

Pedagogical Leadership of VET within a confused FET Context

LYNN RUSSELL

Abstract

This case study investigates the pedagogical leadership role of the Adult Education Officer (AEO) in the area of Vocational Education and Training (VET) to meet the requirements of the Bruges Communiqué (2010).

The study found that the AEOs interviewed are working to implement a confused system imported from other countries that has yet to be properly defined and named, to fit smoothly within the Irish education context. Their pedagogical leadership role is impeded by bureaucracy which has seen the introduction of policies and practices prioritising productivity over quality of service.

This paper seeks to highlight the need for policy makers to clearly define the context within which the AEOs operate. This should recognise and acknowledge the potential pedagogical leadership role of the AEO to ensure a quality VET service, as proposed under the Bruges Communiqué (2010).

Key words: Bruges Communiqué (2010), pedagogical leadership, Adult Education Officer, vocational education and training, further education and training

Introduction

To promote prosperity in Europe, the Bruges Communiqué (2010) stressed the need to transform Vocational Education and Training (VET). This study set out to investigate the Vocational Education and Training (VET) context and the pedagogical leadership role of the middle manager within this context. The study then looked at whether the role reflects the 2013 Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council's conclusion on effective pedagogical leadership

in education to meet the Bruges Communiqué (2010) and ensure quality provision. This was done by examining the pedagogical leadership role of the Adult Education Officer within the VET context.

The Context

“Without doubt, successful leaders are sensitive to context” (Leithwood *et al.*, 2008, p. 31). However, Leithwood *et al.* (2008) and Hallinger (2003), stress that successful leaders should only be responsive to, not dictated to by the context within which they operate, applying “contextually sensitive combinations” (Leithwood *et al.*, 2008, p. 31) of leadership practices. Callan *et al.* (2007) would go further by suggesting that leaders in VET should not simply respond to context, but should be proactive in designing the future context.

The context within which leaders lead makes a difference to how they lead (Lumby *et al.*, 2009, p. 164). Any attempt to decontextualize leadership practice destroys that which it attempts to explain (Eacott, 2013). It is the context that gives the behaviours meaning and significance (Eacott, 2013). The lack of attention to this leads to “an under-problematised engagement with the political workings of education in general and specifically the administration of schooling” (Eacott, 2013, p. 179). Coates *et al.* (2010) state that VET leaders have always had to contend with commercial pressures but leaders “now face new pressures arising from the elevation of VET as a key vehicle for national workforce development and productivity” (p. 7). It is planning and leading change in this increasingly commercial context “that is the focus of VET leadership, rather than education-specific matters” (Coates *et al.*, 2010, p. 12). This commercial context has led to the creation of policies and legislation in Europe and Ireland influencing the administration of VET and in turn the practice of pedagogical leadership.

European Policies on Adult Education

According to Egan (2012) it is unambiguous that the OECD, UNESCO and the European Commission have had a strong influence in shaping Ireland’s adult education policy up to the present time. It is well documented that there is a neo-liberal agenda in the pursuit of education (Lynch, 2009, Sugrue, 2008, Finnegan, 2008). Lynch (2009) states that neo-liberalism defines the person to be educated in economic terms as “homo economicus”, a worker whose life and purposes are determined by their economic status.

The Maastricht Treaty (1992) (Article 126), marked for the first time the partial jurisdiction of the European Commission over education matters. However, the European Commission has “long been exerting a massive influence on education policies of the member states via guidelines, resolutions, recommendations and reports” (Heinemann 1991, p. 71). In 2000, the Lisbon Strategy focused on growth and jobs in the light of increasing global competition with the aim of achieving the most “competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” (2000, p. 3). Access to lifelong learning was seen as having a vital role in the achievement of the Lisbon goals (Keogh, 2004). According to Keogh, this strategy is “the compass and the journey, driving developments in education and training systems in the EU member states” (2004, p. 1).

Since 2002, European policy specifically devoted to this VET journey has been part of the Copenhagen Declaration (Council of the European Union, 2002). However, VET leadership was not addressed until the Helsinki Communiqué (2006) which stated that “more emphasis should be placed on good governance of VET systems and providers...stronger leadership of institutions and/or training providers within national strategies” (European Commission, 2006, p. 6). The European Commission did not focus again on leadership in VET until the Bruges Communiqué (2010) which stressed the need for “flexible, high quality education and training systems which respond to the needs of today and tomorrow” (p. 1). This Communiqué (2010) recognised the crucial role of leadership in achieving this aim (Cedefop, 2011).

The 2013 Council conclusions on effective leadership in education, state that educational leadership calls for a range of competences in order to meet the Bruges Communiqué (2010). One of the competences is the need for a leader in education to display the pedagogical skills required to “regularly review occupational and education/training standards which define what is to be expected from the holder of a certificate or a diploma” (Bruges Communiqué, 2010, p. 2) in order to ensure quality provision. The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) (2011), however, would dispute this requirement claiming that the need for pedagogical leadership has diminished as more onus needs to be paid to legal, financial, administrative and quality assurance issues.

Irish Policies on Adult Education

In Ireland, in 1992, the Green Paper on education stated that the education system “must seek to interact with the world of work to promote the employability of its students and in playing its part in the country’s economic development” (p. 35). Fleming (1992) rejected this Green Paper on the basis of the absence throughout of references to the humanities and social studies, which he views as confirming “the conviction that the economy is king” (p. 9).

In 1993, the White Paper on Growth, Competitiveness and Employment (1993) described the role that the system of vocational training can play in improving economic growth, competitiveness and employment. That same year, the National Social Partnership submitted a national development plan to the European Commission. One of the main objectives was to re-integrate the unemployed back into society. Egan (2012) sees this as “the beginning of formally bringing economic factors directly to play within education” (p. 33).

In 1995, the White Paper on Education spoke of an “education system which is systematically linked to the economic planning process” (p. 1). The following year, the OECD saw investment in education and training as making a positive contribution to economic development, citing “a strong identifiable relationship between human capital growth and the growth not just in output but also in labour productivity” (p. 65). In 1998, the Green Paper on Adult Education in an Era of Lifelong Learning stated that education has an important role to play in economic development. A year later, the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act (1999), established structures for a national framework of qualifications to co-ordinate awards and promote access, transfer and progression within the VET system.

In 2000 the White Paper on Adult Education (Government of Ireland, 2000) echoed the goals of the Lisbon Agenda. Within the White Paper, Chapter 6 addressed the issue of lifelong learning and the labour market in Ireland, highlighting the need for a proactive lifelong learning policy.

Along the cycle of this learning, the Lisbon Agenda (2000) called for reflection on the concrete objectives of education systems by using “tools such as indicators and benchmarks, as well as on comparison of best practice, monitoring, evaluation and peer review” (Keogh, 2004, p. 19). The White Paper (2000) referred to career paths for those facilitating this reflection, stating “the government is concerned with providing long-term funding” (p. 116). However,

this has never been acted upon. In 2003, the McIver Report, commissioned to make suggestions on providing appropriate resourcing, staffing, structuring and development in the Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) sector, highlighted poor middle management structures as a result of inadequate staffing.

Lynch (2009) argues that within the neo-liberal agenda, society is being colonised by the market driven priorities of the state. New leaders will have to function within an education system that Egan (2012) believes is in danger of becoming “essentially consumerist”, focusing “especially on its role in servicing the manpower needs of the economy” (Conroy, 1998, p. 4). To meet these market driven priorities, the McIver Report (2003) recommended the establishment of a further education sector. At that time further education was being managed by local VECs and FAS training centres and owed its existence, not to any plan but “to the vagaries of history” (Mooney, 2014). Furthermore, the McIver report highlighted how the hosts of FET, namely the PLC sector, originated as part of the second level system and operated under second level conditions.

In Ireland, in 2013, the Further Education and Training Act, provided for the dissolution of FAS and the establishment of a new further education and training authority named SOLAS. In that same year, the Education and Training Boards Act (2013) provided for the legal establishment of the Education and Training Boards (ETBs). As a result of both acts, the Further Education and Training (FET) strategy was drawn up to “provide a framework for the establishment and development of a strong further education and training sector” (p. 3). The strategy aims to achieve this reform in FET by “improving quality, accountability” (p. 3).

The political strategy behind the establishment of the ETBs lay in the concept of “flexicurity”, developed under the revised Lisbon Strategy 2005 and endorsed by the European Council in 2007. This concept aimed at enhancing flexibility of the labour market and at the same time providing social protection for workers (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2007). The flexicurity model is built around Employment Protection Legislation, Unemployment Benefits, Active Labour Market Policies (ALMP), and Lifelong Learning. To date, Ireland, like many other EU countries, has treated these four policies in isolation with minimal interaction between them (Kavanagh, 2014). Since flexicurity is expected to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, it will undoubtedly have a major influence on the design of arrangements to join-up welfare

policies, education/training policies and employment legislation within a new integrated system (Adult Education Officers' Association, 2011).

However, this new strategy, developed and endorsed by the EU, must be implemented within an Irish context. This context differs in many respects to other EU countries. For example, unlike the rest of the EU, in Ireland and the UK-Scotland, no difference is drawn between initial VET and continuous VET (Ginsberg, 2013). Unlike Ireland however, the UK-Scotland provision is delivered through specifically designated colleges of further education with a remit that is broader than VET, to also prioritise social inclusion. In Ireland, provision to a large extent, is currently being delivered through PLC colleges repackaged as further education colleges and focusing on a narrower area of VET (McGuinness *et al.*, 2014).

Caution therefore must be exercised in assuming VET is the same across different countries (Raffe, 2011). Instead of borrowing and attempting to transplant international best practice into a local context, best practice should instead be used to inform thinking on policy development (Raffe, 2011). Applying a universal discourse of leadership will fail to address crucial historically and culturally determined dysfunctionalities within each country's educational context (Ngcobo and Tikly, 2010), obstructing leadership and leadership capacity (Mertkan, 2014).

The Capacity of Leadership to Influence Classroom Teaching

Leithwood *et al.* (2008) believe that "leadership acts as a catalyst without which other good things are unlikely to happen" (p. 28). They further state that "this catalyst [unleashes] the potential capacities that already exist in the organisation" (2008, p. 29). Hallinger and Heck (2010), based on a review of fifty years of theory and research, claim that "leadership contributes to learning through the development of a set of structural and sociocultural processes that define the organisation's capacity for academic improvement" (p. 95). Leithwood *et al.* (2008) believe that successful leadership will improve employee, particularly teacher performance and that this performance is central to pupil learning.

Given that "teaching and learning is the core business" of educational institutions (Coates *et al.*, 2010, p. 6), the idea that leadership should be inextricably linked to learning appears sound (Robinson *et al.*, 2009; Dinham, 2007). Bush and Glover (2012) contend that effective leadership and management takes the strain by creating structures and processes that allow teachers to engage as

fully as possible in their key task. The Council (2013) agree by concluding that effective educational leadership calls for a range of competences, one of which is the ability to create an “effective and attractive” work environment. Leithwood *et al.* (2008) concur, stating that teacher performance is related to “the conditions in which they work” (p.29).

However, based on a national study on leadership in Australia’s VET sector, Coates *et al.* (2010) found that with the exception of leaders who are directly involved in teaching and learning, “teaching and learning was flagged by all other leaders as the least important facet of their work” (p. 6). Coates *et al.* (2010) considered this finding to be concerning. Furthermore, based on their research on the pressures shaping the work of VET leaders, Coates *et al.* (2010) found that most leaders questioned placed low emphasis on pressures related to students, with most emphasis placed on increasing productivity and institutional reform.

While a review of the literature regularly identifies learning improvements in terms of academic improvement, in more recent discussions concepts such as student well-being and belonging have become more apparent (Dimmock, 2012). Duignan (2012) argues for the need to view the influence of leadership on student learning as something greater than merely supporting mathematics or science scores. In highlighting the importance of considering diverse perspectives, Duignan (2012) reinforces the complex, dynamic, and relational nature of schooling. Based on their study of adult education in Limerick city, Power *et al.* (2011) would agree, stating that while labour market activation is top of the agenda, personal and social outcomes must also be prioritised.

Methodology – Qualitative Research

This case study sought to explore the reality of the pedagogical leadership role of the AEO as interpreted by the AEOs themselves within the VET context. Qualitative methods were viewed as “particularly helpful in the generation of an intensive, detailed examination of the case” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007 p. 253). In total 43% of the AEOs registered with the Adult Education Officers Association (AEOA) took part, representing a nationwide geographical spread.

The pilot interviews were conducted with policy experts who were “handpicked” as “knowledgeable people” (Ball, 1990) based on their professional roles within organisations with direct influence on the work of the AEOs in FET.

Bowen (2008) states that the sample size is justified when theoretical saturation is achieved. For the purposes of this study, it was the author's view that theoretical saturation was achieved after carrying out three pilot interviews, six semi-structured interviews and one focus group session.

Irish Context – The Reality

All AEOs interviewed referred to FET rather than VET. This is understandable as the context for much of the work that they carry out has been set by the FET Strategy 2014-2019. Furthermore, FET encompasses community education, which is something all the AEOs felt strongly about. However, what is perhaps most interesting is the fact pointed out by a policy expert that neither acronym is completely suitable for use within the Irish context. This Irish context is situated within the remit of the ETBs. The ETBs are a combined legacy of the VECs and FAS, developed under an EU concept of “flexicurity”. Despite the concept behind the establishment of the ETBs, the legacy ensures that the European system, where VET has a very specific meaning in terms of initial VET and continuous VET, is different to the Irish system which makes no distinction. Furthermore, in terms of FET, the legacy also ensures that this system, which was adopted from systems such as those operating in UK-Scotland is not directly transferrable to the Irish context. As another policy expert explained, further education in the UK is broad in scope and takes place in further education colleges as opposed to further education programmes in Ireland, which are much narrower in scope and take place in PLC colleges calling themselves further education colleges.

The AEOs were not aware of specific European VET policy documents. However, they were all very familiar with, although often dubious about, the Irish FET policies and strategy. While they were all actively involved in improving the quality and comparability of data for EU policy making in VET, through their work with databases such as PLSS and FARR, they were also very conscious of the fact that the focus of these policies was labour market activation, driving other policies, such as community education and social inclusion, underground. Policy experts concurred, stating that while there is lip service to social inclusion, all action is being focused on the economy.

Furthermore, the policy experts cautioned against presuming all EU policies were applicable within an Irish context. In this respect, the AEOs showed themselves to be leaders who, rather than being dictated to by these policies, queried their appropriateness at local, national and international level, in terms of efficiency, educational effectiveness and current viability.

The disquiet shown by AEOs regarding VET policy could also be seen as a reflection of the disconnect between the policy makers and the providers, as pointed out by the policy experts. This has resulted in a lack of belief on the part of the providers in the viability of the policies and the ethos behind them.

The shift in education policies, under a universal FET strategy, towards marketisation and performativity, has restructured and recultured AEO leadership (Mertkan, 2014). However, the AEOs, rather than applying a universal discourse of leadership to achieve the aims of the strategy, are querying the strategy and attempting to display a leadership style which tries to be culturally sensitive to context (Ngcobo and Tikly, 2010).

AEO Pedagogical Leadership within this Context

The AEOs do not have a direct influence on teaching and learning. In fact one AEO, reflecting the Coates *et al.* (2010) research, flagged it as the least important aspect of their job. However, unlike Coates *et al.* (2010), this AEO did not consider this to be a concern, instead believing that this has led to a more effective work environment, based on the needs of the students as opposed to the personal preferences of the AEO.

Reflecting the findings of Cedefop (2011), while most AEOs perform a pedagogical leadership role to varying degrees, this role is diminishing. Further reflecting the 2011 report, many would cite an increase in the level of bureaucracy as one of the main reasons. Europe 2020 stresses an outcomes-based, value for money delivery of VET. As a result, institutional reform is taking the onus away from pedagogy and placing it on productivity (Coates *et al.*, 2010), with one policy expert stating that the onus had shifted from pedagogical leadership skills to managerial skills. Since the creation of SOLAS, reporting expectations have increased dramatically (Coates *et al.*, 2010). As leaders, the AEOs queried the effectiveness of how the data is gathered and thus how it is subsequently reflected in new policies aimed at improving the quality of VET provision.

However, according to one policy expert, more emphasis should be placed on trying to assess the quality of learning. This policy expert sees a very important role for the AEOs in this area as pedagogically qualified leaders delivering quality VET programmes. AEO leadership delivers quality VET programmes by developing structures and processes (Bush, 2011), which include hiring tutors and setting up teams to administer and report on performance. While

their direct pedagogical leadership influence on the classroom is diminishing, the Council (2013) sees a very definite role for them in terms of reviewing tutor qualifications. The AEOs would agree. However, due to the legal requirement that tutors after a certain number of years be awarded CID contracts (Contracts of Indefinite Duration), if or when their qualifications become obsolete, there is no onus on them, or funding available for them, to retrain. As a result, many AEOs, instead of placing suitably qualified tutors in classes set up to meet student needs, often have to place students in classes matching teacher qualifications, rendering the service not fit for purpose.

With no Continuing Professional Development model or policy incentive to enable and encourage staff to train up in other areas, AEOs face a leadership dilemma as to how to actively encourage staff to continually develop their expertise (Muijs and Harris, 2003) to meet the goals of the FET strategy requiring students to attain certain QQI qualifications. Policy experts identify this as a weakness that was not identified in the policy provision before the SOLAS roll-out.

It is important for policy makers to recognise and acknowledge the AEO expertise in pedagogy as a means of maintaining high standards in terms of quality of learning. However, AEO pedagogical leadership in this area is also being impeded by policy or rather lack of policy. This study highlighted the need for policymakers to review and introduce new policies regarding teacher qualifications, to ensure they are fit for the purpose of meeting student requirements.

This leadership dilemma in terms of delivering quality VET programmes is further exacerbated by the increasing influence of Department of Social Protection and other inter-government agencies on classroom activities as part of the flexicurity policy. Both the leadership activities of the AEOs and flexicurity policies are aimed at achieving the objectives of the Bruges Communiqué (2010). The study revealed the AEOs to be a group within the ETB with extensive experience and pedagogical qualifications to lead learning. However, the study would suggest that the AEO leadership role, rather than working in tandem with flexicurity policies to achieve a common aim, is being impeded by these policies. In particular, labour market activation policies which see DSP placing students in and out of classes and querying progress – the non-pedagogically qualified impeding the role of the pedagogically qualified. This would point to an area of FET policy that is working at odds within itself and

not to the ultimate benefit of the student. This lack of cohesion can only have negative consequences for labour market activation and for the organisation as a whole.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the Vocational Education and Training (VET) context and the pedagogical leadership role of the middle manager within this context to ensure quality provision. This was done by examining the role of the Adult Education Officer (AEO).

This study sought to heighten awareness, create dialogue and help address the lack of research evidence (Creswell, 2013) on middle management pedagogical leadership within the Irish Education and Training Board (ETB) context. This was achieved by responding to a number of research questions related to how leadership is understood, performed and enacted in the everyday working practice of Adult Education Officers (AEOs) within the ETBs in Ireland. In particular, the study questioned whether the material practices within the Irish context meet the pedagogical leadership criteria, as set out by the 2013 Council to achieve the requirements of the Bruges Communiqué (2010).

The practical contribution of the present research is that it provides some empirical data on the actual leadership role of AEOs. This information is important given that no other comparable study exists.

The findings of the case study underline the need for policy makers to clearly define the context within which the AEOs operate. At present the AEOs are working to implement a system imported from other countries that has yet to be properly defined and named to fit smoothly within the context of the Irish education system.

All of those interviewed concurred that the emphasis of the VET policies is on productivity over pedagogy. The study highlighted concerns regarding the quality of learning as a result of this situation.

This clearly defined context should recognise and acknowledge the potential pedagogical leadership role of the AEO to ensure a quality VET service as proposed under the Bruges Communiqué (2010), and build capacity to ensure this quality service going forward.

References

- Adult Education Officers Association (AEOA) (2011). *Strategic Framework 2016*. www.aeoa.ie.
- Ball, D.L. (1990). 'The mathematical understandings that prospective teachers bring to teacher education', in *Elementary School Journal*, 90, pp. 449-466.
- Bowen, G. A. (2008). 'Naturalistic Inquiry and the Saturation Concept: A Research Note', in *Qualitative Research*, 8, pp. 137-152.
- Bush. T. (2011). *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management* (4th Ed). London: Sage.
- Bush, T. and Glover, D. (2012). 'Distributed leadership in action: leading high performing leadership teams in English schools', in *School Leadership & Management: Formerly School Organisation*, 32(1), pp. 21-36.
- Callan, V., Mitchell, J., Clayton, B. and Smith, L. (2007). *Approaches for Sustaining and Building Management and Leadership Capability in VET Providers*. Adelaide: NCVER.
- Coates, H., Meek, L., Brown, J., Friedman, T., Noonan, P. and Mitchell, J. (2010). *VET Leadership for the Future*. Research Briefing. Melbourne, Australia: LH Martin Institute.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education* (6th Ed.). London and New York: Routledge.
- Conroy, P. (1998). *The History and Structure of Adult Education in Ireland 1969-1997*. Unpublished Thesis. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.
- Council of the European Union (2013). *Council conclusions on effective leadership in education (2013)*. www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/139715.Pdf.
- Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.
- Dimmock, C. (2012). *Leadership, Capacity Building and School Improvement: Concepts, Themes and Impact*. Abingdon: Rutledge.
- Dinham, S. (2007). *Leadership for exceptional educational outcomes*. Teneriffe, Qld: Post Pressed.
- Duignan, P. (2012). *Ethical Leadership: Together Creating Ethical Learning Environments*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Eacott, S. (2013) "'Leadership" and the social: time, space and the epistemic', in *International Journal of Educational Management*, 27 (1), pp. 91-101.
- Egan, P. (2012). *The Changing Face of the Adult Education Landscape in Ireland. A case study approach to exploring current philosophy, policy and practice*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis. Dublin: Trinity College Dublin.
- European Commission (1992). *The Maastricht Treaty*. Publications of the European

- Commission.
- European Commission (2000). *The Lisbon Strategy*. Lisbon European Council, Presidency Conclusions, 23-24 March. European Commission.
- European Commission (2002). *The Copenhagen Declaration*. European Commission.
- European Commission (2006). *The Helsinki Communiqué on Enhanced European Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training*. European Commission.
- European Commission (2010). *The Bruges Communiqué on enhanced European cooperation in vocational education and training for the period 2011-2020*. European Commission.
- European Commission (2010). *Europe 2020 Strategy*. European Commission.
- Finnegan, T (2008). 'Neo-Liberalism, Irish Society and Adult Education', in *The Adult Learner Journal 2008*, pp. 54-73.
- Fleming, T. (1992). 'Try Telling that to Socrates: An Overview of the Green Paper: Education for a Changing World', in *The Adult Learner Journal*, pp. 8-11.
- Ginsberg, M. (2013). *Preparation, Practice and Politics of Teachers. Problems and Prospects in Comparative Perspective*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Government of Ireland (1992). *Education for a Changing World: Green Paper on Education*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland (1993). *Growth, Competitiveness and Employment: White Paper*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland (1995). *Charting our Education Future: White Paper*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland (1998). *Adult Education in an Era of Lifelong Learning: Green Paper*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland (1999). *The Qualifications Act*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland (2000). *Learning for Life: White Paper on Adult Education*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland (2013). *The Further Education and Training Act*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Government of Ireland (2013). *The Education and Training Boards Act*. Dublin: The Stationery Office.
- Hallinger, P. and Heck, R.H. (2010). 'Collaborative leadership and school improvement: Understanding the impact on school capacity and student learning', in *School Leadership and Management*, 30 (2), pp. 95-110.
- Hallinger, P. (2003). 'Leading educational change: Reflections on the practice of instructional and transformational leadership', in *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 33 (3), pp. 329-351.
- Heinemann, K. (1999). 'Education and the internal market', in *European Education*. 23 (2),

- pp. 69-76.
- Kavanagh, F. (2014). *Flexicurity in Recovery*. ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=13110&langId=en
- Keogh, H. (2004). 'Adult Education in Ireland: The implications of developments at European Union level', in *The Adult Learner 2004*, pp. 18-26.
- Leithwood, K., Harris, A. and Hopkins, D. (2008). 'Seven strong claims about successful school leadership', in *School Leadership and Management*, 28(1), pp. 27-42.
- Lumby, J., Walker, A., Bryant, M., Bush, T. and Bjork, L. (2009). 'Research on Leadership Preparation in a Global Context'. In Young, M.D., Crow, G. M., Murphy, J. and Ogawa, R. T. (Eds). *Handbook of research on the education of school leaders*. New York: Routledge.
- Lynch, K. (2009). *A Time for Dissent from a Neo-liberal to an Egalitarian and Caring State*. Conference Paper VTOS 20th Anniversary Conference, Limerick.
- McGuinness, S., O'Connell, P. and Kelly, E. (2014). 'The Impact of Training Programme Type and Duration on the Employment Chances of the Unemployed in Ireland', in *The Economic and Social Review*, 45 (3), pp. 425-450.
- McIver Consulting. (2003). *Report of the Steering Group to the PLC Review established by the Department of Education and Science*. Dublin: Government Stationery Office.
- Mertkan, S. (2014). 'In search of leadership: what happened to management?', in *Educational Management Administration*, 42 (2), pp. 226-242.
- Mooney, B. (2014). *A lot done in further education...more to do*. www.irishtimes.com/news/.../a-lot-done-in-further-education-more-to-do-1.1925529.
- Muijs, D. and Harris, A. (2003). 'Teacher Leadership – Improvement through Empowerment? An Overview of the Literature', in *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 31 (4), pp. 437-448.
- Ngcobo, T. and Tikly, L. P. (2010). 'Key Dimensions of Effective Leadership: a Study of Township and Rural Schools in South Africa', in *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership*, 38 (2), pp. 202-228.
- OECD (1996). *Lifelong Learning for All*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD (2016). *Trends Shaping Education 2016*. Paris: OECD.
- Power, M., Neville, P. and O'Dwyer, M. (2011). *The Social Value of Community-Based Adult Education in Limerick City*. 730610cc-8ad5-4162-9b9b-8ec4f0692036.pdf
- Raffe, D. (2011). 'National Qualifications Frameworks: what can be learnt from the International experience?', in *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies*, 4, pp. 52-65.
- Robinson, V.M.J., Lloyd, C.A. and Rowe, K.J. (2009). 'The impact of leadership on student outcomes: an analysis of the differential effects of leadership types', in *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44 (5), pp. 635-674.
- Sugrue, C. (2008). *The Future of Educational Change: International Perspectives*. London:

Routledge.

The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) (2011).
Exploring leadership in vocational education and training. www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/6113_en.pdf.

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (2007). *Fourth European Working Conditions Survey*. Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.