

School Leadership: Concepts and Evidence

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A review of the literature
carried out for NCSL by
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Contents

Introduction	3
Definitions of school leadership	4
Leadership, management and administration	9
A typology for leadership	11
Other typologies of leadership	23
Generic leadership skills and situational leadership	26
Leadership and school context	29
Conclusion	31
Bibliography	36
Appendix 1: Audit trail	42

Introduction

This is the final report of desk research on school leadership commissioned by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL). An interim report (Bush and Glover 2002) was submitted in May 2002. This final version responds to points made by NCSL's International Steering Group (Brian Caldwell, Ken Leithwood and Joseph Murphy) as well as including additional sources not available to the authors in May.

The College has also commissioned the University of Manchester to conduct desk research on the mainstream literature on leadership. Accordingly, such literature is largely omitted from this review but the two reports will be compared with a view to a possible joint paper at a later stage.

The literature on school leadership alone is vast and it is not possible to do justice to so many sources in a single report. Indeed, two members of the International Steering Group stated that the task is "impossible". This paper has a more modest objective; to provide a summary synthesis of the most important sources in a form which is intended to be accessible for practitioners and policy-makers. The report includes theoretical literature, to show how leadership has been conceptualised, and empirical literature, to demonstrate whether and how the research evidence supports these concepts of school leadership. The report also summarises the key implications of the desk research for both leadership development and educational research.

Definitions of school leadership

Leithwood et al (1999) contend that there is no agreed definition of the concept of leadership. Yukl (2002, pp.4–5) adds that “the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no ‘correct’ definition.” Cuban (1988, p.190) says that “there are more than 350 definitions of leadership but no clear and unequivocal understanding as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders”. However, given the widely accepted significance of leadership for school effectiveness (Daresh 1998, NCSL 2001a, Sammons et al 1995, Sheppard 1996) and for school improvement (Stoll and Fink 1996, Hallinger and Heck 1999), it is important to establish at least a working definition of this complex concept. As Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) emphasise:

Outstanding leadership has invariably emerged as a key characteristic of outstanding schools. There can no longer be doubt that those seeking quality in education must ensure its presence and that the development of potential leaders must be given high priority. (Beare, Caldwell and Millikan 1989, p.99)

Leadership as influence

A central element in many definitions of leadership is that there is a process of influence. Leithwood et al (1999, p.6) say that “influence... seems to be a necessary part of most conceptions of leadership”. Yukl (2002, p.3) explains this influence process:

Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation.

Yukl’s use of ‘person’ or ‘group’ serves to emphasise that leadership may be exercised by teams as well as individuals. This view is reinforced by Harris (2002) and Leithwood (2001) who both advocate distributed leadership as an alternative to traditional top-down leadership models. Ogawa and Bossert (1995, pp.225–26) also state that leadership involves influence and agree that it may be exercised by anyone in an organisation. “It is something that flows throughout an organisation, spanning levels and flowing both up and down hierarchies.”

Cuban (1988, p.193) also refers to leadership as an influence process. “Leadership, then refers to people who bend the motivations and actions of others to achieving certain goals; it implies taking initiatives and risks”. This definition shows that the process of influence is purposeful in that it is intended to lead to specific outcomes. Fidler (1997, p.25) reinforces this notion by claiming that “followers are influenced towards goal achievement”.

Stoll and Fink (1996) use the similar concept of ‘invitational’ leadership to explain how leaders operate in schools. “Leadership is about communicating invitational messages to individuals and groups with whom leaders interact in order to build and act on a shared and evolving vision of enhanced educational experiences for pupils” (p.109).

Leadership and values

Leadership may be understood as ‘influence’ but this notion is neutral in that it does not explain or recommend what goals or actions should be sought through this process. However, certain alternative constructs of leadership focus on the need for leadership to be grounded in firm personal and professional values. Wasserberg (1999, p.158) claims that “the primary role of any

leader [is] the unification of people around key values". From his perspective as a secondary headteacher, he argues that these core values should be:

- schools are concerned with learning and all members of the school community are learners
- every member of the school community is valued as an individual
- the school exists to serve its pupils and the local community
- learning is about the development of the whole person and happens in and out of classrooms
- people prosper with trust, encouragement and praise (Wasserberg 1999, p.155).

Greenfield and Ribbins (1993) add that leadership begins with the 'character' of leaders, expressed in terms of personal values, self-awareness and emotional and moral capability.

The values adopted by many school leaders can be illustrated by Day, Harris and Hadfield's (2001) study of 12 schools in England and Wales which focused on heads who were deemed effective by Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED) criteria and by the vaguer notion of 'peer reputation'. The researchers adopted a 360 degree perspective by interviewing teachers, parents, governors and students as well as conducting three interviews with each principal. They conclude that "good leaders are informed by and communicate clear sets of personal and educational values which represent their moral purposes for the school" (p.53). They elaborate on the nature of these core 'personal values':

These concerned the modelling and promotion of respect (for individuals), fairness and equality, caring for the well being and whole development of students and staff, integrity and honesty. These core values were often part of strong religious or humanitarian ethics which made it impossible to separate the personal and the professional and which provide empirical support for those who write of the essential moral purposes of those involved in teaching. (Day, Harris and Hadfield 2001, p.45)

Moos, Mahony and Reeves (1998) reinforce the importance of leaders' "clear sets of educational and personal values" and stress the need for a 'clear personal vision' (p.70).

Leadership and vision

Vision is increasingly regarded as an important component of leadership. There are different views about whether vision is an essential aspect of school leadership or, rather, a feature which distinguishes successful from less successful leaders. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989), for example, say that "outstanding leaders have a vision of their schools – a mental picture of a preferred future – which is shared with all in the school community" (p.99). However, in drawing on the work of Bennis and Nanus (1985), they articulate 10 'emerging generalisations' (present authors' emphasis) about leadership, four of which relate directly to vision:

1. Outstanding leaders have a vision for their organisations

The vision... may be a dream expressed in written form as our school will be a learning centre in the community, where every child will enjoy coming to school and will acquire the basic skills (p.107).

2. Vision must be communicated in a way which secures commitment among members of the organisation

They cite Bennis and Nanus' (1985, p.28) view of how this is achieved by visionary leaders:

Their visions or intentions are compelling and pull people towards them. Intensity coupled with commitment is magnetic (p.109).

3. Communication of vision requires communication of meaning

They support Bennis and Nanus' (1985, p.33) assessment that "the management of meaning, [the] mastery of communication, is inseparable from effective leadership" (p.109). They add that symbols are important for the communication of meaning.

4. Attention should be given to institutionalising vision if leadership is to be successful

Articulation and communication of the vision need to be supported by a process of 'implanting' the vision:

The principal should work with others to implant the vision in the structures and processes of the school, something that calls for the technical and human skills of policy-making and planning (p.115).

These generalisations are essentially normative views about the centrality of vision to effective leadership. However, there is also some empirical support for these prescriptions. Southworth (1997) summarises the findings of several research projects and commentaries on leadership in primary schools. Nias et al's (1992) study of five primary schools shows that their heads "provided a vision for the staff and the school" (p.46). Southworth (1993) suggests that heads are motivated to work hard "because their leadership is the pursuit of their individual visions" (p.47) while Alexander, Rose and Woodhead (1992) say that primary heads should provide a "vision of what their schools should become" (p.48).

Dempster and Logan's (1998) study of 12 Australian schools shows that almost all parents (97%) and teachers (99%) expect the principal to express his or her vision clearly while 98% of both groups expect the leader to plan strategically to achieve the vision

These projects show the high level of support for the notion of visionary leadership but Foreman's (1998) review shows that, in practice, it remains highly problematic. "Inspiring a shared vision is the leadership practice with which [heads] felt most uncomfortable" (Kouzes and Posner 1996, p.24) while Fullan (1992a, p.83) adds that "vision building is a highly sophisticated dynamic process which few organisations can sustain". Elsewhere, Fullan (1992b) is even more critical, suggesting that visionary leaders may damage rather than improve their schools:

The current emphasis on vision in leadership can be misleading. Vision can blind leaders in a number of ways... The high-powered, charismatic principal who "radically transforms the school" in four or five years can... be blinding and misleading as a role model... my hypothesis would be that most such schools decline after the leader leaves... Principals are blinded by their own vision when they feel they must manipulate the teachers and the school culture to conform to it. (Fullan 1992b, p.19)

The research by Bolam et al (1993) for the School Management Task Force illustrates a number of problems about the development and articulation of 'vision' in English and Welsh schools. Their study of 12 self selected 'effective' schools shows that most heads were able to describe

“some sort of vision” but “they varied in their capacity to articulate the vision and the visions were more or less sophisticated” (p.33). Moreover, the visions were rarely specific to the school. They were “neither surprising nor striking nor controversial. They are closely in line with what one might expect of the British system of education.” (p.35)

The Bolam et al (1993) study also casts doubt on the ability of heads to communicate the vision effectively and to ensure that it is shared by staff. In only four of the 12 schools were staff clear about the head’s vision:

In most of the schools comparatively few teachers were able to speak with any confidence about the elements of the vision. This would suggest that... the headteachers of these schools had not consciously and deliberately set out to communicate their vision to colleagues and to ensure that its influence permeated every aspect of organisational life. (Bolam et al 1993, p.36)

There is contrasting evidence from the research by Greenfield, Licata and Johnson (1992) in the United States. Using a large sample of 1,769 teachers from 62 schools in rural and small communities, they demonstrate strong support for the notion that there was a clear vision for the school and that it was articulated well:

Teachers in this sample seemed to agree that their principals had a vision of what the school ought to be and that it was in the best interest of their students. Moreover, they viewed their principals as relatively effective in advancing this vision. (p.74)

The mixed evidence on the efficacy of ‘vision’ as a way of explaining how successful leaders operate may be explained by using Begley’s (1994) four level analysis of ‘the principal as visionary’. These levels are examined using five aspects of vision. The ‘vision derived goals’ aspect serves to illustrate the approach (see Table 1).

Level	Vision Derived Goals
Basic	Possesses a set of goals derived from Ministry and Board expectations.
Intermediate	Develops school goals consistent with the principal’s articulated vision.
Advanced	Works with the teaching staff to develop school goals which reflect their collaborative vision.
Expert	Collaborates with representative members of the school community to develop goals which reflect a collaboratively developed vision statement.

Table 1: The Principal as Visionary (Begley 1994)

Table 1 shows that ‘vision’ may operate at different levels. The shift from ‘basic’ to ‘expert’ provides a useful way of categorising the extent to which leaders are able to develop a distinctive vision, widely regarded as one hallmark of successful leadership. It is evident that the articulation of a clear vision has considerable potential to develop schools but the empirical evidence of its effectiveness remains mixed and there are also concerns about the extent to which the leader’s vision may be imposed on the school. Begley’s (1994) hierarchy suggests that principals vary in the extent to which they are able to develop and articulate a shared vision for their schools. This seems to be an area which requires further research.

A further problem relates to the relationship between vision, goals, activities and school outcomes. Mintzberg (1994) suggests that poor strategic implementation may inhibit the attainment of vision.

Towards a definition of leadership

The issues addressed in this section of the report provide the basis for a working definition of school leadership. This definition, shown below, will inform the remaining sections of this report.

Leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared towards the achievement of this shared vision.

Leadership, management and administration

The concept of leadership overlaps with two similar terms, management and administration. 'Management' is widely used in Britain, Europe and Africa, for example, while 'administration' is preferred in the United States, Canada and Australia. Dimmock (1999) provides one of the few distinctions amongst these concepts whilst also acknowledging that there are competing definitions:

School leaders [experience] tensions between competing elements of leadership, management and administration. Irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administration). (p.442)

The main focus in this section will be on the differences between leadership and management.

Leadership and management

Cuban (1988) provides one of the clearest distinctions between leadership and management. He links leadership with change while sharing Dimmock's (1999) view that management is a maintenance activity. He also stresses the importance of both dimensions of organisational activity:

By leadership, I mean influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. Frequently they initiate change to reach existing and new goals... Leadership... takes... much ingenuity, energy and skill.

Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change. I prize both managing and leading and attach no special value to either since different settings and times call for varied responses.

Starratt (2001) adopts an alternative perspective, focusing on the difference between efficiency and an approach based on core values:

Rather than emphasising a framework of technical rationality, in which goals and objectives are set and then appropriate means are operationalised for their efficient and effective achievement, I want to emphasise leadership as 'cultivation'. By this I mean that democratic leadership is primarily concerned to cultivate an environment that supports participation, sharing of ideas, and the virtues of honesty, openness, flexibility, and compassion. (p.338)

Day, Harris and Hadfield's (2001) study of 12 'effective' schools leads to a discussion of several dilemmas in school leadership. One of these relates to management, which is linked to systems and 'paper', and leadership, which is perceived to be about the development of people. 'Development and maintenance' are identified as another tension, linking to the Cuban (1988) distinction identified above.

Bush (1998, p.328) links leadership to values or purpose while management relates to implementation or technical issues. This latter point complements Starratt's emphasis on 'technical rationality'.

Fidler (1997, p.26) argues against a firm distinction between leadership and management, claiming that they have an "intimate connection" and "a great deal of overlap, particularly in respect of motivating people and giving a sense or purpose to the organisation". West-Burnham (1997, p.235) seems to support this view in expressing concern about the "increasing emphasis on school leadership **and** management as a technical skill. Increasing levels of definition, specification and imposed goal setting have served to diminish the creative and critical components of leading **and** managing." (*present authors' emphasis*)

These comments are redolent of an earlier period when there was concern about an over-emphasis on technical implementation, and a lack of creativity and innovation, but these notions were not always linked to distinctions between management and leadership. Bush (1999), in arguing for a redefinition of educational management, regrets that "the discipline stands accused of 'managerialism', a stress on procedures at the expense of educational purposes and values" (p.240).

Given the now widely accepted distinction between leadership, an influence process based on values and a clearly articulated vision leading to change, and management, the effective implementation of decisions based mainly on notions of maintenance, it is vital that both dimensions of this duality are given equal prominence. While a clear vision is essential to establish the nature and direction of change, it is equally important to ensure that innovations are implemented efficiently and that the school's residual functions are carried out effectively while certain elements are undergoing change. Both aspects are necessary for successful schools, as writers on both sides of the Atlantic emphasise:

Methods... [are] as important as knowledge, understanding and value orientations... Erecting this kind of dichotomy between something pure called 'leadership' and something 'dirty' called 'management', or between values and purposes on the one hand and methods and skills on the other, would be disastrous. (Glatter 1997, p.189)

Leading and managing are distinct, but both are important. Organisations which are over managed but under led eventually lose any sense of spirit or purpose. Poorly managed organisations with strong charismatic leaders may soar temporarily only to crash shortly thereafter. The challenge of modern organisations requires the objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment wise leadership provides. (Bolman and Deal 1997, pp.xiii-xiv)

The dichotomy in Britain and elsewhere is that, while leadership is normatively preferred (Millett 1996, Starratt 2001), governments are encouraging a technical-rational approach through their stress on performance and public accountability (Glatter 1999, Levacic et al 1999). In the current policy climate, schools require both visionary leadership and effective management.

Leadership is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. It involves inspiring and supporting others towards the achievement of a vision for the school which is based on clear personal and professional values. Management is the implementation of school policies and the efficient and effective maintenance of the school's current activities. Both leadership and management are required if schools are to be successful.

A typology for leadership

The vast literature on leadership has inevitably generated a plethora of alternative, and competing, models. Some writers have sought to cluster these various conceptions into a number of broad themes or 'types'. In this section, we review eight of these broad theories, using a typology adapted from Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999), who identified six 'models' from their scrutiny of 121 articles in four international journals.

Instructional leadership

Leithwood et al (1999) point to the lack of explicit descriptions of instructional leadership in the literature and suggest that there may be different meanings of this concept. Their definition is:

Instructional leadership... typically assumes that the critical focus for attention by leaders is the behaviour of teachers as they engage in activities directly affecting the growth of students. (p.8)

Sheppard (1996) claims that there are 'narrow' and 'broad' conceptions of instructional leadership where the latter also involves variables, such as school culture, which may have important consequences for teacher behaviour:

The narrow definition focuses on instructional leadership as a separate entity from administration. In the narrow view, instructional leadership is defined as those actions that are directly related to teaching and learning – observable behaviours such as classroom supervision. In the broad view, instructional leadership entails all leadership activities that affect student learning. (Sheppard 1996, p.326)

Southworth (2002, p.78) says that "instructional leadership is likely to be more effective when it is conceptualised as 'broad' rather than 'narrow'" because it increases the scope for other leaders to play a role as well as the principal and because it recognises how social organisations operate. He adds (2002, p.79) that "instructional leadership... is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth". Geltner and Shelton (1991, p.339) also appear to advocate a broad view in claiming that "effective instructional leadership... is... characterised by a strategic perspective which leads to the integrated linkage and deployment of all resources available to the school to achieve its purpose and mission".

According to Leithwood et al (1999, p.8), instructional leadership models typically assume that school leaders, usually principals, have both the expert knowledge and the formal authority to exert influence on teachers.

Hallinger and Murphy (1985) state that instructional leadership comprises three broad categories:

- defining the school mission
- managing the instructional programme
- promoting school climate

Blase and Blase's (1998) research with 800 principals in American elementary, middle and high schools suggests that effective instructional leadership behaviour comprises three aspects:

- talking with teachers (conferencing)
- promoting teachers' professional growth
- fostering teacher reflection

Southworth's (2002) qualitative research with primary heads of small schools in England and Wales shows that three strategies were particularly effective in improving teaching and learning:

- modelling
- monitoring
- professional dialogue and discussion

Southworth's third category confirms Blase and Blase's (1998) first point but his other strategies introduce new notions of which instructional leadership practices are likely to be successful. He also concurs with Hill (2001) that "school leaders may lack sufficient knowledge of teaching and learning to provide adequate, let alone successful, instructional leadership" (p.87) and advocates that this dimension should be included in leadership development programmes.

In contrast, Leithwood (1994, p.499) claims that "instructional leadership images are no longer adequate" because they are "heavily classroom focused" and do not address "second order changes... [such as] organisation building" (p.501). He adds that the instructional leadership image "is now showing all the signs of a dying paradigm" (p.502).

Despite these comments, instructional leadership is a very important dimension because it targets the school's central activities, teaching and learning. It may also be undergoing a renaissance in England, not least because of its specific endorsement by NCSL (NCSL 2001b). "School leadership must be instructionally focused" (p.5) is one of the 10 'propositions' in the NCSL Leadership Development Framework. However, this paradigm underestimates other aspects of school life, such as socialisation, student welfare and self esteem, as well as the wider school-level issues referred to by Leithwood (1994). In addition, the model gives insufficient prominence to how leaders exert their influence on teaching and learning and may overestimate leaders' preparedness to adopt instructional leadership behaviours.

Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers in working with students. Leaders' influence is targeted at student learning via teachers. The emphasis is on the direction and impact of influence rather than the influence process itself.

Transformational leadership

Gunter (2001, p.69) says that transformational leadership is about building a unified common interest between leaders and followers. She and Allix (2000) both attribute this concept to Burns (1978).

Leithwood et al (1999) provide a detailed definition of this model of leadership:

This form of leadership assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organisational members. Higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity. (p.9)

Transformational approaches are often contrasted with transactional leadership. Miller and Miller (2001) explain these twin phenomena:

Transactional leadership is leadership in which relationships with teachers are based upon an exchange for some valued resource. To the teacher, interaction between administrators and teachers is usually episodic, short-lived and limited to the exchange transaction. Transformational leadership is more potent and complex and occurs when one or more teachers engage with others in such a way that administrators and teachers raise one another to higher levels of commitment and dedication, motivation and morality. Through the transforming process, the motives of the leader and follower merge. (p.182)

Sergiovanni (1991) makes a similar distinction between transactional and what he calls 'transformative' leadership:

In transactional leadership, leaders and followers exchange needs and services in order to accomplish *independent* objectives... This bargaining process can be viewed metaphorically as a form of *leadership by bartering*. The wants and needs of followers and the wants and needs of the leader are traded and a bargain is struck. Positive reinforcement is given for good work, merit pay for increased performance... and so on. (p.125) (*Original author's emphasis*).

In transformative leadership, by contrast, leaders and followers are united in pursuit of higher-level goals that are common to both. Both want to become the best. Both want to shape the school in a new direction. When transformative leadership is practised successfully, purposes that might have started out being separate become fused. (pp.125–26)

Leithwood (1994) conceptualises transformational leadership along eight dimensions:

- building school vision
- establishing school goals
- providing intellectual stimulation
- offering individualised support
- modelling best practices and important organisational values
- demonstrating high performance expectations
- creating a productive school culture
- developing structures to foster participation in school decisions

Leithwood et al (1999, p.21) claim that transformational leadership is the model that comes closest to providing a comprehensive approach to leadership although he subsequently states that "transformational leadership practices ought to be considered a necessary but not sufficient part of an effective leader's repertoire" (2001, p.217), referring also to issues of school context.

Day et al's (2001) research suggests that successful principals are both transactional, "ensuring that systems were maintained and met and that their schools ran smoothly" and transformative, "building on esteem, competence, autonomy and achievement" (p.47).

Goldring (1992) points to a shift from transactional to transformational leadership in Israeli schools and attributes this to systemic changes in the requirements imposed on schools and their

leaders. Her typology of changes affecting principals could apply to many other school systems (see Table 2).

Areas of change	Principals as routine-managers of static school organisations	Principals as leader-managers of dynamic school organisations
Resource allocation	Resource receiver	Resource mobiliser
Organisational framework	Bureaucratic	Professional
Governing system	Centralised	Pluralistic
Market structure	Monopolistic	Competitive

Table 2: Changes in the nature of principals' leadership roles in Israel (Goldring 1992, p.53)

Goldring (1992) shows that these wide-ranging changes have been the catalyst for a move to a transformational approach:

Until recently, the principal of a typical Israeli neighbourhood school worked in a relatively static organisation. Today, principals in experimental project schools aimed at system-wide diversity are moving towards a dynamic definition of their role. In broad terms, it seems that principals are being required to move from being routine-managers to leader-managers, or from transactional to transformational leaders. (p.52)

Murphy and Hallinger (1992) also attribute the shift to transformational leadership to "changes in the policy context of schools" (p.86) but also show that this is a normative change. "They are being *asked to* undergo a metamorphosis, to change from transactional to transformational leaders." (p.81) (*Present authors' emphasis*)

Leithwood's (1994) research suggests that there is some empirical support for the essentially normative transformational leadership model. He reports on seven quantitative studies and concludes that:

Transformational leadership practices, considered as a composite construct, had significant direct and indirect effects on progress with school-restructuring initiatives and teacher-perceived student outcomes. (p.506)

The transformational model is comprehensive in that it provides a normative approach to school leadership which focuses primarily on the process by which leaders seek to influence school outcomes rather than on the nature or direction of those outcomes. It may also be criticised as being a vehicle for control over teachers and more likely to be accepted by the leader than the led (Chirichello 1999).

Allix (2000) goes further and alleges that transformational leadership has the potential to become 'despotic' because of its strong, heroic and charismatic features. He believes that the leader's power ought to raise 'moral qualms' and serious doubts about its appropriateness for democratic organisations:

Leadership [is] a special form of power embodied in a structure of action, in which the acceptance of 'superior' values by followers is forged through social conflict in a context charged by emotional elevation, rather than reason... there lurks implicitly... the necessary – though not sufficient – conditions for the development of despotic forms of social organisation and control... this conceptualisation of education carries with it the

seeds of psychological manipulation, in which the indoctrination of falsehoods, and the cultivation of ignorance, is all too possible. (Allix 2000, pp.17–18)

The contemporary policy climate within which schools have to operate also raises questions about the validity of the transformational model, despite its popularity in the literature. The English system increasingly requires school leaders to adhere to government prescriptions which affect aims, curriculum content and pedagogy, as well as values. There is “a more centralised, more directed, and more controlled educational system [that] has dramatically reduced the possibility of realising a genuinely transformational education and leadership” (Bottery 2001, p.215).

Webb and Vulliamy (1996, p.313) take a similar view, arguing that “the current climate... encourages headteachers to be powerful and, if necessary, manipulative leaders in order to ensure that the policies and practices agreed upon are ones that they can wholeheartedly support and defend”.

Coleman (1996, 2002), following large-scale research with female and male heads of secondary schools in England, concludes that women are more likely than men to display the behaviours associated with transformational leadership. This is an important issue that is beyond the scope of this report but merits separate attention and further research.

Transformational leadership describes a particular type of influence process based on increasing the commitment of followers to organisational goals. Leaders seek to engage the support of teachers for their vision for the school and to enhance their capacities to contribute to goal achievement. Its focus is on this process rather than on particular types of outcome.

Moral leadership

Moral leadership assumes that the critical focus of leadership ought to be on the values and ethics of leaders themselves. Authority and influence are to be derived from defensible conceptions of what is right or good (Leithwood et al 1999, p.10). These authors add that this model includes normative, political/democratic and symbolic concepts of leadership.

An alternative moral perspective is political in origin and focuses on “the nature of the relationships among those within the organisation and the distribution of power between stakeholders both inside and outside the organisation” (Leithwood et al 1999, p.11) Values central to this form of leadership are derived from democratic theory.

Sergiovanni (1984, p.10) says that “excellent schools have central zones composed of values and beliefs that take on sacred or cultural characteristics”. Subsequently, he adds that ‘administering’ is a ‘moral craft’ (1991, p.322). The moral dimension of leadership is based on “normative rationality; rationality based on what we believe and what we consider to be good” (p.326). His conception is closely linked to the transformational model:

The school must move beyond concern for goals and roles to the task of building purposes into its structure and embodying these purposes in everything that it does with the effect of transforming school members from neutral participants to committed followers. The embodiment of purpose and the development of followership are inescapably moral. (p.323)

West-Burnham (1997) discusses two approaches to leadership which may be categorised as ‘moral’. The first he describes as ‘spiritual’ and relates to “the recognition that many leaders possess what might be called ‘higher order’ perspectives. These may well be... represented by a

particular religious affiliation.” (p.239) Such leaders have a set of principles which provide the basis of self-awareness.

West-Burnham’s (1997) second category is ‘moral confidence’, the capacity to act in a way that is consistent with an ethical system and is consistent over time. The morally confident leader is someone who can:

- demonstrate causal consistency between principle and practice
- apply principles to new situations
- create shared understanding and a common vocabulary
- explain and justify decisions in moral terms
- sustain principles over time
- reinterpret and restate principles as necessary
- (West-Burnham 1997, p.241)

Gold et al’s (2002) research in English primary, secondary and special schools provides some evidence about the nature of the values held and articulated by heads regarded as ‘outstanding’ by OFSTED inspectors. These authors point to the inconsistency between “the technician and managerial view of school leadership operationalised by the Government’s inspection regime” and the focus on “values, learning communities and shared leadership” (p.1).

The heads in Gold et al’s (2002) research demonstrated the following values and beliefs through their words and deeds:

- inclusivity
- equal opportunities
- equity or justice
- high expectations
- engagement with stakeholders
- co-operation
- teamwork
- commitment
- understanding

Gold et al (1992, p.9) conclude that their case study heads “mediate the many externally-generated directives to ensure, as far as possible, that their take-up was consistent with what the school was trying to achieve”.

Grace (2000) adopts a temporal perspective in linking moral and managerial leadership in England and Wales. He asserts that, for more than 100 years, “the position of the headteacher was associated with the articulation of spiritual and moral conceptions” (p.241). Subsequently, the requirements of the Education Reform Act led to the “rising dominance” (p.234) of management, exemplified by the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). Grace (2000) argues, prescriptively, that “the discourse and understanding of management must be matched by a discourse and understanding of ethics, morality and spirituality” (p.244).

Sergiovanni (1991) takes a different approach to the leadership/management debate in arguing for both moral and managerial leadership. His conception points to the vital role of management but also shows that moral leadership is required to develop a learning community:

In the principalship the challenge of leadership is to make peace with two competing imperatives, the managerial and the moral. The two imperatives are unavoidable and the neglect of either creates problems. Schools must be run effectively if they are to survive... But for the school to transform itself into an institution, a learning community must emerge... [This] is the moral imperative that principals face. (p.329)

Greenfield (1991) also stresses that managerial leadership must have a moral base:

Values lie beyond rationality. Rationality to *be* rationality must stand upon a value base. Values are asserted, chosen, imposed or believed. They lie beyond quantification, beyond measurement. (p.208) (*Original author's emphasis*)

Moral leadership is based in the values and beliefs of leaders. The approach is similar to the transformational model but with a stronger values base, that may be spiritual. Moral leadership provides the school with a clear sense of purpose.

Participative leadership

“Participative leadership... assumes that the decision-making processes of the group ought to be the central focus of the group” (Leithwood et al 1999, p.12). This is a normative model which is based on three criteria:

- participation will increase school effectiveness
- participation is justified by democratic principles
- in the context of site-based management, leadership is potentially available to any legitimate stakeholder
(Leithwood et al 1999, p.12).

Collegiality is one normatively preferred type of participative leadership:

The head or principal is expected to adopt strategies which acknowledge that issues may arise from different parts of the organisation and be resolved in a complex interactive process... the head... [is] the facilitator of an essentially participative process. (Bush 1995, pp.64–65)

Participative leadership may also be conceptualised as ‘distributed’. Neuman and Simmons (2000) argue that there should be a move away from ‘single person’ leadership to an approach which stresses collaborative decision-making:

Distributed leadership calls on everyone associated with schools...to take responsibility for student achievement and to assume leadership roles in areas in which they are competent and skilled. (p.10)

Sergiovanni (1984, p.13) also points to the importance of a participative approach. This will succeed in ‘bonding’ staff together and in easing the pressures on school principals. “The burdens of leadership will be less if leadership functions and roles are shared and if the concept of *leadership density* were to emerge as a viable replacement for principal leadership” (*original author's emphasis*).

Copland (2001) makes a similar point in claiming that participative leadership has the potential to ease the burden on principals and avoid the expectation that the formal leader will be a 'superhead':

Leadership is embedded in various organisational contexts within school communities, not centrally vested in a person or an office... exciting work is under way that explores specific ways in schools might distribute leadership more broadly... [there is] a need to identify and support aspects of leadership beyond the role of the principal (p.6).

Savery, Soutar and Dyson (1992) demonstrate that deputy principals in Western Australia wish to participate in school decision-making but their desire to do so varied across different types of decision. A majority of their 105 respondents wanted joint decision-making in school policy, student discipline, teaching load, general policy and time allocation but fewer were interested in participating in what were described as 'economic variables', including budgets and staff selection, and in responding to parental complaints. The authors conclude that "people are more likely to accept and implement decisions in which they have participated, particularly where these decisions relate directly to the individual's own job" (p.24).

Participative leadership is an attractive notion underpinned by democratic ideals. It has been popular in the literature for many years but evidence of its successful implementation in schools is sparse. Referring to English primary schools, Webb and Vulliamy (1996) argue that the policy framework introduced in the 1990s makes it more difficult for school leaders to adopt this approach:

There is... a growing tension between collegial and top-down management strategies at the whole-school level...The evidence...suggests that, in all but the smallest primary schools, the impact of more recent government initiatives...is taking schools further down that path [towards more managerial and directive approaches]. (Webb and Vulliamy 1996, p.313)

Despite this evidence, there is a continuing focus on participative and distributed leadership. Harris (2002) argues that democratic leadership styles are inevitable in the complex and rapidly changing world inhabited by schools in the 21st century, despite the current emphasis on individual leaders:

The orthodoxy of school leadership that promotes the 'cult of the individual' stubbornly prevails. Fuelled by a view of organisational change that is inherently rational, stable and predictable, it reinforces the status quo of the leader-follower relationship, creating dependency cultures and an ownership divide. It is easier, far easier, to point the finger of accountability in the direction of one person than to acknowledge that leadership is collective, shared and distributed throughout the organisation... To cope with the unprecedented rate of change in education requires... establishing new models of leadership that locate power with the many rather than the few. (Harris 2002, p.11)

It remains to be seen whether such powerful, but essentially normative, ideas will be reflected in school leadership practice.

Participative leadership is concerned primarily with the process of decision-making. The approach supports the notion of shared or distributed leadership and is linked to democratic values and empowerment. Participative leadership is thought to lead to improved outcomes through greater commitment to the implementation of agreed decisions.

Managerial leadership

The notion of 'managerial leadership' may appear to be a contradiction, particularly in the light of the distinctions outlined earlier in this report. Nevertheless, it merits separate consideration in this section because it is included in the Leithwood et al (1999) typology and because it serves to demonstrate that a narrow view of 'management' is often adopted. Leithwood et al's (1999) definition serves to illustrate this latter point:

Managerial leadership assumes that the focus of leaders ought to be on functions, tasks and behaviours and that if these functions are carried out competently the work of others in the organisation will be facilitated. Most approaches to managerial leadership also assume that the behaviour of organisational members is largely rational. Authority and influence are allocated to formal positions in proportion to the status of those positions in the organisational hierarchy. (p.14)

This definition is remarkably close to that adopted earlier by Bush (1986, 1995) in respect to just one of his six models of management, 'formal models'. As Leithwood et al (1999, p.15) suggest, managerial leadership "conveys an orientation to leadership similar to the orientation found in the classical management literature". The Bush definition is:

Formal models assume that organisations are hierarchical systems in which managers use rational means to pursue agreed goals. Heads possess authority legitimized by their formal positions within the organisation and are accountable to sponsoring bodies for the activities of their institutions. (p.29)

These two definitions illustrate an interesting temporal phenomenon. During the 1980s and much of the 1990s, 'management' was regarded as the overarching concept and leadership was just one dimension of this broader notion. During the late 1990s and into the new millennium, 'leadership' has been in the ascendancy and Leithwood et al's (1999) definition suggests that 'management' has been reduced to a rump of its former range and significance. At one level, this matters little because it is partly a matter of semantics and linguistic preference. However, this narrowing has arisen in part because governments in many countries, including the United Kingdom, have adopted this limited perspective of management in advancing their reform programmes (Levacic et al 1999). If heads are simply expected to implement external policy decisions, they are engaged in a process of managerial leadership sometimes described as 'managerialism'.

Dressler's (2001) review of leadership in Charter schools in the United States provides another perspective on this issue, suggesting that leadership is a 'management plus' approach:

Traditionally, the principal's role has been clearly focused on management responsibilities... Global and societal influences have increased the span of responsibility. (p.175)

The additional responsibilities are said to include interpersonal leadership, such as motivating others, sensitivity and communication skills, and contextual factors, including philosophical and cultural values, and policy and political influences (p.176).

Myers and Murphy (1995) identify six specifically managerial functions. Four of these are described as 'hierarchical':

- supervision
- input controls (eg teacher transfers)

- behaviour controls (eg job descriptions)
- output controls (eg student testing)

The remaining two are non-hierarchical:

- selection/socialisation
- environmental controls (eg community responsiveness)
(Myers and Murphy 1995, p.14)

Leithwood et al (1999, p.14) claim that leaders need to adopt a 'bifocal' perspective, management and leadership. This also supports the views of Glatter (1997) and Bolman and Deal (1997) cited earlier in this report. Leithwood (1994) adds that "distinctions between management and leadership cannot be made in terms of overt behaviour... most of the overt practices of transformational leaders look quite managerial" (p.515).

Managerial leadership focuses on functions, tasks and behaviours. It also assumes that the behaviour of organisational members is largely rational and that influence is exerted through positional authority within the organisational hierarchy. It is similar to the formal model of management.

Post-modern leadership

This is a relatively recent model of leadership which has no generally agreed definition. One member of the International Steering Group for the project said that "juxtaposing two concepts routinely accused of vagueness does not hold much promise". This criticism seems to be valid in that Starratt's (2001) discussion of 'a postmodern theory of democratic leadership' does not define the concept beyond suggesting that postmodernism might legitimise the practice of democratic leadership in schools (p.347).

Keough and Tobin (2001, p.2) provide a definition as a starting point for linking postmodern leadership to educational policy: "current postmodern culture celebrates the multiplicity of subjective truths as defined by experience and revels in the loss of absolute authority". This view has certain similarities with subjective or interactionist perspectives, which also stress the notion of individual experience and interpretation of events (Greenfield 1973, Bush 1995).

Keough and Tobin (p.11–13) identify several key features of postmodernism:

- language does not reflect reality
- reality does not exist; there are multiple realities
- any situation is open to multiple interpretations
- situations must be understood at local level with particular attention to diversity

They offer few clues to how leaders are expected to operate within such a framework. This is also a weakness of the parallel subjective model (Greenfield 1973). The most useful point to emerge from such analyses is that leaders should respect, and give attention to, the diverse and individual perspectives of stakeholders. They should also avoid reliance on the hierarchy because this concept has little meaning in such a fluid organisation. Starratt (2001) aligns postmodernity with democracy and advocates a "more consultative, participatory, inclusionary stance" (p.348), an approach which is consistent with collegiality (Bush 1995).

Post-modern leadership focuses on the subjective experience of leaders and teachers and on the diverse interpretations placed on events by different participants. There is no objective reality, only the multiple experiences of organisational members. This model offers few guidelines for leaders except in acknowledging the importance of the individual.

Interpersonal leadership

West-Burnham (2001, p.1) argues that “interpersonal intelligence is the vital medium. It is impossible to conceptualise any model of leadership that does not have interpersonal intelligence as a key component.” This seems to be overstated in that some of the models previously reviewed do not appear to depend on this notion. His definition is:

Interpersonal intelligence is the authentic range of intuitive behaviours derived from sophisticated self-awareness, which facilitates effective engagement with others. (p.2)

West-Burnham (2001, p.2) links this model to the moral perspective and adds that “there is... moral imperative on school leaders to adopt a model of personal effectiveness which exemplifies the values of the school”.

West-Burnham (2001) stresses the importance of collaboration and interpersonal relationships, a theme taken up by Tuohy and Coghlan (1997):

Much of the teachers’ day is taken up in an intensity of relationships. Understanding the changing nature of relationships with young students, the changing context of their lives, and developing appropriate and effective responses to both their personal and academic needs requires constant reflection and adjustment. (p.67)

These pressures are even more evident in the work of school leaders and suggests a requirement for high level personal and interpersonal skills (Johnston and Pickersgill 1992).

Interpersonal leadership focuses on the relationships leaders have with teachers, students and others connected with the school. Leaders adopt a collaborative approach which may have a moral dimension. They have advanced personal skills which enable them to operate effectively with internal and external stakeholders.

Contingent leadership

All the models of leadership examined hitherto are partial. They provide valid and helpful insights into one particular aspect of leadership. Some focus on the process by which influence is exerted while others emphasise one or more dimensions of leadership. They are mostly normative and often have vigorous support from their advocates. None of these models provide a complete picture of school leadership. As Lambert (1995, p.2) notes, there is “no single best type”.

The contingent model provides an alternative approach, recognising the diverse nature of school contexts and the advantages of adapting leadership styles to the particular situation rather than adopting a ‘one size fits all’ stance. Leithwood et al (1999) offer a definition of this model:

This approach assumes that what is important is how leaders respond to the unique organisational circumstances or problems... there are wide variations in the contexts for leadership and that, to be effective, these contexts require different leadership

responses...individuals providing leadership, typically those in formal positions of authority, are capable of mastering a large repertoire of leadership practices. Their influence will depend, in large measure, on such mastery. (p.15)

Yukl (2002, p.234) adds that “the managerial job is too complex and unpredictable to rely on a set of standardised responses to events. Effective leaders are continuously reading the situation and evaluating how to adapt their behaviour to it.”

Bolman and Deal’s (1984) ‘conceptual pluralism’ provides a similar approach to this issue. An eclectic stance is required where leaders adapt their styles to the context in which they are operating. These differences are often described in polar terms; people v. performance, male v. female, managerial v. visionary etc, but the reality is much more complex. Leadership requires effective diagnosis of problems, followed by adopting the most appropriate response to the issue or situation (Morgan 1986, Bush 1995).

Fidler (1997, p.27) takes a similar view, arguing that “the choice of conceptualisation will depend on the situation and on the purpose for which understanding is being sought”. Subsequently, he argues that “a contingent approach should take account of both the internal situation in the organisation and the external context in which the organisation operates” (Fidler 2000, p.403).

Leithwood (1994), p.515) makes an interesting link between transformational and contingent leadership, saying that “transformational leadership practices are themselves contingent”:

Whereas the dimensions of transformational leadership offer a coherent approach to school leadership, specific practices within each dimension vary widely. So advocating a transformational approach to school leadership does not entail the specification of a uniform or rigid set of leadership behaviours. (p.515)

Contingent leadership focuses on how leaders respond to the unique organisational circumstances or problems they face. The wide variations in school contexts provide the rationale for this model. Leaders need to be able to adapt their approaches to the particular requirements of the school, and of the situation or event requiring attention.

Other typologies of leadership

The Leithwood et al (1999) typology has been taken as the starting point for presenting and differentiating models of leadership but it is important to note that other writers have chosen to conceptualise leadership in different ways. This section will provide an overview of three of these alternative typologies. This will be done briefly because several of these models overlap strongly with the Leithwood et al (1999) categorisation.

Leadership and excellence

Sergiovanni (1984) identifies five 'leadership forces':

1. Technical

This is derived from sound management techniques. The technical leader assumes the role of 'management engineer'. This category is the same as Leithwood et al's (1999) 'managerial leadership'.

2. Human

This is derived from harnessing available social and interpersonal resources. The human leader assumes the role of 'human engineer'. This links to both participative and interpersonal leadership.

3. Educational

This is derived from expert knowledge about matters of education and schooling. The educational leader assumes the role of 'clinical practitioner'. This is closely aligned with instructional leadership.

4. Symbolic

This is derived from focusing the attention of others on matters of importance to the school. Purposing is of major concern to the symbolic force. This links to overall definitions of leadership and has certain similarities to transformational leadership.

5. Cultural

This is derived from building a unique school culture. The cultural leader assumes the role of 'high priest', seeking to define, strengthen and articulate those enduring values, beliefs and cultural strands that give the school its unique identity. This links to contemporary conceptions of leadership and, specifically, to moral leadership.

Four frames of leadership

Bolman and Deal (1997) identify four types of leadership:

1. Structural

The structural perspective assumes that leaders operate as follows:

- focus on achieving established goals
- design a structure to facilitate goal achievement
- limit the impact of environmental turbulence
- encourage specialisation as a way of raising performance
- exercise co-ordination and control to achieve effectiveness
- address organisational problems through restructuring
- (adapted from Bolman and Deal 1997, p.48)

This perspective is consistent with 'managerial leadership', as discussed earlier, and with Bush's (1995) formal models.

2. Human resources

The human resource perspective is based on the following assumptions:

- organisations exist to serve human needs
- organisations and people need each other
- when the 'fit' between the individual and the organisation is poor, one or both will suffer
- a good fit between individual and organisation benefits both
- (adapted from Bolman and Deal 1997, p.121)

This model relates to the concepts of transactional and transformational leadership discussed earlier. When leaders act, within the transformational model, to inspire and empower colleagues, they are fulfilling their most important needs for esteem and self-actualisation. When they operate within the transactional model, they are meeting colleagues' lesser needs for security (Maslow 1954).

The human resources model also links to the interpersonal approach (see above).

3. Symbolic

The symbolic perspective is based on the following assumptions:

- the most important aspect of events and situations is not what happens but what it means
- people interpret the same events in different ways
- many events are ambiguous and uncertain
- faced with uncertainty, people create symbols to reduce confusion

- myths, rituals, ceremonies and sagas help people to find meaning from their experience
- (adapted from Bolman and Deal 1997, p.244).

The symbolic perspective is closely linked to transformational leadership, as the authors demonstrate. “Transforming leaders... are visionary leaders, and visionary leadership is invariably symbolic” (p.439). The emphasis on different interpretations of events also echoes one of the central themes of post-modern leadership.

4. Political

The political perspective is based on the following assumptions:

- organisations are coalitions composed of individuals and interest groups
- there are enduring differences in the values and beliefs of groups and individuals
- these differences lead to conflict which is resolved by power
- goals and decisions are the products of bargaining and negotiation
- (adapted from Bolman and Deal 1997, p.186)

The political perspective has links to managerial leadership as official leaders invariably have more power than their colleagues and may use it to ensure the dominance of their own goals (Bush 1995).

Bolman and Deal’s (1997) notion of ‘conceptual pluralism’ is similar to contingent leadership and also serves to emphasise that successful leaders may need to operate within most or all of these frameworks. “The truly effective leader and manager will need multiple tools, the skill to use each of them, and the wisdom to match frames to situations” (p.12).

Elements of leadership

Dimmock and Walker (2002) recognise eight interrelated elements of leadership. They claim that “the eight provide a convenient and manageable way of encapsulating school leadership” (p.72):

- collaboration and partnership
- motivation
- planning
- decision-making
- interpersonal communication
- conflict
- evaluation and appraisal
- staff and professional development

The authors claim that these can be regarded as “key operational areas of leadership”, suggesting a managerial approach.

Generic leadership skills and situational leadership

Concepts of leadership include those that relate to leadership skills and competencies and those that emphasise situational factors. The purpose of this part of the report is to review the empirical evidence on the relative significance of generic and contextual factors in school leadership. This section will summarise these findings but additional desk research is recommended to provide a more comprehensive treatment of this issue.

The English and Welsh *National Standards for Headteachers* (TTA 1998) provide a clear set of expected leadership and management skills and competencies for school leaders. The standards are in five parts:

1. Core purpose of the headteacher

To provide professional leadership for a school which secures its success and improvement, ensuring high quality education for all its pupils and improved standards of learning and achievement.

2. Key outcomes of headship

These are expressed in terms of outcomes for:

- schools
- pupils
- teachers
- parents
- governors

3. Professional knowledge and understanding

These are expressed as 16 separate areas of knowledge. The TTA (1998, p.6) states that these areas “are relevant to all schools, although some aspects will need to be interpreted differently according to the phase, size and type of school”, a recognition of the need to balance generic and school-specific knowledge.

4. Skills and attributes

Thirty five leadership skills and attributes are identified in five categories:

- leadership
- decision-making
- communication
- self-management
- attributes

5. Key areas of headship

This section identifies 33 leadership and management tasks for five 'key areas' of headship:

- strategic direction and development of the school
- teaching and learning
- leading and managing staff
- effective and efficient deployment of staff and resources.
- accountability

These national standards are central to the NPQH and candidates are expected to demonstrate that they meet them before being awarded the qualification.

This generic skills approach to NPQH, particularly part four, is similar to trait theory which dominated the early years of debate about the nature of leadership. Yukl (2002, p.175) defines trait as “a variety of individual attributes, including aspects of personality, temperament, needs, motives and values. Personal traits are relatively stable dispositions to behave in a particular way. Examples include self-confidence, extroversion, emotional maturity, and energy level.”

Yukl (2002) reviews work by Stodgill (1948, 1974) and concludes that:

The review failed to support the basic premise of the trait approach that a person must possess a particular set of traits to become a successful leader. The importance of each trait depends on the situation. (p.177)

This approach to leadership and leadership development is also open to the criticism that it fragments and oversimplifies the requirements for headship. Glatter (1999, p.259), for example, warned that “the standards were in danger of fostering an excessively atomised and disaggregated approach which would not reflect the realities of the job”. It also plays little attention to the different school contexts likely to be experienced by new heads.

Sergiovanni (1984)'s discussion of competence is similar to that of the TTA (1998) while “excellence is multidimensional, holistic” (p.4). He distinguishes between competent and excellent schools:

Competence... is marked by mastery of certain predetermined, essential fundamentals... In excellent schools... a sense of purpose rallies people to a common cause; work has meaning and life is significant; teachers and students work together and with spirit, and accomplishments are readily recognised... Competent schools... get the job done in a satisfactory manner. Excellent schools, however, exceed the expectations necessary to be considered satisfactory. (pp.5–6)

Regardless of the merits and demerits of the National Standards, and trait theory, it could be argued that generic skills and attributes are at their most helpful in developing new heads, most of whom will take up their first headships in a new school. They are much less useful for in-service development where heads need to acquire the ability to modify their approaches to the specific requirements of their schools.

Wasserstein-Warnet and Klein (2000) conducted research in 20 Israeli schools to identify “the characteristics of effective leadership” (p.435) and to assess “whether successful principals act in a situational manner or whether they adhere to a particular leadership style” (p.438). Their work

shows that “the more successful principals use contingent leadership” (p.448), requiring the ability to change perspective using a multi-frame, pluralistic perspective and to avoid a ‘static vision’.

Leadership and school context

The contingency model of leadership, referred to earlier, emphasises that each school is unique in its combination of situational variables. The purpose of this section is to review the evidence on the impact of school context on leadership. Before doing so, it is important to acknowledge that the most important variable may be that of culture, both societal and organisational. Globalisation has led to simplistic assumptions that leadership styles may be universally applicable. Dimmock and Walker's (2000, p.144) warning that policies and practices should not be imported without "due consideration of cultural and contextual appropriateness" may be sound advice for all school leaders and is particularly significant for cross-border initiatives.

School size

The research on the impact of school size on styles of leadership is limited. Lashway (2002, p.1) says that "small schools are more likely to nurture a sense of belonging and community, engaging active student involvement through a positive, humane and caring atmosphere". This implies that leaders are more likely to operate in a participative mode and Cotton (1996), drawing on American evidence, claims that interpersonal relations are more positive in small schools.

Meier (1996) points to one of the advantages of leadership in small schools:

A school's total faculty should be small enough to meet around one common table. Whether it's hammering out a solution to a crisis or working through a long-range problem, sustained attention over time is required of everyone... once you have more than 20 people in a group, you've lost it. (pp.12–13)

Wilson and McPake's (1998) research in small Scottish primary schools shows that the main difference in leadership for such schools is that the headteacher is invariably also a classroom teacher. As one of their respondents suggests, "I have to come to terms with whether I am the headteacher or the teacher. The most difficult task is dividing management time and teaching time." (p.4)

These authors conclude that the leadership style for small schools should be described as "situational management – a style based upon a realistic assessment of context, tasks and available resources" (p.8). This is consistent with the contingent model.

Other contextual factors

There are several other contextual factors which are likely to be significant in influencing approaches to leadership in schools. Some of these other variables are:

- school type; early years, primary, secondary, special etc
- school location; inner city, suburban, rural etc
- socio-economic factors
- governance, including the nature and level of activity of governors, particularly the chair
- parents; the nature and level of activity of the parent body
- staffing; the experience and commitment of teachers and other staff

- school culture; the values, beliefs, customs and rituals of schools

There is limited evidence on the impact of most of these factors and it is recommended that additional research is undertaken to address these issues. There is a developing literature on the relationship between school culture and leadership and it is recommended that further desk research is undertaken to explore these links.

Conclusion

Comparing the models

Leadership can be understood as a process of influence based on clear values and beliefs and leading to a 'vision' for the school. The vision is articulated by leaders who seek to gain the commitment of staff and stakeholders to the dream of a better future for the school, its students and stakeholders.

Each of the models discussed in this report is partial. They provide distinctive but uni-dimensional perspectives on school leadership. Sergiovanni (1984, p.6) adds that "the current focus in leadership theory and practice provides a limited view, dwelling excessively on some aspects of leadership to the virtual exclusion of others".

The eight models adapted from Leithwood et al (1999), and summarised in this report, show that concepts of school leadership are complex and diverse. They provide clear normative frameworks by which leadership can be understood but relatively weak empirical support for these constructs. They are also artificial distinctions in that most successful leaders are likely to embody most or all of these approaches in their work.

Hallinger (1992) provides a helpful, although dated, temporal perspective on what are probably the three most important models; managerial, instructional and transformational. He argues that there has been a shift in expectations of American principals which can be explained as changing conceptions of school leadership. These three phases were:

1. Managerial

During the 1960s and 1970s, principals came to be viewed as change agents for government initiatives:

These categorical programmes and curriculum reforms represented innovations conceived and introduced by policymakers outside the local school... the principal's role, though apparently crucial, was limited to *managing* the implementation of an externally devised solution to a social or educational problem. (p.36) (*Original author's emphasis*)

2. Instructional

By the mid 1980s, the emphasis had shifted to the 'new orthodoxy' of instructional leadership. "The instructional leader was viewed as the primary source of knowledge for development of the school's educational programme" (p.37).

We noted earlier that this model is primarily about the direction rather than the process of influence. This view is reflected in two contemporary criticisms of instructional leadership:

- an inability "to document the processes by which leaders helped their schools to become instructionally effective" (pp.37–38)
- principals did not have "the instructional leadership capacities needed for meaningful school improvement" (p.38)

3. Transformational

During the 1990s, a new conception of leadership emerged based on the assumption that schools were becoming the “unit responsible for the initiation of change, not just the implementation of change conceived by others” (p.40). This led to the notion of transformational leadership, as principals sought to enlist support from teachers and other stakeholders to participate in a process of identifying and addressing school priorities.

Hallinger (1992) follows Sergiovanni (1992) in stating that instructional leadership should not be the predominant role of principals:

The legitimate instructional leaders... ought to be teachers. And principals ought to be leaders of leaders: people who develop the instructional leadership in their teachers. (p.41)

In this view, transformational leadership is the vehicle for promoting and developing the instructional leadership capabilities of classroom teachers and those leaders with direct responsibility for promoting learning.

The Hallinger (1992) distinction provides a starting point for a normative assessment of school leadership in the 21st century. Managerial leadership has been discredited as limited and technicist but it is an essential component of successful leadership, ensuring the implementation of the school’s vision and strategy. Instructional leadership is vital to ensure a continuing focus on teaching and learning but this focuses on the direction rather than the process of influence. Moral leadership is similar to the transformational model but with a stronger emphasis on values and beliefs. The participative model stresses the importance of team work but does not constitute a distinctive approach to leadership. Postmodern leadership focuses on individual interpretation of events while the interpersonal model emphasises the need for good relationships between staff, students and other stakeholders. The contingent model outlines an approach that recognises the significance of situational leadership, with heads and other senior staff adapting their approach to the unique circumstances of their schools.

An integrated model needs to start with a contingent approach because a specific vision for the school, a hallmark of the transformational model, cannot be independent of this context. Transformational leadership then provides the basis for articulating and working towards this vision. Instructional leadership is compatible with a transformational approach because it indicates, in broad terms, what the main priority of any learning organisation ought to be. Managerial leadership remains important because it is necessary to ensure effective implementation of policies arising from the outcomes of the transformational process.

Comparing the typologies

The alternative typologies offered by Sergiovanni (1984), Bolman and Deal (1997) and Dimmock and Walker (2002) demonstrate that there are other plausible ways of explaining school leadership. The models of leadership and management discussed by Bush (1995) also overlap with some of these ideas. Table 3 shows the connections between these typologies and the framework adapted from Leithwood et al (1999).

Leithwood et al (1999), adapted by Bush and Glover (2002)	Sergiovanni (1984)	Bolman and Deal (1997)	Dimmock and Walker (2002)	Bush (1995)
Instruction	Educational			
Transformational	Symbolic	Symbolic		
Moral				
Participative			Collaboration and partnership	Collegial
Managerial	Technical	Structural	Planning and decision-making	Formal
Post-modern				Subjective
Inter-personal	Human	Human resources	Interpersonal communication	
Contingent		Cultural pluralism		
	Cultural			Cultural
		Political	Conflict	Political

Table 3: Comparing Leadership Typologies

Table 3 shows a large measure of agreement about models of leadership. All five typologies include managerial leadership, under various titles, while inter-personal or human resource models appear in four of them and transformational and participative models feature in three of them.

Implications for leadership development

The leadership models featured in this report provide powerful normative explanations of leadership behaviour in schools. There is also some empirical evidence to support most of these concepts. The insights from these models provide helpful guidelines for those devising and implementing leadership development programmes:

- Given the significance of instructional leadership, these programmes should have a **clear focus on learning**, the main purpose of schools, and on the teaching required to promote effective learning. This inevitably means training to ensure that leaders at all levels are able to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and are willing and able to implement strategies such as classroom observation as part of the evaluation process.
- The continuing endorsement of transformational leadership in the literature, and in formal policy statements, suggests a need for programmes to develop the portfolio of skills required to ‘transform’ schools. These include **developing an explicit vision** for the school which inspires teachers and other stakeholders to work towards a better future.
- To avoid the problems that may be associated with transformational leadership, including the potential for manipulation of followers, it is important for leaders to develop a **participative, or team, approach** which enables staff and others to contribute to the process of visioning rather than simply accepting the leader’s personal vision.
- Training should include **management as well as leadership** to ensure effective implementation of the vision.

- The contingency model suggests a requirement for leaders to develop a **portfolio of leadership styles**. They need to be able to carry out effective situational analysis to show that they are able to adapt their approaches to the specific context.

Implications for research

This report summarises a substantial body of normative literature on school leadership. However, despite the contemporary interest in this topic, and its established links with school effectiveness and school improvement, there are still many gaps in our understanding about leadership. There are also few empirical studies, particularly in the British context, about the nature of leadership, the relative efficacy of different approaches and about how effective leaders operate. There is considerable scope for new research and the following suggestions are intended to be illustrative rather than comprehensive:

- The current interest in transformational leadership suggests a need to examine what constitutes a transformational approach. How do successful leaders develop their visions and to what extent are these shared rather than imposed? How are the visions translated into actions likely to produce the intended outcomes? It may be particularly helpful to field test the stages developed by Begley (1994) to categorise leaders' ability to develop a distinctive vision for their schools.
- Given the emerging view that women are more likely than men to adopt transformational leadership styles (Coleman 2002), how and why do women leaders operate within this paradigm? Qualitative research on how effective women leaders implement transformational approaches would be a valuable corollary to the wider work on vision suggested above.
- The current emphasis on distributed or dispersed leadership, for example in NCSL's Leadership Propositions, suggests a need to examine what constitutes a distributed approach? How does this differ from the participative model discussed in this report and from the collegial approaches which have been popular in the official and academic literature for almost two decades (Bush forthcoming).
- Given the rapid and multiple changes facing schools in the 21st century, how and to what extent do leaders adapt their styles to new events and changing situations? Do successful leaders adopt a contingency approach, choosing the most appropriate tool from a range of strategies honed from a combination of experience and professional development?
- What is the impact of different contextual factors on the nature of school leadership? Do leaders operate differently according to school type, location and socio-economic factors? How do leaders adapt their approach to cope with stakeholder variables, such as the nature and level of involvement of governors, parents and staff? What is the impact of school culture on the nature of leadership and how do new leaders seek to change school culture?

These suggestions provide a basis for a programme of research which could make a significant contribution to our understanding of the nature of school leadership and to differentiating successful and less successful leadership styles. Given the established link between leadership and school outcomes, such research could make a valuable contribution to school improvement.

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Appendix 1: Audit trail

The literature search for this report was structured around three themes:

- school leadership, management and administration
- models of leadership
- leadership effectiveness

These themes were searched using the BIDS, ERIC, EBSCO, SWETSNET/NESLI and Education Abstracts search engines. A net search was also used with eight search terms:

- leadership
- management
- administration
- leadership models
- leadership effectiveness
- leadership training
- contingency

This search also included use of the Australian, Hong Kong and Singaporean university websites, which largely produced repeat references. The initial search of all these databases focused on the period from 1992 until 2002. Following the original trawl, the search focused on material from 1996 for direct references and on the full period for secondary references.

The original trawl resulted in 849 titles. Many of these were subsequently discarded because the keywords had been used inappropriately or the areas covered were either too narrow or too broad for this investigation. From the original list, the abstracts from 482 titles were examined of which 216 sources were selected for further reading because their content related to definitions, practice or models of leadership. The 216 titles were included in the initial literature review which, in turn, formed the basis for the interim report (Bush and Glover 2002) submitted in May 2002. An additional 32 references were examined following comments from the international consultants. The audit process is summarised in Table 4:

Audit Trail	Numbers of references
Initial trawl of databases	849
Abstracts scrutinised	482
Titles reviewed for the interim report	216
Titles examined following comments from international consultants	32
Total number of titles reviewed for the final report	248

Table 4: Audit trail for the literature review