, as these symptoms were attributed to witchcraft, rather than to AIDS. Whilst a positive vision of the future is often perceived to be linked to empowerment, these findings indicated that pupils who were able to perceive a dual and wished-for future described more strategies to protect themselves and to take an active role in turning the trend around, whilst pupils with a doomsday vision of the future had a greater knowledge of AIDS, but did not see how they could contribute to their own well-being or to turning the trend around.

These findings indicated that a good knowledge of AIDS and high academic grades did not lead to less risky behaviour (BIDPA 2003); rather, behaviour change is linked to cultural values and beliefs, and the ability to make links, analyse and act upon the knowledge in the community. Consequently, there is a need not only to teach children to negotiate safe sex but also to nurture a strong sense of gender identity based on equality, the ability to analyse cultural values and practice, long-term thinking and the capability of thrift, as well as to analyse and actively participate in the issues affecting the community.

These findings suggest that close experience of AIDS is reducing pupils' ability to concentrate and the time spent on learning, which SER models have found contribute to high academic scores. Whilst there is no evidence to suggest that close experience of AIDS leads to lower levels of aptitude, responses did suggest that closer experience of AIDS led to reduced self-esteem and perception of one's own ability, which would influence the extent that pupils trust and make use of their own ability.

The Impact at the Classroom and School Levels

The impact of AIDS on pupils' psychosocial well-being spills over into pupils' attainments and classroom attitudes. Not all orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) showed symptoms of distress within the classroom, as some saw school as a safe haven and a place to be normal. The majority of teachers noted how students' behaviour changed and their attendance, timekeeping, preparedness and ability to focus on learning and complete assignments decreased as parental illness became worse. Whilst one regional advisor did not see how OVC grades were worse than those of children from destitute families, teachers noted how grades gradually declined during a parent's illness and then dropped drastically – approximately two and sometimes three grades – during the last stages and when the parent passed away. Although, for the majority of children who had been successfully and comfortably incorporated into a new family, grades slowly began to increase after six to eight months, a considerable loss of learning was noted. Whilst OVC were most affected, teachers also noted how:

Many children are not happy. They are always thinking death. They feel lost. They have seen it on television. They have heard it from people talking. They are thinking that they will be dead in the future. They don't see a future for themselves. They are worried and thinking that I will have it too. Many children are confused. (T2/2/1).

In addition, pupils' learning and attainment are also affected by AIDS' impact on teachers' lives, health and well-being. Whilst early and quantitative studies primarily focused on the impact of teacher mortality rates, which are slowly increasing (from 81 primary school teachers during 2001 to 110 during 2006), the findings suggest that, similar to the pupil level, the effect of AIDS is much broader than the specific impact of the disease on personal and familial health. For instance, one teacher noted how 'AIDS makes teachers be not effective because the teachers are not thinking about what they are doing in the classroom' (T4/7/3) and sometimes 'parents are complaining that teaching is weak' (T6/3/2). While teachers noted that those who were receiving antiretroviral (ARV) treatments returned to their usual self after about three to four months, headteachers found that they were always tired and their perceptions and feelings about themselves and their work had changed. Although mortality and teacher sickness were lower than earlier predicted (2–4 teachers per schools were known or showed through absentee patterns to be HIV positive, except for one school where the majority of teachers mentioned that they were HIV positive), absenteeism was in the increase. HIV-positive teachers were on average absent at least one week per month, or 1–2 days per week, and in the later stages of the disease this could increase to up to 60 days in different intervals during term (three and a half months). During these periods the most common sickness cover arrangements were to divide the children into the remaining classes in the same grade level, which meant that, in a two-form entry school, the teacher pupils ratio rose to 60–70:1, whilst in larger schools the increase would be much less.

The increased absenteeism and the general decline in teacher health and energy levels had an impact on the breath and the depth of the curriculum and on teacher effectiveness.

One regional educational advisor (REO) described how many teachers were no longer fit to teach subject areas that required lots of energy, such as PE, agriculture and home economics, and as a result teacher effectiveness was reduced or subjects were no longer taught. Large class sizes meant that many of the interactive methodologies were substituted with whole-class lecturing and copy work, and subject areas that did not lend themselves to these methodologies were also often marginalised when classes were doubled. Hence, increased sickness levels and general ill-health led to inconsistency in teaching, reduced teacher preparedness and use of effective assessment, marginalisation of important subject areas, and reduced effectiveness in teaching, use of appropriate methodologies and grouping of students. In Zambia, Das, Dercon, Habyarimana & Krishnan (2004) found that similar levels of absenteeism led to a decline in the learning rate of 20–30 per cent, which was equivalent to approximately three months of learning. This impact was higher in rural areas and in schools where students were taught by a sick teacher year after year. Teachers described how they would have to take two days off to travel into larger towns to receive antiretroviral therapy (ART), while those in the urban areas could receive treatment after school hours.

This would amount to a considerable loss of learning for OVC taught by sick teachers or in the same grade level in a two-form-entry school. However, all children's learning was affected. The increase of OVC within the classes also meant the teaching speed within the classroom was reduced and the teacher workload increased, as they prepared an increasing

amount of remedial work for pupils who were not able to keep up with the curriculum.

Hence the impact of AIDS on pupils' learning is related to the level of impact of AIDS on pupils' own lives, the level of impact on the teachers, the prevalence within the school, and community factors such as social cohesion, family constellation, closeness to hospitals, and stigma, as well as school-level factors such as school size and policies related to absentee cover arrangements.

The Impact on Leadership and School Culture

Coombe (2001) found that the organisational culture in many schools in South Africa had begun to be tainted by fear, distress and anxiety, and loss of concentration. However, the school culture that had been described by Harber & Davies (1997) as authoritarian and conformist had become more open and supporting. In three schools that had been visited three years earlier, a change in attitudes towards AIDS was noted. The Teacher Capacity Building project (TCB) had not only increased teachers' knowledge of AIDS but also provided a forum where staff could discuss issues related to AIDS. However, to what extent this government initiative influenced the school culture and pupils' learning, in schools that had electricity, was to a large degree dependent on the headteacher's role. In schools where headteachers took an active role in championing the fight against AIDS, and shared ideas about effective teaching strategies and how to support OVC, a more collaborative and open approach to HIV/AIDS was found.

Though the headteacher in the urban school in the high HIV/AIDS-prevalent area did not perceive how AIDS had and would impact on his role as a headteacher, the other headteachers mentioned how they now spent more time counselling teachers to ensure that they were able to cope with the teaching, and encouraging teachers to overcome their fears and to be tested, seek help and treatment; encouraging teachers, through personal engagement, to work closely with the community and AIDS organisations and to support pupils and their families; and travelling to the land and cattle posts to find out what was happening with OVC whose attendance had become erratic. In the schools where there were close links with the community and where the school organised theatre groups and role-plays, pupils' descriptions of their role in the mitigation process was more active.

Whilst sickness-cover arrangement in an autonomous school system is seen as a school-level factor, in many centralised systems, like that of Botswana, cover arrangements, replacement of teachers and hiring is managed regionally or centrally. Only after a teacher has been sick for two weeks, or has a doctor's certificate for longer than two weeks, can the REO organise an external supply teacher. Although many of the sickness patterns were less than two weeks at the time, and therefore did not qualify for this support, much of the longer absenteeism was also covered in-house. This was partially due to an ineffective monitoring system and delays in recording and sending absentee notes to the REO. Although the first port of call was the headteacher, most absenteeism was covered by doubling-up of classes. This, as noted at the classroom level, impeded the breadth and depth of the curriculum, and effective use of grouping and subject-specific methodology, with greater impact in smaller schools and in grade-levels with weak teachers, as suggested by this teacher's statement:

Sharing large classes really affects my teaching. I can't manage. We have so many children in the class. I can't control the situation. Sometimes when I talk to them they will not listen or obey. I only teach on the backboard. They don't concentrate at all

because the other class is above or below the objectives of my class. It is very painful for me because it delays the teaching of my pupils. At the end, my objectives are not covered and I have all the problems. There is too much noise. I feel very frustrated. (T1/1/4).

The extent to which the sickness cover system influences pupils' learning and attainments is thus dependent on the following factors: firstly, how far the headteachers take an active role in covering classes; secondly, the timely monitoring of sickness patterns and reporting to the REO; thirdly, the class allocation from year to year, ensuring that one class is not taught by a sick teacher year after year; lastly, the school size, as the impact would be greater in smaller schools. In addition, the impact is also dependent on community type. Teachers in the rural areas needed to take two days off to travel to hospitals to receive ART, while urban teachers could receive treatment after school hours. Moreover, as HIV-positive teachers often were transferred to schools close to medical facilities, the proportion of sick teachers receiving ARV will increase in urban areas, which will have an impact, both on the general effectiveness and the culture of the school. The stigma of the disease will have an effect on teachers' lives and teaching. Respondents also noted that although the stigma has been reduced in all community types, the speed by which it reduced was slower in the urban areas, and teachers were suffering greater effects of stigma, which manifested itself in withdrawal, lack of confidence and trust, and loneliness. As the stigma in the different communities was closely linked to knowledge, cultural values and traditional beliefs, the strategies to reduce the stigma within the school and the community would need to differ.

Not only do these findings have implications for leadership and how to measure, monitor and control for the context of AIDS in SER studies, they also raise questions about the appropriateness of conducting SER studies or using transplanted effectiveness variables from the West into the context of areas with AIDS prevalence. This will be discussed further in the next section.

Implications

Exploring and using AIDS as a contextual variable when conducting SER studies in developing or transitional countries with high HIV/AIDS prevalence raises a number of issues. It may be easy to suggest that AIDS should be measured and controlled in relation to the prevalence in each region or county. However, a more in-depth study of the impact of AIDS on the different levels of education in Botswana reveals that the influence of the context of AIDS is not directly related to the prevalence, nor is it stable over time. For instance, family constellation, number of siblings and proportion of children from one-parent households would be an important indicator. The highest proportion of orphans and the fastest growing number of orphans were found not in the high-prevalence area, but in the villages where the majority of children were dependent on parent incomes. These children's lives and learning were disrupted most when a parent became ill or died. Children in two- or one-parent households also described greater fear of becoming infected and losing a parent than those living close to the extended family. However, this was also closely linked to the social cohesion within the community type.

It also clear that contextual variables are not stable over time, since the impact of AIDS changes the community constellation more than once during the pandemic pattern. In developing indicators and categories for community type, factors such as the following need

to be taken into consideration: people's connection and relationship with and to the community; the history of the town and to what extent people have long-established commitments towards the development of the community and the well-being of its people; the visibility of AIDS within the community; family constellations within the village; work opportunities for both parents within the community; closeness to hospitals and medical facilities and closeness to a main road that is tarred, electricity and railway lines. Although culture has played a part in interpreting some of the findings related to contextual variables in various studies, the findings from this study indicate that there is a real call to identify ways in which culture can be explored further, as cultural beliefs, values and practices influence the way in which pupils learn, and relate to AIDS, to stigma and to the spread of AIDS. Whilst Hofstede (2001) suggests that cultural values are stable over time, pupils' and teachers' descriptions suggest that they vary between community types as, according to respondents, people's values became more individualistic the more urban the society became. The difference between individualistic and collective values influenced not only the way in which people experienced stigma, but also the way in which children felt connected to society and felt cared for, and their worries about becoming orphans. Hence, there is a need to study cultural values and their connection to community type. Thus, the findings do not only support Cuttance (1988) and Hannaway & Talbert's (1993) result of an effect associated with the combination of contextual factors, but suggest that, within the context of HIV/AIDS, this effect also requires new methods and indicators for measuring the commonly used contextual factors. As, for example, the effect of 'SES', 'culture' and 'community type' differed between the levels, there is a need to measure the composition not only of the student population, but also of the teacher and the national level.

Finally, the context of AIDS raises a number of issues in relation to SER and its search for one universal model of education that will yield similar results, once contextual factors have been controlled. We support Fitz-Gibbon & Kochan's (2000) call for the development of 21st-century sensitive educational approaches, since the findings of this study indicate that high academic scores in maths and language, and good knowledge of AIDS, do not lead to behaviour that allows pupils to develop sufficient capabilities to make decisions that will allow them to live long enough to contribute towards broader societal development and well-being. This may lead to further marginalisation of subject areas paramount in developing the capacity to turn the trend around.

Indeed, we would argue that the pandemic forces us to engage in the debate about the nature, goal and role of education in the 21st century. An analysis of the underlying issues in these findings would support Delors' (1996) argument that schools need to place as much value on the educational goals within the UNESCO's domains of 'Learning to be' and 'Learning to live together' as on traditional education subjects such as those found in the domains 'Learning to know' and 'Learning to do'. As such, the context of AIDS challenges the school effectiveness search for universality in the process variables, as effectiveness processes may need to vary between the goals in the different educational domains. Moreover, these process variables may need to change over time according to the needs of the pandemic patterns.

Moreover, as the influence of AIDS is not stable over time and is dependent on the interaction between the contexts of AIDS, community type and culture, it is important to begin to monitor these relationships. As argued by Rea & Weiner, such analysis is required in order to begin to meet pupils' and teacher's needs. Whilst Fitz-Gibbon & Kochan's (2000)

review of SER and Educational Indicator Research (EIR) found limited links between the two paradigms, we suggest that, within this context, EIR can play a vital role in enabling an SER study. Thus, we propose that the monitoring of both the qualitative and quantitative impact of AIDS on learning is required.

Conclusions

The findings from this study indicate that AIDS is no longer purely a health problem, but rather that its impact influences all levels of society and the education system, undermining many of the factors that have, through SER studies, been deemed to contribute to pupils' learning and high attainments. In this respect there is a clear argument that AIDS needs to be regarded as one of the more important contextual variables, alongside the context of community type and school culture. These findings pose a number of developmental challenges to the School Effectiveness Research paradigm in relation to the paradigm's search for universality.

Responses to AIDS have been influenced strongly by the dominant transnational school effectiveness paradigm. Whilst we accept the widely held belief that a pupil's socioeconomic background can have an impact on that pupil's learning and attainment, this paper argues that all too often AIDS is perceived as a health issue affecting only those children who have become orphans or have experience of AIDS within their homes. Findings from this qualitative multilevel analysis of AIDS' impact on the education system in Botswana reveals that HIV/AIDS now operates as a compositional variable, in that the impact is no longer restricted to orphans and vulnerable children. The level of AIDS prevalence within the pupil, teacher, headteacher and community population is influencing all children's learning and attainments. Not only does HIV/AIDS, as a contextual variable, have an impact on processes influencing attainment, but findings indicate that AIDS influences other contextual variables and the way in which these need to be measured. School leadership will thus need more sophisticated and culturally nuanced approaches that take account of this complex nexus of problems.

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Leadership for Emotionally Hot Climates

Kenneth Leithwood and Brenda Beatty

Abstract: *In this article, we argue that school leaders work in emotionally intense environments and that recognition of this pervasive phenomenon enhances their chances of success. With a focus on elementary schools, the article identifies some of the most consequential teacher emotion sets that are subject to influence by principals, and provides an account of the sorts of leadership practices most likely to have both indirect and direct effects on teaching and learning. Enhanced capabilities and increased capacities of both teachers and leaders result, when the emotional ecology of schools features prominently in leaders' views of how they do their work.*

Introduction

School leaders live in emotionally 'hot' climates. Their teaching colleagues bring strong commitments to their work. Most feel passionately about teaching as a 'calling', love their students (well, most of them anyway), hate all the paper work they have to do, are just 'knocked out' by seeing a student finally 'get' reading, absolutely dread filling out report cards, feel burned out by December, and get anxious about 'meet the creature' nights. Thinking about the first day of school each year is a stomach churner even for the most experienced teachers.

Principals and others in school leadership roles are, for the most part, implicitly discouraged from taking on any serious consideration of these emotions as a serious part of their work. Teachers' emotions are more typically viewed as a troublesome distraction on the path to a cooler set of preferably 'rational' considerations: What should be our goals for this year? How can we align our budget with our school improvement plan? Can we create a master schedule that will allow the primary teachers time to plan together? Clearly these are critical questions for leaders to address in some fashion. In this article, however, we argue that the emotional 'ecology' of schools ought to figure prominently in leaders' views of how to do their work. In advancing this argument, we are not adding more to the job of school leaders. Rather, we are claiming that the successful creation and implementation of these seemingly rational decisions of necessity depends on leaders' sensitive engagement with the emotional realities of everyone within their organisations, including themselves!

Until recently, teachers' emotions have been a badly neglected focus of attention on the part of educational researchers, as well as policy makers and other reformers. There are exceptions, including a series of studies by Beatty (e.g., Beatty 2000; 2007b), as well as Hargreaves (1997; 1998), Lasky (2000) and Schmidt (2000). Among the most significant recent efforts to refocus research in school leadership is a developing line of theory and evidence

about the important role of principals' pedagogical content knowledge and its skilful use in changing teachers' instructional practices (e.g., Stein & Spillane 2005). This seems a long overdue project – and one we certainly support. But when leaders neglect the emotional roots of teachers' work in their efforts to influence it, the results can be disappointing.

In their comprehensive text *Understanding Emotions*, Oatley, Keltner and Jenkins (2006) offer what is, in our view, a most compelling explanation for the effects emotions can have on perception and human interaction: 'Emotions', they argue, 'have principled, systematic effects upon cognitive processes and ... lead to reasonable judgments about the world ... Emotions structure perception, direct attention, give preferential access to certain memories and bias judgment in ways that help the individual to respond to the environment in ways that we recognize as valuable aspects of our humanity' (2006: 260). Results of recent brain research (Damasio 1997) indicate that emotions are part of the seamless blend of thinking and feeling that occurs simultaneously and continuously, acting as heuristics that shape and reflect perceptions. They have a profound effect upon the decisions we make and the morality of our judgements (Margolis 1998).

Especially with primary/elementary schools in mind, the remainder of this article

- provides a synopsis of research about several sets of teacher emotions that have significant consequences for teaching and learning in schools and which are susceptible to what leaders do;
- describes how leaders influence teacher emotions *indirectly* – through teachers' working conditions; and
- identifies leadership practices and abilities with the potential to nurture positive teacher emotions *directly*.

Emotions that Influence Teaching and Learning¹

This section of the article draws on a subsample of evidence from a large number of original empirical studies (91), supplemented with systematic reviews of relevant evidence (26) published in reputable referred journals (Leithwood 2006). The majority of this evidence was collected in primary/elementary school contexts. Eight sets of teacher emotions surface in this evidence as having significant consequences for teaching and learning in schools, including individual and collective teacher efficacy, stress/burnout, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, morale, trust, and engagement in the profession. While we do not claim that these are the only teacher emotions that matter, there is ample evidence to recommend that school leaders are wise to consider them as lenses through which to view their own decisions, actions and communications with teachers. This section summarises evidence concerning three of these sets of emotions – individual efficacy, commitment, and stress/burnout – as a means of illustrating the relationship between teachers' emotions and the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

Individual Sense of Self-efficacy

Individual teacher self-efficacy (Bandura 1996; 1997) has been defined as 'the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance' (Berman et al.,

¹This section is based on evidence described in much more detail in Leithwood (2006; 2007) and Leithwood & Beatty (2008). Some parts of the text also are derived from these sources.

cited in Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy 1998). It is a belief about one's ability to perform a task or achieve a goal. Such a sense of self-efficacy may be relatively general, as in the teacher's belief about her instructional capacities with all children and all curricula, or more specific, as in the teacher's belief about her ability to teach a specific concept (e.g., evolution) to a specific type of student (e.g., Grade 6 students). Individual self-efficacy beliefs are associated with other thoughts and feelings (Tschannen-Moran et al. 1998). For example, low levels of teacher self-efficacy are associated with feelings of anxiety and general levels of stress (Parkay, Greenwood, Olejnik & Proller 1988), while high levels of teacher self-efficacy are associated with feelings of optimism, confidence and creative problem-solving

Teacher emotions have a direct impact on the way teachers interact with their students. High levels of individual teacher self-efficacy have been associated with a large number of quite positive teacher behaviours such as: a decreased tendency to be critical of students' incorrect responses and an increased tendency to persist in helping struggling students arrive at correct answers; promotion of expectations for achievement in the classroom; development of warm interpersonal relationships in the classroom; and an increased tendency to persist with a student who is failing to understand a concept (Goddard & Goddard 2001). Higher levels of individual teacher self-efficacy are also associated with higher levels of student achievement, particularly in maths and reading in the elementary grades and across diverse student populations (e.g., Anderson, Greene & Loewen 1988; Ross 1992), as well as more positive student attitudes towards school, subject matter and teachers; and lower rates of suspension and dropouts (Esselman & Moore 1992).

Teachers' Organisational Commitment

Teachers' organisational commitment has been defined by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) as a three-dimensional construct including: a strong belief in, and willingness to accept the organisation's goals and values; loyalty and a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; and a strong desire to maintain organisational membership. While efforts have been made to tease out the unique sources of influence on each of these dimensions of commitment, there is little warrant for considering them separately, as yet.

Teacher commitment has been identified as contributing to student achievement in a relatively small number of studies (e.g., Rosenholtz 1989; Kushman 1992). A more substantial body of research, however, has linked greater organisational commitment to employee retention (Angle & Perry 1981; Williams & Hazer 1986), job search activities, absenteeism (e.g., Bateman & Strasser 1984) and perceptions of organisational effectiveness (Hoy & Ferguson 1985). Job performance also seems to be moderately influenced by organisational commitment (Wright & Bonett 2002).

Stress and Burnout

Burnout is an extreme form of stress experienced by those who work in interpersonally intense occupations, human services for the most part, that are subject to chronic tension (Cunningham 1983); it signifies the inability of people to function effectively in their jobs as a consequence of prolonged and extensive stress related to those jobs (Byrne 1991). Stress and burnout are closely related states of mind. Dworkin (1997) argues that the greater the level of stress, the greater the level of burnout, up to some critical point after which it may actually reduce stress. Maslach and Jackson (1981) describe burnout as a three-dimensional state of mind including feelings of emotional exhaustion or wearing out, depersonalisation (teachers develop

negative, cynical and callous attitudes towards students, parents and their teaching colleagues), and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment and esteem. Burnout has significant negative effects on teachers themselves, their schools and their students. For example, teachers suffering from excessive stress or burnout tend to demonstrate increased absenteeism and a decline in classroom performance, as well as poor interpersonal relations with colleagues and students. These teachers are less sympathetic toward students, and less committed to, and involved in, their jobs. They have a lower tolerance for classroom disruption, are less apt to prepare adequately for class and are generally less productive (Farber & Miller 1981; Blase & Greenfield 1985). Burned out teachers can have a chilling effect on the morale of new teachers.

Teachers experiencing burnout also tend to be more dogmatic about their practices and resist changes to those practices. They are inclined to treat students in a depersonalised way and resort to victim-blaming for low achievement or failure. Dworkin (1987) summarises evidence indicating that high-achieving students placed with teachers suffering from burnout achieve 20 per cent less, over the course of a year, than do students placed with other teachers. Burnout also is associated with higher rates of student dropout.

The *Indirect* Influence of Leaders on Teachers' Emotions: Teachers' Working Conditions

This section synthesises evidence about conditions in classrooms and schools that have an impact on those teacher emotions discussed above, as well as others. Leaders are often in a position to shape many of these conditions in significant ways and so have an indirect form of influence on teachers' emotions through such efforts. We limit our analysis in this section to classroom and school conditions only.

Conditions in the Classroom

At the classroom level, both the volume and complexity of teacher workloads have been demonstrated to have substantial effects on their emotions.

Workload Volume

Teachers' overall attitude about the volume of their work depends on their perceptions of five more specific features of their environments. Commitments to their school, feelings of stress and morale are all eroded when teachers perceive their workload to be unfair in comparison with the work of other teachers in their own school or across the district; the overall number of pupils for which they are responsible becomes excessive; the size of their classes is perceived to make unreasonable demands on the time required for preparation and marking and seriously erodes the opportunities for providing differentiated instruction for their students.

Excessive paper work (filling in forms, collecting information for others, and so forth) and the burden of such non-teaching demands as hall monitoring, bus duty and lunchroom supervision add to teachers' feelings of stress and reduce their morale, commitment to the school, and the likelihood of seriously considering moving on to another school or another line of work.

Workload Complexity

The complexity or intensity of their workload, as teachers' perceive it, influences the same

internal states as does workload volume. Job satisfaction also is eroded by teachers' perceptions of an excessively complex teaching assignment. Such perceptions of excessive complexity arise when teachers are required to teach in areas for which they are not certified or otherwise ill prepared and when their students are uncooperative and achieve relatively poorly. Complexity is perceived to be increasingly manageable, however, when teachers are given a significant degree of autonomy over classroom decisions because this allows them to do the job the best way they know how. Manageability also is increased by an atmosphere throughout the school which encourages learning and when instructional resources are readily available.

Evidence indicates that, from the point of view of teachers, the complexity or general difficulty of their work is significantly increased by insufficient preparation time, excessively large classes and class composition including, for example, more ESL and special needs students (e.g., Harvey & Spinney 2000; Naylor & Schaefer 2003; Dibbon 2004). Perceptions of workload complexity are also influenced by disruptive students and the unmet needs of students arising, for example, from cutbacks in specialists and the presence of non-designated students with special needs. Students' aspirations, behaviour and readiness for learning resulting from dysfunctional family environments influence teachers' emotions, as do split- or multi-grade classes, especially for elementary teachers. Inadequate levels of learning resources and inappropriate assignments are a cause of negative feelings on the part of teachers.

Teachers' work is also made more complex by the decidedly uneven pattern of demands on their time. At one extreme, holiday periods afford the relative luxury of time for planning and preparing for instruction without many other work demands to be juggled at the same time. At the other extreme, as Dibbon (2004) reports, many teachers spend from 24 to 28 extra hours preparing for and reporting to parents during each two- to three-week reporting period every term on top of their other regular duties.

In between these two extremes are teachers' 'normal' weeks, of approximately 50 hours, about half of which time is spent in intense interpersonal interaction with a classroom of highly diverse children. Of all the things that teachers do, this core function of teaching is among the highest sources of stress for teachers, in large part because of the sheer number of specific tasks entailed in performing the function well (Harvey & Spinney 2000).

Conditions in the School

Four sets of working conditions appear to have a significant influence on teachers' emotions – school cultures, structures, relations with the community and operating procedures.

School Cultures

This school condition has significant effects on all seven teacher emotion sets. Increasingly positive contributions are made to the affective lives of teachers by school cultures in which the goals for teachers' work are clear, explicit and shared; teachers are able to find their work meaningful (e.g., clear and morally inspiring goals); there is little conflict in teachers' minds about what they are expected to do; and collaboration among teachers is encouraged and supported. Positive feelings about their work are also engendered in teachers by an atmosphere in the school that is genuinely as opposed to contrivedly collegial.

How the school manages student behaviour is also an important factor. School-wide management of student behaviour can have significant effects on the time required of

individual teachers for this task and so the time available to them for instruction. There is, therefore, a plausible relationship between this condition and both teacher and student performance. We know, for example, that time devoted to instruction is one of the most powerful explanations for variation in student achievement. And there is evidence that time-consuming individual teacher efforts to deal with students' misbehaviour have significant effects on teacher satisfaction, stress, absenteeism and attrition. These negative effects are substantially ameliorated when administrators and teachers together set and consistently enforce rules for student behaviour throughout the school. Recent analyses of the 2003 PISA data, collected by OECD in a large number of developed nations, indicates that the school's disciplinary climate is one of the four strongest predictors of student learning.

Teachers also respond positively when their schools value and support their safety and the safety of their students, and when there are high expectations for students and a strong academic 'press' evident to students and teachers across the school.

School Structures

The primary purpose for school structures is to make possible the development and maintenance of cultures that support the work of teachers and the learning of students. Not all structures are alterable, at least not easily, or in the short term, however. This is the case for school size and location, in particular. There is evidence that positive teacher emotions and work are associated with relatively small schools located in suburban rather than urban locations. But there is not much that can be done about school size or location, although 'schools-within-schools' is currently a popular response to large school structures, and the Gates Foundation in the USA is spending enormous resources in an effort to reduce the number of very large high schools.

All other structural attributes of schools associated with teachers' emotions are potentially quite malleable, however, and can easily outweigh the negative effects of larger school sizes and urban locations. Positive contributions to teachers' internal states (efficacy, satisfaction, commitment, reduced stress, morale, engagement) and overt practices are associated with structures that provide teachers with opportunities to collaborate with one another, such as common planning times. Positive effects on teachers' internal states are also associated with time to prepare adequately for classroom instruction.

Teachers associate positive feelings about their work with access to good-quality professional development (e.g., Hirsch 2004a; 2004b). Teacher learning opportunities may be found in many sources in addition to the school. But the school is a potentially rich source of professional learning depending on its structure and culture: its goals are a legitimate source of direction for professional learning; its students provide the unique challenges to which any new learning must respond; and its resources set boundary conditions on the expression of any new learning. Forms of professional development contributing most to sustained teacher learning include study groups, coaching and mentoring arrangements, networks linking teachers together to explore problems of mutual concern, and immersion in inquiry activities with students (e.g., Loucks-Horsley, Hewson, Love & Stiles 1998).

Empowerment, participation in school-level decisions and other ways of exercising control over their work are also critical working conditions for teachers. Arguments for the importance of empowerment, task autonomy and discretion originate in the workplace performance theories of Hackman & Oldham (1975) and Gecas & Schwalbe (1983). Autonomy and discretion, according to such theory, enhance commitment by 'making

people the main causal agents in their own performance' (Rosenholtz & Simpson 1990: 244). Physical facilities that permit teachers to use the types of instruction they judge to be most effective increase teachers' engagement in their schools and desire to remain in the profession (Hirsch 2004a; 2004b). Teacher engagement or retention is increased also when the school has well-developed and stable programmes on which to build when new challenges present themselves.

Community Relations

A third set of school conditions, community relations influence teachers' job satisfaction, as well as the probability of remaining in the school and profession. Positive contributions to these states occur when the reputation of the school in the local community is positive and when there is considerable support by parents and the wider community for the efforts and directions of the school (Naylor & Schaefer 2003).

School Operating Procedures

Finally, at the school level are three conditions that, as a group, influence teachers' sense of individual and collective efficacy, as well their job satisfaction and organisational commitment. These conditions are, first, the quality of communication in the school and, second, how well the school's plans for improvement match teachers' views of what the school's priorities should be. Third, evidence also points to the value of providing regular feedback to school working groups about the focus and quality of their progress.

Leadership Practices and Skills that Directly Influence Teachers' Emotions

Those emotionally consequential leadership practices uncovered in our review reflect four sets of 'core practices' found in a model developed from recent reviews of evidence about effective leadership (e.g., Leithwood & Jantzi 2005; Leithwood & Riehl 2005). Considerable evidence suggests that many of these practices are a significant part of what most successful leaders do in many different organisational and cultural contexts (e.g., Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, Dorfman & GLOBE associates 1999). With their early roots in transformational approaches to leadership, these core practices aim at direction-setting, developing people, redesigning the organisation, and managing the instructional programme.

- *Direction-setting* practices of school leaders aim at building a shared sense of purpose in the school, as well as an appreciation of the more specific goals that will need to be accomplished if progress is to be made toward these broader purposes. Successful leaders also hold high expectations for their own performance and the performance of their teaching colleagues and students.
- Focused on helping teachers use and improve their professional capacities, *developing people* includes the largest number of principal practices influencing teachers' internal states. Included among these practices are being genuinely collegial, considerate and supportive, listening to teachers' ideas, and generally looking out for teachers' welfare. Leaders who provide individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation nurture the capacities teachers need to accomplish both their own and the school's goals. Part of the success of leaders in building this capacity is buffering teachers from distractions to their instructional work, as well as modelling appropriate values and practices along with connecting with teachers about their core purpose: making a difference in children's lives.

- *Redesigning the organisation* entails building a culture that supports collaborative work and learning, creating and sustaining structures consistent with such a culture. Successful principals build productive relationships with parents and the wider community, and develop connections to the wider environments in order to both anticipate and influence future policies and mandated practices which may arrive at the school door.
- Finally, *Managing the instructional program* includes many of the practices associated with 'instructional leadership'. This category includes efforts by leaders to staff their schools with highly competent teachers, monitor the progress of students and the school's improvement effort, observe teachers' instructional practices and provide both supportive and constructive feedback to staff.

The claim that these core practices capture much of what effective leaders do in many contexts assumes, however, that such practices are enacted in contextually sensitive forms. Drawing on several extensive reviews of research carried out in non-school contexts (Barrick & Mount 1991; Zaccaro, Kemp & Bader 2004), as well as several studies conducted in schools (Nias, Southworth & Yeomans 1989; Beatty 2007a; Leithwood & Day 2007). Emotionally responsive practices are associated with an underlying set of 'social appraisal' skills or abilities. These are abilities to appreciate the emotional states of one's colleagues, to figure out what those states are in complex social circumstances, to respond in ways that are considered helpful, and to understand and manage their own emotions. Social and emotional 'intelligence' are logically associated with social appraisal skills. Mayer & Salovey (1990: 10) described emotional intelligence as 'the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth'. Beyond emotional intelligence, is the notion of emotional meaning-making, something that leaders familiar with the power of collaborative reflection engage in with colleagues and teachers alike. Transformational leaders do not shy away from the meaning of emotion and are prepared to venture into this important dimension of professional life despite the discomfort of breaking with traditions of professional cultural norms, in order to maintain and repair professional relationships (Beatty 2007a). Building trusting relationships is foundational to a dynamic collaborative culture (Beatty & Brew 2004).

In recently reported evidence from an international study of successful principal leadership (Day & Leithwood 2007), five of the nine qualitative studies included in the report provided evidence of successful principals' being good listeners; one mentioned principals having a good sense of humor (Moos, Krejlsler, Kofod & Jensen 2007), which could be a sign of good social appraisal skills in some circumstances (e.g., a strategy for defusing conflict or reducing tension). Notably, the explicit evidence about successful principals reported by Day, Leithwood and their colleagues does not reflect the full range of social appraisal skills uncovered in the wider leadership research. It is tempting, though, to infer from indirect evidence, as in teachers' characterisations of successful school leaders in Beatty's research (e.g. 2007a), that quite extensive social appraisal skills are involved.

Associated with emotional intelligence and social appraisal skills is the 'discernment' of what others are experiencing emotionally. This evokes the notion of empathy used to sense 'what people are feeling, being able to take their perspective, and cultivating rapport and attunement with a broad diversity of people' (Goleman 1998: 318). While this certainly

sounds – and can be – positive, dangers lurk beneath the surface of the leader who believes he or she knows what others are feeling. As Denzin (1984) notes, the belief that we can sense what others are feeling is just as often a mistaken belief; often, spurious emotionality is the result, since we can easily misinterpret another's feelings to be an extension of our own as we try to imagine what we might be feeling in their situation. Young (1997) argues that assuming we know another's feelings and preferences can be dangerous, especially if we are wrong. Only by engaging in respectful, reflective conversations to find out if what we have 'sensed' is accurate can we hope to know what and how someone feels.

Evidence suggests that leaders with emotional *wisdom* do not assume that they know what others are feeling. Instead, they commit themselves to emotional meaning making with others. These leaders appreciate the importance of emotion in explicit professional discourse, as well as in private reflection and strategic assessment of situations. This collaborative consideration of emotions is emerging as a key element for building dynamic learning communities, even as it represents a step beyond present practice for many leaders (Beatty 2007b).

Research in school settings specifically exploring the connections between leaders' success and their social appraisal skills is in its infancy. However, such evidence from non-school settings indicates that these skills make a moderate to strong contribution to leadership success. The size of this contribution seems to vary in strength depending on the type of job. Wong and Law suggest, for example, 'that emotional management skills would be more strongly related to performance in highly emotionally laborious jobs than in those involving less emotional labor' (quoted in Zaccaro et al. 2004: 116). Emotional labour (Hochschild 1983) is associated with masking emotions one is actually feeling and generating other emotions in the line of one's duty. Teaching and school leadership undoubtedly qualify as a '10' on the emotionally laborious scale.

Conclusion

A compelling body of evidence, the majority of it collected in primary/elementary schools, suggests that principal leadership has significant indirect, as well as direct, effects on student learning. Indirect effects depend largely on the extent to which leaders are able to create, restructure or fine tune working conditions in their schools so that those conditions nurture positive emotions towards work on the part of teachers, further develop teachers' instructional expertise, and enhance the use of that expertise in the best interests of students.

Leaders' direct effects are to be found in the nature and quality of the relationships they help to build with their teaching colleagues and the impact those relationships have on both the individual emotional predisposition to membership in the school culture and the collective emotional climate of the school. Building a productive emotional climate entails listening, appreciating and honouring the feelings and ideas of one's teacher colleagues, and creating social spaces and structures in the formal school agenda for genuine dialogue about improving instruction. Building such a climate depends on leaders' willingness and ability to understand the complex array of internal states that motivate teachers' actions and to forge authentically shared mental models of what the school can and should be. To be successful, we argue, means leading with teachers' and your own emotions in mind (Leithwood & Beatty 2008). Leaders who take emotions seriously wisely engage in reflection with trusted others about the emotional toll of their own work, as emotional woundings can challenge as well as provide rich opportunities for rediscovery and new learning (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski 2004).

When leaders open themselves up to their own feelings and connect with the feelings of others, when they listen authentically to the aspirations and ideas of their colleagues, their efforts are likely to shift from directing to enabling. This is a shift from traditional forms of leadership behaviour to a new view of what leaders do when organisations are examined through the lens of complexity science (Stacey 1996). Arguing that ‘emergent self organisation’ is the anchor concept to be found in complexity theory, Plowman, Solansky, Beck, Baker, Kukarni & Travis (2007) demonstrate how leaders adhering to this concept acknowledge rather than gloss over the uncertainties they face; sometimes create and surface conflict to destabilise organisations that are resistant to change and use such opportunities to create new realities together; become catalysts for actions rather than the determiners of those actions; and direct attention to what is important so that others might figure out what to do, with their support and encouragement. Leading with emotions in mind, their own and their teachers’, increases the chances that schools will benefit from the enhanced capabilities and increased capacities of all of its members.

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