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Cultural models

What do we mean by culture?

Cultural models emphasize the informal aspects of organizations, rather than their official elements. They focus on the values, beliefs and norms of individuals in the organization and how these individual perceptions coalesce into shared organizational meanings. Cultural models are manifested by symbols and rituals rather than through the formal structure of the organization. The definition below captures the main elements of these approaches.

> Cultural models assume that beliefs, values and ideology are at the heart of organizations. Individuals hold certain ideas and value-preferences which influence how they behave and how they view the behaviour of other members. These norms become shared traditions which are communicated within the group and are reinforced by symbols and ritual.

Cultural models have become increasingly significant in education since the first edition of this book was published in 1986. Walker (2010: 176), for example, comments that 'interest in building [learning] cultures has grown markedly over the past decade'. Harris (1992) claims that educational writers attach considerable value to culture:

Theorists argue that educational administration has a technical manage-

ment aspect but is mainly about the culture within an organization. This culture includes the rituals which occur (or should occur) within an organization ... Educational managers ... are taken to be those capable of shaping ritual in educational institutions. (Ibid.: 4)

This extract demonstrates that culture may be both operational and normative ('occur or should occur') and that leaders have a central role in influencing culture.

The increasing interest in culture as one element in school and college management may be understood as another example of dissatisfaction with the limitations of the formal models. Their emphasis on the techni-cal aspects of institutions appears to be inadequate for schools and colleges aspiring to excellence. The stress on the intangible world of val-ues and attitudes is a useful counter to these bureaucratic assumptions and helps to produce a more balanced portrait of educational institutions.

The developing importance of cultural models arises partly from a wish to understand, and operate more effectively within, this informal domain of the values and beliefs of teachers and other members of the organization. Morgan (1997) and O'Neill (1994) both stress the increasing significance of cultural factors in management. The latter charts the appearance of cultural 'labels' and explains why they became more prevalent in the 1990s:

The increased use of such cultural descriptors in the literature of educa-tional management is significant because it reflects a need for educational organizations to be able to articulate deeply held and shared values in more tangible ways and therefore respond more effectively to new, uncer-tain and potentially threatening demands on their capabilities. Organizations, therefore, articulate values in order to provide form and meaning for the activities of organizational members in the absence of visible and certain organizational structures and relationships. In this sense the analysis and influence of organizational culture become essen-tial management tools in the pursuit of increased organizational growth and effectiveness. (O'Neill, 1994: 116)

Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) claim that culture serves to define the unique qualities of individual organizations:

An increasing number of ... writers ... have adopted the term 'culture' to define that social and phenomenological uniqueness of a particular organisational community ... We have finally acknowledged publicly that uniqueness is a virtue, that values are important and that they should be fostered. (Ibid.: 173)

The international trend towards decentralization and self-management reinforces the notion of schools and colleges as unique entities. Caldwell and Spinks (1992: 74) argue that there is 'a culture of self-

management'. The essential components of this culture are the *empowerment* of leaders and their acceptance of *responsibility*.

Societal culture

Most of the literature on culture in education relates to organizational culture and that is also the main focus of this chapter. However, there is also an emerging literature on the broader theme of national or societal culture. Walker (2010: 178) notes that 'culture can be applied in big picture terms to nations, societies, religious or ethnic groups'.

Bottery (2004: 36) warns of 'cultural globalisation', where standardization arises from uncritical adoption of international, usually Western, norms rather than developing approaches based on a careful assessment of the specific needs of the society or of the individual school. Given the globalization of education, issues of societal culture are increasingly significant. Walker and Dimmock (2002: 1) refer to issues of context and stress the need to avoid 'decontextualized paradigms' in researching and analysing educational systems and institutions:

> The field of educational leadership and management has developed along ethnocentric lines, being heavily dominated by Anglo-American paradigms and theories ... Frequently, ... an implicit assumption is made that findings in one part of the world will necessarily apply in others. It is clear that a key factor missing from many debates on educational administration and leadership is context ... context is represented by societal culture and its mediating influence on theory, policy and practice. (Walker and Dimmock, 2002: 2)

Walker and Dimmock are by no means alone in advocating attention to issues of context. Crossley and Broadfoot (1992: 100) say that 'policies and practice cannot be translated intact from one culture to another since the mediation of different cultural contexts can quite transform the latter's salience', while Bush, Qiang and Fang (1998: 137) stress that 'all theories and interpretations of practice must be "grounded" in the specific context ... before they can be regarded as useful'. Southworth (2005: 77) stresses that school leadership is contextualized because 'where you are affects what you do as a leader'.

Dimmock and Walker (2002) have given sustained attention to these issues and provide a helpful distinction between societal and organizational culture:

> Societal cultures differ mostly at the level of basic values, while organizational cultures differ mostly at the level of more superficial practices, as

reflected in the recognition of particular symbols, heroes and rituals. This allows organizational cultures to be deliberately managed and changed, whereas societal or national cultures are more enduring and change only gradually over longer time periods. School leaders influence, and in turn are influenced by, the organizational culture. Societal culture, on the other hand, is a given, being outside the sphere of influence of an individual school leader. (Ibid.: 71)

Dimmock and Walker (2002) identify seven 'dimensions' of societal culture, each of which is expressed as a continuum:

1. *Power-distributed/power concentrated*. Power is either distributed more equally among the various levels of a culture or is more concentrated.
2. *Group-oriented/self-oriented*. People in self-oriented cultures perceive themselves to be more independent and self-reliant. In group-oriented cultures, ties between people are tight, relationships are firmly structured and individual needs are subservient to the collective needs.
3. *Consideration/aggression*. In aggression cultures, achievement is stressed, competition dominates and conflicts are resolved through the exercise of power and assertiveness. In contrast, consideration societies emphasize relationships, solidarity and resolution of conflicts by compromise and negotiation.
4. *Proactivism/fatalism*. This dimension reflects the proactive or 'we can change things around here' attitude in some cultures, and the willingness to accept things as they are in others – a fatalistic perspective.
5. *Generative/replicative*. Some cultures appear more predisposed towards innovation, or the generation of new ideas and methods, whereas other cultures appear more inclined to replicate or adopt ideas and approaches from elsewhere.
6. *Limited relationship/holistic relationship*. In limited relationship cultures, interactions and relationships tend to be determined by explicit rules which are applied to everyone. In holistic cultures, greater attention is given to relationship obligations, for example kinship, patronage and friendship, than to impartially applied rules.
7. *Male influence/female influence*. In some societies, the male domination of decision-making in political, economic and professional life is perpetuated. In others, women have come to play a significant role. (Adapted from Dimmock and Walker, 2002: 74–6.)

This model can be applied to educational systems in different countries. Bush and Qiang's (2000) study shows that most of these dimensions are relevant to Chinese education:

Power is concentrated in the hands of a limited number of leaders. 'The principal has positional authority within an essentially bureaucratic system ... China might be regarded as the archetypal high power-distance (power concentrated) society' (ibid.: 60).

Chinese culture is *group-oriented*. 'Collective benefits [are] seen as more important than individual needs' (ibid.: 61).

Chinese culture stresses *consideration* rather than aggression. 'The Confucian scholars advocate modesty and encourage friendly co-operation, giving priority to people's relationships. The purpose of education is to mould every individual into a harmonious member of society' (ibid.: 62).

Patriarchal leadership dominates in education, business, government and the Communist Party itself. There are no women principals in the 89 secondary schools in three counties of the Shaanxi province. Coleman, Qiang and Li (1998: 144) attribute such inequalities to the continuing dominance of patriarchy.

Similar outcomes are evident in Hallinger and Kantamara's (2000) research in Thailand. They show that Thailand is a power-concentrated culture with collectivist values, replicative rather than generative approaches, and a focus on relationship-building in local communities.

Societal culture is one important aspect of the context within which school leaders must operate. They must also contend with organizational culture which provides a more immediate framework for leadership action. Principals and others can help to shape culture but they are also influenced by it. We turn now to examine the main features of organizational culture.

Central features of organizational culture

Organizational culture has the following major features:

1. It focuses on the *values and beliefs* of members of organizations. These values underpin the behaviour and attitudes of individuals within schools and colleges but they may not always be explicit. The assumption of 'shared' values is reflected in much of the literature on culture. Mitchell and Willower (1992: 6) say that culture is 'the way of life of a given collectivity (or organization), particularly as reflected in shared values, norms, symbols and traditions'.

   The sharing of values and beliefs is one way in which cultural models may be distinguished from the subjective perspective. While Greenfield (1991) and other subjective theorists stress the values of

individuals, the cultural model focuses on the notion of a single or dominant culture in organizations. This does not necessarily mean that individual values are always in harmony with one another. Morgan (1997: 137) suggests that 'there may be different and competing value systems that create a mosaic of organizational realities rather than a uniform corporate culture'.

Large, multipurpose organizations, in particular, are likely to have more than one culture. 'Our experience with large organizations tells us that at a certain size, the variations among the sub-groups are substantial ... any social unit will produce subunits that will produce subcultures as a normal process of evolution' (Schein, 1997: 14).

Within education, sub-cultures are more likely in large organizations such as universities and colleges, but they may also exist in primary education. Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) argue that some schools develop a 'balkanized' culture made up of separate and sometimes competing groups:

> Teachers in balkanized cultures attach their loyalties and identities to particular groups of their colleagues. They are usually colleagues with whom they work most closely, spend most time, socialize most often in the staffroom. The existence of such groups in a school often reflects and reinforces very different group outlooks on learning, teaching styles, discipline and curriculum. (Ibid.: 71–2)

2. Organizational culture emphasizes the development of *shared norms and meanings*. The assumption is that interaction between members of the organization, or its subgroups, eventually leads to behavioural norms that gradually become cultural features of the school or college: 'The nature of a culture is found in its social norms and customs, and that if one adheres to these rules of behaviour one will be successful in constructing an appropriate social reality' (Morgan, 1997: 139). Walker (2010: 178) adds that these 'basic assumptions' comprise 'the "invisible" workings of schools, consisting of unconscious, taken for granted beliefs'.

These group norms sometimes allow the development of a monoculture in a school with meanings shared throughout the staff – 'the way we do things around here'. We have already noted, however, that there may be several sub-cultures based on the professional and personal interests of different groups. These typically have internal coherence but experience difficulty in relationships with other groups whose behavioural norms are different. Wallace and Hall (1994) identify senior management teams (SMTs) as one example of group culture with clear internal

norms but often weak connections to other groups and individuals:

> SMTs in our research developed a 'culture of teamwork' ... A norm common to the SMTs was that decisions must be reached by achieving a working consensus, entailing the acknowledgement of any dissenting views ... there was a clear distinction between interaction inside the team and contact with those outside ... [who] were excluded from the inner world of the team. (Ibid.: 28, 127)

In this respect, cultural models are similar to collegiality where loyalty may be to a department or other sub-unit rather than to the school or college as an entity.

3. Culture is typically expressed through *rituals and ceremonies* which are used to support and celebrate beliefs and norms. Schools, in particular, are rich in such symbols as assemblies, prize-givings and, in many voluntary schools, corporate worship. 'Symbols are a key component of the culture of all schools ... [they] have expressive tasks and symbols which are the only means whereby abstract values can be conveyed' (Hoyle, 1986: 150). Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989: 176) claim that culture is symbolized in three modes:

   (a) *Conceptually or verbally*, for example through use of language and the expression of organizational aims.
   (b) *Behaviourally*, through rituals, ceremonies, rules, support mechanisms, and patterns of social interaction.
   (c) *Visually or materially*, through facilities, equipment, memorabilia, mottoes, crests and uniforms.

   Schein (1997: 248) argues that 'rites and rituals [are] central to the deciphering as well as to the communicating of cultural assumptions'. Wallace and Hall (1994: 29) refer to rituals developed by SMTs, including seating arrangements for meetings and social occasions for team members.

4. Organizational culture assumes the existence of *heroes and heroines* who embody the values and beliefs of the organization. These honoured members typify the behaviours associated with the culture of the institution. Campbell-Evans (1993: 106) stresses that heroes or heroines are those whose achievements match the culture: 'Choice and recognition of heroes ... occurs within the cultural boundaries identified through the value filter ... The accomplishments of those individuals who come to be regarded as heroes are compatible with the cultural emphases'. Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) stress the importance of heroes for educational organizations:

> The heroes (and anti-heroes) around whom a saga is built personify the values, philosophy and ideology which the community wishes to sustain ... The hero figure invites emulation and helps to sustain group unity. Every school has its heroes and potential heroes; they can be found among principals and staff, both present and past; among students and scholars who have gone on to higher successes; and among parents and others associated with the school. Every school honour board contains hero material. (Ibid.: 191)

In practice, only those heroes whose achievements are consistent with the culture are likely to be celebrated. 'Whether religion or spirituality, pupils' learning, sporting achievements, or discipline are emphasized in assemblies provides a lens on one facet of school culture ... [schools] are making statements about what is considered important' (Stoll, 1999: 35). In South Africa, for example, the huge interest in school sport means that sporting heroes are frequently identified and celebrated. This was evident in a Durban school visited by the author, where former student Shaun Pollock, the South African cricketer, had numerous photographs on display and a room named after him.

Developing a learning culture

A dominant theme of this book is that leaders should focus strongly on the aims or purposes of their organizations. During the twenty-first century, there has been a growing recognition that the central purpose of schools and colleges should be learning (Southworth, 2005). Walker, (2010: 180) notes that this emphasis is reflected in the language of 'communities of practice' and 'professional learning communities'. He comments that educational reforms often fail to achieve their intended outcomes. 'One of the main reasons for this is that the cultural conditions are missing, misaligned or misunderstood' (ibid.). School staff may fail to reach a shared agreement about their aims or there is a lack of congruence between beliefs and actions (ibid.). In this scenario, people do not act in accordance with their values.

South Africa provides a powerful case study about the misalignment of values and practice. The predominant culture in South African schools reflects the wider social structure of the post-Apartheid era. Decades of institutionalized racism and injustice have been replaced by an overt commitment to democracy in all aspects of life, including education. The move from four separate and unequal education systems to

integrated educational provision was underpinned by the rhetoric of democracy.

Badat (1995) traces the nature of educational transition since 1990 and links it to democratic values. He points out the difficulties involved in switching from racist and ethnic education to a system restructured 'along progressive and democratic lines' (ibid.: 141). Education was an important battleground in the struggle for national liberation, encapsulated in slogans such as 'Equal Education' and 'Education towards Democracy', and linked to the wider objective of political rights:

> The form and content of struggles around education have been shaped by a social structure characterized by severe economic and social inequalities of a race, class, gender and geographic nature, political authoritarianism and repression, and the ideology, politics, and organizational strengths and weaknesses of the social movements and organizations that have waged the struggle around apartheid education. (Badat, 1995: 145)

The years of struggle against apartheid inevitably affected schools, particularly those in the townships. One of the 'weapons' of the black majority was for youngsters to 'strike' and demonstrate against the policies of the white government. Similarly, teacher unions were an important aspect of the liberation movement and teachers would frequently be absent from school to engage in protest activity. It is perhaps inevitable that a culture of learning was difficult to establish in such a hostile climate. Badat (1995: 143) claims that 'the crisis in black education, including what has come to be referred to as the "breakdown" in the "culture of learning" ... continued unabated' while the National Education Policy Investigation links this problem to poor conditions in schools:

> South African teachers, especially those in black education, have had to contend with severe difficulties in rendering professional service to their clients, frequently because of the wretched physical conditions prevailing in their schools. Most teachers in black education have experienced a weakening of the social fabric in their communities, and the consequent disintegration of the culture of learning within their institutions. Most have experienced the trauma of having their bona fides questioned and their service rejected by their clients, as well as the humiliation of not being able to offer an adequate defence against these charges. (National Education Policy Investigation, 1992: 32)

This issue surfaced in the author's survey of school principals in the KwaZulu-Natal province. In response to a question about the aims of the school, principals stated that the school is striving:

> to instil in the minds of learners that 'education is their future'

to show the importance of education within and outside the school
to provide a conducive educational environment
to develop a culture of learning.

The absence of a culture of learning in many South African schools illustrates the long-term and uncertain nature of cultural change. The long years of resistance to Apartheid education have to be replaced by a commitment to teaching and learning if South Africa is to thrive in an increasingly competitive world economy. However, educational values have to compete with the still prevalent discourse of struggle and it seems likely that the development of a genuine culture of learning will be slow and dependent on the quality of leadership in individual schools (Bush and Anderson, 2003).

Organizational culture: goals, structure, environment and leadership

Goals

The culture of a school or college may be expressed through its *goals*. The statement of purposes, and their espousal in action, serve to reinforce the values and beliefs of the organization. Where goals and values are consistent, the institution is likely to cohere:

> A clear description of the aims of a school, college or any section within it helps to provide a common vision and set of values. Well-stated aims will seize everybody's interest. Such aims will help in creating a strong culture. (Clark, 1992: 74)

Clark suggests that the process of goal-setting should be linked to organizational values. The core values help to determine the vision for the school or college. The vision is expressed in a mission statement which in turn leads to specific goals. This essentially rational process is similar to that set out in the formal models but within a more overt framework of values. In practice, however, the link between mission and goals is often tenuous:

> Consensus on the core mission does not automatically guarantee that the members of the group will have common goals. The mission is often understood but not well articulated. To achieve consensus on goals, the group needs a common language and shared assumptions about the basic logical operations by which one moves from something as abstract and general as a sense of mission to the concrete goals. (Schein, 1997: 56)

As Schein implies, official goals are often vague and tend to be inadequate as a basis for guiding decisions and action. Much then depends on the interpretation of aims by participants. This is likely to be driven by the values of the interpreter. Where there is a monoculture within the organization, a consistent policy is likely to emerge. If there are competing cultures, or 'balkanization' (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992), the official aims may be subverted by members of sub-units who will interpret them in line with their own sectional values and goals.

Organizational structure

Structure may be regarded as the physical manifestation of the culture of the organization. 'There is a close link between culture and structure: indeed, they are interdependent' (Stoll, 1999: 40). The values and beliefs of the institution are expressed in the pattern of roles and role relationships established by the school or college. Schein (1997) cautions against a simplistic analysis of the relationship between structure and culture:

> The problem with inferring culture from an existing structure is that one cannot decipher what underlying assumptions initially led to that structure. The same structure could result from different sets of underlying assumptions ... The structure is a clear, visible artifact, but its meaning and significance cannot be deciphered without additional data. (Ibid.: 180–1)

Morgan (1997) argues that a focus on organizations as cultural phenomena should lead to a different conceptualization of structure based on shared meanings. He adopts a perspective similar to the subjective models in discussing the link between culture and structure:

> Culture ... must be understood as an active, living phenomenon through which people create and recreate the worlds in which they live ... we must root our understanding of organization in the processes that produce systems of shared meaning ... organizations are in essence socially constructed realities that are as much in the minds of their members as they are in concrete structures, rules and relations. (Ibid.: 141–2)

Structure is usually expressed in two distinct features of the organization. Individual roles are established and there is a prescribed, or recommended, pattern of relationships between role holders. There is also a structure of committees, working parties and other bodies which have regular or ad hoc meetings. These official encounters present opportunities for the enunciation and reinforcement of organizational

culture. Hoyle (1986) stresses the importance of 'interpretation' at meetings:

> Ostensibly formal meetings are called to transact school business either in a full staff meeting or in various sub-committees and working parties. But meetings are rich in symbolic significance both as meetings and in the forms they take ... The teachers have the task of interpreting the purposes of the meeting and they may endow a meeting with functions which are significant to them. (Ibid.: 163–4, original emphasis)

The larger and more complex the organization, the greater the prospect of divergent meanings leading to the development of sub-cultures and the possibility of conflict between them:

> The relationship between organizational structure and culture is of crucial importance. A large and complex organizational structure increases the possibility of several cultures developing simultaneously within the one organization. A minimal organizational structure, such as that found in most primary schools, enhances the possibility of a solid culture guiding all areas of organizational activity. (O'Neill, 1994: 108)

The development of divergent cultures in complex organizations is not inevitable but the establishment of a unitary culture with wide and active endorsement within the institution requires skilled leadership to ensure transmission and reinforcement of the desired values and beliefs (see 'Leadership' section below).

The external environment

The external environment may be regarded as the source of many of the values and beliefs that coalesce to form the culture of the school or college. The professional background and experience of teachers yield the educational values that provide the potential for the development of a common culture. However, there is also the possibility of differences of interpretation, or multiple cultures, arising from the external interests, professional or personal, of teachers and other staff.

O'Neill (1994) charts the links between the external environment and the development of organizational culture. The environment is the source of the values, norms and behaviours that collectively represent culture:

> The well-being of schools and colleges depends increasingly on their ability to relate successfully to their external environments. As such they are

> open rather than closed systems. It is therefore fundamentally important
> that the organization is able to offer visible and tangible manifestations
> of cultural 'match' to that environment. (Ibid.: 104)

O'Neill (1994) argues that the existence of complementary values
should be publicized to external groups in order to sustain their
sponsorship and support. This stance is particularly significant for
autonomous colleges and schools whose success, or even survival, is
dependent on their reputation with potential clients and the
community. Caldwell and Spinks (1992) stress the need for self-
managing schools to develop a concept of marketing that allows for
the two-way transmission of values between the school and its
community.

Leadership

Leaders have the main responsibility for generating and sustaining culture
and communicating core values and beliefs, both within the organization
and to external stakeholders (Bush, 1998). Heads and principals have their
own values and beliefs arising from many years of successful professional
practice. They are also expected to embody the culture of the school or
college. Hoyle (1986) stresses the symbolic dimension of leadership and
the central role of heads in defining school culture:

> Few heads will avoid constructing an image of the school. They will dif-
> fer in the degree to which this is a deliberate and charismatic task. Some
> heads ... will self-consciously seek to construct a great mission for the
> school. Others will convey their idea of the school less dramatically and
> construct a meaning from the basic materials of symbol-making: words,
> actions, artefacts and settings. (Ibid.: 155–6)

Schein (1997: 211) argues that cultures spring primarily from the
beliefs, values and assumptions of founders of organizations. Nias,
Southworth and Yeomans (1989: 103) suggest that heads are 'founders'
of their school's culture. Deal (1985: 615–18) suggests several strategies
for leaders who wish to generate culture:

Document the school's history to be codified and passed on.
Anoint and celebrate heroes and heroines.
Review the school's rituals to convey cultural values and beliefs.
Exploit and develop ceremony.
Identify priests, priestesses and gossips and incorporate them into

mainstream activity. This provides access to the informal communications network.

However, it should be noted that cultural change is difficult and problematic. Hargreaves (1999: 59) claims that 'most people's beliefs, attitudes and values are far more resistant to change than leaders typically allow'. He identifies three circumstances when culture may be subject to rapid change:

The school faces an obvious crisis, for example a highly critical inspection report or falling pupil numbers, leading to the prospect of staff redundancies or school closure.

The leader is very charismatic, commanding instant trust, loyalty and followership. This may enable cultural change to be more radical and be achieved more quickly.

The leader succeeds a very poor principal. Staff will be looking for change to instil a new sense of direction. (Adapted from Hargreaves, 1999: 59–60.)

Hargreaves (1999: 60) concludes that, 'if none of these special conditions applies, assume that cultural change will be rather slow'.

Leaders also have responsibility for sustaining culture, and cultural maintenance is often regarded as a central feature of effective leadership. Sergiovanni (1984a) claims that the cultural aspect is the most important dimension of leadership. Within his 'leadership forces hierarchy', the cultural element is more significant than the technical, human and educational aspects of leadership:

The net effect of the cultural force of leadership is to bond together students, teachers, and others as believers in the work of the school ... As persons become members of this strong and binding culture, they are provided with opportunities for enjoying a special sense of personal importance and significance. (Ibid.: 9)

Walker (2010: 193) offers a five-part guide to designing and leading learning cultures:

Develop a 'common schema'or framework to guide actions and relationships.

Frame values and beliefs as 'simple rules' to guide behaviour.

Encourage 'similarity at scale', meaning that the schema is embedded at all levels of the organization.

Encourage 'emergent feedback' through a network of exchange among individuals and groups.
Develop 'dispersed control', linked to distributed leadership, that enables self-organizing sub-systems to work collaboratively but in a way that is connected to other groups.

Walker (2010: 194) concludes that 'leaders play a key role in shaping a learning culture' but he also cautions that 'there is no recipe or guide-book for building learning cultures; it's not that simple'.

Moral leadership

The leadership model most closely linked to organizational culture is that of *moral leadership*. This model assumes that the critical focus of leadership ought to be on the values, beliefs and ethics of leaders themselves. Authority and influence are to be derived from defensible conceptions of what is right or good (Leithwood et al., 1999: 10). These authors add that this model includes normative, political/democratic and symbolic concepts of leadership. Several other terms have also been used to describe values-based leadership. These include ethical leadership (Starratt, 2005; Stefkovich and Begley, 2007), authentic leadership (Begley, 2007), spiritual leadership (Woods, 2007), and poetic leadership (Deal, 2005).

Sergiovanni (1984b: 10) says that 'excellent schools have central zones composed of values and beliefs that take on sacred or cultural characteristics'. Subsequently, he adds that 'administering' is a 'moral craft' (Sergiovanni, 1991: 322). The moral dimension of leadership is based on 'normative rationality; rationality based on what we believe and what we consider to be good' (ibid.: 326):

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

West-Burnham (1997: 239) discusses two approaches to leadership which may be categorized as 'moral'. The first he describes as 'spiritual' and relates to 'the recognition that many leaders possess what might be called "higher order" perspectives. These may well be ... represented by

a particular religious affiliation'. Such leaders have a set of principles which provide the basis of self-awareness. Woods's (2007: 148) survey of headteachers in England found that 52 per cent 'were inspired or supported in their leadership by some kind of spiritual power'. Deal's (2005: 119) discussion of poetic leadership includes the claim that 'symbolic leaders first find their own spiritual core and then share their gifts with others'.

West-Burnham's (1997: 241) second category is 'moral confidence', the capacity to act in a way that is consistent with an ethical system and is consistent over time. The morally confident leader is someone who can:

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

Gold et al.'s (2003: 127) research in English primary, secondary and special schools provides some evidence about the nature of the values held and articulated by heads regarded as 'outstanding' by OFSTED inspectors. These authors point to the inconsistency between 'the technicist and managerial view of school leadership operationalised by the Government's inspection regime' and the heads' focus on 'values, learning communities and shared leadership'. Gold et al. (2003: 136) conclude that their case study heads 'mediate the many externally generated directives to ensure, as far as possible, that their take-up was consistent with what the school was trying to achieve'.

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

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

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

Greenfield (1991: 208) also stresses that managerial leadership must have a moral base: 'Values lie beyond rationality. Rationality to *be* rationality must stand upon a value base. Values are asserted, chosen, imposed or believed. They lie beyond quantification, beyond measurement' (original emphasis).

Moral leadership is consistent with organizational culture in that it is based on the values, beliefs and attitudes of principals and other educational leaders. It focuses on the moral purpose of education and on the behaviours to be expected of leaders operating within the moral domain. It also assumes that these values and beliefs coalesce into shared norms and meanings that either shape or reinforce culture. The rituals and symbols associated with moral leadership support these values and underpin school culture.

Limitations of organizational culture

Cultural models add several useful elements to the analysis of school and college leadership and management. The focus on the informal dimension is a valuable counter to the rigid and official components of the formal models. By stressing the values and beliefs of participants, cultural models reinforce the human aspects of management rather than their structural elements. The emphasis on the symbols of the organization is also a valuable contribution to management theory while the concept of moral leadership provides a useful way of understanding what constitutes a values-based approach to leadership. However, cultural models do have three significant weaknesses:

1. There may be ethical dilemmas in espousing the cultural model because it may be regarded as the imposition of a culture by leaders on other members of the organization. The search for a monoculture may mean subordinating the values and beliefs of some participants to those of leaders or of the dominant group. 'Shared' cultures may be simply the values of leaders imposed on less powerful participants. Morgan (1997) refers to 'a process of ideological control':

> Ideological manipulation and control is being advocated as an essential
> managerial strategy ... such manipulation may well be accompanied by
> resistance, resentment and mistrust ... where the culture controls
> rather than expresses human character, the metaphor may thus prove
> quite manipulative and totalitarian in its influence. (Ibid.: 150–1)

Prosser (1999: 4) refers to the 'dark underworld' of school culture
and links it to the micropolitical ideas addressed in Chapter 5: 'The
micropolitical perspective recognized that formal powers, rules, reg-
ulations, traditions and rituals were capable of being subverted by
individuals, groups or affiliations in schools'. Hargreaves (1999: 60)
uses the term 'resistance group' to refer to sub-units seeking to sub-
vert leaders and their intended cultural change.

2. The cultural model may be unduly mechanistic, assuming that lead-
   ers can determine the culture of the organization (Morgan, 1997).
   While they have influence over the evolution of culture by espous-
   ing desired values, they cannot ensure the emergence of a
   monoculture. As we have seen, secondary schools and colleges may
   have several sub-cultures operating in departments and other sec-
   tions. This is not necessarily dysfunctional, because successful
   sub-units are vital components of thriving institutions.

   In an era of self-managing schools and colleges in many countries,
   lay influences on policy are increasingly significant. Governing bodies
   often have the formal responsibility for major decisions and they share
   in the creation of institutional culture. This does not mean simple
   acquiescence to the values of the head or principal. Rather, there may
   be negotiation, leading to the possibility of conflict and the adoption
   of policies inconsistent with the leader's own values.

3. The cultural model's focus on symbols such as rituals and ceremonies
   may mean that other elements of organizations are underestimated.
   The symbols may misrepresent the reality of the school or college.
   Hoyle (1986) illustrates this point by reference to 'innovation without
   change'. He suggests that schools may go through the appearance of
   change but the reality continues as before:

> A symbol can represent something which is 'real' in the sense that it ...
> acts as a surrogate for reality ... there will be a mutual recognition by
> the parties concerned that the substance has not been evoked but they
> are nevertheless content to sustain the fiction that it has if there has
> been some symbolization of the substance ... in reality the system car-
> ries on as formerly. (Ibid.: 166)

Schein (1997) also warns against placing too much reliance on ritual:

> When the only salient data we have are the rites and rituals that have survived over a period of time, we must, of course, use them as best we can ... however ... it is difficult to decipher just what assumptions leaders have held that have led to the creation of particular rites and rituals. (Ibid.: 249)

Conclusion: values and action

The cultural model is a valuable addition to our understanding of organizations. The emerging focus on societal culture provides the framework within which school and college leaders must operate. It also serves to re-emphasize the significance of context at a time when globalization threatens to undermine it (Bottery 2004). Values and beliefs are not universal. A 'one size fits all' model does not work for nations any more than it does for schools.

The recognition that school and college development needs to be preceded by attitudinal change is also salutary, and consistent with the oft-stated maxim that teachers must feel 'ownership' of change if it is to be implemented effectively. Externally imposed innovation often fails because it is out of tune with the values of the teachers who have to implement it. 'Since organization ultimately resides in the heads of the people involved, effective organizational change always implies cultural change' (Morgan, 1997: 150).

The emphasis on values and symbols may also help to balance the focus on structure and process in many of the other models. The informal world of norms and ritual behaviour may be just as significant as the formal elements of schools and colleges. Morgan (1997) stresses the symbolic aspects of apparently rational phenomena such as meetings:

> Even the most concrete and rational aspects of organization – whether structures, hierarchies, rules, or organizational routines – embody social constructions and meanings that are crucial for understanding how organization functions day to day. For example meetings are more than just meetings. They carry important aspects of organizational culture. (Ibid.: 146)

Cultural models also provide a focus for organizational action, a dimension that is largely absent from the subjective perspective. Leaders often adopt a moral approach and may focus on influencing values so that they become closer to, if not identical with, their own beliefs. In this way, they hope to achieve widespread support for, or 'ownership' of, new policies. By working through this informal domain, rather than imposing change

through positional authority or political processes, heads and principals are more likely to gain support for innovation. An appreciation of the relevance of both societal and organizational culture, and of the values, beliefs and rituals that underpin them, is an important element in the leadership and management of schools and colleges.

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