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**Southern Connecticut State University
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JELPS Call for Manuscript **www.southernct.edu/jelps/**

Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (JELPS) ISSN#: 2473-2826, sponsored by Southern Connecticut State University is a peer-reviewed electronic journal dedicated towards establishing a global network that will serve as a platform for researchers, policymakers, educators and school leaders who are concerned with moving educational issues forward. JELPS seeks manuscripts that address best practices and school policies in the four leadership domains: Instructional, Leadership,

Comprehensive Talent Management, Instructional Leadership, School Climate Culture and School Climate. Organizational Systems. The journal welcomes articles based on practice and research with an explicit educational leadership, or components that examine the function of school and or district leadership from a variety of well-balanced perspectives. All theoretical and methodological approaches are welcome (e.g., qualitative vs. quantitative; empirical vs. conceptual; discipline-based vs. interdisciplinary). Authors will receive initial review decision notifications within a 4 to 6 week.

Please carefully review the details of Call for Articles at <https://go.southernct.edu/jelps/#call-for-articles>

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For questions and inquiries about the submission, contact JELPS

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Editorial

Olcay Yavuz

Southern Connecticut State University

A high performing school with a safe and positive learning environment starts with an effective leadership. With an emphasis on developing competent educational leaders who can address a wide range of very complex tasks and responsibilities in schools, the first issue of the Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies (JELPS) represents thoughtful articles by engaged authors that touch on the many faces of effective educational leadership.

To begin this issue, Dave's article called "*Resistance to Change: A Speed Bump on the Road to School Improvement?*" discusses various approaches to how school leaders can successfully facilitate organizational change and overcome resistance to new ideas. Since people are often resistant to change for a variety of reasons including fear, lack of information, and a lack of appropriate skills. Dave provides school leaders with practical information to facilitate change strategies that will improve organizational output.

In the second article "*Organizational Structure and Design*", Fred examines several structural frameworks: Weber's model of bureaucracy, Likert's system 4 organization, Bolman and Deal's four-frame model, Mintzberg's strategy-structure typology, Scott's open-systems perspective, Senge's learning organization, and Bass's transformational leadership. We get a glimpse into the usefulness of organizational structure increase capacity for organizational learning; greater opportunities for the individual growth and fulfillment of its members; and ultimately organizational success.

In Donna, Felice and Robert's article "*Leadership Practices to Increase Equity*

through Closing Intraschool Achievement Gaps", the authors examine the degree to which purposefully selected schools closed intraschool achievement gaps while exploring educator beliefs and practices regarding the implementation of gap-closing strategies. The findings of this study suggest that process of attempting to close the gaps resulted in the transformation of practices and beliefs of teachers and principals.

In the final article "*Principals' Perceptions and Enactment of Tasks Related to Changes to Teacher Evaluation*", Tiffany and Suzanne expand the conversation about how school leaders are implementing and prioritizing practices that have an impact on teaching and learning. The authors found that school leaders' time is constrained by policy requirements and procedures. Key barriers and practical strategies to effectively enacting leadership tasks were also reported in this article. The authors also reported that some of school leaders' beliefs did not match or demonstrated weak correlation with current actions.

Once again, as the founding editor, I am immensely grateful to the Dean of Southern Connecticut State University School of Education, SCSU Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies faculty members, Dr. Russo, the authors, and the editorial board of the JELPS, and to all who have tirelessly supported its publication. We trust that this first issue's articles will inform effective school leadership preparation and development for all student success as well as inspire new practices, policies and studies. Please respond with comments to us and to the authors as you read the first issue of JELPS.

Resistance to Change: A Speed Bump on the Road to School Improvement?

David Dolph

University of Dayton

Abstract

The need for reform and improvement in P-12 school systems is an ongoing topic of debate among legislators, business leaders, parents, educational leaders, and teachers. It can be argued that interest in reforming educational opportunities for students is more prevalent and critical today than at any other time of American educational history.

Scholars indicate that people are often resistant to change for a variety of reasons including fear, lack of information, and lack of appropriate skills. Nevertheless, one of the chief responsibilities of school leaders is to facilitate change strategies that will improve organizational output. This article will discuss various approaches to how leaders can successfully facilitate organizational change and overcome resistance to new ideas.

Key Words: Change, Resistance, Leadership, Management

David Dolph, Ph.D., is a former school principal and superintendent. He is currently an Assistant Professor and Department Chair in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Dayton. His research interests have focused on school leadership, organizational management, managing organizational change, and effective decision-making.

Introduction

The need for school improvement through reform efforts in P-12 educational systems represents an ongoing debate between and among legislators, business leaders, parents, educational leaders, and teachers. It can be argued that interest in reforming and improving school systems and educational opportunities for students is more prevalent today than at any other time of American educational history. At the same time, educational leaders and teachers are realizing that continual change is necessary for education as the demand for change and improvement is pervasive not only in school systems but in all organizations. Changes happen continuously and rapidly.

Changes, or demands for changes, are often high stakes for organizations and their staffs. As continuous as the change process is in school systems, it offers possibilities for opportunity and improvement or danger and decline. Organizations with leaders who do not recognize the need for change eventually become noncompetitive. Given the high levels of expectations and accountability in education, it is imperative for school leaders to embrace ongoing change, reform, and improvement.

Unfortunately, resistance to reform and change is often observable in most organizations, including schools. Resistance to change, which can strongly impact the chances for success of reform initiatives (Choi & Ruona, 2011), is often inevitable because of people in all organizations, including school systems, have tendencies to defend the status quo if they believe their security or status is under attack

(Bolognese, 2002). Due to the need for improvements through changes, coupled with the attendant and natural reaction to resist changes, educational leaders must consider how to make successful alterations in their school systems without creating problems or wreaking havoc. In the case of school systems, management and leadership, as discussed in this article, focuses on superintendents, principals, and other positional leaders.

The school reform and improvement movement suggests the need for changes in policies, practices, procedures, and sometimes, personnel. In other words, schools, teachers, and administrators must modify how they practice their craft and what procedures they employ if improvements are to occur. The need for change can be driven by external factors such as demographics, modifications in social or political climates, mandated calls for reform by higher authorities including legislative actions, and/or top-down programs driven by the need for reorganization such as realigning school district boundaries (Adrienn, 2016).

Amid calls for reform, unfortunately, the success rates of achieving meaningful changes in organizations generally was dismal at best (Beer & Nohria, 2000). Etschmaier (2011) took a more positive view, suggesting approximately 50% of change efforts met with success. Regardless of the estimate, achieving meaningful change in school systems is an arduous task. Yet, in order to remain competitive, especially in light of the recent emphasis on school choice, school systems must become adept at change.

Against this introductory background, it is important to note that one of the chief responsibilities of educational leaders is to facilitate change strategies designed to improve organizational output regarding student learning. Consequently, this article, based on a review of literature rather than empirical data, discusses various approaches related to organizational change and how best to facilitate this process in an efficient and effective manner.

Specifically, the article first reveals what resistance to change looks like and how it manifests itself in individual behaviors when changes occur. Second, the article examines issues associated with why people in organizations are often changing resistant. The third section of the article reviews different approaches to school leadership as it relates to change facilitation. Fourth, the article presents a variety of models for change. The article then offers recommendations and strategies for school leaders to employ when leading or facilitating changes within their schools before ending with a brief conclusion.

Resistance to Change: What It Looks Like

Dent and Goldberg (1999) reported that resistance to change is a behavior designed to shield individuals from the impact of either real or perceived change. Piderit (2000) suggested that resistance to change may take three different avenues; cognitive, emotional, and behavioral. When leaders facilitate changes in their organizations, they should be aware that although there may be overlaps in the manifestations of resistance to change, behaviors can stem from a combination of behaviors, emotions, or beliefs (Bolognese, 2002). Hultman (2003) posited that resistance to change reflects unwillingness or lack of receptivity to alter the way one thinks and behaves. Simply stated, resistance to change is demonstrated through activities opposed to or struggling with changes, that threaten the status quo of individuals or organizations (Heathfield, 2017). Thus, change simply means doing things differently, which may be good or bad depending on one's perspective.

Hultman (2003) provided numerous examples of what resistance to change looks like in organizations as revealed through individual behaviors of participants. He divided types of resistance into two categories: active and passive. Examples of active resistance include being critical, fault-finding, ridiculing, appealing to fear, using facts selectively, sabotaging, intimidating and threatening,

manipulating, distorting facts, blocking, undermining, spreading rumors, arguing, and raising objections. Passive resistance includes verbally agreeing to do something but not following through, failing to implement changes, foot-dragging, feigning ignorance and withholding information.

Illustrations of resistance are fairly typical when people working in organizations face the need to change. For instance, when teachers and administrators are asked to make curricular changes to meet state mandates, they are often resistant because they view doing so as intrusions into their professional expertise. Consequently, the change makes people uncomfortable based on behavioral modifications required within change programs (Hultman, 2003).

There are times when resistance is a problem. Paradoxically, at other times resistance is valuable and necessary for the success of people and organizations. Moreover, employees can discover problems with proposed reform agendas while initiation is in progress through demonstrated resistance. Resistance in the form of problem identification and process modification is beneficial to overall success. Consequently, leaders must be able to distinguish between merit-based resistance and resistance that is completely negative.

Teachers who resist simply because they do not agree with mandates such as curricular changes or approaches to teaching pedagogy can impede progress. On the other hand, if resistance by teachers points out legitimate problems with mandates, it can lead to formative data to help improve net outcomes. Successful educational leaders can interpret the difference and adjust accordingly. Part of this awareness of why people resist change and when it may be helpful is needed for leaders to understand how to manage change and resistance. As such, the article now examines why people resist change.

Why People Are Resistant To Change

Writers such as Fullan (2007) noted that teachers and administrators are often resistant to change for a variety of reasons including fear, lack of information, and/or lack of appropriate skills. Allan (n.d) suggested that other reasons for employee resistance to change include beliefs that changes are only temporary, their leaders are incompetent, their sense of change overload, their lack of trust in leadership, and their feelings that organizations did not deserve or were not entitled to the extra time and/or effort in order to implement changes.

Similarly, Quast (2012) identified five primary reasons why people resist both personal as well as organizational changes, including, fear of the unknown, mistrust, loss of job security and control, poor timing for changes, and negative employee predispositions toward change. Resistance may be demonstrated not only by individuals but if not dealt with, by group resistance such as teacher union activity. Resistance to change may result from combinations of various factors discussed above, thereby complicating the task of successful leaders to understand, motivate, manage and implement necessary changes in their organizations.

Manifestations of resistance people demonstrate towards attempts at organizational changes in their schools include denial, anger, depression, and sabotage (Fullan, 2007). Further, employees may attempt to discredit, delay, or outright prevent the implementation of whatever organizational changes are being suggested (Sundaram, 2015). Resistance can lead to teacher cynicism due to the often-overwhelming requirements needed to implement organizational changes, leading to poor acceptance and implementation of new ideas (Reeves, 2009).

School personnel is often resistant to changes in how they or their schools are supposed to function. The reasons can vary from disagreement over related facts to deep-seated individual psychological beliefs people hold dear (Allan, n.d). Erwin (2009) reported

employees, including some at leadership levels, lack sufficient experience or motivation to recognize and appreciate the need and significance of required changes within their organizations. In addition, employees may become concerned and anxious regarding job stability and security; this may lead to resistance as people attempt to delay what may be inevitable.

Zander (1950) offered six key reasons why people resist change. First, if the nature of the change is not carefully explained, resistance would be a natural outgrowth due to fear of the unknown. Second, multiple interpretations of changes can lead to resistance. Third, strong competing forces such as deterring people from changing can result in resistance. Fourth, resistance occurs when a top-down approach is employed, thus inhibiting participant buy-in and ownership. Fifth, resistance occurs if changes are made based on personal reasons of leadership. Finally, changes violating established norms in organizations may lead to challenges.

Following Zander's research, numerous authors developed lists of reasons why people are change resistant. Among those whose ideas best fit for schools, Bolognese (2002) noted one of the primary reasons for resistance is fear of the unknown. Learning new skills and behaviors can strike fear within employees and this naturally leads to some form of resistance. Another reason for resistance is employee tolerance for change. Some people have low thresholds to tolerate any kind of changes in their lives; this may lead to resistance. Folger and Skarlicki (1999) suggested that some resistance can be a direct result of how people believe they are being treated as changes are explained and implemented. Strebel (1996) indicated that a major reason for resistance stems from employee perceptions of broken agreements struck between organizations and employees. Changes imply these arrangements are somehow different, a situation that can lead to employee disillusionment.

Henry (1993) explained that people resist change for various reasons such as when modifications are not made clear, affected individuals see no reason for altering behaviors, individuals are not involved in planning, poor communication throughout change processes, and rewards for doing things differently are not valued. Henry (1993) added that if important aspects of jobs are altered, or employees are cynical due to failures of previous change projects, resistance may occur. Finally, fear, lack of respect for leadership, and the perceived incongruence between organizational objectives and personal goals of people affected can all be reasons for resistance. Other primary causes for resistance to change can include concern for the loss of employment, a past history of change effort failures, alterations in requirements for individual jobs, and lack of awareness or knowledge of why changes are being required.

Regardless of the reasons for resistance, school leaders must have knowledge and ability to recognize various forms of resistance and to respond appropriately in order to facilitate needed organizational changes. Illustrations of resistance in schools can appear when programmatic, curricular, or scheduling changes are required. Teachers, and sometimes administrators, are reluctant to embrace new ways of working due to comfort with the status quo.

Effective change management is an essential skill for principals and central office leaders to master in order to lead continually improving, successful schools. As such, the article now explores a number of approaches to leadership, and how it affects change efforts in schools.

Leadership and Change

In the case of school systems, management and leadership focus on superintendents, principals, and other positional leaders such as directors, department chairs, and school business officials. Leadership and

management are two areas that when successfully accomplished, have the potential to add great competitive advantage to organizations. As positional leaders, meaning they are identified as individuals whose positions of power, that by job description and role expectations, are designated and required to exert leadership.

Hersey et al (2008) defined management as a process of working with individuals to accomplish organizational goals. They define leadership as activities whereby one person attempts to influence the behavior of others, regardless of the reason. Hersey and Blanchard also suggest that leadership has three primary competencies; diagnosing, adapting, and communicating. Management, on the other hand, has three different components: planning, organizing, and motivating. Working synergistically, Hersey et. al view the skills and functions of leadership and management as having the capacity to determine and actualize organizational goals.

A variety of theories and concepts related to the practice of leadership and management offer guidance and strategies for success. Three theories built on each other, theory X, theory Y, and situational leadership, are noteworthy because they identify attitudes and beliefs of leaders and tactics they use based on those attitudes.

Theory X and theory Y, concepts developed by McGregor (1960), offer leaders a framework from which they can base their approaches to dealing with people in organizations. Theory X maintains that people like and need to have direction from leaders rather than accepting personal responsibility for their actions. This theory assumes that for most people, work is inherently distasteful, that they have little ambition or capacity to solve problems related to organizations and work, and that they need careful direction. Under this theory, people do not like work, attempt to avoid it when possible, and require close supervision, direction, threats, and potential

punishment in order to get work accomplished. In addition, theory X suggests that people lack ambition, are only interested in basic security including money, and preferred direction rather than seeking responsibility.

Theory Y, on the other hand, presents a more optimistic view of people, identifying most as engaged, and satisfied by their work, as well as motivated, creative, and self-directed. In addition, theory Y suggests that people are accepting of, or in pursuit of responsibility but that in many cases, their potential is untapped by most organizations.

The assumptions behind the two theories can lead to very different approaches to organizational structures and styles of leadership and management. Organizations and leaders espousing theory X believe and function as if it is necessary to have closely supervised, tightly structured, restrictive environments. These leaders believe that they must be highly directive and transactional in their approach to employee interactions.

Organizations and leaders functioning from theory Y perspectives focus more on building trusting relationships while empowering and encouraging employees to assume responsibility for their activities aimed at accomplishing organizational goals. Advocates of theory Y believe insofar as people possess a potential for creativity, and self-direction, employees' desire autonomy, and accountability while seeking opportunities for responsibility in the workplace if given the opportunity.

Owens (1987) described ramifications of the two approaches as a two-dimensional theory of leadership. The basic tenets of this approach consider three aspects of leadership. The first is how leaders behave, the second is how followers behave, and the third is the situational context. Consequently, leaders with predispositions toward theory X more than likely exhibit fairly directive and controlling approaches to leadership behaviors while those

inclined to theory Y take more participatory approaches, allowing and encouraging employees to become empowered and responsible.

Examining the differences in leader behaviors, Likert (1961) suggested that leaders have either an employee-orientation or a job-centered orientation. Similarly, Blake and Mouton (1985) theorized that leaders could exhibit either concern for their followers or for getting tasks completed.

Simply stated, leaders have choices between a range of leadership styles and attendant organizational structures based on the behaviors they exhibit. The style of leadership that leaders use and the organizational structures they develop may range on a continuum from very directive to more participatory. Further, leaders may be more concerned about getting tasks accomplished than they are about caring for the people in organizations. This creates a real anomaly in schools because they are usually people-centered.

Understanding these basic assumptions is helpful when considering models of contingency or situational leadership. Three prominent models related to contingency theories include Fielder's (1967) model, House's (1971) goal-path model, and Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) situational leadership model. Fielder's theory differentiates between leadership style and behavior, with the former referring to personality traits, and the latter explaining leader actions. House's model focuses on how leaders work with subordinates regarding work goals, personal goals, and paths to attain each. Situational leadership, as espoused by Hersey and Blanchard, depicts relationships between effective styles of leadership and levels of maturity of followers. These researchers recognize that leaders may exhibit different approaches to leadership based on the context of situations they face, but still meet with successful accomplishment of organizational tasks.

Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson's model of situational leadership (2008) argues there is no single best way to influence and in effect, lead people. Rather, they espouse the position that approaches leaders take depends on two factors: first the willingness of followers to engage in the task; second, follower abilities and skills at completing tasks. In this theory, in its simplest form, followers who lack skills require more directive behavior on the leader's part. On the other hand, followers who have skill but are not necessarily willing to engage in the task require more relational behaviors focused on communication.

Due to the need for varying approaches contingent on situations, Hersey and Blanchard (1977) identified four main styles of leadership. The first is directive wherein leaders tell people what to do. The second is selling, an approach suggesting that leaders should convince followers to accept and endorse their ideas. The third is a participatory approach that encourages followers to become involved in decision-making. The final style is delegating wherein, leaders take hands off approaches, allowing followers to make the majority of the decisions related to the tasks at hand.

Each of these styles certainly requires different behaviors by leaders. The initial job for leaders is determining the willingness and ability of followers, and then having the flexibility and skill to employ the approach to leadership best suited to result in the successful accomplishment of required tasks. This speaks to the idea that there is no single approach to leadership; rather leaders must understand situations they are in and followers they are dealing with and then apply the most appropriate leadership strategies to maximize chances of success.

In addition to varying approaches to leadership, it is essential for school leaders to possess technical skills providing them with in-depth knowledge of various change models. Just as situations may call for different approaches to leadership styles, similarly, different contexts

may be better suited to one model of change than another. As a result, the article turns to a variety of models related to change.

Change Models

Change is difficult for individuals as well as organizations. Consequently, chances for school success are improved if educational leaders especially, principals and superintendents, have clear understandings of how to facilitate change so positive outcomes may accrue. Change models take into account tools, approaches, and theories geared toward maximizing opportunities for successful changes either for individuals or organizations. Some of these models are fairly simple while others are more complex. It is helpful for leaders to be knowledgeable about a variety of approaches to match their organizations with models best increasing chances for success. This is in keeping with basic tenets of contingency and situational leadership. The article now briefly reviews three models of change from among many insofar as they are best suited to school systems.

Because Lewin's model for change is one of the first and simplest to grasp, it is still used today (Lewin, 1951). Lewin's model is considered a foundational approach for change researchers because of its simplicity and ease to understand. Connelly (2016) suggests that the model is still relevant.

The second approach, Kotter's model for change, is a mainstay of change management according to the Construction Financial Management Association (2017). Kotter's model provides an explicit description of various stages associated with change (Kotter, 1996). The third approach to organizational change is the McKinsey 7 S Model of change management (Juerevicius, 2013). This model is important because it stresses the interrelatedness of various organizational factors as well as how they interact throughout change processes.

Lewin's (1951) model is relatively simple and straightforward because it uses an analogy referring to changing the shape of a cube of ice as a way to explain change management. The first stage, unfreezing, includes changing attitudes of people involved, and helping them recognize the need for change. This step usually includes identifying issues, communicating with employees, and gathering relevant data related to the change. The focus of this phase is to modify current attitudes and lay a framework for change. This stage attempts to help people get ready for changes by helping them understand the importance of, and the need to change the status quo. An important aspect of unfreezing, according to Lewin, is the idea of force field analysis (Connelly, 2016).

Force field analysis, a significant aspect of Lewin's first stage, is a process whereby leaders assess and identify factors affecting change; in schools, these factors include support from central office administrators, incentive programs for employees, and/or union resistance. Once factors are named, leaders must decide how many of them favor the change and how many are against the change. If there are more factors in favor of the change, then the chances of success are improved. However, if more factors are opposed to change, then leaders must figure out how to motivate people so they are more receptive to proposed ideas, thus increasing factors favorable to change.

Lewin (1951) called the second phase of his model change or moving. This phase includes ongoing communication and assisting people with embracing new ways and structures related to changes. This phase of Lewin's model involves diagnosing problems, planning strategies, and implementing planned changes. The change or transition stage is often the most challenging because it requires having people learning and doing new things (Connelly, 2016). Further, this stage requires attempts at making various aspects of change stable within organizations (NHS North West Leadership Academy, n.d). Examples of fostering stability

of changes may include additional resources, training, incentives, or changes in policy.

The final stage of Lewin's (1951) model is called freezing. Freezing, which entails completion of change processes, is marked by a return to stable environments incorporating new changes. This phase might result in new organizational structures, policies, procedures, and/or organizational norms supporting changes. In essence, once re-freezing has occurred, the behaviors related to change become new organizational norms. This step also requires continual assessment because organizations must retain flexibility and nimbleness. The pace of progress demands that organizations do not remain static, but rather that their leaders understand and embrace the realization that ongoing change is a journey, not a destination.

The second model is Kotter's (1996) eight-step approach which identifies the actions necessary in order to facilitate change. Kotter's first step is to create a sense of urgency around the need for change through ongoing communications. In order for changes to be successful under this theory, a critical mass of people within organizations must agree that they can lead to improvement. This is often accomplished through a process known as Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat (SWOT) analysis activities or strategic planning. Using this approach, it is helpful to inform people about potential threats of remaining static and refusing to change, while encouraging discussion about better ways to get organizational tasks successfully accomplished. This is an essential step because Kotter believes that in order for organizational changes to be successful, approximately 75% of employees must be on board with the change (The Mind Tools Editorial Team, n.d.).

The second step in Kotter's (1996) model of change consists of forming a guiding or powerful coalition of influential people within organizations in support of the need and importance of change. It is essential to identify

all leaders, not only those who hold positions on organizational flow charts but also informal or peer group leaders who are respected within organizations. By building a team approach with these types of people, leaders can develop support groups to encourage others about the importance of organizational changes.

The third stage of Kotter's (1996) model is developing a vision for change, generally defined as a desired future outcome. A clear vision is important for people to help understand where organizations need to go and why it is important for them to get there. Vision statements should be concise and precise, reduced to short summaries allowing people to see and understand the future of their organization (The Mind Tools Editorial Team, n.d.).

Once leaders develop visions, the fourth stage is communicating it to people within organizations in order to explain, address concerns about, and promote all aspects of changes. This activity must be ongoing and two-way. For example, a principal's merely making announcements at faculty meetings or sending emails to teachers and other staff is not sufficient. It is essential for leaders such as principals to take face-to-face, frequent, formal, and informal opportunities to share and communicate visions while gaining buy-in from all constituents. Leaders should not only speak about visions, they should also model new behaviors by being part of and participating in required changes of behavior. Communication in word and deed helps to reinforce new ways of doing business.

The fifth step of this model involves removing obstacles to intended changes. Examples of possible obstacles may include current job descriptions, procedures, personnel, and policies to name a few. One helpful strategy aimed at removal of obstacles is to provide information explaining the importance of changes not only to organizations but also to employees. A second helpful strategy is to reward and recognize early attempts at change,

thus reinforcing hoped for changes (Kotter, 1996).

After leaders deal with obstacles, the sixth step in Kotter's (1996) model of change focuses on creating short-term wins, or successes, related to planned change projects. Success breeds more success, and by seeking and identifying steps in desired changes that do not face daunting challenges or opposition, opportunities for success are enhanced. Leaders should be cautious during this phase; they should look for easy wins such as providing necessary training identified by employees because early failures can have lasting damage on newly initiated change programs. The last point related to the sixth phase is to make sure people who participated in aspects of successful ventures are recognized and rewarded because this increases the motivation of others to become more engaged and less critical.

Kotter's (1996) seventh step relates to building on successful aspects of changes already made. Leaders must realize that each success offers opportunities and challenges to build on while continuing to grow and improve. It is also helpful at this point to try to engage new people in change processes in order to increase coalitions of interested individuals. New blood in organizations instills fresh ideas and enthusiasm. Consequently, involving new teachers in school change efforts after initial successes help overcome organizational inertia.

The eighth and final step is to anchor changes in organizational cultures. It is imperative for leaders to ensure that new ways of doing business become organizational norms. Leaders can make great progress in this final phase by emphasizing relationships between changes made and improvements in organizational outputs. In the case of education, this may mean improved test scores, higher graduation rates, or new and exciting curricula. Regardless of obtained objectives, it is essential for leaders to link success to change.

The third approach, McKinsey's 7 S Model, was developed by the McKinsey Company in the 1980s (Juerevicius, 2013). This model which focuses on the coordination of various organizational factors as they relate to change includes seven interrelated factors present in organizations, namely strategy, structure, systems, shared values, style, staff, and skills (Juerevicius, 2013). Strategy refers to the plan of action to be accomplished. Structure focuses on how organizations are organized. Systems deal with actions and procedures within the functioning of organizations. Values relate to organizational core beliefs as manifested in climate and culture. The approach toward leadership defines and refers to leadership styles in the model. Staff refer to employees, while skills refers to competencies of employees within organizations.

The strength of the 7 S Model is that it assists leaders to recognize the interrelatedness of multiple factors at play within organizations and how these elements function in concert, either positively or negatively. The model can be helpful to identify current situations accurately, desired future outcomes, and gaps between the two. By thinking in these terms, leaders can better understand how to align and fine-tune various elements of change processes in order to enhance chances for success.

The model considers the importance of the role of coordination and interrelatedness of the seven factors as they pertain to organizations and organizational change. The object of this model is to align the factors in such a way designed to improve chances for success. The model points out the issue of systemic change, stressing that when one area is altered, others must be modified in order to retain successful alignment (Juerevicius, 2013). Cawsey (2012) suggested that none of the seven factors identified in the model should be ignored. Rather, all should be considered and attended to if success is to occur. The article now examines suggestions and recommendations to help

leaders facilitate change and effectively deal with resistance.

Strategies for Change Leaders to Avoid “Bumps” in Road to School Improvement

Insofar as a great variety of change models exist, there is an equally expansive number of recommendations, suggestions, and factors to be aware of when leading efforts geared toward organizational changes. The article reviews five leading authors who stand out as often cited and which may provide the most helpful information to school leaders as they facilitate change. Fullan (1993) in focusing on change within educational systems, provided specific guidance on change related to schools and school personnel. Baker (1989), Lucas (1974), Armstrong (2011), and Alsher (2013), on the other hand, addressed change and organizations globally, thereby providing an overall perspective of an organizational change. Nevertheless, all five authors offer viable suggestions to educational leaders and others regarding change management and facilitation.

The first strategy, reported by Fullan (1993), suggests eight ideas associated with organizational change in school systems that can serve as potential guides for educational leaders when changes are required. Fullan's initial recommendation is recognizing that important, systemic organizational changes cannot be mandated to teachers. When complex changes are required, people cannot simply be told they have to comply. Much more is involved in order to implement changes successfully. Unfortunately, legislatively mandated requirements forcing changes are common and present ongoing problems for educational leaders. However, in order to counteract this problem, leaders must solicit and provide opportunities for involvement on the part of teachers and staff. Developing teacher buy-in on changes is essential as it helps them cultivate ownership of change strategies.

The second important point Fullan (1993) stressed was that change is a journey, not

necessarily a roadmap or blueprint. Moreover, for Fullan, change is messy and cannot be predictably predetermined. Consequently, leaders must expect the unexpected. In other words, difficulties and challenges, both anticipated and unanticipated, are likely to arise as changes are implemented. School leaders must thereby plan for problems they expect such as union resistance and be sufficiently flexible when unknown issues such as a sudden reduction of resources, arise in order to gain resolution. Fullan's (1993) closely related third suggestion is that educational leaders need to be aware they will encounter problems along the journey of change. His point is that such problems have to be expected and dealt with in order to grow and improve. Recognizing and successfully managing problems becomes easier when leaders involve others. Leaders who consult and work with followers affected by changes will often find solutions rather than more problems.

The fourth point Fullan (1993) made was that overall vision and grand strategies usually came later in change processes rather than on the front end. He based this position on the belief that the need for changes came first and the best way to have a shared vision was for people within organizations to be interacting and develop the vision collaboratively. Fullan, emphasizing that this all takes time, relates this to the idea that change is a journey, not a destination. Consequently, Fullan is not an advocate of complicated strategic plans in the beginning stages of improvement projects. Rather, he favors getting started and letting the plan evolve organically. To this end he uses the phrase “ready, fire, aim” as opposed to the more commonly used “ready, aim, fire.”

Fifth, Fullan (1993) maintained that successful change occurred when people were able to interact and collaborate without having activity and thought reduced to groupthink. He suggested individual teachers, as well as groups of teachers, must both be recognized as

possessing power during change processes and be empowered to act.

Fullan's sixth point (1993) was that changes in school systems could not be mandated solely from the top of organizational charts, nor could they be completely driven from the bottom up. Rather, there should be a combination of the two approaches. This requires different ways of thinking regarding organizational structures and leadership already mentioned, related to Theory Y assumptions. In other words, all changes cannot be administratively driven, nor should they be solely driven by teachers alone. Instead, the process should incorporate leadership from both the top and the bottom.

The seventh strategy Fullan (1993) suggested is for school systems to be connected with their wider environments. Instead of being isolated, schools should be connected, engaged, and active within communities where they exist. For school leaders, this means making sure their boards have an active community relations programs featuring ongoing, two-way communication methodologies providing both information to community stakeholders as well as listening to them.

Fullan's (1993) last point was that in order for schools to be successful and growing, all stakeholders must be involved in change and recognized as change agents. This idea embodies shared leadership speaking to the importance of professional learning communities, shared leadership, and collaborative leadership.

Another change management theorist, Baker (1989) suggested additional strategies related to change management. First, she suggested that it is essential for leaders to provide timely information to those employees and stakeholders affected by changes as early and as often as possible. Second, in a related strategy, leaders should carefully explain the reasons for changes to help everyone involved better understand the need for change. Third,

leaders should promptly address questions from those affected in order to allay their fears and suspicions. Baker further suggested that leaders should offer employees time to reflect on proposed changes. The effect of Baker's advice is that if employees have accurate information, early enough in order to be able to question and better understand what is being asked of them, they will be less resistant to changes within their organization.

In addition to timely and accurate information, Baker (1989) stressed the need to make employees comfortable and aware that when new skills were required, leadership would provide sufficient training. Along with frequent communication, and timely, meaningful training, Baker highlighted the importance of involving employees with opportunities to participate in change processes.

In concert with Baker's (1989) ideas, a third change theorist, Lucas (1974) suggested involving employees in change processes as a way to increase their awareness and knowledge about proposed changes, thereby potentially reducing employee fears related to changes. Second, he posited that participation helps employees feel good about themselves and their organization. Further, Lucas explained that participation can be self-satisfying and help with employee's self-actualization. Lastly, Lucas emphasized that employee participation gives them a sense of having control over changes, an essential element of reducing anxiety.

At the same time, a fourth change theorist, Armstrong (2011), suggested that resistance must be actively addressed and that leaders cannot pretend that it will not or is not occurring. Second, Armstrong noted that leaders must build trust through open, ongoing, two-way communications before, during, and after organizational changes occur. This type of communication helps develop positive organizational climates and cultures conducive to successful change.

The next point Armstrong (2011) made was that leaders must focus on vibrant and consistent approaches to implementation by providing high levels of ongoing communication, professional development, necessary resources, and appropriate materials to make changes successful. He suggested that insofar as change is often resourced hungry in terms of necessary equipment, materials, and training, embarking on change when these items are scarce is fool hardy. Another important point was to use data when establishing the need for change. However, when data are used, it should not be used in a negative manner to find fault or point out weaknesses. Accurate data, delivered in a professional and non-accusatory manner, will assist when validating reasons for the change.

Finally, Armstrong (2011) suggested that leaders must continue to provide active support with follow-through on training and recognition of those employees who model behaviors related to changes. This last step is essential in order to deal effectively with inevitable problems associated with change.

A fifth change management theorist, Alsher (2013), offered ideas for leaders to ponder as they facilitate organizational changes. She posited that determining explicit reasons why change is being resisted is critical. Explanations for resistance may be based on past history, lack of trust, fear, or how it will affect individuals. Identifying reasons for resistance and then actively addressing them is essential. Alsher's next recommendation was to establish a personal rapport with peer leaders as well as change resisters. This should lead to enhanced levels of communication. Clearly ongoing, two-way communication is an essential ingredient for successful change and organizational improvement. It is important to clarify that change is going to happen, it cannot be avoided. Nevertheless, this type of information is better received if employees are involved and informed in a humanistic manner. Leaders who explain changes by including

information about what they mean to individuals personally allays fears and concerns. When employees have better understandings of how changes directly affect their lives, it often reduces stress and anxiety.

In successful school systems, principals and superintendents have learned to overcome resistance to change and capitalize on challenges, viewing them as opportunities rather than problems. They have established cultures where employees feel safe and have provided opportunities for growth and support through training, trust building, and ongoing communication.

Recommendations

Summarizing findings from the authors and models described above, educational leaders facilitating changes in their school's systems should consider the following recommendations:

1. Determine what needs to be changed and why by performing a S.W.O.T. analysis of your organization. This step is essential for successful change. Without knowing what needs to be improved, leaders often grasp at straws in order to facilitate change and make improvements within their schools.
2. Be clear on the changes or improvements in need of being implemented. Once needs are identified, leaders must determine appropriate strategies aimed at creating improvement.
3. Educational leaders should consider the skill and willingness of employees as they embark on changes in schools.
4. Decide which model of change is to be used through S.W.O.T. analysis and consideration of staff and teachers involved. Matching models to organizations is critical for success.
5. Develop a cadre of supporters for change. Leaders must encourage groups of employees who are in favor of plans for change.
6. Communicate frequently by informing teachers, staff, and parents as to reasons for change; utilizing data when possible to prove the need for changes. This step is critical and must be present throughout all phases of

change. Leaders must listen to teacher and staff concerns to clarify questions, including those about how the change will affect them personally.

7. Actively involve employees throughout change processes. The more sense of ownership teachers and staff have, the more supportive they will be of changes.
8. Reduce anxiety through ongoing professional development. If changes require new skills and knowledge on the part of employees, it is essential to provide them with needed training and professional development.
9. Make sure sufficient resources are available to support changes. Leaders who attempt changes when lacking adequate resources to support doing so are doomed to failure.
10. Reward early adopters of changes. Rewards such as employee recognition programs, recognition in school newsletters, or cash bonuses can be helpful.
10. Be flexible. Leaders must understand that change is not a linear process that there will be starts and stops along the way. Leaders must be aware of this and be willing to adapt and modify when needed.
11. Leaders should take their time as they move through all steps of change processes. The old axiom about measuring twice and cutting once applies.
12. Stay calm. Teachers and staff look to leaders in times of stress. Change often creates stress. Therefore, if leaders remain calm and focused, employees are apt to do the same.

Conclusion

Organizational change in school systems is inevitable and ongoing. In order for their schools to survive, educational leaders must be willing to grow in terms of providing students with quality learning experiences. Schools are often viewed as change resistant organizations due to the relative lack of competition and long-standing cultures of stability. Fortunately or otherwise, depending on one's point of view, change is here to stay. Therefore, educational leaders and their school

communities must learn to be flexible, innovative, and change-adept.

The article has identified various models of organizational change and has provided a variety of tips to assist leaders when using the models. The article also offered suggestions about approaches to leadership including, and emphasizing, contingency or situational approaches.

Regardless of the change model leaders select, or the leadership strategy they employ, they must address a variety of factors in the process of managing change. These management practices and procedures must include communication strategies, employee involvement, professional development, resistance management, rewards and recognition, and ongoing coaching. Leaders who attend to these areas of change management are likely to enhance the ability of their organizations to negotiate change and not crash on one of the many potential speed bumps on the road to change and organizational improvement.

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Organizational Structure and Design

Fred C. Lunenburg

Sam Houston State University

Abstract

In this paper, the author examines several structural frameworks: Weber's model of bureaucracy, Likert's system 4 organization, Bolman and Deal's four-frame model, Mintzberg's strategy-structure typology, Scott's open-systems perspective, Senge's learning organization, and Bass's transformational leadership.

In the broadest sense, the usefulness of organizational structure in the field is an attempt to create organizations with best administrative styles or practices; increased capacity for organizational learning; greater opportunities for the individual growth and fulfillment of its members; and ultimately organization success.

Key Words: Organizational Structure and Organizational Theory, Leadership.

Fred C. Lunenburg, Ph.D. is the Jimmy N. Merchant Professor of Education at Sam Houston State University. Previously, he was on the faculty of educational administration at the University of Louisville, Loyola University Chicago, and Southern Utah University, where he also served as Dean of the College of Education. In addition, he has held public school positions as a high school principal and superintendent of schools. Dr. Lunenburg's scholarship includes 38 books, 15 book chapters, and over 200 articles published in both practitioner and academic/research journals.

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to understand the various types of organizational structures and factors that influence the structure for a given purpose. Three terms need to be clarified at the outset. An organization is a collection of people working together to achieve a common purpose. Organizational structure is the arrangement of people and tasks to accomplish organizational goals. Organizational design is the process of creating a structure that best fits a purpose, strategy, and environment. Because understanding the structure of organizations is key to appreciating their functioning optimally—and, ultimately, their success—organizational theorists have devoted considerable attention to this topic.

I discuss these efforts in this paper. Specifically, I examine how these structural elements can be most effectively combined into productive organizational designs. In so doing, I examine some of the classical and neo-classical organizational theories as well as some contingency organizational forms.

The Weberian Bureaucratic Model

Max Weber's (1947) classic analysis of bureaucracy is the theoretical basis of most contemporary treatments of structure in organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Hall, 2002; Hoy & Miskel, 2013; Hoy & Sweetland, 2000, 2001; Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012; Perrow, 1986; Scott, 2007).

Weber's characteristics of bureaucracy apply to many large-sized organizations today. Although few "pure" bureaucracies exist today, almost all organizations have some elements of bureaucracy within their structure: division of labor and specialization, rules and regulations, hierarchy of authority, impersonality in interpersonal relations, and career orientation.

Bureaucratic Characteristics

According to Weber (1947), the ideal bureaucracy possesses the following characteristics.

- ***Division of Labor and Specialization.*** Divide all tasks into highly specialized jobs. Give each jobholder the authority necessary to perform these duties.
- ***Rules and Regulations.*** Perform each task according to a consistent system of abstract rules. This practice helps ensure that task performance is uniform.
- ***Hierarchy of Authority.*** Arrange all positions according to the principle of hierarchy. Each lower office is under the control of a higher one, and there is a clear chain of command from the top of the organization to the bottom.
- ***Impersonality in Interpersonal Relations.*** Maintain an impersonal attitude toward subordinates. This social distance between administrators and staff members helps ensure that rational considerations are the basis for decision making, rather than favoritism or prejudices.
- ***Career Orientation.*** Base employment on qualifications and give promotions based on job-related performance. As a corollary, protect employees from arbitrary dismissal, which should result in a high level of loyalty.

Bureaucratic Dysfunctions

In a period of increasing demands for accountability, demographic changes in population, and economic crisis, most organizations are being forced to examine their fundamental structural assumptions. Bureaucracy — the basic infrastructure of organizations in the industrial world — is ill suited to the demands of our postindustrial, demographically diverse information society (Murphy, 2002). Bureaucratic characteristics not only are being viewed as less than useful but also are considered to be harmful. Some of these built-in dysfunctions of bureaucracy include the following:

1. Division of labor and specialization

A high degree of division of labor can reduce staff initiative. As jobs become narrower in scope and well defined by procedures, individuals sacrifice autonomy and independence. Although specialization can lead to increased productivity and efficiency, it can also create conflict between specialized units, to the detriment of the overall goals of the organization. For example, specialization may impede communication between units. Moreover, overspecialization may result in boredom and routine for some staff, which can lead to dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover.

2. Reliance on rules and procedures

Weber (1947) claimed that the use of formal rules and procedures was adopted to help remove the uncertainty in attempting to coordinate a variety of activities in an organization. Reliance on rules can lead to the inability to cope with unique cases that do not conform to normal circumstances. In addition, the emphasis on rules and procedures can produce excessive red tape. The use of rules and procedures is only a limited strategy in trying to achieve coordinated actions. Other strategies may be required. But bureaucracy's approach is to create new rules to cover emerging situations and new contingencies.

And, once established, ineffectual rules or procedures in a bureaucracy are difficult to remove.

3. *Emphasis on hierarchy of authority*

The functional attributes of a hierarchy are that it maintains an authority relationship, coordinates activities and personnel, and serves as the formal system of communication. In theory, the hierarchy has both a downward and an upward communication flow. In practice, it usually has only a downward emphasis. Thus, upward communication is impeded, and there is no formal recognition of horizontal communication. This stifles individual initiative and participation in decision making.

4. *Lifelong careers and evaluation*

Weber's (1947) bureaucratic model stresses lifelong careers and evaluations based on merit. Because competence can be difficult to measure in bureaucratic jobs, and because a high degree of specialization enables most employees to master their jobs quickly, there is a tendency to base promotions and salary increments more on seniority and loyalty than on actual skill and performance. Thus, the idea of having the most competent people in positions within the organization is not fully realized. Loyalty is obtained; but this loyalty is toward the protection of one's position, not to the effectiveness of the organization.

5. *Impersonality*

The impersonal nature of bureaucracy is probably its most serious shortcoming. Recent critics of bureaucracy attack it as emphasizing rigid, control-oriented structures over people.

New viewpoints are leading to a decline in the use of bureaucratic structure in modern organizations (Etzioni-Halevy, 2010; Rowan, 1990; Senge et al., 2012). Leaders in the twenty-first century will see a change in some of their duties. One change will be a shift away from simply supervising the work of others to

that of contributing directly to the organization's goals. Instead of shuffling papers and writing reports, the modern administrator may be practicing a craft (Glickman, 2006).

The excessive rigidity and inherent impersonality of the bureaucratic approach stimulated interest in participatory management. Participatory management represents alternative strategies for the design of organizations. Supportiveness, shared leadership, flexibility, and organization member growth and development are the keys to participatory management. These new theories of organization place greater emphasis on employee morale and job satisfaction. Participatory management stresses the importance of motivating organization members and building an organization for that purpose. The organization is structured to satisfy employees' needs, which will in turn result in high organization member productivity. Examples include Likert's system 4 organization and Bolman and Deal's frames of organization. Let's examine each one of these structures more closely.

System 4 Organization

Rensis Likert (1979, 1987) opposes the kinds of organizations that hew to the bureaucratic model. Likert's theory treats the structural prescriptions for organizational effectiveness more explicitly and completely. He builds his structural recommendations around three key elements that undergird four systems of organization.

Based on many years of research conducted in various organizational settings—industrial, government, health care, and educational—Likert (1979) proposed four basic systems of organization. System 1, which Likert originally labeled exploitive authoritative, follows the bureaucratic or classical structure of organization. Characteristics of the classical structure include limited supportive leadership,

Table 1

Characteristics of System 1 and System 4

Organizational Characteristics	System 1 Organization	System 4 Organization
Leadership	Little confidence and trust between administrators and subordinates	Subordinates ideas are solicited and used by administrators
Motivation	Taps fear, status, and economic motives exclusively	Taps all major motives except fear
Communication	One-way, downward communication	Communication flows freely in all directions
Interaction influence	Little upward influence; downward influence overestimated	Substantial influence upward, downward, and horizontally
Decision making	Centralized; decisions made at the top	Decentralized; decisions made throughout the organization
Goal setting	Established by top-level administrators and communicated downward	Established by group participation
Control	Close over-the-shoulder supervision	Emphasis on self-control
Performance goals	Low and passively sought by administrators; little commitment to developing human resources	High and actively sought by administrators; full commitment to developing human resources

motivation based on fear and superordinate status, one-way downward communication, centralized decision making, close over the shoulder supervision, no cooperative teamwork, and low performance goals of administrators.

The **System 4 organization**, which Likert calls participative group, is more team-oriented. There is a high level of trust and confidence in the superior; communication flows freely in all directions; decision making occurs throughout the organization; cooperative teamwork is encouraged; and leaders actively seek high performance goals. System 2 is less classical than System 1, and System 3 is less supportive than System 4 while coming closer to Likert's ideal model of organization. Table 1 shows the characteristics of System 1 and System 4, the extreme ends of Likert's systems continuum.

Key Elements of System 4

According to Likert (1987), System 4 has three key elements: the administrator's use of the principle of supportive relationships, the use of group decision making in an overlapping group structure, and the administrator's high-performance goals for the organization. The underlying theory is that if an organization is to be effective, the leadership and other processes of the organization must ensure that in all interactions between superordinates and subordinates, subordinates will perceive the relationship as enhancing their own sense of personal worth and importance in the organization. Furthermore, Likert argues that "an organization will function best when its personnel function not as individuals but as members of highly effective work groups with

high performance goals" (Likert, 1987, p. 98). In this way, decisions are group decisions, not simply orders from above. And the leader is seen as a "linking-pin;" that is, the leader is the head of one group but a member of another group at the next higher level. For example, the school principal is the leader of school staff but also a subordinate to an administrator at the central office in another group at the next level in the organization. Thus, the principal serves as an important communication link between two levels of organization—school and school system.

System 4 Variables

Likert identifies System 4 as the ideal model of organization. The object of this approach is to move an organization as far as possible toward System 4. To analyze an organization's present system and move it toward System 4, Likert uses an organizational paradigm consisting of three broad classes of variables.

Causal variables are independent variables that affect both the intervening and end-result variables. They include the administrator's assumptions about followers, the organization's goals and how they emerge, administrative behavior and practices, the

nature of the authority system that prevails, the union contract, the administrator's view of change, and the needs and desires of members of the organization. Causal variables are within the control of administration, and the value that administration places on these variables will determine the organization's management system. Causal variables, then, are the ones school administrators should attempt to change in order to move the organization to System 4.

Intervening variables, representing the internal state and health of the organization, are those variables that are subsequently affected by causal variables. They include the attitudes that organization members have toward their jobs, their superiors, peers, and other organization members; their commitment to organizational goals; their levels of performance goals; their levels of group loyalty and group commitment to the organization; their confidence and trust in themselves and their superiors; their feeling of upward influence in the organization; their motivational forces; and the extent to which communications flow freely and in all directions within the organization.

End-result variables are dependent variables that represent the achievements of the organization. In schools they include

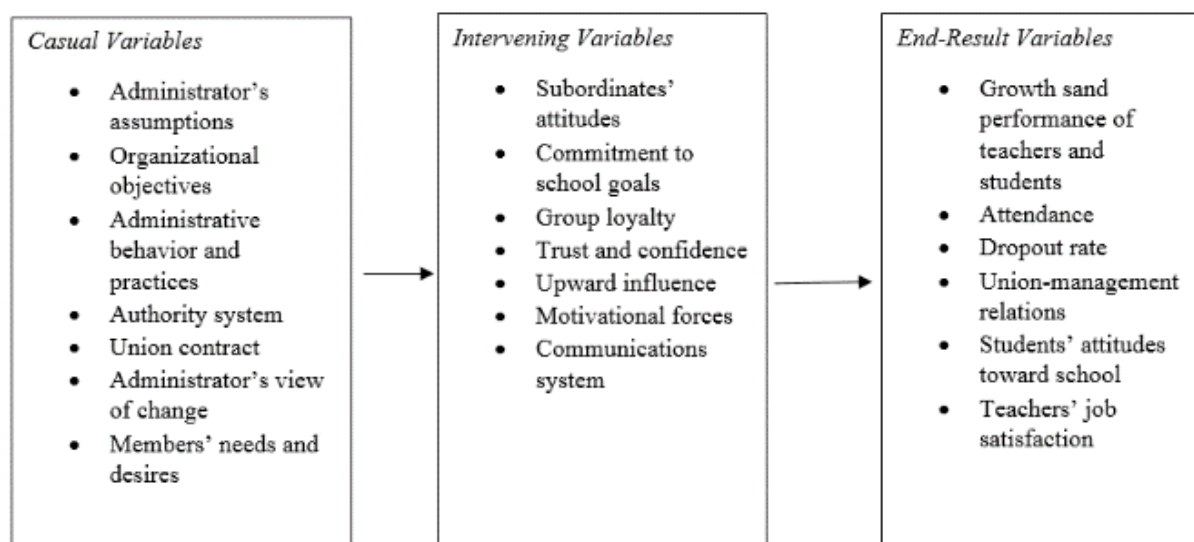


Figure 1. Relationships among Causal, Intervening, and End-Result Variables in a System 4 Organization

performance and growth levels of teachers and students, absence and turnover or dropout rates of employees and students, union-management relations, school-community relations, students' attitudes toward school, and levels of intrinsic job satisfaction of school employees. Figure 1 shows the relationship among the variables.

To move an organization to System 4, Likert (1987) recommends using the survey-feedback method and leadership training. Using his Profile of Organizational Characteristics instrument, the organization can determine the management system that is currently in place. The survey instrument measures the eight characteristics of organizational systems (see Table 1). Respondents are given a range of choices for each item on the questionnaire, through which they indicate whether the organization tends to be exploitive authoritative (System 1), benevolent authoritative (System 2), consultative (System 3), or participative group (System 4). Respondents are also asked where they would like the organization to be on the continuum. Then an organization-systems profile chart is plotted, which visually conveys the organization's present management system and the desired system. Another instrument, the Profile of a School, also measures the organizational systems of schools. It has several

versions that can be used with students, teachers, counselors, principals, superintendents, central office administrators, school board members, and parents. By comparing the perceptions of several subgroups within the organization, it is possible to measure the management system of a school or an entire school district.

The profile charts become a basis for discussing and analyzing an organization's management system so that plans for improving it can be made. Because effectiveness and System 4 go together in Likert's theory, the implications for organizational improvement are straightforward: Move the present management style of the organization to System 4 and keep it there. This is accomplished by training all school administrators throughout the organization to acquire the skills needed for achieving a System 4 structure: manifesting supportive leadership, focusing on high performance goals, and building intact work groups into more effective teams.

Frames of Organization

Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal (2008) provide a four-frame model (see Table 2) with its view of organizations as factories (structural frame), families (human resource frame), jungles (political frame), and temples (symbolic

Table 2

Overview of the Four-Frame Model

	Frame			
	Structural	Human Resource	Political	Symbolic
Metaphor for organization	Factory or machine	Family	Jungle	Carnival, temple, theater
Central concepts	Rules, roles, goals, policies, technology, environment	Needs, skills, relationships	Power, conflict, competition, organizational	Culture, meaning, metaphor, ritual, ceremony
Image of Leadership	Social architecture	Empowerment	Advocacy	Inspiration
Basic leadership challenge	Attune structure to task, technology, and environment	Align organizational and human needs	Develop agenda	Create faith, beauty, meaning

frame). Their distillation of ideas about how organizations work has drawn much from the social sciences—particularly from sociology, psychology, political science, and anthropology. They argue that their four frames or major perspectives can help leaders make sense of organizations. Bolman and Deal (2008) further assert that the ability to reframe—to reconceptualize the same situation using multiple perspectives—is a central capacity for leaders of the twenty-first century.

- **Structural Frame.** Drawing from sociology and management science, the structural frame emphasizes goals, specialized roles, and formal relationships. Structures—commonly depicted by organizational charts—are designed to fit an organizations environment and technology. Organizations allocate responsibilities to participants ("division of labor") and create rules, policies, procedures, and hierarchies to coordinate diverse activities. Problems arise when the structure does not fit the situation. At that point, some form of reframing is needed to remedy the mismatch.
- **Human Resource Frame.** The human resource frame, based particularly on ideas from psychology, sees an organization as much like an extended family, inhabited by individuals who have needs, feelings, prejudices, skills, and limitations. They have a great capacity to learn and sometimes an even greater capacity to defend old attitudes and beliefs. From a human resource perspective, the key challenge is to tailor organizations to people—to find a way for individuals to get the job done while feeling good about what they are doing.
- **Political Frame.** The political frame is rooted particularly in the work of political scientists. It sees organizations as arenas, contests, or jungles. Different interests compete for power and scarce

resources. Conflict is rampant because of enduring differences in needs, perspectives, and lifestyles among individuals and groups. Bargaining, negotiation, coercion, and compromise are part of everyday life. Coalitions form around specific interests and change as issues come and go. Problems arise when power is concentrated in the wrong places or is so broadly dispersed that nothing gets done. Solutions arise from political skill and acumen in reframing the organization.

- **Symbolic Frame.** The symbolic frame, drawing on social and cultural anthropology, treats organizations as tribes, theaters, or carnivals. It abandons the assumptions of rationality more prominent in the other frames. It sees organizations as cultures, propelled more by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes, and myths than by rules, policies, and managerial authority. Organization is also theater: Actors play their roles in the organizational drama while audiences form impressions from what they see onstage. Problems arise when actors play their parts badly, when symbols lose their meaning, when ceremonies and rituals lose their potency. Leaders reframe the expressive or spiritual side of organizations through the use of symbol, myth, and magic.

The bureaucratic and participatory management models laid the groundwork for more complex approaches to organizational structure. Top-level leaders must consider the relative suitability of alternative approaches to organizational structure, based on the problems they face and the environment in which they work. Some alternative approaches to organizational structure are described, including Mintzberg's (1992, 2009) strategy-structure typology, Scott's (2007) open systems theory, Senge's learning organization (2006), and Bass's transformational leadership (1986).

Strategy-Structure Typology

Another alternative approach to organizational structure concerns the relationship between organizational strategy and structure. Social scientists contend that an organization's strategy determines its environment, technology, and tasks. These variables, coupled with growth rates and power distribution, affect organizational structure. Henry Mintzberg (2009) suggests that organizations can be differentiated along three basic dimensions: (a) the key part of the organization, that is, the part of the organization that plays the major role in determining its success or failure; (b) the prime coordinating mechanism, that is, the major method the organization uses to coordinate its activities; and (c) the type of decentralization used, that is, the extent to which the organization involves subordinates in the decision-making process. The key parts of an organization are shown in Figure 2 and include the following (Mintzberg, 2009)

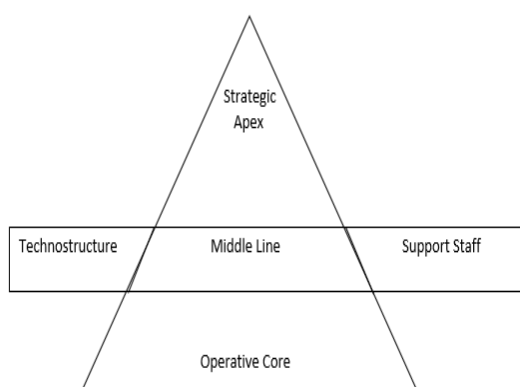


Figure 2. Key Parts of an Organization

- **The strategic apex** is top administration and its support staff. In school districts, this is the superintendent of schools and the administrative cabinet.
- **The operative core** are the organization members who actually carry out the organization's tasks. Teachers constitute the operative core in school systems.

- **The middle line** is middle-and lower-level administration. Principals are the middle-level administrators in school districts.
- **The technostructure** are analysts such as engineers, accountants, planners, researchers, and human resource administrators. In school systems, divisions such as instruction, business, human resources, public relations, and the like constitute the technostructure.
- **The support staff** are the people who provide indirect services. In school districts, similar services include maintenance, clerical, food service, legal counsel, and consulting to provide support.

The second basic dimension of an organization is its prime coordinating mechanism. This includes the following:

- **Direct supervision** means that one individual is responsible for the work of others. This concept refers to the unity of command and scalar principles discussed earlier.
- **Standardization of work process** exists when the content of work is specified or programmed. In school districts, this refers to job descriptions that govern the work performance of educators.
- **Standardization of skills** exists when the kind of training necessary to do the work is specified. In school systems, this refers to state certificates required for the various occupants of a school system's hierarchy.
- **Standardization of output** exists when the results of the work are specified. Because the "raw material" that is processed by the operative core (teachers) consists of people (students), not things, standardization of output is more difficult to measure in schools than in other nonservice organizations. Nevertheless, a movement toward the

standardization of output in schools in recent years has occurred. Examples include competency testing of teachers, state-mandated testing of students, state-mandated curricula, prescriptive learning objectives, and other efforts toward legislated learning.

- **Mutual adjustment** exists when work is coordinated through informal communication. Mutual adjustment or coordination is the major thrust of Likert's "linking-pin" concept discussed earlier.

The third basic dimension of an organization is the type of decentralization it employs. The three types of decentralization are the following:

- **Vertical decentralization** is the distribution of power down the chain of command, or shared authority between

- **Selective decentralization** is the extent to which decision-making power is delegated to different units within the organization. In school districts, these units might include instruction, business, human resources, and public relations divisions.

Using the three basic dimensions—key part of the organization, prime coordinating mechanism, and type of decentralization—Mintzberg (1992) suggests that the strategy an organization adopts and the extent to which it practices that strategy result in five structural configurations: simple structure, machine bureaucracy, professional bureaucracy, divisionalized form, and adhocracy. Table 3 summarizes the three basic dimensions associated with each of the five structural configurations. Each organizational form is discussed in turn.

Table 3

Mintzberg's Five Organizational Structures

Structural Configuration	Prime Coordinating Mechanism	Key Part of Organization	Type of Decentralization
Simple structure	Direct supervision	Strategic apex	Vertical and horizontal centralization
Machine bureaucracy	Standardization of work processes	Techno structure	Limited horizontal decentralization
Professional bureaucracy	Standardization of skills	Operating core	Vertical and horizontal decentralization
Divisionalized form	Standardization of outputs	Middle line	Limited vertical decentralization
Adhocracy	Mutual adjustment	Support staff	Selective decentralization

supervisors and staff members in any organization.

- **Horizontal decentralization** is the extent to which non-administrators (including staff) make decisions, or shared authority between line and staff.

Simple Structure

The **simple structure** has as its key part the strategic apex, uses direct supervision, and employs vertical and horizontal centralization. Examples of simple structures are relatively small corporations, new government

departments, medium -sized retail stores, and small elementary school districts. The organization consists of the top administrator and a few staff members in the operative core. There is no technostructure, and the support staff is small; staff members perform overlapping tasks. For example, teachers and school administrators in small elementary school districts must assume many of the duties that the technostructure and support staff perform in larger districts. Frequently, however, small elementary school districts are members of cooperatives that provide many services (i.e., counselors, social workers) to a number of small school districts in one region of the county or state.

In small school districts, the superintendent may function as both superintendent of the district and principal of a single school. Superintendents in such school districts must be entrepreneurs. Because the organization is small, coordination is informal and maintained through direct supervision. Moreover, this organization can adapt to environmental changes rapidly. Goals stress innovation and long-term survival, although innovation may be difficult for very small rural school districts because of the lack of resources.

Machine Bureaucracy

Machine bureaucracy has the technostructure as its key part, uses standardization of work processes as its prime coordinating mechanism, and employs limited horizontal decentralization. Machine bureaucracy has many of the characteristics of Weber's ideal bureaucracy and resembles mechanistic organizations. It has a high degree of formalization and work specialization. Decisions are centralized. The span of control is narrow, and the organization is tall—that is, many levels exist in the chain of command from top management to the bottom of the organization. Little horizontal or lateral coordination is needed. Furthermore, machine bureaucracy has a large technostructure and support staff.

Examples of machine bureaucracy are automobile manufacturers, steel companies, and large government organizations. The environment for a machine bureaucracy is typically stable, and the goal is to achieve internal efficiency. Public schools possess many characteristics of machine bureaucracy, but most schools are not machine bureaucracies in the pure sense. However, large urban school districts (New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago) are closer to machine bureaucracies than other medium-sized or small school systems.

Professional Bureaucracy

Professional bureaucracy has the operating core as its key part, uses standardization of skills as its prime coordinating mechanism, and employs vertical and horizontal decentralization. The organization is relatively formalized but decentralized to provide autonomy to professionals. Highly trained professionals provide nonroutine services to clients. Top administration is small; there are few middle-level administrators; and the technostructure is generally small. However, the support staff is typically large to provide clerical and maintenance support for the professional operating core. The goals of professional bureaucracies are to innovate and provide high-quality services. Existing in complex but stable environments, they are generally moderate to large in size. Coordination problems are common. Examples of this form of organization include universities, hospitals, and large law firms.

Some public school districts have many characteristics of the professional bureaucracy, particularly its aspects of professionalism, teacher autonomy, and structural looseness. For example, schools are formal organizations (Bidwell, 1965), which provide complex services through highly trained professionals in an atmosphere of structural looseness (Rowan, 1990). These characteristics tend to broaden the limits of individual discretion and performance. Like attorneys, physicians, and university

professors, teachers perform in classroom settings in relative isolation from colleagues and superiors, while remaining in close contact with their students. Furthermore, teachers are highly trained professionals who provide information to their students in accordance with their own style, and they are usually flexible in the delivery of content even within the constraints of the state-and district-mandated curriculum. Moreover, like some staff administrators, teachers tend to identify more with their professions than with the organization.

Divisionalized Form

The **divisionalized form** has the middle line as its key part, uses standardization of output as its prime coordinating mechanism, and employs limited vertical decentralization. Decision making is decentralized at the divisional level. There is little coordination among the separate divisions. District-level personnel provide some coordination. Thus, each division itself is relatively centralized and tends to resemble a machine bureaucracy. The technostructure in school organizations is located at central office headquarters to provide services to all divisions; support staff is located within each division. Large corporations are likely to adopt the divisionalized form.

Most school districts typically do not fit the divisionalized form. The exceptions are those very large school systems that have diversified service divisions distinctly separated into individual units or schools. For example, a school district may resemble the divisionalized form when it has separate schools for the physically handicapped, emotionally disturbed, and learning disabled; a skills center for the potential dropout; a special school for art and music students and so on. The identifying feature of these school districts is that they have separate schools within a single school district, which have separate administrative staffs, budgets, and so on. Elementary and secondary school districts that have consolidated but retained separate administrative structures with one school board are also examples of the

divisionalized form. As might be expected, the primary reason for a school district to adopt this form of structure is service diversity while retaining separate administrative structures.

Adhocracy

The **adhocracy** has the support staff as its key part, uses mutual adjustment as a means of coordination, and maintains selective patterns of decentralization. The structure tends to be low in formalization and decentralization. The technostructure is small because technical specialists are involved in the organization's operative core. The support staff is large to support the complex structure. Adhocracies engage in nonroutine tasks and use sophisticated technology. The primary goal is innovation and rapid adaptation to changing environments. Adhocracies typically are medium sized, must be adaptable, and use resources efficiently. Examples of adhocracies include aerospace and electronic industries, research and development firms, and very innovative school districts. No school districts are pure adhocracies, but medium-sized school districts in very wealthy communities may have some of the characteristics of an adhocracy.

Strategy and Structure

The work of Mintzberg has laid the groundwork for an understanding of the relationship between an organizations strategy and its structure. The link between strategy and structure is still in its infancy stage. Further research in this area, particularly in service organizations like schools, will enhance school administrators' understanding of school organizations. In the meantime, school leaders must recognize that organization strategy and structure are related (Lunenburg & Irby (2017).

An Open-Systems Perspective

To better understand how organizational models have evolved over the years, we need to know the difference between open and closed systems. All schools are open systems, although the degree of interaction with their environment

may vary. According to **open systems** theory, schools constantly interact with their environments. In fact, they need to structure themselves to deal with forces in the world around them (Norlin, 2009; Scott, 2007). In contrast, a **closed-systems** theory views schools as sufficiently independent to solve most of their problems through their internal forces, without taking into account forces in the external environment.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) of 2001 is a good example of open systems theory and the impact it has had on schools. Since the federal law was passed, states began to focus their policy on standards, accountability, and the improvement of student achievement. Statewide assessment systems were implemented nationwide. Thus, was born an era of high-stakes testing complete with sanctions for low-performing schools. NCLB has impacted local school districts in every state. And the trend continues under Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, which replaces and expands many of the provisions of NCLB.

A **system** can be defined as an interrelated set of elements functioning as an operating unit (Senge, 2006). As depicted in Figure 3, an open system consists of five basic elements: inputs, a transformation process, outputs, feedback, and the environment (Scott, 2007).

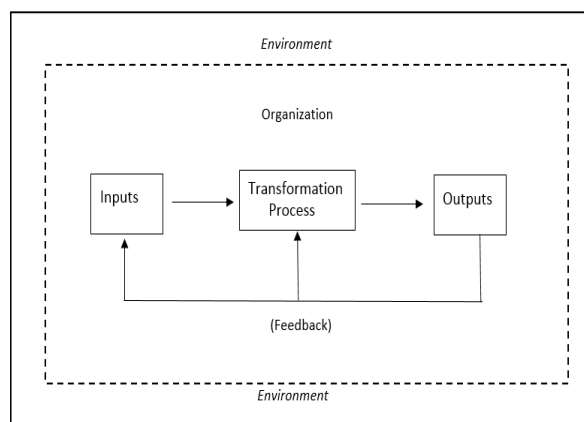


Figure 3. Open Systems Model

Inputs

Systems such as schools use four kinds of **inputs** or resources from the environment: human resources, financial resources, physical resources, and information resources. Human resources include administrative and staff talent, labor, and the like. Financial resources are the capital the school/school district uses to finance both ongoing and long-term operations. Physical resources include supplies, materials, facilities, and equipment. Information resources are knowledge, curricula, data, and other kinds of information utilized by the school/school district.

Transformation Process

The school administrator's job involves combining and coordinating these various resources to attain the school's goals—learning for all. The interaction between students and teachers is part of the transformation or learning process by which students become educated citizens capable of contributing to society. How do school administrators accomplish this? Work of some kind is done in the system to produce outputs. The system adds a *value added* to the work in process (Shaw, 2006).

This **transformation process** includes the internal operation of the school organization and its system of operational management. Some components of the system of operational management include the technical competence of school administrators and other staff, their plans of operation, and their ability to cope with change. Tasks performed by school administrators within the organization's structure will affect the school/school district's outputs.

Analysis of the school as an open system would be incomplete without an examination of the core technology of schooling—the teaching-learning process. The technical core of the school affects many of the decisions school administrators make concerning structure (Rowan, 1998; Rowan, Raudenbush, & Cheong, 1993). Although learning is not limited to school, the process of teaching and learning is

why schools exist.

Generally speaking, learning occurs when experience produces change in one's knowledge or behavior. Most experts agree that there are three general theories of learning: (a) behavioral theories stress observable changes in behavior; (b) cognitive theories stress internal mental activities such as thinking, memory, and problem solving; and (c) constructivist theories stress learners as active in constructing their own knowledge (Woolfolk, 2013). Application of each of these theories of learning has different implications for teaching (see, e.g., Alberto & Troutman, 2009; Bruning, Schraw, & Norby, 2011; Kirchner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006; Windschitl, 2002).

Outputs

It is the administrator's job to secure and use inputs to the schools, transform them—while considering external variables—to produce outputs. In school organizations, **outputs** are the attainment of *goals* or *objectives* of the school district and are represented by the products, results, outcomes, or accomplishments of the system. Although the kinds of outputs will vary with a specific school, they usually include one or more of the following: growth and achievement levels of students and teachers, student dropout rates, employee performance and turnover, student and staff absenteeism, administrator-staff relations, school-community relations, union-management relations, student attitudes toward school, and teacher morale and job satisfaction.

Most of these require no elaboration; only the last one requires some explanation. A school must provide "satisfaction" to members of the school community beyond the physiological needs (salary, working conditions, job security). Schools must provide for employees' needs for affiliation, acceptance, esteem, and perhaps even self-actualization if they hope to retain a motivated, committed work force capable of performing at maximum levels (Maslow, 1970).

Feedback

Feedback is crucial to the success of the school operation. Negative feedback, for example, can be used to correct deficiencies in the transformation process or the inputs or both, which in turn will have an effect on the school's future outputs.

Environment

The **environment** surrounding the school/school district includes the social, political, and economic forces that impinge on the organization. The environment in the open systems model takes on added significance today in a climate of policy accountability. The social, political, and economic contexts in which school administrators work are marked by pressures at the local, state, and federal levels. Thus, school administrators today find it necessary to manage and develop "internal" operations while concurrently monitoring the environment and anticipating and responding to "external" demands.

Since the enactment of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110) and subsequent federal legislation Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, education has been near the top of the national political agenda. NCLB nationalized the discussion concerning the well-being of public schooling in America. At the time the report was released and subsequently, there has been concern with an achievement gap in America (Darling-Hammond, 2010; DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Karhanek, 2010; Howard, 2011; Lunenburg, 2013a; Paige, 2011) and our academic competitiveness with other nations, particularly in mathematics and science (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). These achievement gaps and academic comparisons have led many people to conclude that the U.S. public school system was underperforming.

With recognition of an achievement gap and the rise of international educational comparisons, states began to focus their policy on standards, accountability, and the

improvement of student academic achievement (Lunenburg, 2015; Ornstein, 2016). Statewide assessment systems were implemented nationwide. Thus, was born an era of high-stakes testing complete with rewards and sanctions for low-performing schools.

The social, political, and economic forces that impinge on the school organization are not all state and national, however. Local school administrators also face a number of challenges that are exclusively local in nature, such as bond referenda, difficult school boards, and teacher unions. These local political issues can at times confound state mandated policies (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2012). For example, school administrators often face mandated programs that do not meet the changing demographics of their student population. Teachers are often bound by union contracts that conflict with the norms of their particular school or school district. Superintendents are expected to respond to federal mandates even though resources are scarce. Zero-tolerance policies may require expelling a student, even though it may not be in the best interest of the student to miss school for an extended period of time. And educational leaders are faced with ongoing pressures to show good results on standardized achievement tests, while at the same time dealing with a growing number of management duties, such as budgeting, hiring personnel, labor relations, and site committees resulting from school-based management initiatives.

The Learning Organization

In recent years, organization theorists have extended the open systems model by adding a "brain" to the "living organization." Today leaders are reading and hearing a great deal about learning organizations. Peter Senge (2006), a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, popularized the concept of learning organization in his best-selling book *The Fifth Discipline*.

A **learning organization** is a strategic commitment to capture and share learning in the organization for the benefit of individuals, teams, and the organization. It does this through alignment and the collective capacity to sense and interpret a changing environment; to input new knowledge through continuous learning and change; to imbed this knowledge in systems and practices; and to transform this knowledge into outputs.

Senge (2006) defines the learning organization as "organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning how to learn together." (p. 3) Senge describes a model of five interdependent disciplines necessary for an organization to seriously pursue learning. He identifies systems thinking as the "fifth discipline" because he believes that thinking systemically is the pivotal lever in the learning and change process. Brief definitions of Senge's principles follow.

- **Systems thinking:** A conceptual framework that sees all parts as interrelated and affecting each other.
- **Personal mastery:** A process of personal commitment to vision, excellence, and lifelong learning.
- **Shared vision:** Sharing an image of the future you want to realize together.
- **Team learning:** The process of learning collectively; the idea that two brains are smarter than one.
- **Mental models:** Deeply ingrained assumptions that influence personal and organizational views and behaviors.

The five disciplines work together to create the learning organization. A metaphor to describe this systems theory-based model would be DNA or a hologram. Each is a complex system of patterns, and the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Senge, author of the best-selling book, *The Fifth Discipline*, has written a companion book directly focused on education. In *Schools That Learn*, Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner (2012) argue that teachers, administrators, and other school stakeholders must learn how to build their own capacity; that is, they must develop the capacity to learn. From Senge et al. (2012) perspectives, real improvement will occur only if people responsible for implementation design the change itself. They argue that schools can be recreated, made vital, and renewed not by fiat or command, and not by regulation, but by embracing the principles of the learning organization.

Senge et al. makes a powerful argument regarding the need for a systems approach and learning orientation. They provide a historical perspective on educational systems. Specifically, they detail "industrial age" assumptions about learning: that children are deficient and schools should fix them, that learning is strictly an intellectual enterprise, that everyone should learn in the same way, that classroom learning is distinctly different from that occurring outside of school, and that some kids are smart while others are not. They further assert that schools are run by specialists who maintain control, that knowledge is inherently fragmented, that schools teach some kind of objective truth, and that learning is primarily individualistic and competition accelerates learning. Senge et al. suggest that these assumptions about learning and the nature and purpose of schooling reflect deeply embedded cultural beliefs that must be considered, and in many cases directly confronted, if schools are to develop the learning orientation necessary for improvement.

Transformational Leadership

Building on the work of James McGregor Burns (1978), Bernard Bass (1985) has developed an approach that focuses on both transformational and transactional leadership. Recent research has focused on differentiating

transformational leaders from transactional leaders (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). The more traditional **transactional leadership** involves leader-follower exchanges necessary for achieving agreed upon performance goals between leaders and followers. These exchanges involve four dimensions: contingent reward, management by exception (active), management by exception (passive), and laissez faire (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

- **Contingent Reward:** contracts the exchange of rewards for effort; promises rewards for good performance; recognizes accomplishments.
- **Management by Exception (active):** watches for deviations from rules and standards; takes corrective action.
- **Management by Exception (passive):** intervenes only if standards are not met.
- **Laissez-Faire:** abdicates responsibilities; avoids making decisions.

Transformational leadership is based on leaders' shifting the values, beliefs, and needs of their followers in three important ways (a) increasing followers' awareness of the importance of their tasks and the importance of performing them well; (b) making followers aware of their needs for personal growth, development, and accomplishment; and (c) inspiring followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the organization (Bass, 2010). Transformational leadership has four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These four dimensions are often called "the Four Is" (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

- **Idealized Influence:** involves behaving in ways that earn the admiration, trust, and respect of followers, causing followers to want to identify with and emulate the leader. Idealized influence is synonymous with *charisma*. For

example, Steve Jobs, who founded Apple Computer, showed idealized influence by emphasizing the importance of creating the Macintosh as a radical new computer. He followed up with products like the iPod and iPad.

- **Inspirational Motivation:** involves behaving in ways that foster enthusiasm for and commitment to a shared vision of the future. Frequently, that vision is transmitted through the use of symbols to focus efforts. As an example, in the movie *Patton*, George C. Scott stood on a stage in front of his troops with a wall-sized American flag in the background and ivory-handled revolvers in holsters at his sides.
- **Intellectual Stimulation:** involves behaving in ways that challenge followers to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions and reframing old situations in new ways. For example, your boss encourages you to “think out of the box,” that is, to look at a difficult problem in a new way.
- **Individualized Consideration:** involves behaving in ways that help followers achieve their potential through coaching, professional development, and mentoring. For example, your boss stops by your office and makes comments which reinforce your feeling of personal worth and importance in the organization.

The full range of leadership model (transactional and transformational leadership) is depicted in Figure 4 (Bass & Riggio, 2006). As shown in Figure 4, laissez-faire is the least effective of the leader behaviors. Leaders using this style are rarely viewed as effective. Management by exception (active or passive) is slightly better than laissez-faire, but it is still considered ineffective leadership. Leaders who practice management by exception leadership either search for deviations from standards and take corrective action or tend to intervene only

when there is a problem, which is usually too late. Contingent reward leadership can be an effective style of leadership. The leader attains follower agreement on what needs to be accomplished using promised or actual rewards in exchange for actual performance. Leaders are generally most effective when they regularly use each of the four transformational leadership behaviors: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

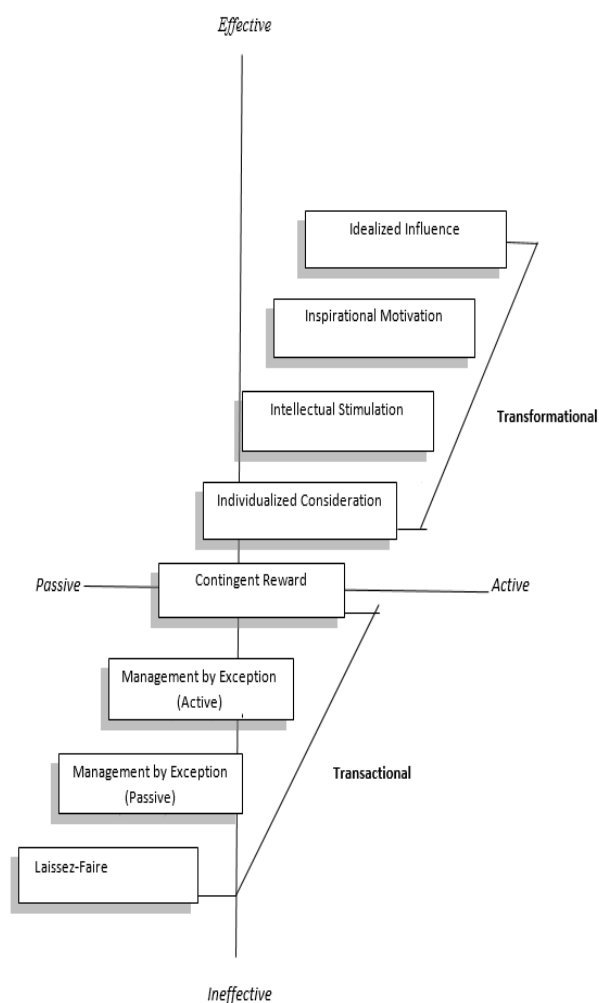


Figure 4. Full Range Leadership Model

How Transformational Leadership Works

A great deal of research has been done to explain how transformational leadership works. Generally, four elements emerge: creativity, goals, vision, and commitment.

Creativity

Transformational leaders are more effective because they are more creative themselves. They are also more effective because they encourage their followers to be more creative as well (Jung, 2001; Jung, Chow, & Wu, 2003). Transformational leaders are proactive rather than reactive; creative rather than compliant; and audacious rather than adherent (Lunenburg, 2010).

Goals

Goals are another key element in how transformational leadership works. Followers of transformational leaders are more likely to pursue ambitious goals, understand and agree with the formal goals of the organization, and believe that the goals they are pursuing will lead to their own self-fulfillment (Berson & Avolio, 2004).

Vision

Transformational leaders create a strategic vision that energizes and unifies followers (Bennis & Nanus, 2007; Quinn, 2004). They communicate the vision with emotional appeal that captivates followers and other stakeholders (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). Not only do transformational leaders communicate a vision, they also model the vision. In other words, they “walk the talk” by doing things that enact the vision (Simons, 2002). For example, leaders in higher education (deans, associate deans, department heads) walk the talk by doing research, acquiring grants, and publishing extensively in the research and professional literature alongside faculty members they lead.

Commitment

Making a vision a reality requires followers’ commitment. Transformational leaders build commitment to the vision through enthusiasm for every project they tackle; by being persistent in their follow-through on all projects; and by involving followers in the creation of the vision (Dvir, Taly, Kass, & Shamir, 2004).

Transformational leadership is currently the most popular organizational theory and leadership approach. The evidence supporting transformational leadership is impressive. Transformational leadership has been supported in various occupations (for example, school superintendents, school principals, college presidents, naval commanders, military cadets, ministers, shop stewards, sales personnel, and school teachers) and at various job levels.

A meta-analysis of 49 studies indicated that transformational leadership was positively associated with measures of leadership effectiveness and followers’ job satisfaction (Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002). A second meta-analysis of 87 studies indicated that transformational leadership was positively related to leader effectiveness ratings, group or organizational performance, and followers’ job satisfaction and motivation (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). A third meta-analysis of 39 studies revealed that the transformational leadership dimensions of inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation were related to leadership effectiveness in most studies, as well as idealized influence when an organization was in crisis. Moreover, except for the contingent reward dimension, the transactional leadership styles did not result in leadership effectiveness ratings (Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996).

These results were reinforced by findings from two large-scale studies of transformational leadership in public schools (Lunenburg, 2013b). The first study involved

school superintendents and their followers. The second study included school principals and their followers. In both studies ($n = 1,062$), three of the four transformational leadership dimensions (inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) were related to leadership effectiveness ratings. Furthermore, a confirmatory factor analysis of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) using data from the two aforementioned public school studies supported a three-factor model of transformational leadership, which appears to be consistent with three of the “four Is” proposed by Bass (Lunenburg, Thompson, & Pagani, 2004). The authors of the two public school studies concluded that idealized influence, or charisma, may not be a significant factor in stable school environments. Furthermore, none of the transactional leadership behaviors, except contingent reward, were related to leader effectiveness ratings.

Implications for Practice

There are several important implications that can be derived from the studies of transformational leadership. Previous research has found transformational leadership to be positively related to leader effectiveness ratings, group or organizational performance, and follower job satisfaction and motivation (Bennis & Nanus, 2007; Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Yukl, 2010). However, idealized influence, or charisma, may not be relevant for leaders in stable public school environments (Lunenburg, 2013b).

Some researchers have begun to explore the idea that idealized influence, or charisma, may be more appropriate in some situations than in others (Egri & Herman, 2000; Pawar & Eastman, 1997). For instance, idealized influence is probably more appropriate when organizations are in crisis and need to adapt than when environmental conditions are stable; that is, when dissatisfaction is high and value congruence and unquestioned obedience are needed to ensure organizational survival

(Bulach, Lunenburg, & Potter, 2016a, 2016b; Hinken & Tracey, 1999; Lunenburg, 2010). This line of thinking is consistent with several contingency theories of leadership proposing that individuals must modify their behavior to fit the situation or find a situation that fits their leadership style (e.g. Evans, 1970; Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971). Clearly, studying transformational leadership in turbulent environments might lead to a better understanding of idealized influence, or charisma, as implied also by the studies of Bycio, Hackett, & Allen (1995) and Keller (1992).

However, the other three dimensions of transformational leadership (inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) may be very important in achieving leader effectiveness. This approach would be in agreement with Bennis and Nanus (2007), who studied 90 innovative leaders in industry and the public sector and found that articulating a vision of the future; emphasis on organizational and individual learning; and the development of commitment and trust were factors that characterized transformational leaders. These results are consistent with the two public school studies reported earlier. Similarly, Yukl (2010) describes transformational leadership as influencing major changes in organization members and building commitment for the organization’s goals. Thus, educational leaders should communicate a sense of where the organization is going, develop the skills and abilities of followers, and encourage innovative problem solving.

Conclusion

Organizational structure is the arrangement of people and tasks to accomplish organizational goals. Organizational design is the process of creating a structure that best fits a purpose, strategy, and environment. *Classical organizational theories* (such as Weber’s notion of bureaucracy) claim that a universally best way to design organizations exists, an approach

based on high efficiency. *Neoclassical organizational theories* (such as those proposed by Likert's system 4 organization) also believe that there is one best way to design organizations. Such an approach emphasizes the need to consider basic human needs. *Contingency organizational theories* (such as Bolman and Deal's four frame model, Mintzberg's strategy-structure typology, Scott's open-systems theory, Senge's learning organization, and Bass's transformational leadership) is based on the belief that the most appropriate way to design organizations depends on the internal and external environment within which they operate.

There are many dysfunctions of the bureaucratic model, including those dealing with division of labor and specialization, uniform rules and procedures, hierarchy of authority, impersonality in interpersonal relations, and lifelong career and loyalty to the organization. New viewpoints are leading to a decline in the use of bureaucratic structure in organizations.

Likert's system 4 grew out of the human relations movement and is the antithesis of the ideal bureaucracy (which Likert calls system 1). The four-frame model, strategy-structure typology, open-systems theory, the learning organization, and transformational leadership are alternative approaches to organizational structure. These approaches integrate several ideas from the classical and participatory management models and other contemporary perspectives on organizational structure.

In the broadest sense, the usefulness of organizational structure in the field is an attempt to create organizations with best administrative styles or practices; increased capacity for organizational learning; greater opportunities for the individual growth and fulfillment of its members; and ultimately organization success.

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Leadership Practices to Increase Equity through Closing Intraschool Achievement Gaps

Donna Braun and Felice D. Billups

Johnson & Wales University

Robert K. Gable

Emeritus Professor, University of Connecticut

Abstract

This convergent parallel exploratory mixed methods study examined the degree to which purposefully selected schools closed intraschool achievement gaps while exploring educator beliefs and practices regarding the implementation of gap-closing strategies. Student achievement data revealed achievement rising and gaps closing between the intervention subgroups and their peers in different ways at the school sites. Interviews with school principals and focus groups with teachers suggested that the process of attempting to close the gaps resulted in the transformation of practices and beliefs of teachers and principals. Merged quantitative and qualitative results revealed new perspectives to inform subsequent study phases.

Key words: leadership development; equity; school improvement model

Donna Braun, Ed.D., is the Executive Director of the Center for Leadership and Educational Equity and adjunct professor in the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program at Johnson & Wales University.

Felice D. Billups, Ed.D. is a Professor in the Educational Leadership Doctoral Program at Johnson & Wales University, and conducts workshops and seminars on qualitative and mixed methods research methods.

Robert K. Gable, Ed.D., is an Emeritus Professor at the University of Connecticut and formerly the Director of the Center for Research and Evaluation and a Professor in the Education Leadership Doctoral Program at Johnson & Wales University.

Introduction

Which leadership practices effect transformative change in educators and in student success? This question prompted this exploratory study regarding the degree to which trained school leaders were able to close identified intraschool achievement gaps (i.e., gaps occurring between subgroups of students and their peers within a school), as well as to explore educators' perspectives on the ways their beliefs, assumptions, and practices shifted while engaging in efforts to close gaps. A secondary goal was to refine the data collection and analysis strategies for the next phase of the study.

A mixed methods approach was selected in order to accomplish complementarity and expansion. Complementarity was a primary goal to reveal new insights generated by data convergence, divergence, paradoxes, and/or new perspectives through merging quantitative and qualitative data at the data interpretation and reporting stages. The secondary purpose of this mixed methods approach was one of expansion, intended to extend the range of inquiry to test different, contrasting methods to answer the same research problem (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Greene, 2007; Hesse-Biber, 2010). Therefore, the overarching quantitative and qualitative research purpose was developed with separate paradigm-specific mixed methods research questions to probe the research problem from two separate perspectives. The quantitative research question was: To what extent and in what ways did the identified academic gaps between the intervention

subgroups and peer groups close? The qualitative research question was: In what ways do educators perceive their practices, beliefs, and assumptions have changed as a result of their efforts to close achievement gaps within their schools?

Conceptual Framework

This study investigated the outcomes of a model of leadership development for school improvement that engages school leaders and teams to implement cycles of inquiry aimed at closing intraschool achievement gaps. The development of the model and the design of this study are grounded in two theories of how adults learn. The first is Kegan and Lahey's (2009) conceptualization of the stages of adult mental complexity. Kegan and Lahey describe four key stages: instrumental, socialized, self-authoring and transformational. The leadership development model uses facilitative leadership practices to intentionally move people through the stages of complexity toward self-authoring and transformational learning and actions. Further, the model engages teams in a key practice that Kegan and Lahey advocate as a way to move toward transformational learning - using cycles of inquiry to identify a focus (e.g. closing an intraschool gap), enact change practices and examine the impact of changing your behavior to challenge assumptions that may hold you back from attaining your goal (e.g., equitable student outcomes).

The second theory that informs the study is Lave and Wenger's situated learning in a community of practice (1991). It is through this lens that the leadership development model continuously engages leaders and leadership teams both in authentic experiences while actively implementing (situated learning) and in communities of practice (in the school and between schools) to create dynamic and robust learning.

The model of leadership development under investigation builds the capacity of school and teacher leaders to improve their school through practitioner-based improvement

research cycles (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & LeMahieu, 2015). In the model, leaders are trained to facilitate collaborative cycles of inquiry that involve (a) identifying an intraschool achievement gap, (b) working to close the gap using facilitative leadership practices that empower shared leadership, (c) monitoring progress data, and (d) improving instructional practices and systems to achieve the best outcomes. This study represents the first step toward an ongoing effectiveness research study on the implementation of the leadership model across a growing number of schools to further validate the leadership development model and inform the field of effective leadership practices to advance equity.

In the state the study took place in, state test achievement scores have shown incremental increases on average; however, persistent gaps have remained for students categorized as Special Education, English Learners, African American, Hispanic, and/or Native American) (Borg, 2016). These gaps or educational debts (Ladson-Billings, 2006) are the manifestations of systemic inequities both across (e.g., urban versus suburban schools) and within (e.g., special education versus non-special education students in the same school) schools. While gaps across schools are rooted in the district, state, or national systemic inequities (Darling Hammond, 2010); intraschool gaps can represent the result of inequities within schools (Johnson & Avelar, 2010; Skrla & Sheurlich, 2009). This study is concerned with inequities within schools (intraschool gaps) because they are within the realm of influence of school leaders to impact. Further, the aim and effort of closing intraschool achievement gaps represents a high leverage strategy for school leaders to accelerate overall school improvement (Johnson & Avelar, 2010; Skrla & Sheurlich, 2009).

School leadership that empowers shared ownership for transforming instructional practices to meet students' needs is critical to achieving equitable educational outcomes for all students (Leithwood, Harris, & Strauss,

2010). Effective leadership development builds capacity for school leaders to facilitate a learning culture, empower shared leadership and strengthen the links between educator practices and student outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2010). The leadership development model under investigation in this study enacts these practices by supporting leaders to facilitate cycles of inquiry to close intraschool achievement gaps. The importance of closing intraschool gaps is based on the following theory of action. If school leaders draw attention to inequitable outcomes for a specific group of students and lead school communities through a collaborative, data-driven process to improve educator practices and learning outcomes for these students, then systemic inequities will be challenged and changed, and educators' beliefs about the ability of all students increased through the evidence of success. Scharff, DeAngelis, and Talbert (2009) have enacted and studied a similar school improvement model,

“Studying the system through the lens of students for whom it is not working clarifies which decisions lead to patterns in curriculum and instruction that consistently fail to meet specific students' needs. The tight focus on a small group of students makes facing and addressing those conditions manageable; shifts the conversation from generalities and assumptions about why struggling students can't learn to specific information about what they don't know and how teachers can help them learn it; and illuminates places where a small, strategic system change can make a big difference” (p.59).

If a school community only focuses on school improvements aimed at increasing the overall percent proficient or average performance of all students, they may not develop the necessary shifts in educator beliefs needed to implement and sustain high expectations for all students. These shifts are

necessary to accomplish the goal of equitable outcomes for all students (Campbell Jones, Campbell Jones, & Lindsey, 2010; Johnson & Avelar La Salle, 2010; Love, 2009; Skrla, McKenzie, & Scheurich, 2009). Therefore, the model taught to leaders to implement collaboratively includes the following steps:

- identify inequities in their students' achievement outcomes;
- analyze the reason for the inequity, and what instructional and school practices need to change or strengthen to eliminate or reduce the inequities;
- use core leadership practices to facilitate educators to implement changes or strategies to meet students' needs;
- monitor and communicate progress to students, parents, and teachers;
- make adjustments based on data to increase effectiveness; and
- continuously facilitate this cycle of collaborative inquiry and action.

To enable schools to continuously engage in this inquiry and action process, leaders build the capacity of educators in the school to collaborate and lead these cycles of improvement (Johnson & Avelar La Salle, 2010; Leithwood, et al., 2010; Love, 2009; Ross & Berger, 2009; Skrla et al., 2009; Talbert et al., 2010).

By focusing reform on intraschool inequities in student outcomes, school communities increase their sense of efficacy that through strong adult collaboration, they can impact the students who are most underserved. Thus, their assumptions of these students' abilities are influenced in positive ways: educators begin to raise expectations for students and see that through their own and their students' efforts, all students can learn at high levels (Campbell Jones et al., 2010; Hammond, 2015). When a school community believes in its ability to impact the learning of all students and has developed a culture of trust and risk-taking, they are more willing to take collective responsibility for all students. The resulting high level of internal accountability leads to an

ability to meet external measures of accountability (Elmore, 2007) and to continuously function as learning communities focused on eliminating inequitable outcomes in their schools. With each new cycle focused on increasing equity for specific groups of students, the school community learns and strengthens practices that ensure all students to have a path to an excellent education.

Literature supports the theory of action and leadership practices described above to enable school and teacher leaders to collaboratively identify, plan, monitor, and close intraschool achievement gaps to lead toward a trajectory of educational equity and larger school improvements (Campbell Jones et al., 2010; Johnson & Avelar La Salle, 2010; Leithwood et al, 2010; Love, 2009; Ross & Berger, 2009; Skrla et al., 2009). In schools in which similar school improvement models have been implemented, Talbert et al. (2010) have investigated the perceptions of educators, and Scharff and Talbert have linked their model to the outcomes of the most struggling students. However, there is no research that links the perception of practices data with the degree to which the specific identified intraschool gaps are closing. This focus is critical for the actively engaged communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) of leaders and teams to directly link their efforts to outcomes to allow changes in practices and beliefs (Kegan & Lahey, 2009).

This study addressed this need by developing a research protocol for use in an initial $N=5$ study schools implementing the model. The process and results both informed the research questions and subsequent research phases, including the development of a survey (Braun, Gable, Billups, 2105). Ultimately, this work will inform preparation programs and school leaders on the ways that efforts to close intraschool achievement gaps impact educators' practices and beliefs, as well as the outcomes of high and equitable student achievement.

Methodology

Research Design

This project was designed as a convergent parallel exploratory mixed methods study involving quantitative analysis of student achievement data and qualitative interpretative exploration using interviews and focus groups. Mixing occurred at the data interpretation stage to inform the overall research purpose, but the inquiry was distinguished with separate paradigm-specific research questions, overlapping sampling strategies, separate data collection, and separate data analysis. Data analysis was accomplished through a collaborative process of inter-rater coding and debriefing, which ensured the integrity and verity of the findings. In the final phase of the study, aligning quantitative results with emergent themes created a profile of the transformative effect of principal leadership on teacher beliefs and practices to close intraschool achievement gaps.

Participants and Sites

Using purposive sampling strategies, participants included $N=5$ principals trained in the leadership development model. These principals were serving in public schools and identified an intraschool achievement gap they were working to close, provided pre- and post-student achievement data, participated in 1:1 interviews and organized staff to attend focus groups. Five focus groups were conducted with the teachers and staff at the $N=5$ school sites (Site 1 $n=7$, Site 2 $n=5$, Site 3 $n=6$, Site 4 $n=6$, Site 5 $n=5$). Participants of the focus group were individuals who were involved in the interventions for the subgroups and were selected based on their 'information rich' potential for detailed responses and 'thick description' (Patton, 2002). Building on the purposeful sampling approach, participants for interviews were further identified using elite informant status (principals) or criterion-selection sampling (focus groups) to increase the substance and scope of participant stories and to increase the holistic perspective of their

collective narratives. The profile of each site is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Profile of Study Sites

Site	Context	Grade levels	Number of Students	% of Eligible for Subsidized Meals	% Receiving Special Education Services	% Receiving ESL**	% AHANA	Years Focused on Gap
1	Urban Charter	K-1	160	66	6	29	70	2
2	Suburban Regular	6-8	200	9	13	1	8	1
3	Suburban Regular	PreK-1	360	17	18	0	10	1
4	Urban Regular	5-8	660	84	23	14	81	2
5	Urban Regular	9-12	740	72	25	15	81	2

Note: Source Infoworks, Rhode Island Department of Education (2015). *ESL is English as a Second Language/Bilingual, **AHANA refers to Asian, Hispanic, African American, Native American

Site 1 Context, Gap, and Practices

The school was in its second year of existence. A majority of teachers were within their first few years of teaching and fully committed to the beliefs and mission of the school that all children can achieve and graduate from college. The principal identified an achievement gap between a subgroup of 1st grade students (with and without Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)) and their peers in English Language Arts (ELA). All students were engaged in differentiated literacy instruction. In addition, the students in the intervention group also received targeted literacy instruction focused on their individual goals. Both the whole-school literacy initiatives and the interventions were designed to improve literacy for all while closing the gaps for the subgroup of students. The school used multiple data sources, including the standardized data used in the study analysis, to monitor student progress, inform instruction, and assess the degree to which the gap closed.

Site 2 Context, Gap, and Practices

The principal was new to the school and the majority of staff members had been at the school for 10+ years. The principal identified an achievement gap between a subgroup of 7th and 8th grade students (with and without IEPs) and their peers in math and literacy. All students were impacted by a multitude of school-level initiatives, including moving to Common Core State Standards and a new Response to

Intervention (RTI) process, designed to improve literacy and math for all. The students in the intervention subgroup were engaged in the RTI process to determine their needs and provide specific interventions in math and/or reading. The school used two sources of standardized data to measure math and ELA literacy.

Site 3 Context, Gap, and Practices

The context was quite similar to Site 2 in every way except the grade levels served. The principal was new to the school and a majority of the teachers had been at the school 10+ years. The principal identified a gap between a group of Kindergarten (K) and grade 1 students identified for intervention services in math and reading compared to their grade level peers. All students were impacted by the implementation of a new RTI process that engaged teachers in regular data analysis to decide which of their limited resources/services to provide to students most in need and to share best practices for classroom-level interventions. The students in the intervention group received extra services to meet their identified needs both in and out of the classroom. The school used two sources of standardized math and reading assessments: one for Kindergarten math and reading and grade 1 reading and the other for grade 1 math.

Site 4 Context, Gap, and Practices

The principal was in her second year as an administrator at the school, and the assistant principal who was co-leading the initiative was in her first year. They focused efforts on a perceived gap between grades 7-8 students who were receiving support for their social learning (i.e., behavior) and their grade-level peers in math and reading. All students were impacted by the school-wide initiative to improve student behavior, including a focus on restorative behavior practices and an RTI system focused on improving student behavior in the classroom setting. In addition, the students in the intervention group received behavior plans, additional support, and continuous monitoring.

The school used one source of standardized data to measure math and ELA literacy.

Site 5 Context, Gap, and Practices

The principal had been an administrator at the school for three years and the school had gone through an extraordinary period of turmoil in those years to determine a path toward ‘turning the school around’ from their low student outcomes. The principal identified a gap between 9th grade students who were below grade level in math and their peers. All students were impacted by the move to a Common Core-aligned curriculum and the implementation of an improved RTI process. The intervention group was enrolled in an algebra seminar in addition to their math course. The school used one source of standardized data to measure math and ELA literacy.

The unique context (Table 1) of each school represented a range of settings. While the practice of identifying a gap that was relevant to the needs of their students and designing specific interventions to meet those needs was analogous at each school, the actual gaps, practices, and assessment instruments were different. Interestingly, each school had an overarching focus on moving toward Common Core-aligned curriculum and associated instructional practices and on improving the RTI system to further differentiate learning and best use limited and diminishing resources.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred over two years, with Sites 1 and 2 participating in the first year and Sites 3, 4 and 5 in the second year. For each site, the sampling and data collection process were the same. Early in the school year, introductory discussions were held with each principal to record their articulation of the gap, the work being done to close it, and the data they would provide by the end of the school year. By the spring, interview and focus group sessions were conducted using interview protocols and focus group moderator guides and audio recorded for subsequent transcription. By the

summer, each principal provided non-identifying student achievement data.

Instrument development for interview protocols and focus group moderator guides followed similar processes; in both cases, instruments were initially developed with content experts, while questions and probes were grounded in the literature. Interview protocols incorporated a variety of introductory, content-based, and free word association questions, followed by sequenced questioning (“I used to think But now I think...”) to elicit reflective and transformative perspectives on the phenomenon under inquiry. Focus group moderator guides were developed using Krueger and Casey’s (2009) template for the icebreaker, introduction, transition, content, and debriefing questioning routes; these questions shared similar content focus with interview protocols but were also customized to match teacher perspectives, which differed from principal perspectives elicited in the individual interviews. Instruments were piloted with individuals who resembled study participants but who were not included in the final sample; adjustments were made to both instruments prior to live data collection, and were likewise modified during the study to adjust probes and prompts to obtain clearer and richer information.

Data Analysis

Preliminary data analysis was accomplished separately for each data set. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software, and presented in tables; qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Giorgi, 1985) and reported narratively. The final process of converging the data at the interpretation stage involved three strategies suggested by Onwuegbzie and Teddlie (2003), consisting of data comparison, data consolidation (emergent), and data display. By comparing the data to see where there was overlap between statistical results and thematic concepts, researchers were able to identify new insights generated by the comparisons. Figure 1

illustrates how the data were examined in this mixed approach to support new perspectives created by this analysis. For instance, there were similarities and differences in the results when viewing the same phenomenon, and while no apparent contradictions were evident in the findings, the new insight generated from these results indicated that there was a transformative effect of school leadership on the perspectives of teachers who collaborated in gap-closing strategies. The analysis procedures are outlined below, followed by detailed analysis for quantitative, qualitative, and converged data.

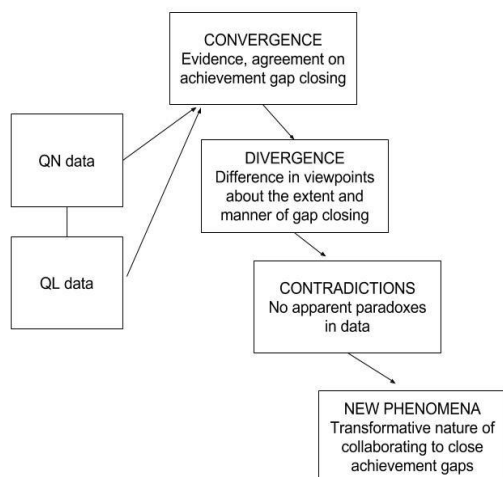


Figure 1. Data Analysis Typology for QN and QL Results

Quantitative

To analyze the degree to which the intraschool gaps closed, a three-step process was used. First, an independent samples *t*-test was used to compare the pre-test results for the intervention and peer groups to determine if they began in significantly different places. Next, a related *t*-test was conducted to compare the pre- and post-means of the intervention and peer groups to determine if both groups' scores significantly incremented upwards. Finally, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) analysis

using the pre- and post-test data for the intervention and peer groups provided the degree to which a significant difference (gap) remained between the groups after the intervention treatment. ANCOVA was used to assess differences between the post-test data while controlling for initial differences on the pretest data to control for variation in the groups. Effect sizes were calculated for each step where statistically significant findings were present to allow a comparison of the results since different standardized tests were used at the five school sites.

Qualitative

Data analysis was accomplished through several steps: 1) holistic review of all interview and focus group transcripts; 2) review of only the interview transcripts for comparison among the principals; 3) review of only the focus group transcripts for comparison among the focus groups; 4) within-case analysis, comparing the differences in perceptions and perspectives between school principals and their teaching staff, and 5) cross-case analysis, comparing the emergent themes holistically. Giorgi's strategy for holistic data analysis (1985) was used for the macro level analysis. This process included reading the entire description to get a sense of the whole statement, re-reading to discriminate "meaning units" from a psychological perspective, going through all the "meaning units" and expressing the psychological insight contained in them more directly, and finally synthesizing the "meaning units" into statements regarding the subjects' experiences (1985, p.10).

Interview and focus group data were integrated for analysis of the two data sets holistically. Employing a rigorous inter-rater coding and analytical process, the researchers coded interview and focus group data independently, using the same sequence of within case (all interview data reviewed separately from all focus group data), and then reviewing initial code categories in an across-

case approach. Coding comprised a blend of grounded codes, originating from the literature, with in vivo codes originating from participant stories and descriptions. Following these analyses, the researchers collaborated to identify common code categories and initial and emergent themes. This process ensured the depth and verity of the findings for interview data, focus group data, the integration of these data sets for all qualitative findings, and the convergence of all data (quantitative and qualitative) for the final synthesis.

Modifying Krueger and Casey's (2009) Classic Approach for focus group data analysis (with an overlay of the Key Concepts Framework), and Miles and Huberman's (2013) three-tier coding strategy (descriptive, interpretive, and pattern coding), the next phase of data analysis and coding proceeded in the following 4 steps: (1) coded data were transformed into themes and categories in order to present the findings, using participants' words and expressions to illustrate their meaning essence (Giorgi, 1985); (2) initial thematic clusters were created by searching the content categories to see where themes emerged and were similar; (3) descriptive summaries were developed by labeling each initial theme cluster with a descriptive sentence or phrase that explained the theme in more detail, at which point the researchers compared the theoretical framework with the findings to determine how to best to integrate the themes with the elements of the framework; and (4) integrating quotes and stories by reviewing the transcripts to link stories, expressions, and phrases, with the theme categories to augment the reader's understanding of how to interpret the findings. (Giorgi, 1985; Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 122).

Limitations and Delimitations

Several limitations posed minimal threats to the credibility and transferability of the study and its findings. One member of the research team inherently presented bias due to her relationship with the participants and her

role as an administrator in the training program; this bias was managed through bracketing at the beginning of each interview and focus group session, and by soliciting rich descriptive information from participants. These detailed stories and descriptions allowed participants to elaborate on their opinions and viewpoints, limiting or offsetting the researcher's bias assumptions about their perceptions. Inherent bias and familiarity with the content and the participants were also addressed through peer debriefing at the conclusion of each data collection session; by working in tandem with a fellow researcher who had minimal knowledge of the training program content or graduates, the data could be reviewed with greater 'distance' and reflection.

The delimitations of this research included the small group of participants and sites in order to allow for in-depth study. Further, only principals who had been trained in the leadership development model were selected for this pilot phase as they had all learned the same school improvement strategy to focus on closing intraschool achievement gaps. Principals selected represented a variety of years of participation in the training and sites were chosen to represent a variety of contexts (e.g., grade level, socioeconomic level, and urban/suburban setting).

Results

Quantitative Results

The study schools used different assessments; however, all assessments were given early in the school year as a pre-test and late in the school year as a post-test. Further, the calculation of effect sizes for any significant statistics allowed comparisons to be made.

Test 1: Pre-Assessment Difference Between the Intervention and Peer Groups

An independent samples *t*-test was used to compare pre-test results for the intervention and peer groups to determine if the schools accurately identified a gap between the groups. Table 2 displays all the results of this first test, with the *p* values in bold for sites that had a

significant difference between peer and intervention groups. The elementary schools (Sites 1 and 3) had the largest differences on the pretest with a large effect size ($d = 1.40$) at Site 1 and four large effect sizes ($d = .95$, $d = 1.33$, $d = 2.0$, $d = 2.51$) at Site 3. The middle schools (Sites 2 and 4) had mixed results. One grade level intervention group at each middle school site were significantly lower on the pre-test: at Site 2 in ELA ($t(59) = 2.13$, $p = .04$ ($d = .41$, small effect size) and at Site 4 in 7th grade ELA ($t(135) = 1.96$, $p = .05$ ($d = .59$, medium effect size). However, the intervention and peer groups at these sites were not significantly different on the pre-test for math, nor at Site 4 for 8th grade ELA. Finally, the intervention and peer groups at Site 5 (the high school) were significantly different on the pre-test ($t(120) = 2.85$, $p = .005$ ($d = .52$, medium effect size). Overall, except for Site 4, the schools accurately identified intervention groups that had significantly lower performance on the pre-test.

Table 2
Test 1 Results of *t*-test and Descriptive Statistics for Pre-Test by Group

Sites	Intervention Group			Peers			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i> ^a
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
1									
ELA	16	3.56	.63	58	5.17	1.74	3.62	.006	1.40
2									
ELA	7	957.71	227.34	52	1130.71	198.28	2.13	.040	.41
Math	6	851.67	43.32	53	887.08	131.72	.65	.520	
3									
K ELA	49	124.27	38.21	112	163.46	44.61	5.35	.001	.95
1 ELA	35	82.54	20.51	110	147.63	31.36	11.51	.001	2.51
K Math	48	8.69	5.93	108	39.27	24.65	12.14*	.001	2.00
1 Math	56	1.71	1.84	89	5.62	4.04	7.92*	.001	1.33
4									
7 ELA	16	382.50	184.77	119	509.25	247.26	1.96	.050	.59
8 ELA	24	547.58	267.69	93	512.17	294.85	.534	.594	.13
7 Math	17	609.29	116.72	114	663.01	122.11	1.70	.091	.20
8 Math	25	704.2	88.99	90	689.13	120.48	.689	.494	.14
5									
9 Math	51	655.94	78.33	69	711.57	134.25	2.85*	.005	.52

Note: ^a Effect size guidelines were as follows: .20 = small, .50 = medium, .80 = large, *equal variance not assumed. **Bolded** statistics indicate the ideal outcome that the schools chose a statistically significant gap within their school to close. Sample sizes (*N*) represent individual students.

Test 2: Pre- to Post-Assessment Differences for Intervention and Peer Groups

Related samples *t*-tests were used to compare pre- and post-test results for both the intervention and the peer group to determine if each group made significant gains on the post-test. Table 3 displays all the results, with the *p* values in bold for the groups that had a significant difference between pre- and post-tests. The elementary schools (Sites 1 and 3) had

the most growth for the both the intervention and peer groups. Site 1 had large effect sizes for both the peer ($d = 2.05$) and intervention ($d = 2.34$) groups. Site 3 had large effect sizes in math for the K intervention group ($d = 5.74$), K peer group ($d = 3.11$), the grade 1 intervention group ($d = 5.0$) and the grade 1 peer group ($d = 4.37$), and in ELA for the grade 1 peer group ($d = 1.31$) and grade 1 ELA intervention group ($d = .77$). However, Site 3 had a small effect size (.28) for the ELA K intervention group and no significant difference for the K ELA peer group. The middle school Sites (2 and 4), were quite different than the elementary results, with only the peer groups showing significant growth and one instance of an intervention group showing significant growth in Site 4 grade 7 ELA group ($t(16) = 4.17$, $p = .001$, $d = .85$, large effect size). Site 5, the high school, showed significant growth and a large effect size ($d = 1.07$) for the intervention group and a medium effect size ($d = .54$) for the peer group. Though the results are mixed, the elementary schools and the high schools generally showed greater growth for the intervention and peer groups than the middle schools.

Table 3
Test 2 Results of *t*-test and Descriptive Statistics for Pre- and Post-Assessments by Group

Sites	<i>N</i>	Pretest			Posttest			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i> ^a
		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>				
1										
1 Intervention ELA	16	3.56	.63		5.75	1.24		6.86	.001	2.34
1 Peers ELA	63	5.17	1.74		9.03	2.03		17.29	.001	2.05
2										
Intervention ELA	7	957.71	227.34		1142.29	143.36		2.28	.37	
Peers ELA	52	1130.71	198.28		1204.48	157.28		6.36	.001	.94
Intervention Math	6	851.67	43.32		890.00	150.63		.69	.36	
Peers Math	53	887.08	131.72		1001.13	101.12		7.78	.001	.63
3										
K Intervention ELA	49	124.27	38.21		134.57	36.66		-2.71	.009	.28
K Peers ELA	112	13.46	44.61		166.20	38.49		.95	.343	
1 Intervention ELA	35	82.54	20.51		111.51	54.42		3.228	.003	.77
1 Peers ELA	110	147.63	31.36		213.09	68.25		14.06	.001	1.31
K Intervention Math	48	8.68	5.93		89.31	22.17		26.32	.001	5.74
K Peers Math	108	39.30	24.65		117.17	25.41		36.21	.001	3.11
1 Intervention Math	56	1.71	1.84		17.73	4.58		26.99	.000	5.00
1 Peers Math	89	5.62	4.04		24.46	4.56		38.42	.000	4.37
4										
7 Intervention ELA	16	382.50	184.77		516.69	132.98		4.17	.001	.85
7 Peers ELA	115	520.32	243.50		594.48	258.56		5.93	.001	.30
8 Intervention ELA	24	547.58	267.69		534.00	276.70		.418	.680	.05
8 Peers ELA	92	517.54	291.85		556.15	302.06		3.33	.001	.13
7 Intervention Math	17	609.29	116.72		629.53	133.06		.84	.413	.16
7 Peers Math	114	663.01	122.11		703.79	114.12		5.65	.001	.35
8 Intervention Math	24	702.79	90.62		721.75	107.16		1.73	.096	.19
8 Peers Math	90	689.13	120.48		701.62	128.49		2.09	.039	.10
5										
Intervention Math	40	658.45	85.80		747.33	80.14		8.34	.001	1.07
Peers Math	59	723.66	132.23		793.56	128.74		7.11	.001	.54

Note: ^a Effect size guidelines were as follows: .20 = small, .50 = medium, .80 = large. **Bolded** statistics indicate that the schools increased the achievement of the subgroup and/or the peer group a statistically significant amount. Sample sizes (*N*) represent individual students.

Test 3: Adjusting for Initial Differences, Qualitative Results

Table 4

Test 3 Adjusted Posttest Means and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) by Group

Sites	Intervention Group				Peer Group				ANCOVA	
	Pretest M	SD	Posttest ^a M	SD	Pretest M	SD	Posttest ^a M	SD	F	η^2
1										
ELA	3.56	.63	6.62	.42	5.17	1.74	8.8	.21	20.68**	.23
2										
ELA	957.71	227.34	1243.34	31.70	1130.71	198.28	1190.88	11.29	2.39	
Math	851.67	43.32	905.20	36.18	887.08	131.72	999.41	12.14	6.09*	.10
3										
K ELA	124.27	38.21	152.53	3.86	13.46	44.61	158.34	2.48	1.50	
1 ELA	82.54	20.51	187.550	10.48	147.63	31.36	188.90	5.01	.010	
K Math	8.68	5.93	102.70	3.44	39.30	24.65	111.22	2.31	3.83	
1 Math	1.71	1.84	18.94	.62	5.62	4.04	23.70	.48	32.58**	.19
4										
7 ELA	382.50	184.77	623.73	33.34	520.32	243.50	579.59	12.27	1.53	
8 ELA	547.58	267.69	511.50	24.93	517.54	291.85	562.02	12.73	3.26	
7 Math	609.29	116.72	664.27	18.16	663.01	122.11	698.61	6.96	3.10	
8 Math	702.79	90.62	711.33	11.47	689.13	120.48	704.40	5.92	.29	
5										
Math	658.45	85.80	777.27	10.94	723.66	132.23	773.26	8.94	.08	

Note: ^aAdjusted Post-test, N sizes all the same as Table 3. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Effect size guidelines were as follows: .01 = small, .06 = medium, .14 = large. **Bolded** statistics indicate the ideal outcome that the schools increased the achievement of the subgroup at a greater rate than the peer group thereby reducing the gap so that there was not a statistically significant difference on the adjusted post assessment. Sample sizes (N) represented in Table 3.

Intervention and Peer Group Post Differences

Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to compare adjusted post-test results, after statistically equating the intervention and peer groups using the pretest scores, to determine if significant differences (i.e., a gap) still remained between the two groups after the intervention period. Unlike Test 1 and 2, the optimal result was a statistically significant difference to *not* be present. Therefore, the *F* values in bold represents the sites where there was no significant difference in the adjusted post-tests scores. Results varied at the different sites (see Table 4). Three sites showed a gap in performance remained evidenced by a significant difference between the two groups on the adjusted post-test results. Site 1 in ELA ($F(1, 71) = 20.68, p < .01, \eta^2 = .23$, large effect size), Site 2 in math ($F(1, 57) = 6.09, p < .05, \eta^2 = .1$, medium effect size), and Site 3 in grade 1 math ($F(1, 143) = 32.58, p < .01, (\eta^2 = .19$, large effect size).

After the initial round of inter-rater coding, the researchers confirmed that research-based leadership practices (Leithwood et al., 2004; 2010) appropriately supported the use of inductive codes and the outline for theme labels: (a) setting direction, (b) monitoring progress, (c) developing capacity to teach, collaborate and lead, and (d) reorganizing systems. Results are encapsulated in the participants' own words. An overarching theme surfaced, reflecting the transformation of practice and beliefs experienced by participants in their efforts to close achievement gaps, "All students reaching toward unlimited potential is the goal, everything else is flexible."

Theme #1 Setting Direction: 'Care Less About the How As Long As We Get There. If We Are Not Getting There, That's a Different Conversation'

This theme refers to the establishment and communication of a shared and clear understanding of the current reality, vision,

priority goals, and common language that raises the ceiling on what educators believe students can achieve and increases their commitment to urgently change practices to enable all students to reach high expectations. In all the study schools, there was a push to raise expectations and achievement for all students, and specifically for a subgroup of students who were being underserved (i.e., the intervention group). While principals drove the effort to set and communicate a vision and goals that challenged the staff's perspective of what was possible, they realized that a collaborative, flexible approach was vital to building ownership. As one principal expressed:

Having clear goals in mind of where you want your team to end are super important, but I think the flexibility of how the team gets to that goal is something that like I have definitely grown to appreciate...I care less about the how, as long as we get there...being flexible when flexibility is warranted and holding that line where maybe it stopped.

And another principal described her changing strategy to share ownership as:

Before I thought that I needed to be the one sort of, setting the direction and setting the course and making sure everybody stayed on it. Now I think I need to be less of the navigator and more of the crew.

Teachers expressed the numerous ways that the efforts to set direction impacted their work. A critical way was in the clarity of purpose and language it brought to the changes they were being asked to make. As one teacher expressed:

Communication is essential. Because the first year or two, communication wasn't as fluid, and everyone was kind of going in a different direction...it clashed at times. Whereas now, with communication being more fluid and things being more consistent, I think everyone's

pulling in the same direction and has a better understanding of where it's going to go.

The impact on the teachers of the practices to set direction transformed their expectations of students, especially the students who were previously underserved. The teacher recognized they're well-intentioned, though the expectation-lowering previous role in maintaining the gap:

In the past, it felt so validating to just say 'Oh, but they struggle with the basics, so I'm not even going to push them to that because it's more stress on me and more stress on them.' ...but I think what we've seen through this push is that they're still capable at their at their level and we can't be holding them back.

Teachers expressed that their beliefs were shifting toward seeing students' potential as unlimited. For example, one teacher remarked, 'before I thought that there was like this theoretical ceiling to what kids could learn in kindergarten...now based on the data that we're looking at, I see that there really is no ceiling.'

Importantly, teachers and principals felt that they needed to adapt urgently. In one teacher's words, 'to suck it up and do whatever it takes.' Increasing expectations for students is a key outcome of this theme that was achieved in complex ways throughout the schools.

Theme #2, Monitoring Progress: 'Data Helps Me Know What My Students Really Need!'

This theme reflects the variety of data cyclically used by teachers and students to learn about students' strengths and needs, plan next steps to differentiate instructional approaches and monitor growth and success to unleash student potential. Principals and teachers discussed the ways that the use of data individually, collectively and with students, evolved their use of data and their instructional practices. Participants provided extensive

examples of the ways in which frequent and relevant data grew more valuable with use:

Yes, I would say that the weekly progress monitoring that takes place has given me lots of information I did not have before. And my job has changed because I now have that information. I am more clear about what the disability might be or even if there is a disability at all. Because I have data to use, I have a lot more information to guide me when I try to identify kids who might need interventions.

The importance of varied data points, as opposed to a single source, also helped build a common, accurate, and trustworthy picture of student learning. Powerfully, the practice of using frequent, varied data also helped teachers ‘understand them [students] and see them in a different light.’

In addition to the importance of informal and frequent data use in the classrooms, teachers also described the way that regular cycles of looking at and ‘speaking about’ data with colleagues ‘cleared up the confusion of expectations for instruction’ and raised expectations for students. Further, it focused the staff on taking collective responsibility for students and ensuring limited resources went to the most needed places, rather than, as one teacher said, ‘the squeaky wheel getting the most.’ Remarkably, cyclical collaborative dialogue about data challenged teachers’ perception of student ability:

So before I thought data was pretty static, meaning that low kids will stay low and high learning kids will remain high, but now there’s so much more to looking at the data! If you use the data the right way, it shows you there is a ton of growth from my lower students as well as for my higher students

And, the regular use of data increased teacher efficacy and motivation to adapt practice:

When we actually were able to look at the data and really see our efforts and see that it is making a change, that it is worthwhile, I think you know it lifts us up and gives us a reason to continue to do it.

The use of data, on a regular and systematic basis, made it possible for teachers to monitor student progress in significant ways. Perhaps more important was the recognition that students were increasing their efficacy through owning and celebrating their progress:

Kids make graphs on their progression in reading and writing. And what I see is that they’re very eager to look at the graph and it’s an incentive for them to try and improve the results...overall, it helps them take ownership of their learning.

Using data and monitoring student achievement so closely gave teachers the information they needed to customize instruction to each student’s individual needs and abilities. This differentiated learning strategy was noted by numerous participants:

Before I thought data was something used to show that we are doing our job and now I know that data is used to really understand all of your students and know exactly what they need so we can provide it for them the way they need it

There is an interconnected dynamic between the first theme, Setting Direction, and this theme, Monitoring Progress. A clear direction must be set *and* everyone must monitor through varied, frequent data if progress is being made toward that direction. The groups described the ways the process of monitoring their progress changed beliefs and practices, which motivated them to continue reaching toward the vision that was set and raising it by increasing expectations for themselves and students.

Theme #3, Developing Capacity: 'Before I Thought It Was All About Teaching. Now I realize It Is All About Learning.'

Developing Capacity: To Teach involves teachers knowing students well enough to craft personalized learning experiences for all student needs and strengths. Teachers (and then students) develop efficacy and take responsibility for student learning by tracking student growth, adapting instructional practices, and questioning their assumptions. Many participants noted that they had previously envisioned teaching in a static, teacher-centered way but that their recent experiences with gap-closing strategies had caused them to see teaching as an ever-evolving means to an end, student learning.

In order to get even those little successes, you need to really individualize and get to know your kids on a personal level one-on-one, each child. You should know what they love, what they don't love, what they are good at, and what they struggle with.

A key goal of building the capacity to teach was to shift instructional practices in the classroom by situating the responsibility for student learning primarily in the classroom setting, rather than relying on outside support. As one principal articulated:

Really trying to shift teachers' mindset around the idea that if a child is struggling that that child must then, therefore, get extra support from another body...shifting that responsibility back to the classroom teachers who then were creating a plan.

By resituating the responsibility on the teachers to change their practice for students who were struggling, rather than reach for outside support, a ripple effect occurred in which teachers realized what they were doing for the most underserved would benefit all students.

If I see that the strategy is good for all kids, then I make it part of what I do...whether it be putting in an agenda for the day at the beginning of class. So all kids do well, I incorporate it.

Developing Capacity: To Collaborate involves teachers engaging in collaboration, problem-solving, and communication to learn from each other, build trust, evolving practices, and give input into reorganizing systems. Principals expressed their views on the need for collaboration among teaching staff:

Before this, I thought that having rock star teachers in every single classroom would be enough but now I think that you need rock star teachers who are interested and able to work together, to share best practices, resources, and truly have a sense of the team... putting that common vision over their individual glory is super important!

Teachers felt similarly about the value of working together as a team:

I don't think it's one person's, but I think our system, our community, and altogether as a team, with the supports that are set, through guidance, through teachers, through support staff, through meetings and RTI and we truly do help with the success and it's just, it makes it make me, it humbles me to see it and then I go, okay, it's working.

Importantly, teachers and principals noted that working together was not just about being congenial or simply sharing ideas and practices, it was about developing a community that was 'in it' together and honestly expressing and challenging each other's perspectives. This deep level of collaboration built trust encouraged risk-taking and focused all efforts and decisions on students.

We look at the entire grade level and the collective responsibility...not thinking necessarily about our own needs but that we're

remembering that everyone has needs... and that we need to make sure that the children come first.

Developing Capacity: To Lead involves a principal knowing the context of the school and the teachers' strengths and needs, similar to the ways teachers need to know students well. Principals use that knowledge to plan steps to share the leadership and ownership of the work to reach the goals. To build the trust needed for teachers to both do the hard work described in these themes and be willing to step up into leadership roles, principals expressed ways they set the stage to distribute leadership. First, they needed to model what they wanted to see and be present in all aspects of the work, 'walking the talk.' Principals also described how they constantly reflected on their own leadership and considered their colleagues need to enable them to build their capacity to lead:

I am learning something new every day about my leadership capacity...I have a much better understanding of how to work with different types of people and a lot of my work here is building relationships and building trust.

Principals felt it was also crucial to distribute leadership to teacher leaders to 'become the experts and become the outward representation' of the change. While formal teacher leadership was seen as important, principals and teachers discussed the need for all staff to become involved and assume leadership and responsibility for all stages, from design to implementation. As one principal expressed:

We involved as many stakeholders as possible in the development of the system and I think that was the biggest instrument of the success that we've had thus far...it's really shared leadership and building ownership.

Learning is what happens when capacity is built. Building capacity necessitates that a leader uses the practices throughout this theme

to create a trustful culture and climate that enables teachers and students to take the risks needed to take full responsibility for their learning. As one teacher expressed, 'I thought student learning was about effort and initiative of the student. Now, I think about the classroom environment to make the student feel safe enough to try things.'

Theme #4, Reorganizing Systems: 'Helping Us Do Everything We Can, As Well As We Can.'

This theme involves a leader building buy-in and commitment, not just compliance, to clear manageable systems to identify, plan, set, and track goals for students with a variety of data, and processes for colleagues to learn from the data and student progress. Similar to the first theme, Setting Direction, principals seemed to drive the creation of structures and systems to ensure equitable access to excellent teaching and student learning. Also, similar to the work for teachers in themes two and three, principals used inquiry and data to monitor and adjust to increase the effectiveness of the systems on a regular basis. From a principal's perspective:

Before I thought leading was like my personality, like a checklist and here's my to-do and that's done, taken care of, had that conversation, but then that gets back to my checklist, so now it's more of the cyclical process of checking back in and revisiting things to make sure that all those systems are still working smoothly and things can continue to grow and that it's not just done onto the next thing; it's ongoing.

And, from a teacher's perspective, 'there's a lot of this process that's trial and error and I don't think that we're ever going to come to a point where you feel like the system is perfect.'

While this theme involved work that assumed a great deal of the principals' attention, they realized that for any system to work, they needed commitment and involvement of the staff.

Once you think you maybe have a system and a structure established that works for your team, constantly keeping an open mind, getting team input to see how we can improve. So whether, it's you know the structure of our team meetings or the structure for data analysis, or the tools that we utilize for developing interventions, constantly getting the thoughts of your team, constantly getting that feedback, just make sure you're doing everything you can, as well as you can

Principals described that releasing control and opening up the changes in the system to a process of shared decision-making was not easy, and often took time.

I was very directive this year because I had a vision of how I wanted this process to go and I wanted it to happen now...I get a little impatient... next year I would want to even release more responsibility and ownership and just directly to the teachers

Teachers reflected that the reorganization of systems and structures were particularly challenging because they demanded that everyone 'trust the process', 'be patient', 'be flexible' and be willing to be uncomfortable with the change process. One teacher expressed what it felt like to be in this process:

And how is this all going to work? ...Not only do we need the staffing, but we need to figure out the right amount of time and the patience to see the results. So everyone has to be flexible and adjust their schedules and balance teaching with student needs and available resources.

Converged Results

After separate analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, the results were left intact as either quantitative or qualitative and were examined together in side-by-side columns (Table 5) to compare for differences, similarities, contradictions or new insights (Greene, 2007). The optimum

quantitative results would show a significant gap was closed while raising achievement for both peer and intervention groups are represented by (a) a significant difference on test one, (b) significant differences between the pre- and post-assessments for both groups on test two, and (c) no significant ANCOVA difference on test three. The overall results (Table 5) show that while the majority of schools identified the intervention group accurately (test 1), and raised achievement significantly for peers and intervention groups (test 2), some gaps or difference still remained (test 3). Three sites achieved the optimal quantitative results of closing a gap for a group of students who were scoring significantly lower than their peers while significantly raising achievement for both the intervention group and their peers: Site 3 in grade 1 ELA and K math, Site 4 in grade 7 ELA and Site 5 in grade 9 math. Two sites accurately identified a gap and raised achievement significantly for the intervention and peer groups, but still showed a significant gap (test 3): Site 1 in grade 1 ELA and Site 3 in grade 1 math.

The qualitative results were more similar to the schools than the quantitative results among the five school sites. After determining the themes, the qualitative data were coded by the core practices that represent each theme. This allowed a simple calculation to be made for each school by dividing the number of times a core practice was discussed by the number of times all the core practices were discussed at that school site. All the sites discussed all the core practices; and all the schools spent a greater percentage of the time discussing practices associated with building capacity, and less time discussing practices associated with monitoring progress, setting direction and reorganizing systems (Table 5). However, slight variations exist and two of the sites with the most optimal quantitative results (sites 2 and 5) spent a greater percentage of time discussing the practices of setting direction and reorganizing systems.

Overall, there were three ways the data from the schools converged: (1) every school had progress evident in the student outcomes of the work to close the gaps, (2) all the principals and teachers were using and discussing all identified core leadership practices, albeit to various degrees, and (3) evidence at all schools indicated that the work to close the gaps utilizing the core practices was transforming, changing both beliefs/assumptions and practices of leaders and teachers. The schools diverged in the degrees to which the gaps were closing, the contexts/demographics in which the work was situated, and which core leadership practices were prioritized by the principals and teachers. The results of qualitative and quantitative phases did not appear to contradict one another but rather created a richer picture of potential patterns of changing educator practices, beliefs and student outcomes.

Table 5

Converged Quantitative and Qualitative Results

Note: Posttest^a is the adjusted post-test. Bolded results represent either show positive outcomes for the intervention

Sites	Quantitative Results: Whether or Not Achieving Optimal Results				Qualitative Results: Percentage of Time Discussing Themes			
	Test 1: Gap between groups on pretest	Test 2: Intervention Group significant growth	Test 2: Peer Group significant growth	Test 3: Gap reduced between groups on Posttest ^a	Setting Direction	Monitoring Progress	Developing Capacity	Reorganizing Systems
Site 1 - ELA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	9%	27%	54%	11%
Site 2 ELA	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	13%	22%	45%	20%
Math	No	No	Yes	No				
Site 3 K ELA	Yes	Yes	No	Yes				
1 ELA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	14%	22%	40%	24%
K Math	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
1 Math	Yes	Yes	Yes	No				
Site 4 7 ELA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				
8 ELA	No	No	Yes	Yes	14%	25%	45%	16%
7 Math	No	No	Yes	Yes				
8 Math	No	No	Yes	Yes				
Site 5 - Math	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	24%	20%	39%	17%

group, peers and/or increasing equity by gap closing (test 3).

Conclusions

This mixed methods study was designed to explore the ways in which principals and teachers implemented gap-closing strategies in their schools. The analysis of the combined data from the quantitative and qualitative methods yielded confirmatory as well as divergent results, and also generated new perspectives worthy of further study. While one aspect of the analysis was focused on the commonalities among schools, attention was also focused on the differences in the school context and the

leadership practices that may have influenced behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions. Merged data analysis identified factors that explained or hinted at the variations in teacher perceptions of leadership practices, relative to their activities in gap-closing efforts.

All study sites used a process to identify a group of students for whom the typical school program was not working and who needed something different from the educators at the school to be successful. This practices of identifying specific groups to intervene and adapt practices to ensure success are well supported by the research on Response to Intervention and Multi-tiered Systems of Supports (Jimerson, Burns, & VanDerHeyden, 2016). The focus on starting small and focusing on intraschool gaps is supported by Johnson & Avelar (2010), Skrla & Sheurlich (2009) and Scharff & Talbert (2013). As the principals and school staff embarked on the year-long process to close the gaps for these groups of students, they all enacted the leadership practices described in the qualitative results: setting direction; monitoring progress; building capacity to teach, collaborate and lead; and reorganizing systems. These leadership practices are widely supported by research (Braun, Gable, & Kite, 2011; Leithwood, et al., 2010; Love, 2009; Ross & Berger, 2009; Skrla et al., 2009; Talbert et al., 2010). Importantly, through this work, the quantitative results showed achievement rising at the majority of the sites for subgroups and the whole school. While the gaps between the intervention groups and their peers were detected to be closing in some schools, significant differences still remained between the groups at the end of the year in other schools. That said, the qualitative results show that the process of attempting to both improve learning for all, and specifically for a group of students whom the school was not serving well, was transforming the practices, beliefs, and motivations of principals and teachers involved in the work. In this sense, converged data analysis yielded the confirmation that a new phenomenon, that of

the transformative effect of leadership and teacher collaboration to close intraschool achievement gaps, creates a culture and climate where students, teachers, and leaders are engaged in transformational learning, even when the gap has not been fully closed yet. The transformational power of using cycles of inquiry (data, dialogue, and results) in community to challenge and change assumptions about students perceived abilities, increase educator efficacy, and change practices is well-supported (Bryk et al., 2015; Campbell Jones, et al., 2010; Hammond, 2015; Johnson & Avelar La Salle, 2010; Kegan & Lahey, 2016; Love, 2009; Skrla, et al., 2009). This identification of a new phenomenon grounds future research phases in this topic area and provides a new approach to exploring the impact of transformative learning. Additionally, the result of applying a mixed methods approach to the study of leadership and equity relative to student success establishes the validity of the connecting quantitative and qualitative data sets in order to obtain answers to the research questions that would not have been possible in a single paradigm approach.

Implications

Extensive focus has been aimed at closing national and state achievement gaps between demographic subgroups without significant progress (Darling-Hammond, 2010). The results of this study can inform the field of educational leadership on a promising model of school reform focused on closing intraschool achievement gaps, rather than on gaps between schools. This research suggests that by resituating the focus inside a schools realm of influence, and at a manageable scale, important shifts in practice and mindset can occur. This suggests important implications for both practice and policy. Leadership develops and preparation programs should consider ways to make the change process for school leaders and teams both more manageable and focused on increasing equitable outcomes within the schools through enacting collaborative cycles of

inquiry. Further, these early results suggest that states and districts consider moving away from policies that focus only on measuring progress by tracking aggregate average test scores and/or aggregate percentages of proficiency. Rather, or in addition, policy makers and educational leaders should consider empowering school teams to measure progress based on the specific, targeted populations that schools are intentionally working to impact. In doing so, policy regarding measurements of school performance could also serve to provide school-level communities of practice with precise data on the degrees to which their intentional goals to close gaps was effective at increasing equity (closing gaps). Thereby, linking accountability to productive means to increase efficacy, the evolution of effective practice, and equitable student outcomes.

During this research phase, protocols for collecting, analyzing, and reporting both the quantitative and qualitative data were developed and refined for future use. The three-step quantitative data analysis provided meaningful, robust information about the ways and degrees to which the gaps between subgroups and peers was closing. However, the small numbers of students in the intervention subgroups from some sites create a caution about interpreting the degree to which the gap is closing. To remedy this, the next phase will involve schools that are working to close a gap between larger subpopulations and their peers. Also, the one-year window of time may not be enough to actually close the gap between the groups. Future studies would benefit from working with school sites over multiple years of continuous implementation.

The interview and focus group questions successfully elicited the responses needed to answer the qualitative research questions. The robust qualitative data were used to create a survey (Braun, Gable, & Billups, 2015) for use in the next phase of the research to replace the use of focus groups and interviews. Infusing

trustworthiness strategies, such as peer debriefing, member checking, and triangulation guaranteed credibility and dependability for the qualitative data, making the convergence with quantitative data more reliable. The survey will allow a greater number of educators in study schools to contribute their perspectives.

In moving towards the next phase of this study, the researchers plan to study new schools every year to add to a larger analysis of the relationships among the degree to which achievement gaps are closing, leader and teacher practices and beliefs, and the practices that prepare leaders to close intraschool achievement gaps. Essentially, the long-term investigation will provide the data and structure to allow a broader correlational analysis of the relationships among preparation/training, educator practices and beliefs, and equitable outcomes for students.

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Principals' Perceptions and Enactment of Tasks Related to Changes to Teacher Evaluation

Tiffany Wright
Millersville University

Suzanne McCotter
The College of New Jersey

Abstract

This study provides a description of how Race to the Top (RTTT) policy is connected to daily work activity for educational leaders using interviews and surveys. Specifically, the survey questions targeted how school leaders are implementing and prioritizing practices that have an impact on teaching and learning. Results of this study found that school leaders' time is constrained by policy requirements and procedures. Key barriers to effectively enacting leadership tasks were reported to include paperwork, and lack of personnel and time. It was found that some of school leaders' beliefs did not match or demonstrated weak correlation with current actions.

Keywords: Principal perceptions; teacher evaluation; Race to the Top (RTTT); task enactment

Dr. Wright is an Associate Professor at Millersville University, where she has been teaching courses since 2011. In 2015, Dr. Wright developed and became Co-Director of the Millersville/Shippensburg Joint EdD program in Educational leadership. She is also the Graduate Coordinator for the Leadership for Teaching & Learning program as well as the Chairperson for the President's Commission on Gender and Sexual Diversity. Before that, Dr. Wright worked as a high school administrator and teacher. Dr. Wright's research interests include LGBT issues in education, teacher effectiveness, culturally relevant pedagogy, principal preparation program evaluation, and principals' best practices in evaluating teach effectiveness.

Dr. McCotter assumed the position dean of the School of Education at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), effective August 1, 2017. Prior, Dr. McCotter served Montclair State University as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the College of Education and Human Service. Previously, she was a faculty member in Montclair's Educational Leadership Program, and chair of the Counseling and Educational Leadership Department. Here she led a team that grew the educational leadership program significantly. Her scholarly interests include instructional supervision, reflection in the practice of teachers and leaders, and the work of middle school principals.

Objectives or purposes

Since 2010, the US Department of Education has invited states to apply for additional funding under the Race to the Top (RTTT) initiative. The goals of RTTT included (1) developing standards and assessments for students to be career and college ready; (2) implementing data systems that measure student growth and success with the goal of improving instruction; (3) getting and keeping effective teachers and principals through recruitment, retention, and professional development; and (4) turning around struggling schools (US Department of Education, 2010). States applied for RTTT funding by demonstrating the ways in which each of these goals will be met. In the first three years, 19 schools and the District of Columbia were awarded RTTT funding.

A particular focus of RTTT is teacher accountability and evaluation, with the implication that student learning will benefit.

These enhanced expectations result in changes for the daily work life of school leaders as they support teachers. Jackson & Remer (2014) indicated that principals identified “using data to improve instruction, developing strong teaching capacity across their schools, and evaluating teachers” as the most important aspects of their jobs (2) now. By surveying and interviewing leaders in RTTT states, researchers sought insight into how this policy is connected to daily work activity. Specifically, the look at the ways in which and the extent to which school leaders are implementing and prioritizing practices that have an impact on teaching and learning under RTTT could be illuminating.

Perspective(s) or theoretical framework

This work uses a distributed leadership framework in that the unit of study is not the school leader, which may rely too heavily on personality or immutable characteristics, but the leadership activity, consisting of leadership tasks and functions, task enactment, and the situational context (Neumerski, 2013; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2004). Figure 1 demonstrates the interaction of these elements, and we describe them more fully in the text.



Figure 1. The Interaction of Leadership Activity Elements

Leadership Tasks

Research by others has provided evidence that leaders are able to influence

teaching and learning through both direct and indirect strategies. Leaders of high performing schools have more personal involvement with teachers (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008), and provide examples of the direct actions that make a difference. Direct work with teachers can include coaching, individual feedback, professional development, modeling, and conferencing and observation (Donaldson, 2009; Ebmeier, 2003; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Gigante & Firestone, 2007; Ippolito, 2010; Leithwood & Jantzi 2008; Matsumura, Garnier, Resnick, 2010; Neumerski, 2013; Youngs & King, 2002). There are some activities by school leaders that predict gains in student learning, including conferencing, discussing assessment, co-teaching, and discussing content (Elish-Piper & L’Allier). Other activities lead to evidence of a long-term gain in teachers’ knowledge, including designing activities or lessons, answering content questions, and facilitating professional development (Gigante & Firestone, 2007). A wide-scale study of Miami school leaders noted that despite the important influence of such actions, only 12.7% of a principal’s day is spent focusing on those activities (Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2013).

Principals also contribute to student learning indirectly through actions which influence school and classroom conditions (Hallinger, 2005), including strong organizational management and technical and symbolic leadership (Ebmeier, 2003; Horng & Loeb, 2010). Both direct and indirect leadership is enhanced by attention to support and professional development for school leaders (Biancarosa, Bryk & Dexter 2010; Donaldson, 2009; Knapp, et al., 2010).

Task Enactment

The tasks described above represent the “what” of leadership; from a distributed perspective, the “who” and “how” are also important. Leaders who are open to collaboration and sharing responsibility are best able to facilitate a student learning climate.

Several recent studies have linked shared instructional leadership to achievement (Gigante & Firestone, 2007; Marks & Printy, 2003; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Supovitz, Sirinides, & May, 2010). This type of task enactment may be achieved by sharing instructional leadership (Neumerski, 2013), developing and advocating for teacher leaders (Knapp, et al., 2010; Mangin, 2007).

The culture and climate developed by school leaders also make a difference for teacher efficacy – both individual and collective – which contribute to instructional effectiveness (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). Aspects of school culture linked to learning include fostering a climate of instructional collaboration (Supovitz, Sirinides & May, 2010), creating structures that promote teacher learning (Youngs & King, 2002), and investing available resources in learning (Knapp, et al., 2010). Principals who are committed to enacting tasks that will lead to improvements demonstrate that commitment by dedicating time and resources, explicitly prioritizing tasks, and sharing responsibility.

Situational Context

Although teacher evaluation has always been among school leaders' responsibilities, RTTT has made this work simultaneously and paradoxically more important and less flexible. States have prescribed evaluation systems, frequency, and consequences in more stringent terms. Teachers' performance is now evaluated against standards that define a competency model of effective teaching, going far beyond the traditional satisfactory/unsatisfactory metric (Trusheit, 2011). To meet federal guidelines, states have also incorporated student learning measures into teacher evaluation, often by using a value-added approach to attempt to separate teacher performance from confounding factors (Goe, Bell & Little, 2008; Hanushek and Raymond, 2005).

In addition to more frequent observations and more comprehensive systems, RTTT teacher evaluation reform puts other

demands on school leaders' time. The focus on teacher accountability and the reform have drawn attention to labor issues (McGuin, 2012). Implementation of new policies has the benefit of developing a common language and increasing dialogue, but these processes necessitate a large time commitment (Heneman, et al., 2006). Given the predominant place RTTT has taken in the policy landscape and educational conversation, there is a surprising paucity of research on it.

In this project, we asked principals who are in RTTT states to reflect on their leadership tasks and task enactment given the situational context presented by RTTT. Specifically, we seek insight into the ways in which the guidelines and constraints of the teacher evaluation policies under RTTT have aligned their tasks and time with practices associated with student and teacher learning.

Methods, Techniques, or Modes of Inquiry

Participants

Participants were school leaders (typically principals) who were named "Principal of the Year" or received state or national recognition for their leadership in the past 5 years. Without an objective way to identify effective leaders, the varied criteria used by these external organizations were trusted. The goal in this purposive sampling (Patton, 1990) was to avoid the confounding factors of struggling leaders, and 142 potential participants received the link to the online survey, which had been validated through a pilot study (McCotter & Wright, 2015).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Participants

Variable	N	Percent	Mean	SD
Gender				
Male	26	68.4		
Female	12	31.6		
Age				
30-39	3	7.9		
40-49	20	52.6		
50-59	6	15.8		
60+	9	23.7		
Years in Leadership			14.9	4.8
1-5	1	2.8		
6-10	5	14		
11-15	16	44.5		
16-20	11	30.7		
21-25	3	8.4		
Race				
American Indian	1	2.8		
Hispanic	1	2.8		
Caucasian	34	87.2		
School District Setting				
Large Urban	8	20.5		
Small Urban	5	12.8		
Suburban	11	30.6		
Rural	12	30.8		

SPSS Descriptive Statistics analysis was used to report demographic data on the participants of the study (See Table 1). Of the 142 participants, 38 responded to the survey and 34 answered the survey to completion; the data for the participants who answered all pertinent questions were utilized in the analysis. For the second stage of the study, up to 20 volunteers from the survey will be interviewed, with the goal of gaining a more comprehensive understanding of their work as school leaders both before and since RTTT's implementation.

The information in Table 1 indicates there were more male participants ($n = 26$) than female participants ($n = 12$). The most common age of participants fell in the 40-49 years old range, and on average, participants had 14.9 years ($SD = 4.8$) of experience in leadership positions. It is important to note that the sample contained only two participants who identified as a race other than Caucasian. In terms of location of school related to local population, there is evidence of some diversity among the settings from which our participants came.

For the second stage of the study, volunteers from the survey were interviewed, with the goal of gaining a more comprehensive

understanding of their work as school leaders both before and since RTTT's implementation. These participants volunteered by providing their email addresses in one item of the original online survey

Instruments

Every participant filled out an online survey focused on the activities in which principals engage on a regular basis. We also asked participants to compare the recent frequency of engagement to past years. The questions focused on tasks that are associated with improved teaching and learning according to the research literature and the ways in which tasks are enacted (e.g., by using practices associated with collaboration and shared instructional leadership). The survey also included basic questions about demographics, leadership background, and school context.

Quantitative data from the online survey were analyzed using SPSS to provide an overview of participants' perceptions. In this paper, we focus on the descriptive statistics that give a snapshot of the ways in which principals compare their practices during RTTT to before RTTT, in addition to their beliefs about practices that impact instruction compared to what they actually do on a day-to-day basis. Qualitative data from open-ended questions were analyzed using codes derived from themes in the literature, including management, instructional leadership, and policy.

During the next stage of the research process, interview questions were aligned with the literature and designed to get more in-depth information about school leadership practices. Interview participants were identified based on volunteering through the survey in the first stage, with the goals of (a) interviewing at least one participant from each RTTT state and (b) interviewing participants who are diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, age, and years of experience.

Results

Quantitative

Preliminary analysis of the survey results showed that the Situational Context (policies and mandatory teacher evaluation systems from Race to the Top) had a greater influence on the Leadership Activity of school leaders than did their understanding of Leadership Tasks that make an impact on

Table 2

Paired Samples Correlations between Principals' Beliefs and Behaviors

Themes Measured	N Total	Correlation
Providing Instruction (1) ***	34	-.268
Walk Through Observations (3) ***	34	.214
Classroom Observations (6) ***	34	.309

***Numbers reference appendix, which details survey questions as paired by measured themes.

teaching and learning. Their time was perceived to be constrained by policy requirements and procedures.

Key barriers to effectively enacting leadership tasks included paperwork, lack of personnel, and time as indicated by responses. SPSS Correlation was utilized to analyze any instances of relatedness of school leaders' beliefs about the important tasks associated with their work as opposed to the task enactment related to that work. As was hypothesized, it was found that many beliefs that school leaders held did not match or strongly match with their actions that they were currently taking (See Table 2). More specifically, it was found that despite leaders feeling it is important to work with teachers to improve (measured on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating lower importance), in the past two years they did not spend more time working with teachers, $r_2 = -.268$, $n = 34$, $p > .05$.

Moreover, it was discovered that

administrators believed that it was important to be in classrooms completing walk-through observations (measured on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating higher importance), yet in the past two years this belief and action only had a weak correlation, $r_2 = .214$, $n = 34$, $p > .05$. School leaders' belief that observing in classrooms is important (measured on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating lesser importance) and their amount time spent in classrooms observing over the past two years neared significance, however, these variables were not correlated strongly $r_2 = .309$, $n = 34$, $p > .05$.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 outline important descriptive data to demonstrate items that were utilized in comparison of beliefs vs. task enactment. Specifically, Table 3.1 lists survey items and the frequencies of the responses on the provided Likert-style scale related to principals' beliefs around the important tasks of a teacher evaluation system.

Table 3.1

Frequency and Percentages on Measures of Principals' Beliefs about Importance Professional Behaviors

Importance Variable	N Total	Frequency	Percent
Work with Teachers (1)*	37		
Completely		31	79.5
Mostly		6	15.4
Somewhat		2	5.1
Not at All		0	0
Classroom Walkthroughs (3)*	37		
Completely		22	56.5
Mostly		11	28.2
Somewhat		4	10.3
Not at All		0	0
Observing Classrooms (2)*	37		
Completely		29	78.4
Mostly		6	15.4
Somewhat		2	5.1
Not at All		0	0
Personalized Professional Development (10)*	37		
Completely		29	78.4
Mostly		7	17.9
Somewhat		1	2.6
Not at All		0	0
Instructional Coaching (9)*	37		
Completely		29	78.4
Mostly		7	17.9
Somewhat		1	2.6
Not at All		0	0

*Numbers reference the appendix, which details survey questions as paired by measured themes

Table 3.2 lists survey items and the frequencies of the responses on the provided Likert-style scale (or a binary yes-no forced

response) related to principals' task enactment in their newly implemented teacher evaluation systems over the past two years.

Table 3.2
Frequency and Percentages of Principals' Reported Professional Behaviors

Variable	N Total	Frequency	Percent
Work with Teachers (1)*	34		
Yes		24	70.6
No		10	29.4
Increased** Classroom Walkthroughs (3)*	34		
Yes		18	52.9
No		16	47.1
Increased** Observing Classrooms (2)*	34		
Yes		17	50.0
Mostly		17	50.0
Increased** Professional Development (10)*	34		
Yes		18	52.9
Mostly		16	47.1
Time Spent on Instructional Coaching (hrs/week) (9)*	34		
7-10		2	5.9
4-6		13	38.2
0-3		16	47.1
0		3	8.8

*Numbers reference the appendix, which details survey questions as paired by measured themes
** Increase is relative to the last two years.

Next, SPSS correlation was used to determine relatedness among certain matched items across the beliefs domain and the task enactment domain (See Table 4). One such pairing of items was the self-reported opinions on the importance of administrators to be appropriately trained in new teacher evaluation systems (on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating lower importance) and how much training administrators received regarding teacher evaluation systems (on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating less training). These variables were predicted to correlate in a positive manner. This analysis supported the hypothesis, the more the principal believed that training was important, the more training the principal reported receiving $r_2 = .408$, $n = 34$, $p < .05$ (See Table 4). Moreover, to find out if the belief that the most recent changes to their teacher evaluation systems improve teacher instruction (on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating lesser beliefs that their teacher evaluation system improves teacher instruction) and if teacher instruction has improved since the implementation of new teacher evaluation systems (on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating less teacher improvement) a

correlational analysis was conducted. It was hypothesized that the more teacher instruction improved, the more administrators would believe the teacher evaluation system improved teacher's instruction. This hypothesis was supported $r_2 = .630$, $n = 34$, $p < .001$ (See Table 4).

Additionally, to find out if the belief that the most recent changes to teacher evaluation systems improved student learning (on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating lesser beliefs that teacher evaluation systems improve teacher instruction) and if principals reported actual improvement since the implementation of new teacher evaluation systems (on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating improvement in student achievement), a correlational analysis was conducted. It was hypothesized that the more student learning improved, the more administrators believed that teacher evaluation systems improved student learning. This hypothesis was supported $r_2 = .737$, $n = 34$, $p < .001$ (See Table 4). This was the strongest correlation reported within this paper.

Table 4
Paired Samples Correlations between Principals' Beliefs and Behaviors

Themes Measured	N Total	Correlation	Sig.
Administrators/Evaluators Trained in teacher evaluation (4)***	34	.408	.017*
Improved Teacher Instruction due to teacher evaluation (5) ***	34	.630	.00***
Increases in student learning due to teacher evaluation (6) ***	34	.737	.000**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; ***Numbers reference appendix, which details survey questions as paired by measured themes.

Participants seemed to value the types of work that they believe leads to improving teaching and learning, including coaching, time in classrooms, and 1:1 interaction with teachers. The majority, however, found their priorities and distribution of time moving away from those activities over the past few years rather than toward them (See Tables 3.1 and 3.2). Administrators believed that coaching is important (measured on a 4-point scale, with higher scores indicating lesser importance),

however, over 50% reported that they were able to coach 3 or fewer hours during the week (See Table 3.2).

Qualitative

Interview data from two individuals provide the brief results reported at this time. Using preliminary coding procedures in analyzing the two transcripts, a couple powerful themes emerge that supported the quantitative results seen above. First off, the participants both reported feeling torn between the ideas of compliance vs. coaching, meaning that so much time was spent on compliance with the new policies or fighting the sense that compliance with the new system was “bad” for teachers and students that they found it difficult to provide the coaching for teachers that they believe is necessary to improve instruction and therefore student learning. One interviewee stated the following. “It feels punitive to people. Trying to fight against that compliance piece in our professional learning, trying to show that really this is about giving definition to what good teaching looks like and what good learning looks like....”. The other respondent stated, “..... there are issues of compliance that absolutely demand time, but if I don’t take the time to do what it takes to be an instructional leader, then I am, I don’t know, I’m guilty of malpractice, I guess.” This respondent’s quote alludes to another theme that emerged from the qualitative data which was that of constrained time. Both participants spoke of time as a commodity, one that they yearned to increase, especially when it came to utilizing coaching strategies with teachers.

Conclusion

The results of this research suggested that school leaders’ time is constrained by policy requirements and procedures, instead of influenced more by practices they report as important (like instructional coaching). Key barriers to effectively enacting leadership tasks were reported to include paperwork, lack of personnel, and time. Correlational analysis was

utilized to fully analyze instances of relatedness of school leaders’ beliefs about the important tasks associated with their work as opposed to the task enactment related to that work. As was hypothesized, it was found that some beliefs that school leaders held did not match at all or only demonstrated a weak correlation with actions that they were currently taking. It seemed that the less formal a type of instructional leadership was (i.e. coaching, walkthrough observations), an inverse or weaker correlation was seen between leaders’ beliefs and their task enactment. More in-depth qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data will give further insight into the role that RTTT has played in the daily work of school leaders, and comparisons will be drawn in future research as the context shifts in post-ESSA implementation settings. However, the research presented in this paper allows for insight into the instructional leadership beliefs and practices of award winning principals, demonstrating the conflicts that school administrators experience when they struggle to match their professional behavior to their beliefs about good practices.

Scientific or Scholarly Significance

School leaders are key to the improvement process in schools, particularly given their roles as instructional leaders working with both teachers and students. Many leaders value these functions and understand the ways in which they can impact learning and development in their schools. The context created by federal and state policies around school leadership determines and prioritizes the ways in which school leaders spend their time. This study contributes to our understanding of what tasks leaders are focusing on and the ways in which they fit into the literature on instructional leadership.

Limitations

The findings of this study are limited by several factors, affecting the reliability and validity of this study. One of these factors includes the demographics of the respondents.

All but one respondent classified themselves as white, indicating that the findings of this study are not representative of multiple ethnicities, cultures or races. Further, the response rate was only 27%. Only two respondents gave follow-up interviews with the researchers, indicating that the qualitative information gained from this study is limited in scope and transferability. Another consideration is that no information exists within the results about how or if these responses correlate with school size and type, as well as no information on how what other leadership responsibilities the participants had due to there being no survey items related to these issues.

Finally, this study relies on the self-report of principals. While self-report measures always create a limitation of findings, principals present unique issues. One study found that principals present with a positivity bias when evaluating their own school's performance. In fact, 74.7% of Texas principals believed that the school is above average, creating a positivity bias of 34:1 (Meier et al., 2015). Of course, this finding is limited in itself in how it applies to this study, as this study required principals to self-report on their own performance rather than the performance of the school as well as to report on more objective topics. Further, several studies have found that teachers (not principals per se) are more likely to have accurate self-report on specific behaviors that occur frequently and during a brief period (Koziol & Burns, 1986). Many of the activities measured in this study can be categorized thusly. Overall, it seems that while there is no data on principals' accurate self-report of how they spend their administrative time, there are indicators that there is some risk for inaccurate reporting, but so great a risk that the findings of this study are invalid.

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