

The importance of leadership and management for education

What is educational management?

Educational management is a field of study and practice concerned with the operation of educational organizations. There is no single generally accepted definition of the subject because its development has drawn heavily on several more firmly established disciplines, including sociology, political science, economics and general management. Interpretations drawn from different disciplines necessarily emphasize diverse aspects of educational management and these varying approaches are reflected in subsequent chapters of this book.

Bolam (1999: 194) defines educational management as 'an executive function for carrying out agreed policy'. He differentiates management from educational leadership which has 'at its core the responsibility for policy formulation and, where appropriate, organizational transformation' (ibid.: 194). Writing from an Indian perspective, Sapre (2002: 102) states that 'management is a set of activities directed towards efficient and effective utilization of organizational resources in order to achieve organizational goals'.

The present author has argued consistently (Bush, 1986; 1995; 1999; 2003) that educational management should be centrally concerned with the purpose or aims of education. These are the subject of continuing debate and disagreement, but the principle of linking management activities and tasks to the aims and objectives of schools or colleges remains vital. These purposes or goals provide the crucial sense of direction which

should underpin the management of educational institutions. Management is directed at the achievement of certain educational objectives. Unless this link between purpose and management is clear and close, there is a danger of 'managerialism', 'a stress on procedures at the expense of educational purpose and values' (Bush, 1999: 240). Managerialism places the emphasis on managerial efficiency rather than the aims and purposes of education (Newman and Clarke, 1994; Gunter, 1997). 'Management possesses no super-ordinate goals or values of its own. The pursuit of efficiency may be the mission statement of management – but this is efficiency in the achievement of objectives which others define' (Newman and Clarke, 1994: 29).

While the emphasis on educational purpose is important, this does not mean that all aims or targets are appropriate, particularly if they are imposed from outside the school by government or other official bodies. Managing towards the achievement of educational aims is vital but these must be purposes agreed by the school and its community. If managers simply focus on implementing external initiatives, they risk becoming 'managerialist'. In England, the levers of central monitoring and target-setting have been tightened to allow government to manage schools more closely, for example through the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies (Whitty, 2008: 173). Successful internal management requires a clear link between values, aims, strategy and day-to-day activities.

The centrality of aims and purposes for the management of schools and colleges is common to most of the different theoretical approaches to the subject. There is disagreement, though, about three aspects of goal-setting in education:

1. the value of *formal* statements of purpose
2. whether the objectives are those of the organization or those of particular individuals
3. *how* the institution's goals are determined.

Formal aims

The formal aims of schools and colleges are sometimes set at a high level of generality. They usually command substantial support but, because they are often utopian, such objectives provide an inadequate basis for managerial action. A typical aim in a primary or secondary school might focus on the acquisition by each pupil of physical, social, intellectual and moral qualities and skills. This is worthy but it has considerable limitations as a guide to decision-making. More specific purposes often fail to reach the same level of agreement. A proposal to

seek improved performance in one part of the curriculum, say literacy or numeracy, may be challenged by teachers concerned about the implications for other subjects.

The international trend towards self-management has led to a parallel call for managers, staff and other stakeholders to develop a distinctive vision for their schools with clearly articulated and specific aims. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989: 99) 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'. Where educational organizations have such a vision, it is possible for effective managers to link functions with aims and to ensure that all management activity is purposeful. In practice, however, as we shall see later, many 'visions' are simply generalized educational objectives (Bolam et al., 1993) and may be derived from national government imperatives rather than being derived from a school-level assessment of needs.

Organizational or individual aims?

Some approaches to educational management are concerned predominantly with organizational objectives while other models strongly emphasize individual aims. There is a range of opinion between these two views, from those who argue that 'organizational' objectives may be imposed by leaders on the less powerful members of the school or college, to those who say that individual aims need to coalesce around specific themes for the organization to have meaning for its members and stakeholders. One problem is that individual and organizational objectives may be incompatible, or that organizational aims satisfy some, but not all, individual aspirations. It is reasonable to assume that most teachers want their school or college to pursue policies which are in harmony with their own interests and preferences. This issue will be explored later in this book, notably in Chapter 6.

The determination of aims

The process of deciding on the aims of the organization is at the heart of educational management. In some settings, aims are decided by the principal or headteacher, often working in association with senior colleagues and perhaps a small group of lay stakeholders. In many schools and colleges, however, goal-setting is a corporate activity undertaken by formal bodies or informal groups.

School and college aims are inevitably influenced by pressures emanating from the wider educational environment and lead to the

questions about the viability of school 'visions', noted above. Many countries, including England and Wales, have a national curriculum, linked to national assessments and inspection systems, and such government prescriptions leave little scope for schools to decide their own educational aims. Institutions may be left with the residual task of interpreting external imperatives rather than determining aims on the basis of their own assessment of student need.

Wright's (2001) discussion of 'bastard leadership' develops this argument, suggesting that visioning is a 'sham' and that school leaders in England and Wales are reduced to implementing the values and policies of the government and its agencies:

Leadership as the moral and value underpinning for the direction of schools is being removed from those who work there. It is now very substantially located at the political level where it is not available for contestation, modification or adjustment to local variations. (Wright, 2001: 280)

The key issue here is the extent to which school leaders are able to modify government policy and develop alternative approaches based on school-level values and vision. Do they have to follow the script, or can they ad lib? Gold et al.'s (2003) research with 10 'outstanding' English principals begins to address this central issue. They 'take for granted that school leaders are essentially "value carriers" ... school improvement is not a technocratic science, but rather a process of seeking ever better ways of embodying particular educational values in the working practices ... of particular schools' (2003: 128). These authors assert that their case study principals were developing just such value-led approaches to school leadership and management:

The school leaders in our case study schools were clearly avoiding doing 'bastard leadership' by mediating government policy through their own values systems. We were constantly reminded by those to whom we spoke, of the schools' strong value systems and the extent to which vision and values were shared and articulated by all who were involved in them. (Ibid.: 131)

Wright's (2003) response to the Gold et al. research questions the extent to which even 'principled' leaders are able to challenge or modify government policies. In his view, these principals are still 'bastard leaders' because their values cannot challenge government imperatives:

What is not provided [by Gold et al.] is clear evidence of how these values actually impinged at the interface between particular government initiatives and action in these schools ... 'bastard leadership' ... is actually about the lack of scope for school leaders to make decisions that legiti-

mately fly in the face of particular unrealistic and often inadequately researched government initiatives or requirements. (Wright, 2003: 140)

This debate is likely to continue but the central issue relates to the relative power of governments and school leaders to determine the aims and purpose of education in particular schools. Governments have the constitutional power to impose their will but successful innovations require the commitment of those who have to implement these changes. If teachers and leaders believe that an initiative is inappropriate for their children or students, they are unlikely to implement it with enthusiasm. Hence, governments would like schools to have visionary leadership as long as the visions do not depart in any significant way from government imperatives.

Furlong (2000) adds that the increased government control of education has significant implications for the status of teachers as professionals. He claims that, in England and Wales, professionalism is allowed to exist only by the grace of central government because of the dominance of a prescriptive national curriculum and the central monitoring of teacher performance.

The nature of the goal-setting process is a major variant in the different models of educational leadership and management to be discussed in subsequent chapters.

What is educational leadership?

Gunter (2004) shows that the labels used to define this field have changed from 'educational administration' to 'educational management', and, more recently, to 'educational leadership'. In England, this shift is exemplified most strongly by the opening of the National College for School Leadership in 2000, described as a 'paradigm shift' by Bolam (2004). We shall examine the differences between leadership and management later in this chapter. There are many different conceptualizations of leadership, leading Yukl (2002: 4–5) to argue that 'the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no "correct" definition.' Three dimensions of leadership may be identified as a basis for developing a working definition.

Leadership as influence

A central element in many definitions of leadership is that there is a process of influence.

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, 2002: 3)

Cuban's (1988: 193) definition shows that the influence process is purposeful in that it is intended to lead to specific outcomes: 'Leadership, then refers to people who bend the motivations and actions of others to achieving certain goals; it implies taking initiatives and risks'. Bush (2008a: 277) refers to three key aspects of these definitions:

The central concept is *influence* rather than authority. Both are dimensions of power but the latter tends to reside in formal positions, such as the principal or headteacher, while the former could be exercised by anyone in the school or college. Leadership is independent of positional authority while management is linked directly to it.

The process is *intentional*. The person seeking to exercise influence is doing so in order to achieve certain purposes.

Influence may be exercised by *groups* as well as individuals. This notion provides support for the concept of distributed leadership and for constructs such as senior leadership teams. 'This aspect of leadership portrays it as a fluid process, potentially emanating from any part of the school, independent of formal management positions and capable of residing with any member of the organization, including associate staff and students' (ibid.: 277).

Leadership and values

The notion of 'influence' is neutral in that it does not explain or recommend what goals or actions should be pursued. However, leadership is increasingly linked with values. Leaders are expected to ground their actions in clear personal and professional values. Greenfield and Ribbins (1993) claim that leadership begins with the 'character' of leaders, expressed in terms of personal values, self-awareness and emotional and moral capability. Earlier, Greenfield (1991: 208) distinguished between values and rationality: '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'.

Day, Harris and Hadfield's (2001) research in 12 'effective' schools in England and Wales concludes that 'good leaders are informed by and communicate clear sets of personal and educational values which rep-

resent their moral purposes for the school' (ibid.: 53). This implies that values are 'chosen', but Bush (2008a: 277) argues that the dominant values are those of government and adds that these are 'imposed' on school leaders. Teachers and leaders are more likely to be enthusiastic about change when they 'own' it rather than having it imposed on them. Hargreaves (2004), drawing on research in Canadian schools, finds that teachers report largely positive emotional experiences of self-initiated change but predominantly negative ones concerning mandated change.

Leadership and vision

Vision has been regarded as an essential component of effective leadership for more than 20 years. Southworth (1993: 73–4) suggests that heads are motivated to work hard 'because their leadership is the pursuit of their individual visions' (ibid.: 74). Dempster and Logan's (1998) study of 12 Australian schools shows that almost all parents (97 per cent) and teachers (99 per cent) expect the principal to express his or her vision clearly, while 98 per cent 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 of the concept shows that it remains highly problematic. Fullan (1992a: 83) says that 'vision building is a highly sophisticated dynamic process which few organizations 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. (Ibid.: 19)

Bolam et al.'s (1993) research 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' (ibid.: 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' (ibid.: 35).

It is evident that the articulation of a clear vision has the potential to develop schools but the empirical evidence of its effectiveness remains mixed. A wider concern relates to whether school leaders are able to develop a specific vision for their schools, given the centrality of government prescriptions of both curriculum aims and content. A few headteachers may be confident enough to challenge official policy in the way described by Bottery (1998: 24); 'from defy through subvert to ignore; on to ridicule then to wait and see to test; and in some (exceptional) cases finally to embrace'. However, most are more like Bottery's (2007: 164) 'Alison', who examines every issue in relation to their school's OFSTED report.

Hoyle and Wallace (2005: 11) are critical of the contemporary emphasis on vision. 'Visionary rhetoric is a form of managementspeak that has increased very noticeably in schools since the advent of educational reforms'. They contrast the 'visionary rhetoric' with 'the prosaic reality' experienced by staff, students and parents: 'If all the visionary rhetoric corresponded with reality, would a third of teachers be seeking to leave the profession?' (ibid.: 12). They add that visions have to conform to centralized expectations and to satisfy OFSTED inspectors; 'any vision you like, as long as it's central government's' (ibid.: 139).

Distinguishing educational leadership and management

As we noted earlier, the terminology used to describe the organization of educational bodies, and the activities of their principals and senior staff, has evolved from 'administration', which is still widely used in North America and Australia, for example, through 'management', to 'leadership'. Bush (2008a: 276) asks whether these are just semantic shifts or whether they represent a more fundamental change in the conceptualization of headship? Hoyle and Wallace (2005: viii) note that 'leadership' has only just overtaken 'management' as the main descriptor for what is entailed in running and improving public service organizations.

Cuban (1988) provides one of the clearest distinctions, linking leadership with change, and management with 'maintenance'. He also stresses the importance of both dimensions of organizational 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 goal ...

Leadership ... takes ... much ingenuity, energy and skill ...

Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational 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. (Ibid.: xx)

Day, Harris and Hadfield's (2001) study of 12 'effective' schools leads to the 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 Cuban's (1988) distinction, identified above.

Bush (1998: 328) links leadership to values or purpose, while management relates to implementation or technical issues. Leadership and management need to be given equal prominence if schools and colleges are to operate effectively and achieve their objectives. While a clear vision may be 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:

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: 189)

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

These cautions are echoed by Leithwood (1994), who comments that the differences cannot easily be observed in the day-to-day practices of principals, and by Hallinger (2003), who argues that a leadership perspective on the role of the principal does not diminish the principal's managerial roles.

The dichotomy in Britain and elsewhere is that while leadership is normatively preferred, notably through the establishment and activities of the National College, governments are encouraging a technical-rational

approach through their stress on performance and public accountability (Glatter, 1999; Levačić, et al., 1999; Gunter 2004). In practice, schools and colleges require visionary leadership, to the extent that this is possible with a centralized curriculum, *and* effective management.

The chronology of educational leadership and management

The origins and development of educational management as a distinct discipline have been chronicled by Hughes (1985), Hughes and Bush (1991), Bush (1999), Glatter (1999) and Bolam (2004). It began in the United States in the early part of this century. The work of Taylor (1947) was particularly influential and his 'scientific management movement' is still subject to vigorous debate, particularly by those who oppose a 'managerial' approach to education. Another important contributor to management theory was the French writer Fayol (1916) whose 'general principles of management' are still significant. Weber's (1947) work on 'bureaucracy' remains powerful and this will be given extended treatment in Chapter 3.

All these theories developed outside education and were subsequently applied to schools and colleges, with mixed results. The other models discussed in this book were developed in the educational context or have been applied to schools or colleges in their formative periods.

The development of educational management as a field of study in the United Kingdom came as late as the 1960s but there has been rapid expansion since then. In 1983 the Department of Education and Science (DES) sponsored a programme of management training for heads and established the National Development Centre for School Management Training at Bristol University. University courses on school and college management became increasingly popular (Hughes et al., 1981; Gunter, 1997).

The British government appointed a School Management Task Force in 1989 and its influential report (SMTF, 1990) set the agenda for school management development for the next few years. Probably its most important legacy was the establishment of mentoring schemes for new headteachers.

The next major development in England and Wales was the establishment of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) which took an interest in leadership and management development as well as the pre-service training of teachers. The TTA set up the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH), the first national qualification for aspiring heads, in 1997. The NPQH became mandatory for new heads in 2009.

The National College

The most important stage in this chronology was the setting up of the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in November 2000. Significantly, the College's title excludes the term 'management', further emphasizing the current normative preference for 'leadership'. The College has taken over responsibility for leadership development programmes, including NPQH, and has introduced many new offerings, including provision for middle leaders, new heads, consultant heads, and leadership teams. Its scope was widened in 2009 to include leadership of children's services, with a modified title of National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (National College). Its former Director of Research, Geoff Southworth, points out that the College was intended 'to provide a single national focus for school leadership development and research' (2004a: 340). He also refers to the 'widespread belief' that 'the quality of leadership makes a difference to organizational health, performance and growth' (ibid.: 341).

A full discussion of the achievements, and limitations, of the National College is beyond the scope of this book but five main strengths can be identified:

- a *national* focus
 - programmes for different career stages
 - an emphasis on practice
 - programmes underpinned by research
 - impressive reach and scale
- (Bush 2008b: 79–82).

Bush (2008b: 82–6) also identifies five main limitations of the College:

- Its intellectual demands are too modest.
- Its emphasis on practice is at the expense of theory and research.
- Its reliance on practitioners to lead programmes limits innovation.
- Its dominance of school leadership development is unhealthy.
- It is unduly influenced by the government.

It might be argued that its revised title and mission weakens the College 'brand' but this remains to be seen.

The National College also has a significant international role, although this appears to be declining (Bush, 2008c). One of its early decisions was to organize a series of study visits to international leadership centres. Each visit involved teams of two or three people, including school principals, College senior staff, and other professionals and academics directly connected with the College. Fifteen centres

were visited in seven countries: Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Singapore, Sweden and the United States.

The report of the visits (Bush and Jackson, 2002) showed that several other countries were well ahead of England and Wales in the development of national or state programmes for prospective principals. In Canada and most of the United States, for example, it is not possible to be appointed as a principal or vice-principal without an approved Masters degree in educational administration. Similarly, Singapore has had a national qualification for school principals since 1984.

The National College has also influenced the field of school leadership globally. In the United States, for example, Levine (2005: 54) says that the college 'proved to be the most promising model we saw, providing examples of good practice that educational administration programs might seek to emulate'. In South Africa, the Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance was modelled to some extent on the College, albeit on a much smaller scale and serving only a single province (Bush, 2008b: 79).

In summary, the climate for educational leadership and management has never been more buoyant. The recognition that high-quality leadership is central to educational outcomes has led to the view that training is desirable to develop people with the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding to lead educational organizations in an increasingly global economy. This requirement is particularly important for self-managing schools and colleges.

Decentralization and self-management

Schools and colleges operate within a legislative framework set down by national, provincial or state parliaments. One of the key aspects of such a framework is the degree of decentralization in the educational system. Highly centralized systems tend to be bureaucratic and to allow little discretion to schools and local communities. Decentralized systems devolve significant powers to subordinate levels. Where such powers are devolved to the institutional level, we may speak of 'self-management'.

Lauglo (1997) links centralization to bureaucracy and defines it as follows:

Bureaucratic centralism implies concentrating in a central ('top') authority decision-making on a wide range of matters, leaving only tightly programmed routine implementation to lower levels in the organization ... a ministry could make decisions in considerable detail as to aims and

objectives, curricula and teaching materials to be used, prescribed methods, appointments of staff and their job descriptions, admission of students, assessment and certification, finance and budgets, and inspection/evaluations to monitor performance. (Ibid.: 3–4)

Lauglo (1997: 5) says that 'bureaucratic centralism is pervasive in many developing countries' and links this to both the former colonial rule and the emphasis on central planning by many post-colonial governments. Tanzania is one example of a former colonial country seeking to reduce the degree of centralism (Babygeya, 2000) while Seychelles illustrates the centralized nature of many former colonial countries (Purvis, 2007).

Centralized systems are not confined to former colonial countries. Derouet (2000: 61) claims that France 'was the most centralized system in the world' in the 1960s and 1970s while Fenech (1994: 131) states that Malta's educational system is 'highly centralized'. Bottery (1999: 119) notes that the United Kingdom education system 'has experienced a continued and intensified centralization for the last 30 years'. In Greece, the public education system is characterized by centralization and bureaucracy (Bush, 2001).

Decentralization involves a process of reducing the role of central government in planning and providing education. It can take many different forms:

Decentralization in education means a shift in the authority distribution away from the central 'top' agency in the hierarchy of authority ... Different forms of decentralization are diverse in their justifications and in what they imply for the distribution of authority. (Lauglo, 1997: 3)

The main forms of decentralization are:

Federalism, for example in Australia, Germany, India and the United States.

Devolution, for example in the United Kingdom.

Deregulation, for example in the Czech Republic (Karstanje, 1999).

Deconcentration, for example in Tanzania (Therkildsen, 2000).

Participative democracy, involving strong participation by stakeholders at the institutional level, for example in Australia, Canada, England and Wales, and South Africa (Sayed, 1999).

Market mechanism, for example in Britain and the United States.

Two or more of these modes may coexist within the same educational system. For example, the school-based management trend in many countries (England and Wales, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong) is underpinned by both participative democracy and the market mecha-

nism. In England and Wales, schools and colleges are at the heart of 'the educational market place' with students and parents as customers, choosing from a range of providers. Caldwell and Spinks's (1992: 4) definition provides a clear link between self-management and decentralization: 'A self-managing school is a school in a system of education where there has been significant and consistent *decentralization* to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources'.

The research on self-management in England and Wales (Bush et al., 1993; Levačić, 1995; Thomas and Martin, 1996) largely suggests that the shift towards school autonomy has been beneficial. These UK perspectives are consistent with much of the international evidence on self-management (OECD, 1994). Caldwell (2008), one of the founders of the 'self-managing schools' movement, argues that the benefits of self-management are 'relatively straightforward':

Self-managing schools have been one manifestation of a general trend to decentralization in public education ... Each school contains a unique mix of students' needs, interests, aptitudes and aspirations, and those at the school level are best placed to determine the particular mix of all the resources available to achieve optimal outcomes. (Ibid.: 249)

Autonomous schools and colleges may be regarded as potentially more efficient and effective but much depends on the nature and quality of internal leadership and management if these potential benefits are to be realized. Dellar's (1998) research in 30 secondary schools in Australia, for example, shows that 'site-based' management was most successful where there was a positive school climate and the involvement of staff and stakeholders in decision-making. Self-management also serves to expand the scope of leadership and management, providing the potential for principals and senior staff to have a greater impact on school outcomes than was possible in the era of state control.

The significance of the educational context

Educational management as a field of study and practice was derived from management principles first applied to industry and commerce, mainly in the United States. Theory development largely involved the application of industrial models to educational settings. As the subject became established as an academic discipline in its own right, its theorists and practitioners began to develop alternative models based on

their observation of, and experience in, schools and colleges. By the twenty-first century the main theories, featured in this book, have either been developed in the educational context or have been adapted from industrial models to meet the specific requirements of schools and colleges.

Educational leadership and management has progressed from being a new field dependent upon ideas developed in other settings to become an established discipline with its own theories and significant empirical data testing their validity in education. This transition has been accompanied by lively argument about the extent to which education should be regarded as simply another field for the application of general principles of leadership and management, or should be seen as a separate discipline with its own body of knowledge.

One strand of opinion asserts that there are general principles of management which can be applied to all organizational settings. The case for a standard approach to the training and development of managers rests largely upon the functions thought to be common to different types of organization. These include financial management, human resource management, and relationships with the organization's clients and the wider community. The debate about the most appropriate relationship between general management and that specific to education was rekindled from 1995 with the TTA's emphasis on the need to take account of 'best practice outside education' in devising professional development programmes. For example, its National Standards document stated that 'the standards ... reflect the work undertaken on management standards by those outside the education profession' (TTA, 1998: 1) and 'the knowledge and understanding that headteachers need draw on sources both inside and outside education' (ibid.: 3).

Taking account of 'best practice outside education' appears uncontroversial, but it assumes that definitions of 'best practice' are widely understood and accepted. In practice, there are several problematic issues:

Who decides what good, let alone 'best', practice is?

How is such good practice to be adapted for use in training school leaders and managers?

Is good practice a universal trait or does it depend on the specific school setting?

In addressing this issue, Glatter (1997: 187) argues that 'it is not always clear what constitutes best practice in management outside education. As in education itself, there are different approaches and contending schools of thought'. Subsequently, Glatter and Kydd (2003: 240) add that 'it needs to be applied more rigorously and the criteria for

assessing what practice is considered “best” should be clearly specified’.

There are several arguments to support the notion that education has specific needs that require a distinctive approach. These include:

- the difficulty of setting and measuring educational objectives
- the presence of children and young people as the ‘outputs’ or ‘clients’ of educational institutions
- the need for education professionals to have a high degree of autonomy in the classroom
- the fact that many senior and middle managers, particularly in primary schools, have little time for the managerial aspects of their work.

Even more important than these issues is the requirement for educational leaders and managers to focus on the specifically educational aspects of their work. The overriding purpose of schools and colleges is to promote effective teaching and learning. These core issues are unique to education and ‘best practice outside education’ is unlikely to be of any help in addressing these central professional issues. As ‘learning-centred leadership’ is increasingly advocated (e.g. by Southworth, 2004b), the main focus should be on learning from school leadership theory and practice. The business sector has little to offer in this domain, although other ideas have been borrowed for use in education, notably managing people (Bush and Middlewood, 2005) and marketing (Foskett, 2002). However, the special characteristics of schools and colleges imply caution in the application of management models or practices drawn from non-educational settings. As the leading American writer Baldrige suggested more than 30 years ago, careful evaluation and adaptation of such models is required before they can be applied with confidence to educational organizations.

Traditional management theories cannot be applied to educational institutions without carefully considering whether they will work well in that unique academic setting ... We therefore must be extremely careful about attempts to manage or improve ... education with ‘modern management’ techniques borrowed from business, for example. Such borrowing may make sense, but it must be approached very carefully. (Baldrige et al., 1978: 9)

Instructional leadership

There are several models of educational leadership and these will be introduced in Chapter 2. Most of the models will be discussed in detail in

subsequent chapters. However, instructional leadership does not fit the framework for this book, because it focuses on the direction of influence, rather than its nature and source, so it will be addressed here.

The increasing emphasis on managing teaching and learning as the core activities of educational institutions has led to 'instructional leadership', or 'learning-centred' leadership, being emphasized and endorsed, notably by the English National College. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999: 8) point to the lack of explicit descriptions of instructional leadership in the literature and suggest that there may be different meanings of this concept. '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'. Bush and Glover's definition stresses the direction of the influence process:

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. (2002: 10)

Blasé and Blasé'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.

The term 'instructional leadership' derives from North America and it has been superseded in England and elsewhere by the notion of 'learning-centred leadership'. Rhodes and Brundrett (2010) argue that the latter concept is broader and has greater potential to impact on school and student outcomes. They 'explore the transition from instructional leadership, concerned with ensuring teaching quality, to leadership for learning, which incorporates a wider spectrum of leadership action to support learning and learning outcomes' (*ibid.*). Southworth (2004b: 78–83) says that leaders influence learning through three main strategies:

- modelling
- monitoring
- dialogue.

Modelling is about the power of example. Learning-centred leaders are role models to others because they are interested in learning, teaching

and classrooms, and want to know more about them. Monitoring involves visiting classrooms, observing teachers at work and providing them with feedback. Dialogue is about creating opportunities for teachers to talk with their colleagues and leaders about learning and teaching. While a strong emphasis on learning is important, leaders should also stay focused on other aspects of school life, such as socialization, student health, welfare and self-esteem, and such wider school-level issues as developing an appropriate culture and climate linked to the specific needs of the school and its community.

Conclusion

Effective leadership and management are essential if schools and colleges are to achieve the wide-ranging objectives set for them by their many stakeholders, notably the governments which provide most of the funding for public educational institutions. In an increasingly global economy, an educated workforce is vital to maintain and enhance competitiveness. Society expects schools, colleges and universities to prepare people for employment in a rapidly changing environment. Teachers, and their leaders and managers, are the people who are required to deliver higher educational standards.

The concept of management has been joined, or superseded, by the language of leadership but the activities undertaken by principals and senior staff resist such labels. Self-management is practised in many countries, expanding the scope and scale of leadership and providing greater potential for direct and indirect influences on school and pupil outcomes. Successful leaders are increasingly focused on learning, the central and unique focus of educational organizations. They also face unprecedented accountability pressures in what is clearly a 'results driven' business. As these environmental pressures intensify, leaders and managers require greater understanding, skill and resilience to sustain their institutions. Heads, principals and senior staff need an appreciation of the theory, as well as the practice, of educational management. Competence comprises an appreciation of concepts as well as a penchant for successful action. The next chapter examines the nature of theory in educational leadership and management, and its contribution to good practice.

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