DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 964 EA 025 449

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TITLE Leadership: Review of Selected Research.
INSTITUTION National Center for School Leadership, Urbana, IL.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO DV-0002
PUB DATE [93]
CONTRACT R117C80003
NOTE 34p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Role; *Educational Administration; Elementary Secondary Education; *Leadership; *Organizational Theories; School Administration

ABSTRACT

This paper offers a review of selected leadership research, with a focus on the evolution of educational leadership research and the theories, methods, and perceptions that have guided this research. The analysis shows how there has been a shift from a person-focused, rational, simplistic view of leadership to a process-focused, more complex understanding of leadership. In doing so, however, "blind spots" have been created that continue to influence and limit the way leadership is studied and perceived. Three sections present an overview of leadership theory within organizational theory, an overview of school leadership research, and suggestions for addressing the blind spots in theory and research. The following "blind spots" in the study of leadership are identified: (1) an assumption of rationality; (2) as assumption of hierarchy; and (3) an assumption that leadership is a function of an individual or individuals within the organization. (Contains 159 references.) (LMI)

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Deliverable:
Culture and Climate

DV-0002

Leadership: Review of Selected Research

by: Marlene M. Johnson, Ed.D.

The National Center for School Leadership

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The Center is funded by a grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (Grant No. R117C80003). Any opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed in this publication are those of the National Center and authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the supporting agency.

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This work was supported by the Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, Grant No. R117-C80003. The opinions expressed in this report are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Education.

INTRODUCTION

In a recent article in Educational Researcher, Jon Wagner suggests that "Ignorance is a better starting place than truth for assessing the usefulness of educational research " (1993, p. 15). Identifying the purpose of educational research as generating new knowledge about education and schooling, he argues that by judging a research project solely on the apparent "truthfulness" in data collection and analysis, we risk neglecting its larger purpose. In his argument he makes a distinction between "blind spots" and "blank spots." What researchers know enough to question but not answer are their "*blank spots.*" It is these blank spots that researchers most often strive to delineate within implications and literature syntheses. Those "areas in which existing theories, methods, and perceptions actually keep us from seeing phenomena as clearly as we might" (p. 16) are labeled by Wagner as "*blind spots.*" It is these blind spots that researchers must seek to uncover in constructing knowledge about education and schooling. Wagner suggests that data, concepts, theories, and direct experience can serve to "illuminate" both blind spots and blank spots.

Numerous scholars have provided extensive reviews of leadership research (House & Baetz, 1979; Jago, 1982; Van Fleet & Yukl, 1986; Yukl, 1989) evaluating its truthfulness and raising questions to be explored for addressing the "blank spots. After examining the leadership research and related literature, including these extensive reviews, however, I suggest that we have unknowingly created and inadvertently perpetuated some "blind spots" that have resulted in a limited understanding of leadership.

In this review an examination of selected leadership research is offered in an effort to show the evolution of educational leadership research and the theories, methods, and perceptions that have guided this research. The purpose of this examination is to provide insight into the possible "blind spots" in the study of educational leadership. What should become evident in this review is that we have moved from a person-focused, rational, simplistic view of leadership to a process-focused, more complex understanding of leadership. In doing so, however, blind spots have been created that continue to influence and limit the way we perceive and study leadership.

The review that follows is presented in three main sections. Because the study of educational leadership has been and continues to be influenced by leadership theory and research from the study of organizations, especially in the field of business, a brief

overview of this research and literature is offered in the first section. The second section addresses leadership in schools and includes an examination of research involving principal and teacher leadership. In the last section, suggestions are made as to the "blind spots" that have resulted from the theories, methods, and perceptions utilized in leadership research.

LEADERSHIP THEORY WITHIN ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

In the following section selected research from organizational theory is examined to show the evolution of the study of leadership and its effect on leadership within schools. Although this research is presented within subheadings, this is not meant to imply that the theories, methods, and perceptions that guided this research can be easily placed into subcategories. Rather, there is a great deal of overlap in the underlying assumptions guiding this research, and in some instances these theories represent an extension or refinement of a previous theory. The importance of considering all of these theories in the examination of leadership is supported by Jago (1982):

> ...it makes little sense to view leadership theories as necessarily competing theories...no leadership theory can rightfully claim comprehensive treatment of the entire domain of leadership phenomena. Because at least some empirical support is available for each perspective, leadership appears to be a far more complex set of cause-and-effect relationships than suggested by any one of the comparatively simple theoretical models offered to date (p. 330).

A "Rational" View

Over the last half century theories of leadership have been influenced by a mechanistic, rational view of leadership based in organizational theory (Taylor, 1911; Barnard, 1938; Weber, 1947; Fayol, 1949). Underlying these theoretical perspectives and empirical studies of leadership are the assumptions that the world is orderly and rational and that certain laws can be identified as cause-effect relationships that result from actions of leaders. It is these underlying assumptions that precipitated a person-focused view of leadership that has influenced and continues to influence the study of leadership

Frederick Taylor in 1911 wrote *Principles of Scientific Management* with a focus on efficiency in the workplace. His bicycle factory in 1896 increased output, lowered costs, and used fewer workers. Taylor's formula was to find the expert and have that expert

systematically problem-solve until the company was at peak efficiency. His intent was to create successful human resource management through the use of expert leadership. The factory did not survive -- "Taylorism" did. One result was that leadership became equated with "leader" and leader with expert. While the fascination with leaders can be traced back many years before this, the link between leader and organizational efficiency was, for the first time, established empirically.

The Western world in the 1900's was experiencing an explosion of change. Man's tendency to do things in a "rational" way, to do things in a "scientific" way, and to deliberate rationally began to pervade all aspects of society. The convergence of economics, technology, and people in a Protestant, agricultural -- becoming industrial -- environment created a reliance on the efficiency of bureaucracy to get "it" done, as well as a reliance on using bureaucracy in growing state systems. The image of the "well-oiled machine" coupled with the phrase "red tape" serves to describe our intuitive understanding of that modern bureaucracy today.

In that same time period, Max Weber (1886-1920), the first to articulate and formulate "formal organization," created the foundations of a field of social organizational theory. Certain core concepts concerned Weber. One of these concepts revolved around the question "Why do people obey?" Weber recognized that systems of authority are very powerful in bringing members of the organization to follow. He suggested that there are three kinds of authority.

Tradition, Weber's first authority type, is defined as the habit of the group of identifying with behavior of the past and conforming with that custom. The second type, *charismatic*, focused not on tradition, but on the power of the special qualities of an individual person, a "grace," that the holder claims. In time that "grace" may be established into the new tradition and become a valued and customary behavior. *Legal-rational* authority, Weber's third mentioned type of authority, became the powerful instrument of the modern world. This legal-rational authority, according to Weber, is mankind's prominent format for formal organization -- the bureaucracy. Derived from the law, legal-rational authority rests on rules -- the regulations that are codified and established by legislative consent or administrative edict -- and are written down, yet always subject to change.

Similar to Taylor, Weber attributed organizational effectiveness to the actions of individual leaders. His leader, however, had much more than just personal expertise to assure organizational success. This individual also had "authority" that came from customs, individual charisma, and the rules of the organization. What this meant for the study of leadership was the interest in the individual characteristics, traits, and behaviors of those who were placed in positions of leadership.

Leader Traits, Characteristics, and Behaviors

Barnard (1938) and Selznik (1948) developed leadership theories based on non-rational aspects and human dimensions present in organizations. Barnard (1938) saw the leader in what could be described as an elitist view. This individual, who by definition possessed a high moral code, was charged with the task of bringing the group members into agreement with the common purpose of the organization. The leader had at his disposal "methods of incentives" or "methods of persuasion." While Selznik took a more critical view of organizations and the way they subvert values than Barnard, he shared Barnard's view that through membership in organizations individuals could find themselves and their society. In speaking of organizational leadership, Selznik (1957) suggested that "...Creative men are needed...who know how to transform a neutral body of men into a committed polity. These men are called leaders; their profession is politics" (p. 61). What the theories of Barnard and Selznik did was to suggest that as an effective leader, the individual must be able to bring others to share the purpose of the organization. The ability to influence was, thus, added to the attributes of effective leaders.

Fascinated with Taylor's determination to create perfect output, the German-born U. S. psychologist Kurt Lewin (1890-1947) added the humanistic dimension of "life value." His belief that each worker, each person, needs meaning for himself in his work grew out of and fostered his field theory around the human's need for "psychic tension," or energy for action (Lewin, 1936). Taking a twist on Weber's notion that individuals have a settled orientation for keeping to habitual rules, that people prefer compliance to chaos, Lewin (1939) stated that to the psychologist who has observed the historical development of the concept of "whole", or Gestalt, in psychology, most of the argumentation about the group mind sounds strangely familiar. It took psychology many steps before it discovered that a dynamic whole has properties which are different from the properties of their parts or from the sum of their parts. Just as the seeds of organizational structure were formed in Weber's studies of bureaucracy, the seeds of key behavioral components in organizational settings belong to Kurt Lewin. Thus, leader actions were supposed to do more than just

bring the organization to maximum efficiency. These actions were also supposed to allow followers to achieve meaning from the work conducted.

The problem of integrating the individual and the organization was shared by other theorists who wrote of organizations as social communities with informal structures and cultural adaptations unique to each setting. Indeed, references in early literature attest to the impact of the organization on the individual and the groups within which individuals work. Weber himself recognized that organizations could begin to destroy individual personality through dehumanizing regimentation.

The seeds of ideas about organizations and leadership are imbedded in the works of Weber, Lewin, and Barnard. To the present day countless studies have followed in which personality traits (Cowley, 1931; Gibb, 1947; Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1974), leader behaviors (Hemphill, 1950; Halpin, 1956), and leadership styles (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939) have been examined. Some research results suggest that effective leadership is associated with such personality traits as alertness, originality, personal integrity, and self-confidence (Argyris, 1955). The assumption underlying these conclusions is that one can ascertain the personality traits, leadership behaviors, and styles of leadership that are most efficient with the intent of selecting or developing individual leaders who demonstrate these.

Leader and Followers

The emphasis on leader traits, characteristics, and behaviors came under criticism (Stogdill, 1948; Mann, 1959) for its failure to consider the effects of followers on the leader's performance and effectiveness. Within what has been loosely termed the human relations movement (Bendix, 1956), leadership was expanded to include a path-goal theory of leadership (Evans, 1970). This leadership perspective considers the motivating impact (Hertzberg, 1968; House, 1971) and the need satisfaction impact that the leader has on the followers. Within this perspective "...effective leadership is thought to involve behaviors that increase follower performance and/or satisfaction by means of enhancing those psychological states that result in increased motivation or increased need satisfaction" (Jago, 1982, 325). In Skinnerian terms, the leader's role is reduced to motivating and shaping the behavior of the followers by controlling the consequences associated with each specific follower action. The importance of the perceptions toward the leader (Calder, 1977), the needs and motivations of individual followers (Evans, 1970,

House, 1971), and the values of the followers (Likert, 1961, 1967) came to be regarded as intervening factors.

While the human relations movement did bring into consideration the follower, it was criticized for its failure to recognize the true potential of the followers (McGregor, 1960; Likert, 1961; Haire, 1962). An alternative perspective, labeled the human resource movement , suggests that follower participation is something received from, rather than given by, the leader or the organization. In this perspective the knowledge, skills, and opinions of the followers are seen as critical components to the success of the leader.

Leaders Within Contexts

The view of organizations as closed, rational systems remained dominant until the 1950's and 1960's, influencing leadership theory and research. Seeing the organization as a whole, a natural system, with an internal and external environment was a new perspective influenced by von Bertalanffy (1950). In *General Systems Theory* (1968) von Bertalanffy provided a foundation for system thinking including group dynamics, participatory management, and quality thinking.

The recognition of environmental factors allowed for consideration of specific situations and their effect on leadership which had been previously been ignored. One outcome was the development of the "Contingency Model of Leadership Effectiveness" by Fiedler (1967). In this model Fiedler attempted to demonstrate how effective leadership is contingent upon the favorableness of the group-task situation. The favorableness of the situation was determined by: 1) the affective relation between the leader and followers, 2) the power inherent in the leadership position, and 3) the degree to which the situation was structured. Fiedler's model was initiated to demonstrate how situational factors intervened, making certain personality traits, characteristics, and behaviors more effective under different situations.

While the work of Fiedler focused on traits within situations, Vroom and Yetton (1973) concentrated on the behaviors of a formally designated leader and the decisions the leader encounters. The model of leadership proposed by Vroom and Yetton suggests the conditions under which directive versus participatory leadership is most effective Decisions as to when and who should participate in the decision-making process are at the discretion of the leader. Turning to the work of Lewin, Lippitt, Trist, Bion, we find similar findings regarding participatory management in which 1) more heads are better

than one, 2) ownership in the process creates successes that last, and 3) unique expertise qualifies an individual for leadership within the group at particular points along the process. In addition to these traits, the shared knowledge and skills that emerge from such a philosophy serve to establish a basis for the synergy of the group.

Chris Argyris deserves credit for encouraging in-depth study of the individual in organizations throughout the 1950's and into the present. In *The Integration of the Individual and the Organization* (1950), for example, Argyris recognized that organizational effectiveness is influenced by the nature of the relations among groups. The importance of maintaining good relationships among the members of a work group was seen as a central factor in individual well-being by Argyris. The work of both Argyris (1962) and Tannenbaum (1968) challenged the belief that decentralization of power would automatically result in organizational effectiveness. Tannenbaum suggested that organizations in which both the leaders and members are judged high on influence will be more effective than those in which either or both are less influential (Perrow, 1986).

Emerging Leaders

The examination of emergent leadership to date has focused mainly on the characteristics of those individuals who evolve as leaders and the conditions under which leaders emerge (Hemphill, 1961). Some of the earliest works employed primarily sociometric techniques examining the connection between popularity and choice of a leader (Jennings, 1943; Gibb, 1950; Borgatta, 1954; Hollander & Webb, 1955). Analysis of these studies indicated that friendship had little bearing on the selection of a leader. One interesting outcome of these studies was the finding that individuals who were selected as leaders were also more likely to be chosen as followers. Results such as these support Hollander's (1961) statement that "...any model of leadership is deficient if it fails to account for transition in status, especially as these are occasioned through the time-linked features of interaction" (p. 38).

Other studies of emergent leadership have employed observer checklists for member behaviors and self-report measures for the identification of group members' feelings and observations. The focus of these studies has been on the behaviors of group members who emerge as leaders. Factors such as amount of time spent talking (Bass, 1949, 1954, 1955), type of questions asked (Alkire, Collum, Kaswan & Love, 1968), and type of behaviors exhibited (i.e. initiating structure, directing others; Berkowitz, 1956; Riecken, 1958) have been examined.

The characteristics of emergent leaders have also been addressed in various studies Possession of task-relevant information (Shaw & Penrod, 1962; Shaw, 1965), technical competence, dominance traits (Mergargee, 1969), and motivation (Hemphill, Pepinsky, Kaufman & Lipetz, 1957) are some of the factors identified as contributing to the emergence of leadership. While these studies support the possibility of emergent leadership, they, like previous works, revert back to the assumption that one leader will and must emerge in order for the group to function effectively (Borg, 1957).

Summary

For years the study of leadership has been influenced by numerous theoretical models. While most of these models are supported empirically and have provided a broader understanding of leadership, many critics have suggested that they still fail to address the complexity of leadership (Jago, 1982). In previous examinations of leadership research, well-known scholars have also lamented that leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth (Burns, 1978). Descriptions of leadership research include "...a bewildering mass of findings..." and "...the endless accumulation of empirical data" that " has not produced an integrated understanding of leadership..." (Stogdill, 1974, p. vii).

Whether or not leadership research has provided us with a better understanding of leadership will continue to be debated. What is evident, however, is that slowly we have come to view leadership as being much more complex than originally conceived Yet, even with a recognition of the complexity of leadership, research efforts have continued to focus almost exclusively on the individual leader. Within organizational theory, the majority of research investigations have examined leadership within the context of a managerial role in a formal organization setting; these studies have produced little in the way of knowledge about the processes that lead to the development of informal leadership (Jago, 1982).

This focus on the individual leader has influenced the research questions explored and research methods utilized. While there is sufficient evidence to suggest that leadership is both a property and a process, most studies have addressed characteristics, traits, roles, and behaviors of individual leaders within various contexts. While both quantitative and qualitative techniques have been utilized, the majority of these efforts have provided little, if any, exploration of leadership as a process. Even those few studies that have recognized leadership as a process revert back to focusing on how the "leader" influences this

process. One possible explanation for this is that the rational, mechanistic view of organizations and the traditional hierarchical structures, have resulted in a paradigm where leadership can only be perceived as a function of an individual. The possibility of leadership as being a synergistic, interactive process created by numerous individuals within an ever-changing context has remained a "blind spot."

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Similar to the focus on the manager in business, until recently, most of the research in school leadership has been a study of the principal. In the following section, selected research is discussed to show the evolution that has taken place in the study of school leadership. Since much of the understanding of leadership has come from organizational theory, the similarities with the study of leadership within organization theory will be evident.

Principal traits, characteristics, and behaviors. Research efforts in the study of leadership within elementary and secondary schools during the 1960's and early 1970's concentrated on personal traits of the building principal. Focusing primarily on demographic characteristics of principals such as race, age, physical appearance and size, sex, formal education, aspiration, and years of teaching experience, these studies yielded inconclusive information about how principals exercise leadership generally or affect the instructional process (De Bevoise, 1984).

Some early studies, however, supported the relationship between principal leadership and student achievement. In examining tasks performed by highly rated principals, Hemphill, Griffiths, & Frederikson (1962) showed an effective principal to be decisive, hard-working, and one who was closely connected with people acting as an information center. Similarly, the results of a study conducted by Gross & Herriott (1965) found that effective principals continually strive to improve the quality of the staff by demonstrating a high concern for instruction, supporting staff development, and discussing work with teachers.

Effective schools research conducted in the 1970's continued to support earlier findings that the personal traits of the principal are not as important as the behaviors and functions performed. Thus, numerous studies sought to determine what specific behaviors are performed by principals in so-called "effective schools." In a research synthesis on effective school leadership, Sweeney (1982) analyzed the results of eight studies and

identified specific leadership behaviors that emerged from these studies. He concluded that school effectiveness is enhanced by principals who emphasize achievement, set instructional strategies, provide an orderly school atmosphere, and frequently evaluate pupil progress. In addition, coordination or instruction and support of teachers are listed as being highly important.

In an effort to describe and explain effective principals' behaviors, Leithwood & Montgomery (1984) utilized both qualitative and quantitative techniques. School-based practitioners were studied in order to develop profiles of the ideal principal. Researchers then modified these effective principal profiles based on interviews with 90 principals. The results included a continuum between the effective and ineffective principal with a four-stage growth profile. At the lower end of the effectiveness continuum was the "Administrator." The stages that followed were labeled "Humanitarian," "Program Manager," and "Systematic Problem Solver." In each of these stages dimensions of behavior were identified as "arenas of principal effectiveness." These included long-term *goals*, *factors* affecting student learning, *strategies* for goal achievement, and structures of *decision-making*. At the "Administrator" stage the principal was described as being preoccupied with "running a smooth ship" as the ultimate goal. The "Humanitarian" shared this concern for running a smooth ship but identified the most important goal as developing effective interpersonal relations in the school, particularly among staff. The Program Manager's concern for interpersonal relationships rests primarily on the belief that this is one important means to achieving student outcomes on which they place the highest value. The highest level of the continuum, the "Systematic Problem-Solvers" begin with a legitimate, comprehensive set of goals for students, and seek out the most effective means for their achievement, regardless if this means coming into conflict with district administrators.

Principal leadership and student achievement. Although the relationship was established between specific principal behaviors and effective instructional leadership, research and practice had not identified clear relationships between what a principal did and the learning experiences children had in school (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee, 1982). Studies were undertaken to look more closely at the link between student achievement and instructional leadership. Andrews and Soder (1987), in a cooperative two-year study between the University of Washington College of Education and the Seattle School District, found a relationship between principal leadership and math and reading achievement as measured

by the California Achievement Test. Principal effectiveness was defined in terms of 1) resource provider, 2) instructional resource, 3) communicator, and 4) visible presence. The findings from the Andrews and Soder study indicate that academic achievement is significantly greater in strong-leader schools (high frequency instructional leadership behaviors) than in those schools where the leaders were rated as average or weak (low frequency instructional leadership behaviors). The academic performance for students of particular ethnic groups and those receiving free lunch were found to be influenced even more than that of the other students by the strong leader versus the weak leader.

In a similar study, Larsen (1987) examined the relationship between 29 critical instructional leadership behaviors and elementary student achievement in math and reading. As with Andrews and Soder (1987), Larsen found that in schools where there is high math and reading achievement, principals were reported to perform those behaviors more frequently and consistently. One additional finding was that in those schools with low achieving students, the principals' perceptions of their behaviors differed significantly from the teachers' perceptions.

Principal leadership and change. Other effective schools studies have directed attention from the principal's leadership to the role of the principal in encouraging the process of change. Bamburg and Andrews (1989) conducted a study employing both quantitative and qualitative techniques to examine the efforts of four rural schools in Washington to initiate and implement change for improving instruction. The sample studied included students across grade levels in a culturally diverse setting. One strength of this study was that data from site-specific interviews were used to determine the specific activities and events that contributed to the changes recorded on the quantitative data.

The findings suggest that in initiating change the principal must be able to promote activities that encourage effective communication between the principal and staff. Success is possible only through the establishment of trust between the principal and staff in the process of "critical inquiry." The implementation of change is dependent upon the principal's ability to secure the necessary resources and the ability to lead the way.

Although the generalizability of Bamburg and Andrews's study is questionable because of the limited number of principals included, the researchers stated the study demonstrated that 1) we cannot assume that principals intuitively know what it means to be an instructional leader; or 2) the principals know how to engage successfully in activities that

will result in the initiation, implementation, and institutionalization of change in schools. One shortcoming of this study was that the principal was assumed to be the primary source of leadership in initiating and implementing change. The possibility of other individuals leading or impeding the change process did not appear to be considered or studied.

The principal as a facilitator of other leaders. Three studies (Bird & Little, 1985; Hall, 1988; Selim, 1989) moved toward examining instructional leadership as an organizational function that consists of interactions with various contributing individuals. Bird and Little's two-year study (1985), which studied eight secondary schools in a western state, assembled a detailed descriptive account of the range of perspectives, approaches, and habits of instructional leadership in each school.

During the first year, interviews were held with principals, assistant principals, department heads, and teachers; field notes were taken from conversations and meetings; principals were shadowed; and a Q-sort procedure was used. Data from these procedures were used to develop case studies of five schools. During the second year, two surveys focusing on leadership practices and collegial interactions were completed.

The findings from this study strongly support the principal's role in facilitating instructional leadership as an organizational function. Recognizing that autonomy and isolation are the norm for teachers, this study refutes the claim that these are preferred and approved by teachers. Rather, the need for fostering leadership and collective practice among teachers is seen as a vital role of the principal.

Similarly, Hall (1988), in a year-long study of day-to-day interventions of nine elementary principals from three districts, focused on the principal's role in providing leadership for change. The frequency, sources, and nature of interventions were studied in depth. The principal's leadership style (Initiator, Manager, and Responder) was shown to have an effect on both the number and success of interventions. An unexpected, but very important, finding suggests that successful implementation of change involves a change facilitating team. More importantly, the principal's behaviors were found to influence what the change facilitating team did and how well its members complemented each other. In discussing the findings from this study, Hall stated that the key to change was not merely having other change facilitators active within the school, but rather the important

difference seemed to be related to how well the principal and these other change facilitators work together as a change facilitating team.

Studies of recent restructuring efforts in schools have begun to offer additional insights into principal leadership. In a four-year case study of one school district's efforts to restructure its schools, Hallinger & Hausman (1992) examined how district-level reform initiatives changed the context for principal leadership. The school restructuring plan for the district studied included three features -- school-based management, shared decision-making process, and parental choice of pupil attendance at the elementary level. Findings from this study suggest that under this district restructuring the role of the principal changed significantly. Because of the parental choice program, the principal became responsible for "marketing the school and its services." As more people became involved in the decision-making process, Hallinger & Hausman also found that there was a greater need for the principal to understand the nature of educational processes and their impact on teachers and students while functioning as a "leader of leaders." In their discussion of this role, these researchers suggest that this "accentuates the capacity of the principal to work effectively in group problem-solving. The ability to manage complex change in collaboration with other school-based leaders -- both parents and teachers -- is a skill that seems of paramount importance." In addition, the need to examine the needs of school leaders other than simply the principal is identified as being important.

Similar changes in the role of principals were also found in an interview study conducted by Bredeson (1991). In this study twenty principals were interviewed from eighteen schools in four districts where there was evidence that shared decision-making, school-based management, and professional autonomy had been increased. Although the focus of the study was on the role transition experienced by principals in restructured schools, the findings support some of the changes in the principal's role as noted by Hallinger & Hausman. Bredeson identified "highly developed communication skills" as the most important leadership qualities for success in the principalship. In discussing the move from more traditional, managerial-driven school leadership to group-centered leadership, he found "the capacity to listen, to deal with conflict, and to facilitate small group processes" as being the principals' most important competencies for success. In describing "group-centered leadership behaviors" Bredeson suggested that the principals increased attention to group needs, relinquished control and responsibility for task completion to others, became consultants and facilitators, provided a climate of support, modeled leadership behaviors, and entrusted group maintenance and process problems to members

of the group. Findings from this study were seen as supporting Blanton's (1991) suggestion that "The essence of leadership is not to manage or change others; it is to manage and change oneself." In discussing the principals' responses, Bredeson saw a movement "away from the image of principal as manager in charge to facilitator on call" (p. 23).

Teacher Leadership

Until the last few decades, the study of teacher leadership could be described as rather limited and narrow in focus. This can be attributed to a number of reasons. First, school leadership has been traditionally seen as primarily the function of the principal. Secondly, because teachers were observed to work in isolation and autonomy (Waller, 1932; Jackson, 1968; Lortie, 1975; Cuban, 1983), the assumption was that this was preferred by teachers. Thirdly, because teachers have historically demonstrated an instructional, student-centered, classroom-level focus (Waller, 1932; Lortie, 1975; Jackson, 1968; Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Hargreaves, 1990), it was assumed that teachers would, and perhaps should, lead at the classroom level while principals would lead on the school-wide level.

Expanding teacher leadership roles. The classroom-level focus for teachers did not imply that teacher leadership was nonexistent. Rather, it was recognized that teachers assumed limited formal leadership roles in schools and school districts, functioning primarily as advisors, mentors, master teachers, union representatives, and department chairpersons. Although teachers received very little feedback from, or collaboration with, others in the classroom (Dreeban, 1973; Duke, 1987), they were assuming various leadership roles within schools. In addition, studies also supported that these teacher leaders were identifiable by other teachers and principals, and that both principals and teachers agreed in the identification of teacher leaders (Brownlee, 1979).

In 1986, however, school reform reports from the Holmes Group and the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy suggested more collegial styles of decision making and teaching where teachers would assume more responsibility for school-wide leadership based on their experience and expertise. Since that time some school districts have initiated school-reform efforts that have expanded the leadership roles for teachers. Studies have also made it evident that opportunities for teacher leadership actually come from many sources (Devaney, 1987; Ward, Pascarelli, & Carnes, 1985).

Thus, over the last five years more studies of teacher leadership have been undertaken. A number of these studies question the extent and degree to which teachers are actually participating in leadership roles (Conley, Schmidle, & Shedd, 1988; Weiss, 1990; Maloy & Jones, 1987), the difficulties of assuming school-wide leadership roles (Lieberman, 1988; Kilcher, 1990; Bellon & Beaudry, 1992), and the training required for teacher leaders (McDaniel, Rice, & Romerdahl, 1990).

Altering work roles and relationships. As more reform efforts have been undertaken, there is growing evidence that working roles and relationships for teachers and principals must be substantially altered (Hart, 1990; Johnson, 1989; Little & Bird, 1987). Thus far, however, only a few studies have been initiated to explore in depth how these roles and relationships are negotiated. In a study of seven pairs of teacher leaders and principals, Smylie and Brownlee-Conyers (1992) offer insight into the factors related to the development of new working relationships between teacher leaders and principals. Their findings suggest: 1) ambiguities and uncertainties surrounding these leadership roles influence the development of new working relationships; 2) perceptions, expectations, interests, and prerogatives which teachers and principals bring into the relationship are related to how the roles and relationships develop; 3) principals and teachers utilize strategies that influence the development of new roles and working relationships; 4) events not directly associated with daily work may play significant roles in the development of new teacher leader-principal working relationships; and, 5) there is a progression from an inward focus on self-interest and the interpersonal dimensions of the relationship to symbiosis and focus on tasks.

In another study conducted by Clift, Johnson, Holland, & Veal (1992), the role interactions among teams from five schools and one university team during a collaborative school improvement effort were examined. In this study a general progression of role definition was traced, showing movement from ambiguity to tentative consensus on the value of teacher participation in school-wide decision making. Observations also suggested: 1) shared leadership for school-wide efforts is not a naturally occurring phenomenon; 2) the importance of school and district context as it relates to school leadership cannot be ignored; 3) progression in role negotiation is more likely if all parties are willing to make the commitment to tolerate ambiguity and communicate that tolerance in actions as well as words; 4) fundamental changes, such as those encouraged by current reform initiatives, are very fragile and can easily be destroyed; and, 5) research in which

teachers and administrators are not included in data collection and analysis has inherent limitations.

Two other studies conducted by researchers from the National Center for School Leadership at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign (Polite, 1993; Johnson, 1993) have also offered insight into how teachers and principals negotiate leadership roles. In these case studies of successful elementary and middle schools, Polite offers a typology for leaders, while Johnson (1993) presents a typology for studying shared leadership within an organization. While both studies offer support to the suggestion that leadership is an organizational rather than an individual function (Ogawa & Bossert, 1989), both typologies remain to be tested.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this review was to explore the possibility that in the study of educational leadership, "blind spots" (Wagner, 1993) have inadvertently been created which limit our understanding of leadership. Following Wagner's (1993) suggestion that the same theories, methods, and perceptions, which serve to create these blind spots, can also serve to illuminate them, leadership research and literature was examined to provide an historical perspective of the direction taken in the study of leadership over the last five decades..

What becomes readily apparent is that we have moved from a person-focused, rational, simplistic view of leadership to a process-focused, more complex understanding of leadership. While this could be easily taken as evidence of progress in moving toward a deeper understanding of leadership, I believe that, as Wagner suggests, blind spots have been inadvertently created.

One of these blind spots involves the assumption of rationality that underlies many leadership studies. Functioning under this assumption prompts the continuous search for cause and effect relations which are linear in nature. Thus, the traits, characteristics, and behaviors of individual leaders and followers are studied in an effort to determine how these affect the organization and organizational outcomes. In many instances, this is done using interviews, questionnaires, and surveys. In rarer cases, observations are made of individual leaders and followers. By functioning under the assumption of rationality and utilizing research methods based on this assumption, what is overlooked is the possibility that leadership is neither rational nor linear. Could leadership be partly chaotic and

unplanned? Could we be, in fact, only capturing a small portion of the leadership that exists in school organizations? If so, how would this affect the leadership theories and research methodologies needed to entertain this possibility?

Another blind spot involves the underlying hierarchical structure that has pervaded the understanding of leadership in organizations since the earliest writings of Taylor, Fayol, and Weber. Although there has been a gradual movement toward recognition that leadership can come from someone other than the "manager" or "principal," there exists a continual tension between who can and who should lead. In the study of school leadership, recent restructuring efforts have prompted more recognition of teachers, parents, and students functioning as leaders. The focus has been, however, on the types of leadership roles and responsibilities assumed and the negotiation of these roles and responsibilities. What is, thus, overlooked is the possibility that leadership involves more than negotiated roles and responsibilities. What if leadership occurs outside of negotiated roles and responsibilities? What if leadership is a reflection of the individual's feelings, beliefs, and motives at that particular point in time? How might the leadership theories and research methodologies address this possibility?

Lastly, another possible blind spot exists which reflects both the rational and hierarchical assumptions mentioned above. Thus far, in the study of educational leadership, the assumption has been that leadership is a function of an individual or individuals from within the organization. What this precludes, then, is the possibility that leadership is an organizational function. That is, leadership might actually be a synergistic outcome of exchanges between and among individuals from both within and outside the organization. If this is considered as a possibility, extensive changes in the way we conceptualize and study leadership would be necessary.

As I leave you with these possibilities to ponder, it seems necessary and important to revisit the words of Wagner, shared in the beginning of this review: "ignorance is a better criterion than truth for determining the usefulness of knowledge generated through different forms of educational research" While my support for this statement has not changed, the challenges and difficulties of actually uncovering "blind spots" seems overwhelming. I fear that it is much easier to continue to find evidence to support truths than it is to consider the possibilities of ignorance. Perhaps this is especially true for those who make a career out of conducting research in an effort to test for truths. Although modest, my hope is that this effort is one of many to follow that reflect acceptance of the

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