Eeva Hujala,
Manjula Waniganayake
& Jillian Rodd (eds)

Researching Leadership in Early Childhood Education

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Content

About the Authors

This book brings together sixteen early childhood researchers from seven countries. Three of these, namely, Eeva Hujala, Manjula Waniganayake and Jillian Rodd, who have been researching various aspects of early childhood leadership since the 1990s, coordinated the editing of this book. The majority of the writers have first-hand experience of working with young children in early childhood settings in their homelands and/or elsewhere by having worked in different roles such as preschool teachers and childcare centre directors. Many of the senior authors are involved in teacher education programs at universities and regularly teach and write about leadership matters. Collectively, all the authors share a passion for working with young children and their families and focus on leadership as a research priority. A brief biographical note on each author follows.

Editors:

Professor Eeva Hujala (PhD)
University of Tampere, Finland
E-mail: Eeva.Hujala@uta.fi
Eeva has a long carrier as a teacher trainer and researcher in the field of early childhood education. She has been working in many universities in Finland as well as abroad. Currently she is working at the Department of Early Childhood Education in University of Tampere, where she is responsible for ECEC masters and doctoral studies programs. Her research focuses on leadership, quality and pedagogical practices in child care. Her research orientation is in cross-cultural comparative studies. She is the founder of the International Leadership Research Forum and the Chief editor of the new international publication 'Journal of Early Childhood Education Research'.

About the Authors
Eeva Hujala, Manjula Waniganayake & Jillian Rodd (Eds)
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Associate Professor Manjula Waniganayake (PhD)
Macquarie University, Australia
E-mail: manjula.waniganayake@mq.edu.au
For nearly thirty years, Manjula has been involved in the early childhood sector in as a practitioner, a parent, an advocate, a policy analyst, a teacher educator, a writer and a researcher. She is currently the Director of postgraduate coursework studies at the Institute of Early Childhood, at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. Her current teaching and research interests include educational leadership, government policy, mentoring, workforce development and career planning in early childhood. She believes in diversity and values working with others from diverse backgrounds.

Dr Jillian Rodd (PhD)
Educational Consultant, England
E-mail: grayrodd@btinternet.com
Jillian is a psychologist and an independent educational consultant based in England. During her academic career of 40 years, she has worked with early childhood organisations and professionals, international schools and educational agencies in numerous countries including Australia, USA, Korea, Nigeria, Singapore, Egypt, Germany and Finland. She has published extensively in the early childhood and education literature, with some key works translated for Chinese, Korean and German readers. Currently, her research, training and advisory interests are focused on leadership in education, particularly leading change in early childhood services.

Contributing authors

Professor Kjetil Børhaug (PhD)
University of Bergen, Norway
E-mail: Kjetil.Borhaug@aorg.uib.no
Kjetil is a political scientist, and he holds a master in public administration and a PhD in social studies didactics from University of Bergen. He has been working with teacher training since 1994, at Bergen University College and University of Bergen. His main research interests are organization and management in ECEC and schools, and political socialization. He has published nationally and internationally in both fields. He is currently engaged in a major research project on the relationship between learning and management in Norwegian ECEC institutions.

Mervi Eskelinen (BEd, Masters candidate)
University of Tampere, Finland
E-mail: Mervi.Eskelinen@uta.fi
Mervi is doing early childhood research as a Masters candidate at Tampere University in Finland. She has worked as a kindergarten teacher and a research assistant in the field of early childhood at the University of Tampere and for the Ministry of Education and Culture. Her research interests include EC leadership, legislation and policy making.

Elina Fonsén (MEd, PhD candidate)
University of Tampere, Finland
E-mail: elina.fonsen@uta.fi
Elina has a long track-record of working as a teacher in day-care centers before working as a Project coordinator in several development projects for the University of Tampere and Finnish municipalities. Elina is finishing her doctoral dissertation at the moment and her main interests areas are pedagogy, pedagogical leadership and quality of ECE. She is also actively involved in the Finnish Early Childhood Education Association.

Associate Professor Per Tore Granrusten
Queen Maude University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway
E-mail: Per.T.Granrusten@dmmh.no
Per Tore is a sociologist, and he holds a Masters degree in family sociology from Norwegian University of Science and Technology. He has been working with preschool teacher training since 1996, at Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education. His main research interest has been gender and men in preschool teacher training. Since 2007 his research has been focused on leadership in early childhood education centres. He is currently engaged in a major research project investigating the relationship between learning and management in Norwegian ECEC institutions.

Dr Leena Halttunen (PhD)
University of Jyväskylä, Finland
E-mail: leena.halttunen@jyu.fi
Leena works as a university teacher at the Institute of Educational Leadership at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Before starting her university career, she worked as a kindergarten teacher and as a day care center director. Her current teaching focuses on the research methods and thesis guidance in an international Master's Degree Program in Educational Leadership. In addition, she is in charge of an in-service training for early childhood education leaders arranged by the institute. Her research interest is in shared leadership, in new

organizational and leadership structures and especially in the leadership of employees.

Johanna Heikka (BEd, MEd, PhD candidate)
University of Tampere, Finland
E-mail: Johanna.Heikka@uta.fi
Johanna is currently finalizing her doctoral research studies focusing on leadership in early childhood. She is completing this higher degree research studies as a cotutelle candidate enrolled at Tampere University, Finland and Macquarie University, Australia. She has completed Bachelor and Masters degrees in early childhood, and worked as a preschool teacher before becoming a researcher and teacher at University of Tampere. Johanna is the current President of the Finnish Early Childhood Association and is very interested in international collaborations in early childhood.

Associate Professor Yuling Hsue (PhD)
National Hsinchu University of Education in Taiwan
E-mail: yuling@mail.nhcue.edu.tw
Yuling is a teacher and a researcher, currently employed as the Director of Early Childhood Education Department at National Hsinchu University of Education in Taiwan. She has been involved in the early childhood sector as a practitioner, a teacher educator, an advocate, a mentor, a policy analyst, and a licensed evaluator of program accreditation. For the past 20 years, she has led an ECEC professional association involved in Taiwanese national and local ECEC policy making. Her current teaching and research interests include educational leadership and management, government policy, mentoring, teacher and director professional development in early childhood education.

Dr Carol Logie (PhD)
University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago
E-mail: clogiett@yahoo.com
Carol is a Trinidadian and the Administrative Director of The University of the West Indies Family Development and Children's Research Centre. She chaired the National Council for Early Childhood Care and Education for seven (7) years and presently sits on the Advisory Committee to the Ministry of Education, Trinidad and Tobago. She has thirty years of international and regional consultancy experience and continues to work with teachers and governments in Hong Kong, Europe and the Caribbean. She is also Caribbean representative and member of the International Organizing Committee of The World Forum for Early Childhood Care and Education.

Associate Professor Kari Hoås Moen
Queen Maude University College of Early Childhood Education, Norway
E-mail: Kari.H.Moen@dmmh.no
Kari has been working in the early childhood sector for more than thirty years as a practitioner, a consultant with the County Governor, a teacher educator, writer and researcher. Kari has been working at Queen Maud University College of Early Childhood Education in Trondheim since 1991. Her main research interests have been cultural minorities and heritage, and the organization and leadership of ECEC institutions. She is currently the manager of a postgraduate education course for directors of early childhood centers. Kari is also involved in a major research project investigating the relationship between learning and management in Norwegian ECEC institutions.

Dr Ulviyya Mikayilova (PhD)
Executive Director for the Center for Innovations in Education, Baku, Azerbaijan
E-mail: umikailova@cie.az
Ulviyya's experience in Early Childhood Education started in 1998 when she became the Step by Step Program Director at the Open Society Institute – the Azerbaijan National Foundation. She has taught courses on gender, politics and education policy at a leading national university in Azerbaijan. In 2006 she was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to conduct research at the International and Comparative Education Department at the Teachers College, Columbia University, NY. She is a member of the Azerbaijani Child Protection Network and NGO Alliance on Child Rights. In 2002–2006 she was an ISSA (International Step by Step Association) Board Member, and in 2008–2011 was a member of a ISSA Program Committee. Her professional interests are social inclusion of children from low income families, children with disabilities, refugee and IDP children, children from socially disadvantageous families and other vulnerable children.

Vitaly Radsky (BA)
Center for Innovations in Education in Baku, Azerbaijan
E-mail: radsky.vitaly@gmail.com
Vitaly is currently working as an International Fellow at the Center for Innovations in Education in Baku, Azerbaijan. He has working with local civil society in human rights and education since coming to Azerbaijan through the U.S. State Department's Critical Language Scholarship in the summer of 2011. Though new to the field of education, during the last two years he has participated in four CIE publications including studies on private tutoring, school leadership, and education for vulnerable groups such as internally

displaced children. He received his Bachelor degree in Arts in political science from Davidson College, USA and speaks English, Russian, and to some extent Azerbaijani.

Ulla Soukainen (MEd, PhD candidate)
Manager of Early Childhood Education, Turku, Finland
E-mail: ulla.soukainen@utu.fi
Ulla has a long career as a kindergarten teacher and leader of Early Childhood Education in several cities in Finland. As a mother of five children, she has developed insights about early childhood settings from a parent's point of view. Currently she is working as a developer of Early Childhood Education in the City of Turku and this role includes dealing with the content orientations of ECEC settings, curriculum and continuing professional development of staff. Her doctoral thesis deals with distributed leadership in the organization of ECEC institutions.

Doranna Wong (MECh, BECE, DipEC, PhD candidate)
Macquarie University, Australia
E-mail: doranna.wong@mq.edu.au
Doranna is a lecturer and is doing her doctoral studies at the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. She began her career as an early childhood educator in Singapore, her country of birth. She has worked in kindergartens and childcare centres in both Singapore and Australia for nearly two decades. Living and working in two cultures has influenced Doranna's teaching and research interests and philosophy of working with children and their families. Her doctoral research will focus on mentoring in the early childhood sector.

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Important note: The '**International Leadership Research Forum**' (ILRF) is an active network of leadership researchers in the early childhood sector, maintained primarily through electronic communication. It is open to anyone interested in early childhood leadership matters and aims to have face-to-face gatherings at least once a year. For further information visit: www.ilrf.uta.fi

Cross-National Contexts of Early Childhood Leadership

Eeva Hujala, Manjula Waniganayake and Jillian Rodd

Abstract

This chapter was aimed at presenting a cross-national introduction to current developments connected with Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in each country represented in this book. It was created with the assistance of authors who contributed chapters by asking them to complete some key questions on how ECEC was currently organized in their homeland. The sixteen authors were drawn from seven countries – Australia, Azerbaijan, England, Finland, Norway, Taiwan and Trinidad and Tobago. Firstly, the Country Profiles outline key characteristics of the policy landscape of ECEC in each country included in this book and serves as a backdrop to understanding the operational contexts of leadership in practice. Secondly, the authors provided information about key regulations that impacted on program delivery in ECEC settings and the nature of leadership (and management) training available for early childhood educators in their countries. The chapter concludes with a broad overview of the history of research into early childhood leadership from a global perspective.

Tiivistelmä

Luku avaa varhaiskasvatuksen johtajuuden teoreettista näkökulmaa sekä varhaiskasvatuksen ohjausjärjestelmiä ja johtajuutta kirjoittajien edustamissa maissa. Kirjan toimittajat kokosivat yhteen keräämänsä aineiston, jossa tarkastellaan varhaiskasvatuksen järjestämiseen liittyviä kysymyksiä. Kirjan 16 kirjoittajaa tulevat seitsemästä maasta – Australia, Azerbaidžan, Iso-Britannia, Suomi, Norja, Taiwan ja Trinidad ja Tobago. Maakohtaisissa varhaiskasvatuksen kuvauksissa esitellään varhaiskasvatusjärjestelmiä ja niiden toimintaperiaatteita. Kappale antaa näin lukijalle yleiskuvan varhaiskasvatuksen johtamisen käytännöistä, konteksteista, ohjausjärjestelmistä ja johtamiskoulutuksesta. Lopuksi johdantoluvussa kuvataan varhaiskasvatuksen johtamisen tutkimuksen kehityslinjoja.

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Introduction

Today, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) has found its place globally as an important educational institution. Discussion about research into the quality of ECEC settings has increased due to government pressures for improvement and cost-effective reform. At the moment it has been recognized within the international ECEC community, that leadership is a prerequisite for high quality program delivery. Essentially, investing in leadership means investing in the quality of ECEC. Leadership in ECEC has a long tradition but it varies considerably in its implementation. In many countries, traditionally, ECEC leadership and management functions and tasks have been connected with preschool teachers' work. This has meant that teachers have had multiple responsibilities in performing the roles of being both a teacher and a leader at the same time.

Today, the demands of educational leadership are so complex that leading ECEC centres is seen as a mainstream profession. ECEC directors are expected to act as financial managers, pedagogical leaders, and human resource managers for instance, by seamlessly moving in and out of these roles in their every day work. Although the demands of leadership are growing fast, the training or upskilling to assume the responsibilities of leadership is still inadequate. For many leaders, the only 'training' or preparation for leadership has come from personal experiences of working as an ECEC teacher. Leaders, teachers and other staff members as well as parents expect appropriate leadership that is research-based to guide and mentor the implementation of high quality ECEC practices. However, research to support the development of ECEC leadership is growing very slowly compared to other research areas in ECEC.

This publication responds to the challenge of developing further research into ECEC leadership. The impetus for the publication grew during a forum on ECEC leadership organized by Tampere University in Finland, and involving researchers from around the world. The purpose of this international leadership research forum (ILRF) was to interact, to lobby, to benchmark good research findings and practices and to identify and develop appropriate leadership practices in ECEC different national contexts. The researchers challenged themselves to evaluate existing research and to devote time and energy to planning joint leadership research based on the findings we already have in leadership research in our own countries. This

publication is a mirror of current leadership research in ECEC to showcase the nature of leadership discussions occurring around world today.

Conceptualising early childhood leadership

The writers who wrote various chapters in this publication represent seven countries: Australia, Azerbaijan, England, Finland, Norway, Taiwan and Trinidad and Tobago. This chapter presents an introduction to conceptualising leadership in ECEC based on comparative information provided by the chapter authors.

The studies introduced in this publication indicate that the research paradigms and research methodologies used by leadership scholars can differ considerably. Leadership is perceived as a multi-faceted theoretical phenomenon. There is no one prevalent theoretical perspective concerning leadership in early childhood that is accepted and applied by ECEC leaders, teachers and/or researchers.

The chapters indicate, that the terms 'leadership' and 'management' as well as 'leader', 'director', and 'manager' have slightly different interpretations in different ECEC contexts and countries. In some contexts, these terms seem to be synonyms and they are used interchangeably but in some ECEC contexts they have subtle variations in meaning and this can influence the interpretation of research on understanding leadership. In fact, the term leadership is quite new and not yet well understood within the early childhood sector, and around the world. The traditional term management is more familiar and better understood within the early childhood sector, amongst the educators themselves. Based on strategic thinking and visionary orientation, leadership discourse has not replaced but supplemented the management terminology.

Many authors in this book see leadership as dynamic and supporting ECEC organisations to achieve the goals and fulfill the core functions of education and care. Leadership is also viewed as a joint learning process where all the participants of an ECEC organisation, comprising the children, parents and staff, are involved. This forms the basis of a shared notion of leadership and has influenced the development of discourses aligned with distributed leadership. However, there is no agreed definition of early childhood leadership and authors refer to a variety of theoretical

discourses in their chapters. In one perspective, leadership is seen as psychologically interpreted, situated in individuals enacting either as formally authorized leaders or informal leaders. Leadership, in this instance, is connected to individuals who have appropriate qualities and skills to act as a leader. Effective leaders provoke team members' enthusiasm, and motivate and empower other staff. Some authors see leadership as being socially constructed and situational. As a contextually defined phenomenon, leaders' work is determined from the mission and core tasks of the organization.

Contextualising ECEC leadership within national policy

The Country Profiles (see Table 1) outline key characteristics of the policy landscape of ECEC in each country included in this book and serves as a backdrop to understanding the operational contexts of leadership in practice. As can be seen from Table 1, in each of the seven countries, the administration of ECEC policies is distributed through two to three layers of government. In every country, the national policy platforms concerned with children 3–6 years, were administered through a Ministry of Education, and this reflects an important shift in global policy developments. In the past, ECEC policies were usually administered through the Ministry of Social Welfare and/or Health. Being placed within a Ministry of Education reflects the increasing recognition of the educational value of ECEC settings. This augurs well in terms of raising the status of the early childhood sector and those who are employed within this sector.

Each of the seven countries also have a national curriculum document, published sometime during the past ten to twelve years. Finland and Norway for instance, were among the first nations to establish a National Curriculum and this is a relatively new development in Azerbaijan and Taiwan. The application of these national curriculum policies specifically to prior to school ECEC settings raises questions about the traditional definition of early childhood comprising birth to eight years.

Traditionally, children in European countries have started school around 7–8 years age. As noted in Table 1, today, this picture is quite different. In England, the statutory school age has been set at 4 years, and this represents the earliest starting point in the countries included in this book. Australia, Azerbaijan and Norway it is 6 years, and in Finland and Taiwan, it is 7 years.

Table 1. Country Profiles on the current context of Early Childhood Education & Care (ECEC)

Country	ROLE of GOVERNMENT	AGE @ ENTRY to SCHOOL	PREPARATION OF ECEC EDUCATORS	ROLE OF PARENTS in ECEC
AUSTRALIA Key website: www.acecqa.gov.au	There are 3 levels of government, and their responsibilities for ECEC services differ and can overlap. In general, government funding was distributed as follows: • **Federal** – child care services • **State/Territory** – Preschools • **Local** – support both to a limited degree ECEC policy now come under the federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and services must follow the national curriculum set by the *Early Years Learning Framework* (2009). All ECEC services must also satisfy the conditions of the *National Law* (2011) and the *National Quality Framework* (2011) administered by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority.	Preschool starts the year before school, and can be at 3 or 4 years age. It is not compulsory. Children start Primary School at 5 to 6 years, and this varies across the 8 States/ Territories.	*Universities* offer 3 to 4 year Bachelor degrees, as well as Masters and PhDs in early childhood. *Technical & Further Education* Colleges offer 2-3 year child care diploma or a 4 year degree. These graduates can only work in ECEC settings with children birth to 5 years. *Private providers*, accredited by government offer diploma and certificate courses for ECEC staff.	Government regulations promote the active development of partnerships with parents and endorse the involvement of families in ECEC settings. Parents volunteer committees manage non-profit preschools and childcare centres.

Country	ROLE of GOVERNMENT	AGE @ ENTRY to SCHOOL	PREPARATION OF ECEC EDUCATORS	ROLE OF PARENTS in ECEC
AZERBAIJAN Key website For policy information: www.edu.gov.az www.kurikulum.az	Early Childhood Education (ECE) is delivered by three levels of government and each has its own responsibilities: • **National** (**Ministry of Education**)– policy for and content of ECE services • **Territory** – Management (hiring both teaching and technical staff, providing meals, teaching materials, maintaining facilities) of ECE Settings - Preschools and kindergartens • **Local** (local education departments as branches of the Ministry of Education)- methodological support to teaching staff at ECE settings. There is no a specific law on ECE and this area of education is regulated by Education Law (2009). New curriculum for preschool education (3–6 years) was developed and is going to be implemented in 2013–2014 school year.	Preschools/kindergartens start at 2 years, but mostly at 3 and continues till age of 6. It is not compulsory, but school readiness is necessary. Children start Primary School at 6 years.	*Universities* offer 4 year Bachelor degrees, as well as Masters and PhDs in early childhood. *Pedagogical Colleges* offer 2–3 year preschool education diploma. These graduates can only work in ECEC settings with children two to 6 years. *There are no Private providers* offering education for preschool teachers.	There are no specific Government regulations promoting the active involvement of parents/ families in ECE settings. Parent volunteers create parent-teachers associations in ECE settings.

Country	ROLE of GOVERNMENT	AGE @ ENTRY to SCHOOL	PREPARATION OF ECEC EDUCATORS	ROLE OF PARENTS in ECEC
ENGLAND Key website http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/earlylearningandchildcare	The **Department of Education** is responsible for the regulation of early education and the full range of childcare provision for children from birth to six years, which is integrated through the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS). Local education authorities have declining discretion and power regarding the provision and supervision of local early years services	Government funded early education is available for 3 and 4 year olds in nurseries, preschools and from qualified child minders. Statutory school age is 4 years with the EYFS curriculum delivered in Reception classes at school.	*Universities* offer Bachelor degrees (3 to 4 years) for teachers in childcare, preschool and Reception in primary school; Masters and PhDs available. Early Years Professional Status is a professional accreditation for non-education degree holders aimed at creating a cohort of graduate leaders broadly equivalent to early years teachers. *Further Education* college certificates and diploma qualifications for child care workers. *Local authorities* offer training courses for registration as a child minder.	Government policy values and endorses partnership with and genuine involvement of parents and carers.

Country	ROLE of GOVERNMENT	AGE @ ENTRY to SCHOOL	PREPARATION OF ECEC EDUCATORS	ROLE OF PARENTS in ECEC
FINLAND Key website http://pre20090115.stm.fi/cd1106216815326/ passthru.pdf	There are three levels of government: • *Federal government*: **Ministry of Education and Culture** is responsible for the regulation of ECEC (laws and guidelines). **National Curriculum Guidelines** in 2005 (ECEC) **National Core Curriculum** in 2010 (preschool for 6 year old children) • *County*: control of implementation of the federal laws. • *Municipal*: local curriculum guidelines and supervision of services (follow federal laws and regulations for child care & preschools)	6 years of age to preschool (in a child care centre or in a primary school). 7 years of age to primary school.	*Universities* offer Bachelor degrees (3-4 years) for teachers in childcare and preschool. Masters and PhDs in EC are available. *Polytechnic Bachelor* degree (3 years) at Universities of Applied Sciences as an alternative way for teachers. *Vocational training* (2–3 years) in vocational schools for childcare nurses.	The National Curriculum states that preschools must promote cooperation with parents. Childcare Act states that all childcare must support the educational task of families.

Country	ROLE of GOVERNMENT	AGE @ ENTRY to SCHOOL	PREPARATION OF ECEC EDUCATORS	ROLE OF PARENTS in ECEC
NORWAY Key website http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/kd/documents/legislation/regulations/2011/framework-plan-for-the-content-and-tasks.html?id=631906	ECE covers children under 6 years of age. • *Federal government*: **The Ministry of Education & Research** administers all ECE centres and the **National Framework** plan for ECE. • *County*: Supervising and guidance of the municipalities related to ECE according to the intentions of the federal government. • *Municipal*: Responsible for EC Centre owners & authority for the supervision & guidance of private & municipal centers.	Children start primary school at 6 years of age. All children under 6 years are entitled to a place in an ECC. In 2012, 97% of all 5 year olds in Norway had attended ECC before starting school.	*Universities and university colleges* offer Bachelor degrees (3 years) for teachers in preschools. Masters and PhDs in EC are also available. *High school* certificate (1 year) The graduates can only work in ECEC settings as an assistant to a teacher. There are no private commercial providers offering education for preschool teachers.	The Kindergarten Act states that centers shall, work in close collaboration and understanding with the homes, and safeguard children's need for care and play, and promote learning and development as a basis for an all round (global) development.

Country	ROLE of GOVERNMENT	AGE @ ENTRY to SCHOOL	PREPARATION OF ECEC EDUCATORS	ROLE OF PARENTS in ECEC
TAIWAN Key website www.ece.moe.edu.tw www.cbi.gov.tw/CBI_2/internet/main/index.aspx	*Federal government*: • **Ministry of Education**: preschool (for 2–6 year old children), **National Curriculum Guidelines** in 2012 • **Ministry of the Interior**, **Child Welfare Bureau** – Babycare center (for 0–2 year old children) *County*: control of implementation of the federal laws. *Municipal*: local curriculum guidelines & supervision of services follow Federal laws for baby care & preschools.	2–6 years of age to preschool (in a child care centre or in a primary school). 7 years of age to primary school.	*Universities* have Bachelor degrees (4years) for practitioners in baby care and preschool centres; Also have Masters and PhDs in EC. To become an ECEC teacher, needs further 16 college credits on curriculum theories and a half-year full time internship in preschool settings. *Technical Colleges* offer 2 year child care diploma or a 4 year bachelor degree for practitioners in baby care and preschool. *Vocational high school* (3 years) The graduates can only work in ECEC settings as an aide to the teacher	The ECEC Act states that preschools must promote cooperation with parents.

Country	ROLE of GOVERNMENT	AGE @ ENTRY to SCHOOL	PREPARATION OF ECEC EDUCATORS	ROLE OF PARENTS in ECEC
REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD & TOBAGO Key website For policy information: www.uwi.tt/fhe/fdcrc/	The ECE system covers children from birth to 5 years. Government centres provide services for children 3–5 years age. However, most ECE services are provided by private institutions and non-governmental organisations. There are plans to implement stricter monitoring of these services through the Ministry of Education.	Children start formal schooling at 5 years of age. ECE services are not viewed as compulsory.	The Ministry of Education suggests that EC educators be trained at least at the certificate level, and offers Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses (GATE) programme. This programme offers free tertiary level education at nationally accredited institutions. Additionally, an incentive of increased salaries for persons with higher levels of education is also provided.	Parents generally have a "hands-off" position to early education, leaving it solely to teachers within these settings.

The location of early childhood programs within schools, as in the case of the Reception Classes in England and preschool centres in school grounds in Finland and Australia means that some children could enter school environments quite early. This pattern of administration of the early years requires research so that both child outcomes and implications for teacher leadership can be examined.

Within each country included in this book, universities were responsible for the preparation of Early Childhood teachers, achieved through 3–4 bachelor degree programs. Polytechnic or technical colleges shared the responsibility for training other staff working in ECEC settings. ECEC staff who completed diplomas or certificates in non-university institutions could not be employed as teachers. This separation of teaching and childcare employment opportunities on the basis of qualifications achieved reflects the continuing impact of the false dichotomy between the education and care of young children before starting school.

At present, parent involvement is perceived as voluntary in Azerbaijan. In all other countries, cooperation with parents has been built into national policy as a requirement of ECEC educators. This view reinforces the traditional notion of mutuality in sharing the education and care responsibilities between families and educators. The challenges encountered in implementing this policy however, requires further investigation.

Leadership regulations in ECE in each country

To understand leadership research introduced in the book it is important to know leadership policies and practices in these societies. In this section, authors provided information about key regulations that impacted on program delivery in ECEC settings and the nature of leadership (and management) training available for early childhood educators in their countries.

It seems that within the OECD countries (Australia, England, Finland and Norway), there was a high level of regulation of ECEC activities. The extent to which leadership roles and responsibilities are however controlled by government regulations was difficult to assess. There was however, increasing recognition of the importance of leadership in the provision of quality children's programs. This rhetoric reflected in government policies

Australia	National ECEC policy reforms introduced in the past few years have seen an increasing focus on leadership within prior to school settings concerned with programs for children birth to five years. The requirement to have an educational leader to guide the pedagogical decision-making within ECEC centres, is impacting heavily on the separation of management and leadership responsibilities. Most university based bachelor degrees on ECEC comprising four years full-time study, emphasise teaching about child development and curriculum preparation. Management and leadership units have been included in these degrees since the 1990s. However, the increasing complexities of managing and leading ECEC settings today, require more in depth study at postgraduate level. Macquarie University offers the only dedicated Masters degree in Educational Leadership in ECEC. Various professional development providers are now beginning to offer certificate level, hands-on management courses to supplement workshops and seminars on leading and managing services. There is however little or no formal recognition in terms of salaries and promotion opportunities for leaders being tied with qualifications and experience as is the case with school teachers. This is a major deterrent in terms of engaging in masters degrees and PhD research studies.
Azerbaijan	The term leadership in education is very new to Azerbaijan and just recently has been introduced while education management is more understandable broad concept. There is no specific regulation on leadership in Early Childhood Education, but according to existing practice any qualified preschool teacher having no less than 5 years of experience as preschool methodologist can apply for a position of principal. Universities do not offer degrees on leadership in education. However a few years ago courses on education management were introduced in the main public in-service teacher training institute. Ministry of Education has also recently introduced a training program for school principals as a pilot initiative but these trainings do not include preschool principals.
England	In England, leadership (as compared to management) of early years services is the subject of considerable government and professional rhetoric that is not backed up by or recognised through promotion or increased salary. Although early years teachers and qualified childcare practitioners are responsible for the leadership of staff and services, they usually report that they are ill-prepared and under-qualified to take up and meet the leadership challenge confidently. Most report that they need greater access to professional development opportunities to improve their understanding of and skills for leadership. While most early years personnel can articulate the 'why' of leadership, they find it more difficult to explain the 'what' and 'how'. Two specialist training opportunities are available; Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) that offers equivalence to qualified early years teacher status and the National Professional Qualification for Integrated Centre Leadership (NPQICL) for leaders of multi-agency early years settings that is equivalent to a Masters degree. The National College of Teaching and Leadership offers a range of opportunities to develop and inspire competent leaders of early years settings including children's centres and schools.

Finland	In Finland, the leadership regulations are based on the law and the latest regulations are from 2005 (Act on Qualification Requirements for Social Welfare Professionals 272/2005). A higher university degree is the qualification for a management position that is principally of an administrative nature in social services (for example a manager of the day care services of a municipality). For the directors of day care centers and family day care, the qualification requirement is the same as for the kindergarten teachers: Bachelor of Education including kindergarten teacher education, or Bachelor of Health Care and Social Services (polytechnic) including studies in Early Childhood Education and care and social pedagogy to the extent as laid down by Government decree. Also adequate management skills are required. The situation can be compared with the status of schools where the principal has to have a Master's degree and in addition a special qualification (e.g. a principal preparation program, 25 ECTS). In practice the situation is such that for example those who are in a position of a day care center director have different kind of formal education. Before the kindergarten teacher training got a status of a university degree in 1995, the length of the training was two and later three years. Since 1995, it has been possible to take a Master's degree with a specialization in Early Childhood Education. In other words, there are directors working with a formal education of two years and those with a Master's degree. Another view is what is meant by the "adequate management skills" and how these skills can be learnt. It depends on the university how much leadership and management studies are included into the curriculum. It can be said that these studies are in minor part. The employees have the right for in-service training days every year but there are not many leadership programs and providers focusing on early childhood leadership.
Norway	Leadership in ECE in Norway is regulated by the Kindergarten Act and the Framework plan. The Kindergarten Act states that all Early Childhood Centers (Kindergartens) shall have adequate pedagogical and administrative leadership. The Early Childhood Centers (Kindergartens) shall have a head teacher who is a trained pre-school teacher or has other college education that gives qualifications for working with children and pedagogical expertise. The municipality may grant a dispensation from the educational requirement in the second paragraph. Administrative decisions made by the municipality may be appealed to the county governor. In 2011 a national leadership training program for head teachers (directors) of Early Childhood Centers at postgraduate level, started at five universities/ university colleges in Norway. This education might be a part of a master degree of leadership and management.

Taiwan	In Taiwan, there are two separate administration systems regulating the qualifications of ECEC directors. One is for directors of preschools (for 2–6 year old children), the other is for directors of babycare centers (for 0–2 year old children). According to the Early Childhood Education and Care Act in 2011, a prospective director of preschool is required to have five years of experience as a certified teacher or assistant teacher. He or she also needs to complete a director's leadership training program of 180 hours to fulfil the qualifications by law. Directors also need to acquire18 hours of in-service training on ECEC topics every year. In addition, the federal government, cooperated with local universities, to provide several professional development opportunities for directors as free workshops. While in babycare centers, according to the Child Welfare Act of 2012, directors' qualifications include at least technical college diploma (2 years) plus 2–4 years experiences, EC leadership training which, compared to the program for preschool director, includes more child development knowledge less topics on management and ECE curriculum. For this group, no in-service training is required by the law.
Republic of Trinidad & Tobago	In the English speaking Caribbean, leadership within organisations has been noted as an essential part of its operations towards success. Within this context, leadership is having the acumen to move an organisation forward, to take the initiative, and to bring about the successful resolution of institutional goals. Management on the other hand, is defined as, following policies and guidelines towards success. Following within this argument, the leadership of early childhood services in the English speaking Caribbean, is still a very new field. We are still battling with the provision of quality programmes in the classroom. The national discourse on Early Childhood Education centres focuses primarily on quality programming and equity issues at present. Leadership in early childhood centres tends to be analogous with parenting for the novice mother. It is assumed that appointed teacher-leaders will develop those skills with experience. However, like mothers, this is not necessarily the case. Heads of early childhood centres are expected to be proficient leaders without necessarily specialised training. Within the past five years, however, there has been new vision and insight within training institutions. New programmes are being developed to address concerns of leadership deficits at the early childhood level in Trinidad and Tobago and other Caribbean islands. At the University of the West Indies, a postgraduate programme in leadership for early childhood professionals now exists. This two year course of study examines critical issues affecting early childhood development regionally and internationally as well as training concerns relating to programme implementation and team leadership. In addition, the Caribbean is also now exposed to training programmes through the University of the West Indies' tertiary level programme in Educational Leadership and Management. This is an online programme, which offers educators and policy makers, theoretical approaches to leadership within early childhood environments. Additionally, through an undergraduate programme in early childhood development and family studies, important issues and skills related to teacher leadership are investigated. In Trinidad and Tobago early childhood teachers and care providers are demanding further expanded courses in educational leadership to increase their ability to lead new and improved early childhood environments.

was not necessarily transparent or easily transferred into everyday practices within ECEC organisations. For instance, in Australia and Norway, government regulations require the appointment of educational leaders to provide pedagogical leadership within ECEC settings. It was however not clear, the extent to which these leaders were expected to perform staff management, financial and other administrative work as well as provide leadership in terms of curriculum and pedagogical work.

In part, this is because there was little or no alignment between leadership work and financial remuneration reflected in pay or salaries awarded to those employed as ECEC leaders. Early research on ECEC leadership by those such as Rodd (2006) have shown that previous generations of early childhood educators who achieved university level bachelor degrees in the 1980s or before, were ill-prepared and reluctant to take on leadership roles. Although there is no clarity in terms of the type of training that is best suited to develop as ECEC leaders, it seems that England offers the best access to specialist leadership development courses at the postgraduate level. Australia, Finland and Norway also offer masters degrees but the level of access and coverage appear somewhat patchy or limited.

In contrast, government investment in leadership preparation for teachers in the school sector was commonplace across most countries included in this book. Likewise all countries noted the inclusion of a limited number of units of study on leadership in bachelor degrees and the availability of short-term in-service or professional development courses on leadership. The extent to which these units are however sufficient in ECEC leader preparation is questionable.

An overview of the history of research into early childhood leadership

Although the provision of quality ECEC services has been high on the agenda of the governments of many countries for some decades, the concept of leadership and its relationship to the delivery of quality services for children and families has only recently become the focus of government and professional attention and interest. Indeed, the current political pressures for reform of and improvement in ECEC services have been instrumental

in bringing the development of leadership capabilities and practice into the spotlight.

Traditionally in ECEC services, leadership was viewed as the province of one positional and formal leader, usually a qualified preschool teacher, who held ultimate authority and power over employees and those who used the service. However, particularly in the past decade, the early childhood sector's understanding of and thinking about leadership has shifted to a more contemporary perspective where leadership is regarded as a distributed, socially-constructed and contextualized role and responsibility. Today, leadership in ECEC services is considered to be a core capability and responsibility that all early childhood practitioners need to understand, accept and develop. Contemporary leadership of ECEC services can be formal or informal, is distributed to staff at all levels and is essential in all contexts. Capability-building and succession planning are pressing issues for those responsible for leadership preparation, training and development.

Interest in leadership as it pertains to ECEC services developed out of theory and research into leadership in school-based educational contexts during the 1960s and 1970s, subsequently applied to early childhood educational settings, and later extended to include childcare services. Unfortunately, over the past four decades, the subject of leadership has received only intermittent attention from early childhood authors and researchers. In the 1970's, highly-esteemed writers such as Millie Almy, Lillian Katz, Bettye Caldwell, Roger Neugebauer, Bernard Spodek and Olivia Sararcho identified the significance of seminal dimensions of leadership as it related to quality ECEC services. During the 1980s and 1990s, other aspects of leadership attracted the interest of a small number of reputable early childhood authors and researchers including Karen Vander Ven, Paula Jorde-Bloom, Sharon Kagan and Gillian Pugh. These authors were the founders of contemporary approaches to and understanding about leadership in early childhood.

In the 1990s and 2000s, a number of researchers from different countries attempted to deconstruct leadership into sets of attributes, skills and knowledge, including Ebbeck and Waniganayake, Hujala, Moyles and Rodd. However, leadership is not easily dissected and understood because it is essentially a holistic, multi-dimensional, multi-layered and complex phenomenon that, to be effective, is embedded in the context in which it is enacted. Although small in number, the contributions of these writers

and researchers cemented the relevance and importance of leadership in the delivery of quality ECEC services. Today, in the 2010s, a small number of dedicated researchers around the world, including those who are members of the International Leadership Research Forum (ILRP) continue the commitment to research into leadership in early childhood in a range of contexts.

Regrettably, research into leadership in early childhood has been hampered by a number of issues, specifically the lack of accepted definition of, common understanding about and prevalent theoretical perspective for leadership. In addition, confusion about language and terminology often results in the terms leadership, management and administration being used erroneously and as if they were synonymous. As the improvement of early childhood services and leadership continues to become a politicised agenda of reform in increasing numbers of countries, it is evident that a variety of academic and empirical paradigms are being applied to explain the principles and practice of leadership in different early childhood contexts. The ILRF has the potential to address some of these factors because it is made up of researchers and experts from seven countries who have adopted a rigorous approach to describing, comparing and explaining leadership in early childhood contexts within and across different countries. In this publication, researchers have analysed and illuminated specific aspects of early childhood leadership within their country, and their insights have the potential for extrapolation to and by other countries.

Although pedagogical leadership is a key issue in supporting the achievement of a strong ECEC vision, all stakeholders are perceived as being responsible for the quality of ECEC within an organisation. Teamwork in ECEC has been traditionally appreciated as a taken-for-granted or common working method among ECEC professionals. Today, teacher leadership is emerging as a new approach to interpreting ECEC leadership. It challenges ECEC trainers – both universities and other providers, to review current courses on educational leadership preparation, to enhance the ability of future ECEC leaders to lead better in new and changing environments.

Reflecting on the Pressures, Pitfalls and Possibilities for Examining Leadership in Early Childhood within a Cross-National Research Collaboration

Jillian Rodd
Educational Consultant
England

Abstract

This chapter examines some key features of current research into leadership in early childhood, with particular focus on factors that affect cross-national collaborations. It identifies a number of potential pitfalls in and pressures of cross-national research collaborations, with particular reference to the International Leadership Research Forum and proposes possible pathways for guiding and scaffolding rigorous inter-country research partnerships within the global early childhood community.

Tiivistelmä

Tässä kappaleessa tarkastellaan ajankohtaisen varhaiskasvatuksen johtamisen tutkimuksen pääpiirteitä, painottaen erityisesti tekijöitä, jotka vaikuttavat kansainväliseen yhteistyöhön. Artikkeli pyrkii tunnistamaan kansainväliseen tutkimukseen liittyviä mahdollisia vaaroja ja yhteistyöhön liittyviä paineita, liittyen erityisesti the International Leadership Research Forum:in toimintaan. Artikkelissa esitetään mahdollisia polkuja ohjaamaan ja rakennustelineiksi tiiviimmän maiden välisen tutkimusyhteistyön aikaansaamiseksi maailmanlaajuisessa varhaiskasvatuksen yhteisössä.

Jillian Rodd: Reflecting on the Pressures, Pitfalls and Possibilities for Examining Leadership in Early Childhood within a Cross-National Research Collaboration.
Eeva Hujala, Manjula Waniganayake & Jillian Rodd (Eds)
Researching Leadership in Early Childhood Education.
Tampere: Tampere University Press 2013, 31–46.

Introduction

Early childhood today has evolved as and functions within a global community where local, national and international aspects have become of increasing interest to researchers and writers. The dissemination of novel and transformed knowledge, ideas, values, approaches, strategies and practice around the world is feeding a small but growing appetite for examining and comparing the contexts and experiences of early childhood in other countries. Today, it is rare for government departments and other bodies to make key decisions concerning developments in and changes to policy and practice in early childhood without reference to the state of play in other related and comparable countries.

As the world's nations increasingly come together to collaborate on political, economic and social issues, so do those educators, practitioners, researchers and writers who are concerned about and with raising quality in early childhood. The descriptive narratives about early childhood practice in various countries that were published in past professional literature are no longer sufficient or acceptable. The global early childhood community today has recognised the importance of and integrated the ability to understand, contribute to and conduct research as a key professional function of its leaders and educators.

Consequently, researchers and experts now are expected to adopt a more rigorous approach to describing, comparing and explaining early childhood practice within and across different countries. Although they pose specific problems and challenges, cross-national research collaborations offer opportunities for researchers to analyse and illuminate specific features (such as leadership in early childhood) within their country from the inside and compare them with those of other countries (Gomez & Kuronen, 2011). Such collaborations help to broaden researchers' horizons, develop greater international and cultural sensitivity and encourage them to think differently about their own national context.

In line with the recent and expanding interdependence between nations, a very small number of researchers in early childhood have established collaborative research endeavours that aim to understand and compare features of early childhood thinking and practice across various countries. One such collaborative venture is the International Leadership Research Forum (ILRF), auspiced by Prof Eeva Hujala, University of Tampere

Finland, in which early childhood researchers and experts from a range of countries, as diverse as Australia, Azerbaijan, England, Norway, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and Taiwan, were invited to become part of a community specifically focused on researching leadership in early childhood. At this point in the collaboration, each researcher or group of researchers is investigating leadership in early childhood in their own national context and then sharing their findings within the forum. To date, cross-national research findings are presented more as individual case studies. None of the research is strictly comparative and coordinated joint projects have yet to be initiated.

Understanding leadership in early childhood contexts

Research evidence in many countries has shown that effective leadership consistently is associated with quality early childhood service provision as well as innovative, responsive change in the sector (Dunlop, 2008). It is the driving force behind improving quality service provision, raising standards and achievements, enhancing professionalism and increasing accountability. Effective leadership raises the bar in the pursuit of excellence in early childhood services.

However, leadership remains an enigma; it is not a concept that is clearly defined and confidently grasped within and across the global early childhood sector (Rodd, 2013). At present, there is no commonly accepted and prevailing definition of leadership in early childhood. In addition, the traditional view of leadership being invested in and enacted by one person, termed positional leadership, has been replaced by a more contemporary viewpoint where effective leadership is seen as distributed across a range of individuals and teams. Consequently, in early childhood services, leadership is a subtle phenomenon that is embedded in social relationships and experience, service structure and context. It enactment can be difficult, even impossible, to pinpoint and observe. In some situations, effective leadership is displayed through action while in other situations, effective leadership is enacted by standing back, saying or doing nothing. Effective leaders possess the insight and ability to perceive both the explicit and obvious and implicit and underlying demands and needs of a situation requiring leadership, and match or adapt their leadership style in ways that engage and empower

others to respond and contribute to positive outcomes for young children and families, early childhood educators and services and the early childhood sector.

Although experienced and recognised leaders of early childhood services appreciate that leadership has many facets and functions, for example, expert, facilitator, teacher, encourager, supporter, rescuer, empowerer and helper, they report that they find it difficult to identify, unpick, articulate and illuminate its complexities in practical enactment. Leadership does not lie in a checklist of qualities and skills. Effective leadership in early childhood services is holistic, dynamic and creates its own synergy, where interaction between the varying elements produces a greater result than would the sum of its individual parts. This also contributes to the challenge of defining and researching leadership in early childhood.

Leadership in early childhood services is deeply embedded in values (both personal and professional), knowledge, understanding, experience and context. It is multi-dimensional, multi-layered, complex and yet holistic in practice. It is conducted in challenging contexts, where staff, families and local communities may have complex and varying needs and expectations.

In addition, leadership is a phenomenon that is greatly influenced by country-specific characteristics, factors and issues. Researchers influenced by Western values, for example, from Australia, North America, Scandinavia, and Western Europe have conducted much of the contemporary research into leadership in early childhood. However, it is very unlikely that findings from these studies can be generalised to other countries and regions (Hartog, House, Hanges, & Ruiz-Quintanilla, 1999) because not all countries share the same assumptions about the values, motivations and practice that contribute to effective leadership.

The practice of leadership is an area ripe for investigation, particularly where findings are linked to leadership capacity and succession building. However, variations in research practice between countries may act as impediments to the conduct, reliability and validity of cross-national research investigations. Goodnow (National Research Council, 2008, 14) defines practice as "... routine ways of doing things we come to think of as normal or natural, which we seldom think about or question, that we often find uncomfortable to change, and that may need to be changed before any shift in concepts or attitudes can occur". It is essential for researchers to understand that practice taken for granted in one context, be it practice

in the fields of leadership or research, may require explicit attention in other national contexts. Any cross-national research collaboration needs to question, scrutinize and check for commonalities and variations in research practice because these are likely to affect the degree to which findings are comparable and able to be generalised.

The elements that are thought to contribute to the practice of leadership may be dissimilar in western-centric countries and be very different again in countries and regions in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Central and South America. In addition, the terminology and descriptors used to denote effective leadership are likely to be interpreted and personified differently in different countries and regions. Therefore, in the context of any one country, capturing the essence of leadership in practice and communicating it to others, both within your own country and from different regions and countries can be demanding.

Despite these challenges and the complexities of leadership as a focus of research endeavour, and given that research into leadership in early childhood continues to attract interest from a small number of researchers, cross-national research collaboration is an opportunity to create synergy, where engaging more researchers who interact and contribute to advancing the theory and practice of leadership in country-specific and cross-national contexts may produce greater understanding about and advancement in theory and practice of leadership in early childhood than would be possible by the efforts of individuals working alone.

The nature of cross-national research collaboration

The ILRF collaboration is described more appropriately as cross-national, rather than international, which implies worldwide participation. Cross-national research is an approach to analysing an event or process that is manifested within a country and comparing it to the way that event or process is manifested across different countries. A forum such as the ILRF is deemed to be cross-national when individuals or teams from two or more countries aim to explore particular issues or phenomena, such as leadership, in order to compare their manifestation in different socio-cultural contexts (Hantrais, 1995).

Cross-national research partnerships can bridge and transcend national boundaries by comparing and contrasting what is learned from research in a particular country with what is known in other countries. It can be explicitly comparative where nations are the object of the research, with a case study focus on understanding each particular country, for example what it is like in Norway, Azerbaijan, Finland or Taiwan in terms of leadership enactment in early childhood services. Here, the focus is on understanding each individual country and how leadership is manifested within it. Alternatively, a nation may be the context for the primary focus on leadership in early childhood in order to establish the generality of findings and interpretations about how early childhood services operate and leadership is practiced cross-nationally. Here, leadership in early childhood is the primary focus with the various countries providing the contexts for the research.

Finding out 'what happens' or 'what it is like' in other countries is the essence of cross-national research (Baistow, 2000). In today's globalised world, nations or countries are populated by people from disparate cultural groups, heritages, backgrounds and regions. Political changes continue to re-draw national boundaries in some continents, thereby forming arbitrarily created nations by bringing together groups of people who may have little natural or historical affiliation. Therefore, considerable intra-country variation is likely to exist in some nations. Countries that are characterised by large intra-country variability make valid cross-national comparison more difficult and therefore are not appropriate for inclusion in comparative cross-national studies, although as individual case studies, they may be informative.

Such issues mean that, in cross-national as well as cross-cultural research, representative samples that truly typify the whole population are very difficult to access. Therefore, research findings may not accurately portray a country's population because certain groups may be excluded or the views of people in certain regions may not be indicative of those of the entire country. The same limitation is applicable in relation to true representation in research in early childhood generally and leadership specifically. However, cross-national research collaborations can be valuable analytical tools for testing the generalisability and validity of findings and interpretations derived from single nation studies, which may be influenced by and related to particular historical or socio-political circumstances.

Cross-national research collaborations also have the potential to contribute to the generation, development and testing of theory.

The ILRF offers participants opportunities to share, become familiar with and build on cross-national research interests, activities and findings, thereby making a significant contribution to understanding leadership in the global early childhood community by extending knowledge about and practice in this essential aspect of quality service provision. Such a collaborative endeavor can help build research interest and capacity, highlight issues, identify commonalities, similarities and differences, seek solutions, inform policies and expand the existing sense of community within the early childhood sector. However, such a research endeavor is not without its own problems and challenges.

Pressures

While the intentions of cross-national research collaborations are laudable, there are numerous difficulties to overcome and issues that need to be considered when embarking on such an undertaking. The selection of the core team, partners or collaborators is of utmost importance. Ideally, partners should be selected on the basis of their research interests, knowledge and expertise (Oliver, 2010). However, often more pragmatic considerations influence selection, such as professional interests, geographical proximity, cultural and language affinity, existing professional relationships and funding availability.

Evidence also points to the fact that countries with smaller populations and those with small emerging research communities are more likely to be interested in collaborative work (Kamalski, 2009), especially where collaboration offers access to more experienced partners and opportunities to work with recognised experts in the field. She argues that the nature of contemporary research questions often benefits from collaboration with researchers across national boundaries. In addition, geographical limitations and national policies drive some countries to pursue more internationalisation than others.

Kamalski (2009) contends that the size and resources of a country impact on the frequency with which local researchers will seek cross-national collaborators. For example, when research collaboration in 49 countries

was ranked in terms of output of collaborative articles, Hong Kong ranked 6th, Norway 9th, Finland 20th, UK 27th and Australia 28th. Switzerland was ranked first, Chile 2nd, with USA was ranked 42nd and China 49th. This may explain why research collaborations such as the ILRF attract researchers from smaller countries or those with smaller research communities. In addition, researchers from smaller countries are likely to have been educated abroad, offering them greater opportunity for making professional contacts and becoming a member of international networks. The small numbers of researchers interested in leadership in early childhood may also be a factor that incentivises cross-national collaboration. Being a member of a larger network offers access to multiple perspectives, skills, support, motivation and other resources.

It is also thought that teams with diverse and heterogenous backgrounds tend to find more significant findings than teams with more similar and homogenous backgrounds (Chatman & Flynn, 2001). Homogeneity in background can increase the likelihood of groupthink, the tendency towards conformity in thinking, in which the core skills that underpin inquiry and research such as creativity, information processing and problem solving can be stifled. Cross-national research collaborations offer pathways for researchers that value diversity of thinking and perspectives, and encourage imagination, experimentation, risk taking and innovation in approaches to research design and processes.

Some key considerations for selecting partners who may make a significant contribution to cross-national research collaborations include national diversity, disciplinary diversity, differences in research approaches, different approaches to hierarchy, authority and teamwork, and different stages of development in contributors' research expertise and careers.

Each of these considerations has pros and cons. For example, the greater the national diversity, the greater the breadth of data. However, the greater the national diversity, the more difficult the issue of equivalence becomes. It becomes more difficult to ensure that partners from different countries understand a concept such as leadership and its relationship to other early childhood concepts equally. Equivalence in conceptualisation and theoretical understanding, research design and data analysis needs to be addressed and thoroughly scrutinised.

The issue of conceptual equivalence is a core pressure for cross-national research collaborations, especially given the predominance of qualitative

and narrative methodologies in data collection. For the ILRF, conceptual equivalence refers to the extent to which the concept of leadership has the same meaning in different countries. That is, are the researchers studying leadership as the exact same phenomenon in different national contexts or are they studying quite different phenomena that are termed leadership in their country? Leadership as a focus of investigation must be appropriately translated and understood by all partners. Because qualitative methodologies are dependent upon mutual understanding and consistent interpretation of terminology, it is essential that conceptual equivalence be highlighted as a key concern. Research terminology, descriptors and questions need to be expressed in an equivalent manner and style in all relevant languages. Similarly, method equivalence refers to the extent to which all of the participating countries perceive and measure leadership in the same way. Equivalence in concepts and methods is a fundamental pre-requisite for ensuring comparability of findings.

Disciplinary diversity brings both advantages and disadvantages. Where researchers come from different disciplines, for example, sociology, psychology, law, economics or political science, they bring different values, approaches, language, understandings and biases. An advantage is that such collaborations bring a wealth of resources to and offer multiple perspectives on the research focus. However, success depends on considerable mutual respect and open communication among partners. Trust, power and ownership can become sources of conflict. In establishing cross-national research collaborations, it is essential to clarify disciplinary frames, foci and contributions as well as ethical values underpinning research design.

Different disciplines also bring disparate philosophies, approaches, strategies and tools for undertaking research which can lead to a wealth of data and perspectives but which also may make analyses, interpretations and comparisons problematic.

Different approaches to hierarchy, authority and teamwork can create challenges for collective and inclusive engagement in research design, methodological issues and data analyses. In some countries, people are socialised to be more acquiescent and defer to hierarchy and authority. In some countries, free and assertive expression of personal opinion and views is encouraged and tolerated. Such differences can be found in the personal characteristics of both researchers and sample participants. In a cross-national research collaboration, it is essential that researchers who may be

less assertive and confident, or more deferential to authority, are encouraged to engage as an equal member of the research team.

Problems related to competition, especially between academic researchers vying for promotion and/or tenure, can act as impediments to cross-national research collaborations, particularly where researchers are more interested in personal gain and recognition than cooperating in pursuit of the research group's substantive agenda and broader goals. Early transparent and shared agreement regarding the issue of intellectual property (that is, who owns data, findings and ensuing publications, individual researcher or the cross-national research team) is essential to genuine cooperation and successful collaboration for groups such as the ILRF.

Successful research collaborations are grounded in cooperation. Cooperation can be encouraged through the identification of common ground, establishing trust by sharing accurate information and findings, highlighting the value of learning from the experience of others and forging linkages, facilitating informal and formal networking and building research-focused learning communities.

All good research in early childhood complies with the self-moderated ethical expectations and standards about conduct set by the profession in many countries. In relation to research, the key considerations are not harming any participant physically or psychologically, participation on the basis of informed consent, the use of appropriate language to ensure participants' comprehension and confidentiality. However, early childhood educators in some countries have yet to adopt a professional code of ethics. In addition, early childhood educators from different countries and cultures may have different views about what is considered right and proper in relation to research. Ethical standards and expectations can be context-specific. For example, issues such as data and identity protection, participants' legal and moral rights, and discrimination on the basis of age, gender and disability are high priorities for research design in western countries. Unfortunately, such issues may not be given the same weight and attention by researchers in countries where the rights of individuals do not take priority over other concerns. In Australia and England, for example, if a respondent chooses not to answer a specific question, no particular interpretation is placed upon that decision and right. In countries where unconditional respect for authority is the norm and the rights of individuals carry little weight, refusal

to answer a question may not be a decision that is an option or taken lightly because it could result in negative and serious repercussions for respondents.

The ILRF, as a cross-national research collaboration that endorses the accepted ethical principles and standards agreed by the early childhood professional community in western countries, could be faced with a variety of ethical dilemmas arising from the way in which some research projects are designed and conducted. Therefore, it is important to highlight and discuss the range of ethical considerations that are pertinent to decisions about methodology prior to project implementation and data collection.

Pitfalls

Being a partner in a cross-national research collaboration such as the ILRF can be exciting and motivating. However, it can also make the work more complicated and difficult. It is important not to gloss over inherent pitfalls and difficulties that may go unnoticed until something goes wrong.

All countries develop their own culture that is made up of specific values, assumptions, expectations, roles, styles, approaches, jargon and systems. Most people, including researchers, possess very little real understanding about the nature of others' culture and its influence on professional thinking, communication and interpersonal relationships. Culture creates significant traditions and differences in the way people approach life and work, including research. Anderson and Stennack (2010) suggested that there are fundamental national differences in the way in which nations organise, support and undertake research. For example, in some countries, researchers have considerable freedom. In other countries, researchers work under considerable surveillance, regulation and restriction. A country's government may exert significant control over research agendas, organisation and finances, thereby making cross-national collaboration more difficult. The amount of funding available and the time that can be devoted to collaborative ventures also vary considerably from country to country.

Language can be a major pitfall to inclusive cross-national research collaborations. Language is not only a vehicle for articulating concepts but is the medium for framing, conveying and reflecting about values, thoughts, ideas, ideology, institutions and practices. Language is an obvious source of

miscommunication and misunderstanding (Anderson, 2011) but can also be used to assert power over others. Although English is a dominant language in the world of research, it is essential that English (or linguistic affinity) not be used to dominate and deter others from contributing. Overcoming language barriers is the first step towards ensuring comparability in cross-national research collaborations (Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik & Harkness, 2005). In the same way, it is essential that researchers from developed countries with Western perspectives avoid imposing their values, theories and methodologies on other partners. Inclusive research collaborations value, accept and respect the views of those from other, particularly developing, countries (Barnett & Stevenson, 2011).

The organisation of a collaborative venture such as the ILRF can bring about its own difficulties. Researchers from different countries work under distinct hierarchies, communication networks, decision-making structures and management protocols making collaborative teamwork, which is the norm in some countries, a challenge for some. The coordination and management of diverse collaborations require sensitivity, good understanding about contributing partners and their countries' values, traditions, contexts and systems, acceptance, respect, trust, open and clear communication, negotiation and conflict resolution skills.

A notable feature of cross-national research is that attention must be paid to methodological as well as theoretical issues (Baistow, 2000), specifically to issues of measurement, reliability and validity. Within the area of methodology, numerous pitfalls may be encountered, especially if any comparability is to be conducted. Without a common and clear definition of leadership, including related terminology, descriptors and concepts, it is difficult to establish agreed upon goals and objectives, which in turn makes reliable and valid evaluation hard to design and conduct. Much research, even so-called comparative research, does not allow direct comparison because of methodological differences in design, data collection and analysis. Harmonisation and equivalence in methods, concepts, samples, indices and interpretations must be established if valid comparisons are to be made.

Pitfalls in data collection can include differences in national literacy rates and levels with a lot of research conducted with more literate and educated members. Where literacy rates and levels are higher, there is a bigger pool of potential participants to sample. In countries with poor literacy rates and levels, data collection instruments and strategies that would be unacceptable

in other countries may have to be employed. In some countries participants are familiar with hypothetical questions and situations; whereas in other countries, questions might need to be contextualised, that is, based on and relate to actual and concrete experience. In some countries, suspicion about researcher intention and confidentiality issues may influence how extensive, accurate and honest the information provided by participants is.

To move research forward and beyond being descriptive case studies, researchers in cross-national collaborations need to be aware of and address any problems that may arise. Though the pitfalls may be many, cross-national research collaborations can offer opportunities to learn from the different cultural and intellectual orientations and approaches and develop deeper understanding of issues that are central to the investigation.

Possibilities

Although cross-national research collaborations need to address numerous pressures and pitfalls, they open a range of opportunities and offer significant advantages. With regard to the ILRF, cross-national research collaboration opens up opportunities for:

- accessing new information and understanding about aspects of leadership in early childhood in and across a range of countries
- organising research contributions around a common focus and interest
- working with and mentoring researchers from a range of disciplines and backgrounds and with varying levels of expertise
- developing common research methodologies for accessing, recording, analysing, interpreting and constructing data concerning aspects of leadership in early childhood
- identifying local and national conceptualisations, issues, problems, needs and resources in relation to leadership
- gaining a deeper understanding of other countries generally and early childhood specifically
- identifying and disseminating good practice in research methodology
- informed critique, provocation and advocacy for leadership in early childhood

- developing aims and strategies for short, medium and long term socio-political change in early childhood service provision in collaborating countries
- building research interest and capacity while addressing leadership issues
- improving research in early childhood generally.

The ILRF, as a cross-national research collaboration, can build and extend a network of researchers and experts on leadership in early childhood, thereby ensuring that future research is current, flexible, creative and methodologically rigorous. Although cross-national research collaborations are considerably easier with the availability of modern information and communication technology, cheaper telecommunications and air travel (Anderson, 2011), to be successful they also require:

- sensitive identification and selection of a range of partners from the global early childhood community to avoid creating or exacerbating divisions
- long-term commitment to the project, in terms of research personnel and funding
- active and collective engagement in research partnerships
- respect for multiple perspectives including those of individual countries and disciplines
- visionary leadership by a competent coordinator.

Conclusion

At present, the ILRF is in its infancy and concerned with providing a platform for cross-national sharing about and dissemination of research findings related to aspects of leadership in early childhood. However, it has the potential to build on its network of researchers, draw on its multi-disciplinary expertise and develop integrated cross-national research studies that advance scholarly knowledge and offer insight into the intricacies of leadership practice in early childhood services. In addition, there is scope for exploring and addressing some of the methodological challenges in cross-national research.

If the ILRF is to develop into a genuine cross-national collaboration, three questions need to be addressed.

- What are the key research areas that are of interest or have emerged regarding leadership in early childhood?
- How do the collaborators' research interests and existing projects connect to a common focus, direction or agenda?
- How can individual and potential joint research projects be organised, coordinated and managed to move the ILRF forward?

The challenge for the ILRF as a cross-national research collaboration is to create a sustainable scaffold for research into leadership in early childhood that offers some scope for comparability and learning but that also permits research to be meaningful in the collaborators' local and national contexts.

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Contextually Defined Leadership

Eeva Hujala
University of Tampere
Finland

"Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth." (Burns, 1978, 2)

Abstract

The increasing number of children entering early childhood education and care (ECEC) services has formed a challenge to focus more to the quality of the programs. In this chapter leadership is seen to build a foundation for quality ECEC. Effective leadership is connected to the context of ECEC, and this defines the leadership culture. In contextual approach to leadership, the mission, core tasks, vision, and management of ECEC processes are integrated. Leadership has foundation on the mission, coordinates the quality of the core tasks, and develops ECEC processes towards the vision. Although leaders are responsible for the management of ECEC, leadership is defined as an interactive process, to which the whole staff is engaged. The challenge of leadership is to clarify the core tasks so that both leader and the followers agree with them. This enables the mission-based work in the organisation, and leading ECEC towards the vision. Contextually defined, distributed leadership improves the quality of ECEC.

Tiivistelmä

Varhaiskasvatuksen määrän lisääntyessä huoli varhaiskasvatuksen laadun ylläpitämisestä lisääntyy ja johtajuuden merkitys korostuu. Johtajuus on laadukkaan varhaiskasvatuksen ydintekijä. Johtajuuden kontekstuaalisessa tarkastelussa johtajuus rakentuu kiinteästi varhaiskasvatuksen arjen kontekstiin, mikä määrittää johtamistyötä ja johtajuuskulttuuria. Toimivassa johtajuudessa organisaation visio, missio, ydintoiminnot ja niiden johtaminen ovat toisistaan riippuvia. Johtajuuden perusta on varhaiskasvatuksen perustehtävässä, missiossa. Johtamistyö huolehtii ydintoimintojen laadusta ja vastaa varhaiskasvatuksen kehittämisestä vision mukaisesti. Vaikka

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johtaja vastaa varhaiskasvatuksen johtamistyöstä, johtajuus nähdään yhteisvastuuna pedagogisten prosessien kehittämisestä, johon osallistuu koko työyhteisö. Toimivan johtajuuden haasteena on mission selkiyttäminen niin, että johtajalla ja työyhteisöllä on siitä yhteinen näkemys. Tämä mahdollistaa kaikkien organisaation jäsenten toimimisen missioperustaisesti ja varhaiskasvatuksen kehittämisen visiota kohden. Kontekstuaalisesti rakentuva johtajuus kehittää varhaiskasvatusta ja sen laatua yhteisvastuullisesti.

Introduction

It seems that leadership research in early childhood education and care (ECEC) has found its place in European research practices. In the 2012 EECERA Conference appeared several sessions with leadership theme contrary to the situation ten years earlier, when only one of the sessions dealt with leadership. In European leadership research, leadership is seen as an inevitable part of the pedagogy and it is an indispensable factor in ensuring the high quality in childcare. In contrast, in the USA at the annual conference of the Association of Childhood Education International (ACEI) in 2012, leadership as a conference theme was quite rare. Does this imply that the focus of leadership by early childhood educators in the USA is perceived differently? In the USA, ECE programs are mainly privately run, and the fiscal management, such as student enrolment and budgeting, are maybe emphasised more than pedagogical issues of leadership.

Although EC leadership is understood as a key issue for improving quality, in practice it is still a quite indistinguishable phenomenon. ECE curriculums have been improved globally, but the significance of the leadership in curriculum development has not yet been made visible. In developing leadership practice to support ECEC centres, curriculum development has still remained marginal. Nonetheless, the prerequisite for successful ECE curriculum planning and implementation into practice is pedagogical leadership. Leading and steering the curriculum processes raise new kind of challenges for EC centre directors. Previous emphasis on administrative tasks must be re-evaluated. These new challenges must be taken into account when planning directors' training and professional development. Increasingly, global trends concerned with staff and managers, indicate the importance of being adequately trained in leadership issues (Taguma, Litjens, & Makowiecki, 2012). Waniganayake, Cheeseman,

Fenech, Hadley and Shepherd (2012) talk about 'leadership specialisations' in emphasising that EC leadership has a specialist nature (p. 241). Rodd (2013, 267) defines the nature of leadership as "subtle, complex, multifaceted and multidimensional and essentially holistic". There are increasing complexity of the roles and responsibilities centre directors are expected to perform. This means that leaders need formal training and development on a continuous basis.

Several changes have taken place in the ECEC throughout the world both in the substance and in structure, which has brought pressure on developing leadership. Especially in Europe, ECEC has increasingly found its place in the life context of children and families. For example, in Finland, childcare is a subjective right of every child. Child care (ECEC) has an influence on many children and their families. One can also say that a society's perceptions of children and education are influenced and developed through child care (ECEC).

Based on the Program of International Student Assessment (OECD 2005) results and Finland's success, the importance of the high quality child care as a foundation for success at school is inevitable (OECD 2004). Along with the increased numbers and stabilization of the child care services the structural changes called for more emphasis on leadership in ECEC. In Finland, the administration and the steering of child care services have been transferred from the Ministry of Social Welfare to Ministry of Education and Culture. This reform is a challenge in developing both the structure and substance of EC leadership at national, municipal and child care center level. At the same time child care centers have been merged into larger administrative units, which has forced centre directors to find new distributed ways to lead (Hujala & Heikka, 2009; Halttunen, 2009). All of these changes have raised multiple contradictory expectations about directors' work and increased confusion among EC staff. These negative perceptions have caused directors work related fatigue as well as have decreased work satisfaction among EC staff (Fonsén, 2013; Söyrinki, 2010). People have many opinions about leadership and they claim to 'know' what EC leaders should do, but to be able to fully understand leaders' work and leadership as a whole, is not easy. In reality, leadership roles and responsibilities are difficult to comprehend even by the leaders themselves.

Contextually theorized leadership

Research on leadership has yielded many doctrines and theories during history. Salovaara (2011) claims that most of the earlier leadership theories represented leader-centric approaches more than a specific leadership approach. The leader and the followers were seen separate in many of the initial leadership paradigms. However several reasons emerged why the leader-centred theories failed to address all the questions about leadership needs (McDowall Clark & Murray, 2012; Ropo, 2011) such as the impact of globalisation, the rise of team thinking, avoidance of top-down and hierarchical models, and the shift into more strategic thinking in organisations. Although officially designated leaders and managers continued to be needed in the organisations, it has become necessary to adopt teamwork and shared leadership models as well (Heikka & Waniganayake, 2011; McDowall Clark & Murray, 2012; Spillane, 2006; Pearce & Conger, 2003). Shared and distributed leadership approaches constitute a clear shift in conceptualising the "leader-follower relationship" instead of the traditional manager oriented leadership (Harris, 2004; Shamir, Pillai, Bligh, & Uhl-Bien, 2007; Vondey, 2008). Hansen, Ropo and Sauer (2007) propose that when the earlier studies concentrated more on leaders, research focus has now shifted into exploring interactions between leaders and followers.

In many of the earlier EC leadership studies (Culkin, 2000; Jorde-Bloom, 1991) leadership was examined as a micro phenomenon. Researchers investigated leaders themselves or the immediate environments where the leaders were working (Jorde-Bloom, 2000; Jorde-Bloom & Sheerer, 1992; Hayden, 1998; Morgan, 2000; VanderVen, 2000). More recent EC research now focus on leadership on a broader scale. It has been seen as a challenge to find out the nature and significance of leadership within the context of a society as well as the roles and responsibilities attached to leadership (Aubrey, Godfrey, & Harris, 2013; Heikka, Waniganayake, & Hujala, 2013; Hayden, 1998; Nivala, 1999). Society embedded leadership research investigates leadership as perceived by those people who are involved directly or indirectly with child care. One of the broadest approach in studying society connections to leadership was examined in the International leadership project (Nivala & Hujala, 2002) implemented in Australia, Great Britain, Russia, USA and Finland. This global study was one of the first to compare society's connections to leadership in different societies and

focused on pursuing variables that defined EC leadership practice within the cultural context.

Smircich and Morgan (1982) have examined leadership through the leading of the processes of organisation. They emphasised that leadership, like other social phenomena, is constructed through social interactions emerging as a result of the constructions and actions of both leaders and followers or those being led. In Salovaara's (2011) meta-analysis of recent leadership studies shows that leadership is bound to the local cultures and it is understood as a way of avoiding a leader-centric approach. This research orientation underlines the socially constructed nature of leadership in which the members of the organisation find themselves.

In this chapter, leadership is theorised as contextually defined (Nivala, 1999; Hujala, 2004; Hujala, Heikka, & Halttunen, 2011). Contextually defined leadership of an organisation is seen to be based on the same paradigm and same goals as the core tasks included in the mission of the organisation. Accordingly, it is proposed that leadership in early education is constructed and based on the theoretical understanding of ECEC.

Ontology

Osborn, Hunt and Jauch (2002) argue that leadership is always embedded in the context. That is, the leader is inseparable from the context and the effectiveness of leadership is dependent upon the context. According to Osborn et al. (2002) the macro views need increasing recognition, but to supplement rather than replace currently emphasised meso and micro perspectives (see also Hujala, 2004). In examining leadership contextually, the mission, core tasks, structure and management of the organisation are integrated (Hujala, Heikka, & Halttunen, 2011).

In this chapter, the ontological view of ECEC and leadership as part of it, is understood from the point of view of contextual theory of ECEC (Hujala, 2004). It sees that children's growth and the early education supporting it have their basis on the children's own life culture and the contextual reality where children live. The contextual thinking has its foundation on Brofenbrenner's ecological psychology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1989). It has been applied to ECEC context from a pedagogical point of view (Hujala, 1999). The contextual theory examines the pedagogical relationship

between the subject and the structure by defining the role of children and adults in pedagogical interactions. According to the contextual theory, teachers' role and professionalism in child care is derived from the functions of the micro systems, meso system as well as from other external systems that define ECEC reality. The practice of professionalism is shaped by teachers' pedagogical awareness of children's developmental and pedagogical needs, parents' expectations, parent-teacher partnerships as well as regulations that guide EC programs. Woodhead (1998) emphasised that the most important element in the implementation of ECEC is that it is contextually appropriate. In early childhood education this "contextually appropriate" practice perceives children as being part of their societal context. Thus, the point of departure for early childhood education is becoming aware of connection between the child and the context of growth, including cultural-historical dimensions. To be successful contextually, appropriate professionalism is developed, guided and supported by contextually appropriate leadership.

The theoretical approach by Nivala (1999) conceptualised leadership as contextually constructed and derived from the contextually understood core tasks of ECEC. Contextual leadership is considered as a micro level phenomenon in the ECEC organisation as well as a broader macro level issue reaching up to the legislation and back. The interactions and co-operation between the different actors at different levels of leadership are particularly meaningful for the success of leadership. These aspects frame the implementation of leadership practice and define the direction of developing ECEC (Hujala & Heikka, 2009; Nivala & Hujala, 2002; Halttunen, 2009; Akselin, 2013).

One of the founders of EC leadership, Jorde-Bloom (1991) defined her contextual approach by describing a leaders' work as a social systems model. The child care centre was viewed as a social system, taking into account both the structure of the centre and the processes of the people there. Also many factors in the external environment affect the implementation of ECE in the centres. The interaction of these contextual parts produced a particular culture within the child care program. Kyllönen (2011) and Osborn et al. (2002) have also examined leadership more broadly, as broader systemic whole. They considered leadership as a product of the organisation's history, and reflecting the values appreciated in the society. Kyllönen (2011) emphasised that the mission based, contextually determined leadership constructs the guidelines for implementing the core tasks aligned with the

goals of the organisation. From a contextual perspective, the mission and the leading, and managing of the organisation are interdependent. Clegg and Gray (1996) point out in their contextual approach that "*Leading must* be *seen* in *context* and *should not* be *considered separate* from s*trategy, organising, learning* and *all those interactions* that *make organisations*" (as cited in Nupponen, 2005, 46). Osborn et al. (2002) outline that the mission, core tasks and the work of the organisation shape the leadership practices as well. Akselin (2013) agrees with this and continues that the mission, core tasks and leadership challenges shape each other dynamically.

Contextual model of leadership

Contextual leadership model in ECEC (see figure 1) defines the structural framework of the factors and actors related to leadership and leading. According to the contextual leadership model, leadership is perceived as a socially constructed, situational and interpretive phenomenon (Nivala,

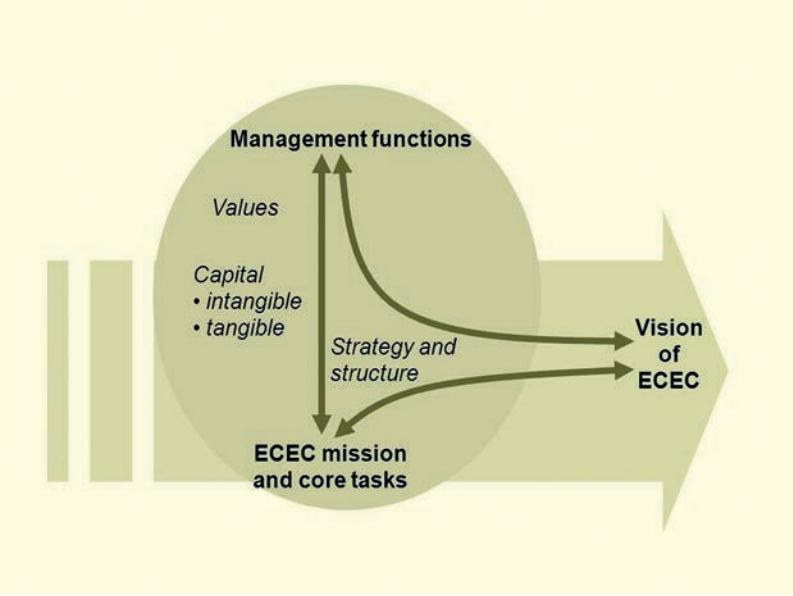

Figure 1. Contextually defined leadership in ECEC (modified from Nivala, 2010)

1999). The situational system means that leadership is influenced by social situations and by the operational environment as well as by expectations and traditions of the society. Accordingly, Giddens' (1984) structuration theory and Berger and Luckman's (1991) socially constructed reality are incorporated into the model to explore the dialogue between the actors and the structures. In ECE this means a dialog between the centre director and the organisational culture of the centre. Leadership as an interpretive phenomenon means that it is not only the leader's own ideas concerning the leadership but also the views of everyone involved with child care, including families and other stakeholders that define EC leadership in that society.

The foundation of the contextual leadership model is the mission and substance of early childhood education. Nivala (1999; 2010) defined leadership as interconnectedness between the substance of ECEC, the actors in the process and structures of the organisational environment. At the macro level of the system, societal values and institutional structures define leadership. Intangible and tangible capital empowers the organisation and its management functions.

Contextually derived leadership in ECEC comprises three dimensions:

1) ECEC mission provides the foundation for core tasks as well as for leadership,
2) director's management functions and administrative tasks, and
3) the vision for ECEC within the organisation

ECE strategy of the organisation towards the goals integrates these three dimensions. The contextual leadership model stresses the importance of managing and leading in itself as professional work. An EC leader's work is to guide and steer the mission and the core tasks. Akselin (2013) has found that effective leadership clarifies the mission and the core tasks as well as the definition of leadership as shared responsibility towards the aims in ECEC.

Ebbeck and Waniganayake (2003) approach EC leadership by separating the three key concepts: administration, management and leadership. All of these are defined from the point of perspective of the core tasks of ECEC seen through the roles and responsibilities, skills and dispositions of EC educators. Rodd (2006) emphasised the importance of engaging the staff with the program vision, mission and strategy so that these are implemented as guidelines for daily work. Hujala, Heikka and Halttunen (2011) see leadership domain as complex and more challenging nowadays, because the

mission and core task are rechanging, partly due to societal changes, and partly because of the new requirements set for ECEC programs. As such, the old distinctions between leadership connected to leading people and management connected to things is deleted by Sydänmaanlakka (2004). He argues that this distinction obscures the true nature of leadership and that management and leadership are bound to each other and must be seen as a whole.

Daily management and administration are terms which in Finnish education context, directors most typically use when they describe the leadership in schools. According to Pennanen (2007) those concepts reflect the reactive leadership which is needed to manage urgent everyday situations. Pennanen emphasised that leadership should be developed to be proactive instead: director must look into the future, listen carefully the weak signals, assess current situation and create vision. Rodd (2006) points out that changes in society and the need to develop flexible early childhood education services for families requires a proactive role from the leaders and other ECE practitioners.

Professional management practices have a foundation in raising a director's awareness of the core task of the organisation and the awareness of the director's own role in leading it. In practice, EC leadership refers to clarifying the mission and constructing the vision of ECEC, in collaboration with staff. All of these functions are anchored in strategy and in the assessment of the implementation of the goals aligned with the core task. The organisation's vision is connected with strategy, and redefines the core tasks and clarifies the mission and the leadership. In ECEC goals for leaders' work are based on the vision of the organisation and this vision is further developed by leadership. So the nature of leadership is always visionary and oriented to the future.

Closing

Based on a contextual leadership approach Hujala, Parrila, Lindberg, Nivala, Tauriainen and Vartiainen (1999) have described the leadership practice as engaging ECEC staff to maintain and improve centre quality. Recent leadership research (Halttunen, 2009; Hujala, Heikka, & Halttunen, 2011) perceive leadership as an even more broader arena, which combines people

involved with children and child care to be jointly responsible for improving the core tasks in ECEC. Sullivan (2003) emphasised shared values as a means by which a leader and staff together can achieve their goals and their mission for ECEC. The context of leadership defines the leadership culture and creates leadership discourse (Hujala, 2004), and determine what the development work based on that should be (Akselin, 2013; Nivala & Hujala, 2002; Halttunen, 2009). The challenges for leading the mission of ECEC emerge from children, education, families and partnership. Early education and care defines the roles of leadership and the skills and knowledges required by leaders in child care.

Seland (2009) found that EC management in Norway is dominated by administrative functions paying less attention to pedagogical issues. Educational organisations are increasingly forced to be led to meet the pressure of market economy, productivity and efficiency. EC leaders are urged to use the business leadership discourse more than before. In the research by Hujala (2004), centre directors recommended to staff that they also have to learn to use the financial discourse to gain an understanding and appreciation of their professional work in connection with the city council. Yet many Finnish researchers (Hirvelä, 2010; Söyrinki, 2010; Päivinen, 2010) have affirmed that municipal ECEC units as expert organisations expect visionary leadership connected with ECEC contexts instead of the traditional model that is usually a hierarchical, top-down administrative leadership (Ropo, 2011). Rajakaltio (2012) also suggests that the development of pedagogical leadership is a counterweight to the managerialist management authority in educational organisations. Visionary, contextually defined leadership discerns capabilities and potential in clarifying mission and developing the core tasks, ensures visioning the future and supports staff to develop their EC work, for themselves and their own wellbeing.

Leadership research as mentioned above indicate that the challenge for EC leadership is the clarification of the mission, and the definition of the shared vision of EC in a way where the director and the staff interdependently create and develop the structures and tasks of the leadership. Harris (2002) emphasised that one of the director's main responsibilities is to empower and engage the staff members in jointly to develop the core tasks. The time for leading alone and leading from top to down is past us. Shared strategic thinking and leadership roles support the accomplishment of the ECEC centre's mission, aims and vision. Likewise, improving EC leadership and

assessing the quality of leadership are bounded by the mission and the core tasks of ECEC centres.

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Leadership Careers in Early Childhood: Finding Your Way through Chaos and Serendipity into Strategic Planning

Manjula Waniganayake
Macquarie University
Australia

Abstract

Leadership is now well established as a key determinant of quality early childhood education. Whilst there is widespread agreement that leader preparation is essential, there is much debate about the appropriate ways to grow and nurture EC leaders. Stories of eight accomplished educators in Australia illustrate how mentoring and further study mediated through diverse experiences can shape EC career trajectories that progress through chaos and serendipity. The challenges encountered by these educators reflect sector specific and societal barriers to leadership growth, and these are nuanced within the context of current EC workforce policy reform in Australia. The chapter concludes by highlighting agency, structured support and strategic planning when developing EC leadership capabilities.

Tiivistelmä

Johtajuuden on osoitettu olevan varhaiskasvatuksen laadun kannalta ratkaiseva tekijä. Samaan aikaan, kun johtajien valmennuksen tarpeellisuudesta vallitsee yksimielisyys, keskustelua käydään siitä, miten varhaiskasvatuksen johtajia tarkoituksenmukaisimmin valmennetaan. Yhdeksän australialaisen kouluttajan tarinat kuvaavat sitä, miten mentorointi ja jatko-opinnot monimuotoisen kokemuksen myötä muovaavat varhaiskasvatuksen urakehitystä paljolti kaaoksen ja satunnaisuuden kautta. Näiden kouluttajien kohtaamat haasteet heijastelevat sektorille tyypillisiä, yhteiskunnallisiakin esteitä johtajuuteen kasvun kannalta, ja ne heijastelevat Australiassa toteutettavia varhaiskasvatuksen työvoimaa koskevien linjausten uudistuksia. Artikkelissa päädytään

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korostamaan toimijuutta, ohjattua tukea ja strategista suunnittelua varhaiskasvatuksen johtajuuden kyvykkyyden keskeisinä elementteinä.

Introduction

There is now emerging recognition that the professional preparation of leaders is essential because of the diversity and increasing sophistication of the early childhood (EC) sector (Aubrey, Godfrey, & Harris, 2013; Rodd, 2013; Waniganayake, Cheeseman, Fenech, Hadley, & Shepherd, 2012). Career development is not an event that happens when someone resigns or loses their job. Building a career is an ongoing process, often described as a journey one travels throughout life. Career planning may be stimulated by various factors, such as looking for a job and encouragement of a powerful mentor or experiences of variable quality may provoke you to consider your career directions. That is, career opportunities can emerge through haphazard or serendipitous pathways. To be effective, however, today's EC leaders require high order thinking capabilities aligned with a substantive body of specialist knowledge that is renewed continuously. This means that aspiring leaders must adopt a long-term strategic view in planning their careers in the EC sector.

Within schools, the presence of professionally qualified leaders is a key contributor to student learning outcomes (Bush, 2008; Marsh, Waniganayake, & De Nobile, 2013) and a similar trend is emerging in the delivery of quality early childhood education (Bush, 2013; OECD, 2011; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007). Global trends reflect the increasing professionalization of the EC sector, with more staff with university-based qualifications being employed as educational leaders (Adams, 2005; Oberhuemer, Schreyer, & Newman, 2010; SCSEEC, 2012). Importantly, "the absence of linear predictable career pathways that can systematically foster early childhood leadership in the sector" (Waniganayake et al., 2012, 232) demands that better attention is paid to career planning by EC practitioners, employers, policy makers and researchers. Given the socially constructed nature of professional identity it is essential to explore how leadership emerges within EC organisations and in the wider community.

Career advancement may involve reflection, planning, monitoring and assessment of your professional growth over time. Enactment of leadership

roles and responsibilities require a thorough grounding in appropriate skills and knowledge as well as the presence of dispositions that may emerge with maturity and experience. Previous EC leadership research show clearly that most educators have stumbled into leadership roles, with limited planning and not by purposefully seeking advancement as a leader (Rodd, 2006; Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2004). The continuation of this pattern of a chaotic trajectory into leadership, suggests that there is a need for critical appraisal of career development in the EC sector. In Australia, both governments and employers are now recognising the necessity of having skilled educational leaders to support the delivery of quality EC programs (SCSEC, 2012). There is however little or no systematic research into career development within the EC sector.

This chapter draws on an investigation of career stories of eight women who have been employed as EC educators in Australia. The aim here is to use their stories "as a mode of exploration" (Sinclair, 2009, 267). The visual maps presented here make it easy to see the uneven career pathways each educator had travelled. This exploration is contextualised within the EC policy landscape in Australia that has seen the introduction of significant reforms during the past four years in particular.

Background context

In November 2009, the election of Prime Minister Rudd saw the launching of major EC policy reforms in Australia. Among the significant achievements of this government was the establishment of national policy on EC curriculum and quality assurance, respectively identified as the *Early Years Learning Framework* (ADEEWR, 2009) and the *National Quality Framework* (ACECQA, 2011). It was clear that the implementation of these policies required well qualified EC educators (Productivity Commission, 2011). As a consequence, government policy now demands that as a minimum, "from 1 January 2014, educators in early childhood education and care centres will be required to have, or to be working towards, a diploma level qualification or Certificate III" (ACECQA, 2011). These requirements reinforce the government's acknowledgement of the specialist knowledge base of EC, and the necessity of employing qualified educators who can deliver sound outcomes for children through quality EC programs.

The Australian Government's interest in investing in the early years workforce has been influenced by a variety of factors. These include the demand for EC services with the presence of an estimated four million children aged between birth to five years, reflecting an all time high participation rate (ADEEWR, 2009). Moreover, countries such as the UK, Canada and the USA have for sometime, embraced EC workforce planning as a necessary strategic intervention. The impact of Australia's poor performance in global benchmarking studies in EC (UNICEF, 2008; Watson, 2012) cannot be underestimated. For instance, "at the top of the rankings, Finland, requires a minimum of a bachelor degree for preschool teachers; many attain a masters degree" (Watson, 2012, 25). In contrast, Australia has set a certificate level as the minimum qualification and about one quarter of preschool (25.8%) and child care centre staff (21.7%) do not have any EC qualifications (ADEEWR, 2009).

There is however no denying that the development of a well educated workforce is a necessity in delivering quality EC programs (Aubrey et al., 2013; Rodd, 2013; Waniganayake et al., 2012; Watson, 2012). Importantly, it is also as Ryan, Whitebook, Kipnis and Sakai (2011, np) noted, "the most common strategy used by policy makers to ensure a robust return on their investment in preschool regardless of auspice (Barnett, 2003; Bogard, Traylor, & Takanishi, 2008; Kagan, Kauerz, & Tarrant, 2008; Whitebook, 2003)." Accordingly, it is pleasing to note that the current Australian government has funded several major workforce initiatives aimed at training and retaining EC personnel (SCSEEC, 2012). These include the funding of

- Staff without formal EC qualifications to complete a relevant vocational education and training qualification;
- EC teachers working in high needs areas to reduce their debts incurred when undertaking higher education studies; and
- EC staff working in rural and remote areas, including Indigenous communities, to access appropriate training.

These initiatives may be regarded as supportive measures that can up-skill a marginalised sector, though their full impact remains to be seen. For instance, it seems that major workforce policy reforms institutionalised in the UK during the past decade, have been stifled by entrenched structural impediments (McGillivray, 2011) and "the inherent classed, gendered, 'raced' assumptions on which constructions of 'professionalism' in EC

come into existence." (Osgood, 2009, 734). Likewise, the outcomes of the impending elections in Australia in September 2013 may stall the EC policy reform agenda. By emphasising the importance of leadership careers this chapter is aimed at creating spaces for shared conversations, thinking and debating ideas that can advance a deeper level of engagement in EC leadership in particular, and workforce matters in general.

Practitioner voices – real stories of career development

By way of illustrating the various facets of career development in the EC sector, learnings from the real-life stories of eight educators are presented next. These stories emerged during a leadership forum that involved getting together with these educators throughout 2012, and where they willingly shared their leadership experiences with each other. A survey, containing both open and closed questions, was completed at the start of the forum. It was aimed at capturing participants' perceptions and experiences of leadership in the sector, and yielded both quantitative and qualitative data as presented in this chapter. The visual maps, which were drawn by each educator during one of the forum meetings, enhanced the discussion and analysis of career experiences. Having agreed to allow the use of these data in this book, once drafted, the chapter was sent to the participants for verification and feedback. These comments in turn, were used in refining the final copy of this chapter. Pseudonyms were used to preserve participants' privacy.

Table 1 presents some background qualifications and employment details of each educator. As can be seen, almost all the participants held a senior management role within their organisation. Those who held the position of a centre director (n=4) did not typically perform regular classroom work though they may participate in working with children in an ad hoc capacity when required. Those who had a combined role in directing and teaching, had regular responsibilities for a particular group of children at their centre. Others, such as Helen, who identified as an Assistant director, and Gail, who identified her role as an educational leader at her centre, had shared responsibilities in teaching and administration. When examining the length of employment in the sector, apart from Candy, everyone had worked in the EC sector for more than 10 years. Other available data showed that

two participants (Candy and Ellen) had international work experience, with one being employed in Colombia and the other in the USA.

Table 1. Background characteristics of practitioners

Participant	Current Position	Highest EC Qualification	Other qualifications	Experience in Sector (years)
Anne	Teacher Director	Bachelor Degree	Bachelor of Arts; Certificate 4	16–20
Benita	Director	Bachelor Degree	Studying for Early Childhood Masters	11–15
Candy	Director	Masters Degree	EC Bachelor degree	5–10
Demi	Director	Bachelor Degree	EC Diploma; Certificate 4; Studying for Graduate Diploma in Psychology	25+
Ellen	Director	PhD	Early Childhood Bachelor degree	11–15
Fiona	Teacher Director	Bachelor Degree	2 x EC Diplomas; studying for Bachelor in Fine Arts	16–20
Gail	Teacher/ Educational leader	Bachelor Degree	EC Diploma, Certificate in Horticulture	21–25
Helen	Assistant Director	Bachelor Degree	EC Diploma	25+

In drawing the maps, participants struggled to depict their career pathways as an upwardly mobile trajectory. The maps by Demi, Helen and Fiona, and to a lesser extent Benita, do show upward movement, but this reflects passage of time rather than advancements in their careers. Demi and Helen, who had each worked for more than 25 years, approached the task differently – one used two pages with lots of details and the other managed to summarise the essentials into one page. Each participant did not specify every EC job they had held over time. Most had however worked in 5 or more organisations. At least two had worked in more than 10 positions, and these ranged from baby-sitting as a teenager to gradually advancing their careers from being an assistant to a director. Others identified working in different service types such as Ellen, who had worked in After School Care, school based EC and privately owned centres; whilst Benita, Gail and Helen noted working as an assistant/ teacher/ consultant involving private and/or community based

EC organisations. Looking at the maps it is however not always possible to comment on seniority or rates of pay afforded in each position, over time. For instance, Fiona began work as a family day care provider, and it would have yielded the lowest rate of pay. It is however, not possible to comment if she perceived her previous role of being a room leader higher or lower in status to her subsequent role as a preschool teacher. Collection of more specific individual data such as these, require 1:1 conversations that fell outside the scope of this study.

When analysing the career pathways maps it was also possible to see that each educator had undergone at least one or more challenging experience that impacted heavily on their employment situations. In some instances, life changing experiences such as immigration to Australia or the birth of a child meant there was a break in employment and others referred to personal crisis points or being burnt out through working in the sector. One participant identified the resignation of a centre director, and another being involved in a conflict with a new director, as impacting their career advancement. Those who were parents (n=5) noted that the needs of their own children, at times influenced their employment circumstances. Each described their changing circumstances in different ways:

- Anne: "Very negative director – I quit" and "Large corporation-disillusioned and searching."
- Benita: The retirement of the director and then plunging into an "unknown abyss."
- Demi: "Conflict with manager of children's services" and "Conflict with new director – alienated by staff."
- Helen: "Burn out" arising through the constantly expanding role within a large organisation, and involving a lot of travelling.
- Fiona: Change of location from the city to country seeking "a lifestyle change."

Participants' maps and comments reflect the personal, relational and local nature of career development and the organisational and societal barriers that impacted their decision-making along the way. Thus, when policy reform is proclaimed at a national level, due consideration of local implementation and personal impact cannot be ignored, especially when assessing needs and allocating resources (McGillivray, 2011).

Importantly, this group of EC practitioners represented well-qualified educators, as everyone had completed an early childhood bachelor degree. Two participants (Candy and Ellen), had also achieved a Masters degree and another (Benita), was currently enrolled in a Masters degree. One participant, Ellen, had achieved a PhD and opted to continue working as a practitioner rather than seeking employment as an academic researcher. Each participant valued the importance of obtaining formal EC qualifications in becoming a leader in the sector. When asked to comment specifically about the extent to which their degree had prepared them for performing leadership roles, the majority of participants were ambiguous. Comments made by four participants clearly indicated that their initial training had not prepared them for working as leaders:

- Anne: "This was not a core aspect of my training in the BEd in 1994 from xxx."
- Benita: "Don't remember doing much about leadership – was not inspired to look at being a leader whilst at university."
- Gail: "Trained at xxx – I believe where and when you trained has a major impact."
- Helen: "More hands on experience and growing with it. I graduated 30 years ago; leadership was not really taught then."

These findings resonate with patterns found in earlier research by those such as Hayden (1997) and Rodd (1997). These comments also mirror historical developments on how leadership study has been built into EC teacher education bachelor degrees.

Participants who had completed their bachelor degrees more recently noted the importance of on-the-job training in developing appropriate expertise in growing as EC leaders:

- Demi: "Minimal focus on leadership during degree. Mostly learnt whilst at work."
- Candy: "It is something that is not addressed (in the degree) since it's hard to teach it through theory without practice."
- Fiona: "Without mentoring I would have struggled straight out of uni. XXX course was a broad introduction and gave me most skills but nothing can replace hands on management and leadership experiences. I hit the ground running!"

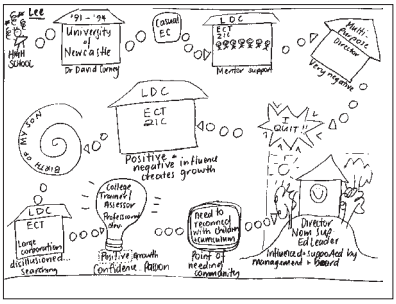
- Ellen: "You cannot be prepared until you start working and meeting the unique needs in the community at that time."

These comments echo findings of Aubrey et al. (2013) who report on the "pragmatic nature of leadership" (p. 24) as described by those who participated in their study in the UK. This meant that understandings about leadership was localised to a particular EC setting and reflected a "tacit leadership knowledge that had not been explicitly taught and usually was not even verbalised " (Aubrey et al., 2013, 25). These matters raise questions about if, how, when and how much leadership knowledge should be cramped into an initial teacher education degree.

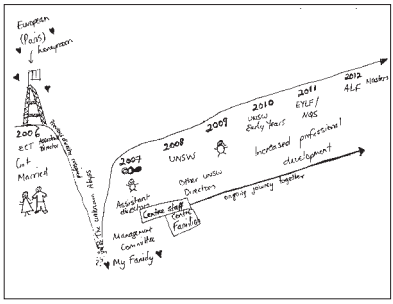
The extent to which an initial EC degree can provide a professional preparation for a neophyte teacher as well as a leader, is highly questionable. Importantly, EC bachelor degrees must provide an induction to the profession, including an orientation to career pathways within the sector. It is also proposed that these discussions include consideration of leadership possibilities and that leadership roles are aligned with postgraduate qualifications as suggested by Rodd (2013, 260).

The majority of educators in this study indicated being inspired by mentors and roles models. Five participants identified university academics and seven named practitioners, who worked either in the same organisation or near by, as being their mentors or role models. These were typically senior colleagues working with junior or novice educators, and this type of mentoring was not defined as 'an official' or formal role and was aligned with crisis management. As Candy explained: "It was common for us to be rescued by our mentors. We didn't usually ask for them to mentor us. They come to save us!" In hindsight, all participants agreed that they have come to realise the power of continuous mentoring as reflected in Ellen's comments: "I think a lot of the pitfalls could have been avoided with a mentor. Having a 'plan' could guide me rather than just taking something on blindly. I would love to have that strategic component."

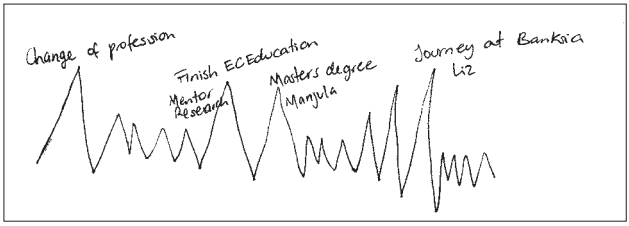
Participants in the current study noted the diversity of organisations and roles/positions that they had held over time. It is however difficult to identify a linear pattern of career progression that enhanced their leadership growth systematically from one job to the next. Some changes in employment had been influenced through challenging circumstances. The extent to which these disruptions can however be perceived as transformative is difficult to



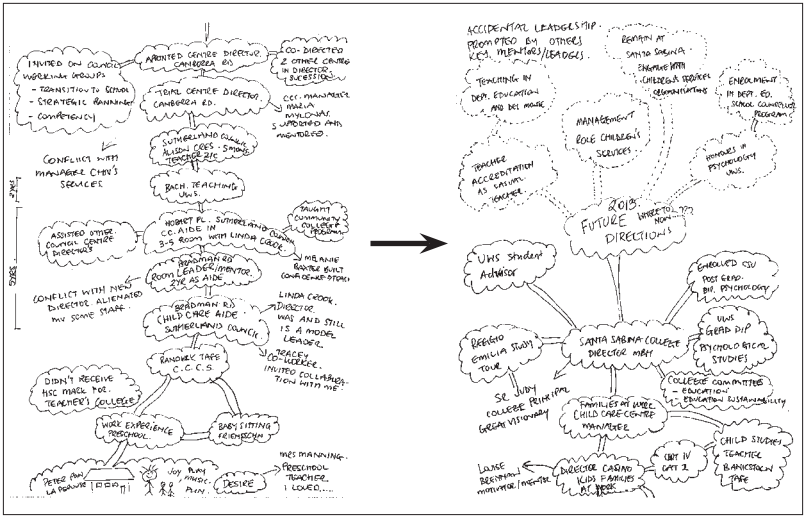
Participant 1 – Anne



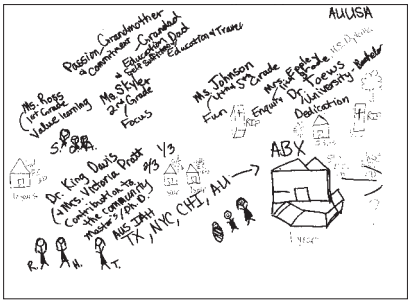
Participant 2 – Benita



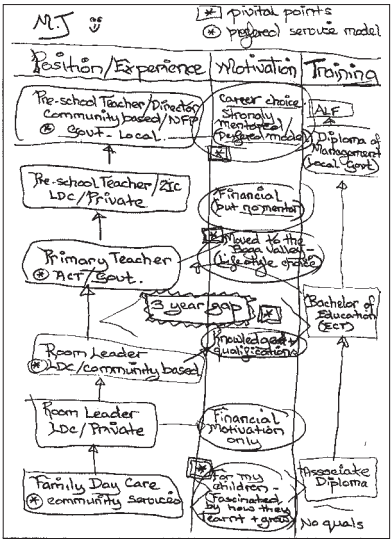
Participant 3 – Candy



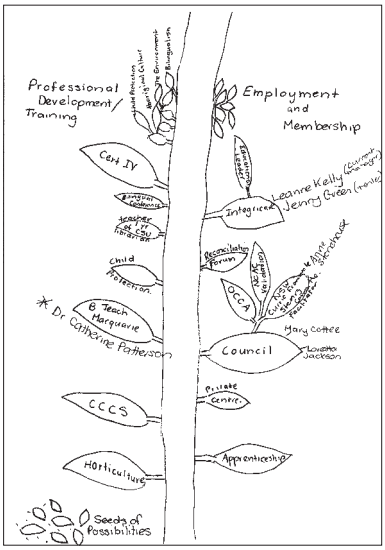
Participant 4 – Demi



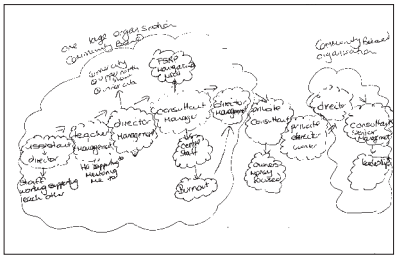
Participant 5 – Ellen



Participant 6 – Fiona



Participant 7 – Gail



Participant 8 – Helen

Figure 1. Mapping the careers of early childhood educators

assess, especially as most participants described these difficult encounters as 'just needing to survive' or 'get by'. This inherently unpredictable nature of career development fit with what Block (2005) described as "the messiness of life" where there is an "underlying order in what otherwise appears to be random" (p. 196). According to Block, given the complexities, chaos and non-linear dynamics of career development, one must adopt a holistic approach when exploring career developments over time.

There was no evidence of any participant actively seeking to advance their careers in a particular direction. None had seen a careers counsellor for academic advice or career planning guidance. It was also difficult to see exactly how they were going to make use of postgraduate qualifications in long-term career planning because of the limited recognition afforded to those with masters or doctoral qualifications within EC centres. This view is captured in Ellen's comments, as she declared, "No one who works at my service would achieve at this level because they see no benefit in it (postgraduate studies). They have plenty of potential, but without this being recognised as valuable to society or being compensated for the achievement, it is viewed as frivolous and wasteful." Another participant, Demi, described her circumstances as "accidental leadership prompted by others – key mentors" and this could be easily applied to all participants in this study. This suggests that in the case of the eight educators in this study, leadership growth had emerged largely as a mix of chaos and serendipity.

Implications for policy makers and researchers

The career trajectories of the eight educators denote authentic stories of passion, perseverance and commitment as key drivers that have sustained their work in the sector. Their narratives also reflect the increasing professionalisation of the EC sector in Australia and serve to highlight three important aspects about the growth of EC leadership:

a) leadership understandings emerge through diverse experiences and employment roles,
b) increasing recognition of the benefits of mentoring by EC peers,
c) achievement of formal university qualifications, with little or no guarantees in obtaining financial remuneration to match.

Using these findings, it is possible to conceptualise leadership career development as comprising three key processes: experiential learning, mentoring, and achievement of professional qualifications (see Figure 2).

Each of these processes may be described as follows:

- EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: Learning by observing, reflecting and demonstrating leadership skills and strategies in diverse contexts.
- MENTORING: Working with a mentor to support, guide and nurture leadership potential.
- ACHIEVING QUALIFICATIONS: completion of university-based qualifications focusing on EC leadership.

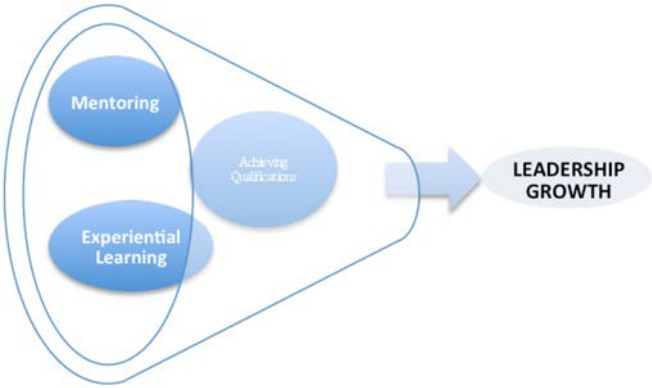


Figure 2. Leadership growth – three key processes

Based on their UK study, Whalley, Chandler, Reid, Thorpe and Everitt (2008) have suggested, leadership can be developed in sustainable ways through the establishment of a pedagogy of participation with the assistance of tutors and mentors. Colmer (2008) supports this view in analysing the use of distributed leadership practices effectively to create a dynamic culture of learning within her organisation. These two examples highlight the potential for leadership growth within collective contexts, across a country and within an individual organisation, respectively. This pattern is illustrated in the career pathways of the participants in this chapter. Clearly, learning through experience, mentoring, and further study, presents opportunities

for leadership growth. There is overlap and collision between these processes and the relative importance of each process for an individual's career development will vary. Ideally, these processes are best considered as being continuous over time. Importantly, the capacity to create and communicate one's leadership approach is built through interactions with others. Put simply, it is through conversations with others that one can experiment and refine the articulation of one's leadership philosophy.

Within Australia, under the *National Quality Framework* (ACECQA, 2011), mentoring and achieving formal qualifications are now legislatively legitimised. There is also an explicit statement about the government's interest in career development in the sector identified in the *Early Years Workforce Strategy* (SCSEEC, 2012, 8):

> Building a career pathway is a key step in raising the professionalism of the EC workforce. Clearly articulating the opportunities available for educators through updating and increasing qualifications will offer clear goals and reward professionalism, ultimately improving the quality of education and care of children.

In reality, as noted by Whalley et al. (2008), to achieve these objectives, there must be adequate structural support, including financial resources, to enable educators to find time to engage in collaborative learning, both within their organisations, and elsewhere, and not be limited by geography. The magnitude of this reality was reflected in Fiona's feedback: "my concern is that 'if' there are short comings in rural services that limit growth in these three important areas, then there will also be limitations on the ability of rural services to produce Early Childhood leaders."

For the first time the Australian government has established a national workforce strategy offering much hope and optimism for the EC sector. It is of grave concern however, that the Government has side-stepped the issues of remuneration by declaring these matters fall "outside the scope of the strategy, as they are for employers and employees to negotiate." (SCSEEC, 2012, 6). Paradoxically, government policies recognise the importance of professional qualifications and the creation of a relational milieu within an organisation as a primary leadership responsibility. The same government can run away from the complexities of achieving structural harmony, especially when a significant attitudinal shift is required in terms of improving pay and conditions in the EC sector.

Serendipity is the gift of discovery, where by accident, coincidence or chance, one can find work as an educational leader with a specific title and job description. Planning involves reflection, projection, preparation and the execution of plans in an orderly manner. In reality, as reflected in the stories of the participants in this study, many EC leaders have travelled through chaos and not through systematic planning or a linear pathway that was upwardly mobile, to get to where they are today. Being strategic implies that one has taken steps to carefully calculate and consider the strategies that are being implemented to maximise the benefits, goals being targeted or outcomes desired. By considering areas of specialisation, Waniganayake et al. (2012) provoke educators to reflect on their interests, talents and passions by taking charge of charting their own careers as leaders.

This model presented in this chapter integrates individual and collective learning approaches to leadership preparation. It emphasises the interdependence of an individual's agency, structured support and strategic planning in pursuing a career as an EC leader. Bloch (2005) conceptualised career development as "a complex adaptive entity" (p. 195) and emphasised the importance of examining "transition points" when change happens and the "understanding the power of small changes" (p. 204). Given the sparse landscape of theorising EC leadership growth and career development, examination of contemporary EC leadership preparation courses is essential. Within this context, incorporating support systems to induct novice educators, retain accomplished leaders and establish succession planning strategies are three aspects that require policy and research attention (Waniganayake et al., 2012).

In Australia, the number of staff employed in EC settings is increasing and the calls for pedagogical leadership are intensifying. The stories included here depicted eight accomplished leaders who developed leadership capabilities in ad hoc ways, driven by a desire to make a difference for young children. Their stories also reflect the importance of having targeted professional development to facilitate leadership growth of both novice and experienced educators. This means "more experienced and less experienced directors receive content relevant to their particular level of expertise." (Ryan et al., 2011, np). Broader considerations such as paying attention to the gendered nature of EC work and "building a linguistically and culturally diverse leadership" (Ryan et al., 2011, np) particularly in multi-ethnic societies such as Australia, are also important.

Understanding that career planning is influential in developing as an EC leader is now beginning to emerge. Adopting a planned approach means developing a personal philosophy of leadership based on an appropriate knowledge base and skills so that the leader can articulate a vision in everyday practice. The challenge to this generation of EC educators is to grapple with their understandings of leadership and adopt strategic directions in advancing their careers as leaders. Systemic provision of well resourced opportunities for leadership learning can fortify individual efforts to chart their own professional development. That is, the growth of EC leaders is both an individual and collective responsibility within the sector. The availability of leadership mentoring, experiential learning in diverse settings and postgraduate qualifications leading to adequate remuneration in pay, offer attractive possibilities for aspiring leaders. If this chapter contributes by provoking further dialogue on leadership workforce planning, it would have achieved its aim.

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Distribution of Leadership Functions in Early Childhood Centers in Norway Following Organisational Changes

Kari Hoås Moen and Per Tore Granrusten
Queen Maud University College
Norway

Abstract

Leadership in early childhood centers (ECCs) might be perceived as different functions that must be taken care of. In this article we distinguish between four such functions: Pedagogical, staff, administrative and strategic leadership functions. We focus on how leadership functions are distributed among three formal positions in a sample of large municipal ECCs after an organisational change from three to two administrative levels in a Norwegian municipality. The three formal leadership positions in the ECCs are directors, assistant directors and pedagogical leaders. This study has a qualitative design with a sample of 15 informants that have been interviewed. One aspect of the results is that both directors and pedagogical leaders spent less time on pedagogical leadership functions than before the reorganisation.

Abstrakt

Ledelse i barnehager kan forstås som ulike funksjoner som må ivaretas. I denne artikkelen skiller vi mellom fire slike funksjoner: Pedagogiske, personalmessige, administrative og strategiske ledelsesfunksjoner. Vi fokuserer på hvordan ledelsesfunksjoner er distribuert mellom tre formelle posisjoner i et utvalg store kommunale barnehager etter en omorganisering fra tre til to administrative nivåer i en norsk kommune. De tre formelle lederstillingene i barnehagene er styrere, fagledere og pedagogiske ledere. Denne studien har et kvalitativt design med et utvalg på 15 informanter som er intervjuet. Ett aspekt ved funnene er at både styrere og pedagogiske ledere bruker mindre tid på pedagogiske ledelsesfunksjoner enn før omorganiseringen.

Kari Hoås Moen and Per Tore Granrusten: Distribution of Leadership Functions in Early Childhood Centers in Norway Following Organisational Changes.
Eeva Hujala, Manjula Waniganayake & Jillian Rodd (Eds)
Researching Leadership in Early Childhood Education.
Tampere: Tampere University Press 2013, 79–96.

Tiivistelmä

Johtajuus päiväkodeissa ilmenee erilaisina tehtävinä, joista pitää huolehtia. Tässä artikkelissa erotamme neljä tehtävää: pedagogiset, henkilöstöön liittyvät, hallinnolliset ja strategiset johtamistehtävät. Keskitymme siihen, miten johtamistehtävät ovat jakautuneet kolmen muodollisen aseman mukaan laajassa aineistossamme, joka on kerätty kunnallisessa varhaiskasvatusinstituutiokontekstissa organisaatiomuutoksen jälkeen. Organisaatiomuutoksessa norjalaisessa kunnassa siirryttiin kolmesta hallinnollisesta tasosta kahteen. Nämä kolme muodollista johtajuusasemaa varhaiskasvatuskeskuksissa ovat johtajat, apulaisjohtajat sekä pedagogiset johtajat. Tässä laadullisessa tutkimuksessa on haastateltu 15 henkilöä. Tutkimuksessa havaittiin muuan muassa, että uudelleenjärjestelyn seurauksena sekä johtajat että pedagogiset johtajat käyttivät vähemmän aikaa pedagogiseen johtamiseen kuin ennen.

Introduction

The Norwegian field of early childhood education and care (ECEC) has changed radically since the millennium. The political commitment to full coverage has led to both a significant expansion of the number of places for children in early childhood centres (ECCs) and reorganisations in the field[1]. In 2005, the Norwegian Parliament decided by law that the municipalities were obligated to provide ECEC for all children under primary school age. A few years later, in 2009, children aged 1 to 5 years were entitled to a place in an ECC if their parents wanted them to have a place.

Although the number of children in Norway's ECCs has increased and continues to increase, the number of centres has decreased since 2008. One might infer from this that some centres have increased in size, while some smaller centres have been closed or merged into larger units. The merging of centres is similar to the results of reforms in other Nordic countries, such as Finland (Halttunen, 2010; Heikka & Waniganayake, 2011). Ten years ago, an ECC in Norway with 14 or 15 employees and 50 to 55 children might have been described as a very large centre. Each centre usually had its own director and a few departments organised according to specific groups of children. The staff in each department often consisted of 1 pedagogical leader (an early childhood teacher), 2 skilled or unskilled assistants and

1 At the end of the year 2000, coverage for children aged 1–5 years in early childhood centres in Norway was 62 per cent. It was 90 per cent in 2011 (Statistisk sentralbyrå 2012).

9 to 18 children, depending on the children's age. Such centres still exist, but large centres where a unit director is responsible for more than 50 to 60 employees and 150 to 180 children are increasingly common. According to Vassenden, Thygesen, Bayer, Alvestad and Abrahamsen (2011), 24 per cent of the children in Norwegian ECCs attend centres with 80 children or more. A pedagogical leader may in turn be responsible for a "base", or group of 35 to 40 children and a related staff of 5 or 6 people. A base has a larger group of children than the traditional departments in Norwegian ECCs. That group of children belongs to a fixed area, the base, but some area at the centre is established as a common area for all bases and is designed for different activities. During parts of the day, smaller groups of children from different bases can use these smaller rooms.

In larger centres, there might be pressure to distribute some of the leadership functions that the directors in the ECCs have traditionally performed. In recent years, new positions have emerged in early childhood centres in Norway (Bleken, 2005; Granrusten & Moen, 2009). Børhaug and Lotsberg (2010) indicated the need for more research about organisation and leadership in large ECCs in Norway. We want to discover how leadership functions might be distributed in such ECCs. More precisely, we will try to address the following issue: How are leadership functions distributed among three leadership positions in a sample of large municipal ECCs in Norway?

The positions director, assisting director and pedagogical leader

The Norwegian Kindergarten Act[2] describes two formal positions for teachers in ECCs: the director and the pedagogical leader. The act states that each ECC shall have a director who is a trained early childhood teacher or has a combination of corresponding education at the bachelor level that qualifies him or her to work with children and pedagogical expertise. Pedagogical leaders must be trained early childhood teachers. The

2 In the English translation of the Kindergarten Act and the Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of the Kindergartens, the term "Kindergarten" is used. This is a direct translation of the Norwegian term "barnehage". Our experience is that the meaning of "kindergarten" in many countries is significantly different from the Norwegian context. Therefore, we have chosen to use "Early Childhood Centre" as a term in this article.

tasks of these positions are not discussed in the act but are elaborated in the notes to the act and the Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of the Kindergartens (Ministry of Education and Research, 2011). This document state, among other things, that ECC directors and pedagogical leaders are particularly responsible for planning, implementing, assessing and developing the ECCs' tasks and content.

The third leadership position in our sample we have chosen to call "assistant director". This is not a translation of the Norwegian title "fagleder", which we have found difficult to meaningfully translate into English. We have chosen the title "assistant director" because this term is the most appropriate description of this role in our sample. Unlike the positions of pedagogical leader and director, the assistant director position is not described in the Kindergarten Act or central regulations. Instead, the position is defined and determined by the director who makes the appointment. The assistant director's tasks and responsibilities may vary from ECC to ECC, depending on agreements in each centre. A large centre may have more than one assistant director (Granrusten & Moen, 2011).

Many small ECCs have probably been merged into larger units as a consequence of reorganisations of the structure of the administrations from three to two levels in many Norwegian municipalities, as shown in figure 1. This reorganisation meant that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in many municipalities exert direct leadership over an increased number of people. An increased range of control for the CEO and an increased need for diverse competencies in each ECC may have driven many municipalities to merge several small ECCs into larger units led by a single director.

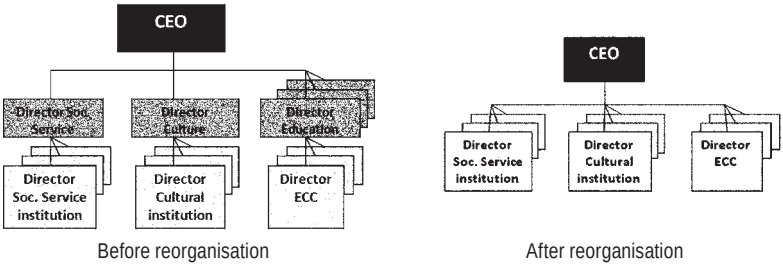

Figure 1. The transition from three to two main levels of leadership in municipality administration

One result of the merging is that the control range and responsibilities of the directors have increased from a single ECC to a unit consisting of several previously independent ECCs. This is often referred to as a change from one single "house[3]" to several "houses" with a significantly larger number of children and staff. Halttunen (2010) calls such centres in Finland "distributed organisations". Some centres have established management systems with coordinators for each house.

New Public Management

The above-mentioned reorganisation of many ECCs and municipalities in Norway can be anchored in the concept of New Public Management (NPM). Since the 1980s, NPM has been implemented in many countries, although in different forms in different national contexts. Although some recent reforms have moved away from this concept, NPM still plays an important role in administrative practices (Børhaug & Lotsberg, 2012). NPM is an overarching term that can include several principles related to how the public sector should be managed and reformed. Some key elements of NPM are a strong belief in professional leadership and management, increased use of indirect control rather than direct authority and increased focus on the citizens as users of welfare services (Øgård, 2005). The weight of leadership is reflected, for example, by decentralising power and authority.

Klausen (2005) divides NPM ideas into two main groups. One emphasises leadership and "cycles of managerialism." This area focuses on stronger leadership, a clear distinction between political and administrative tasks and questions, delegation, service management, personnel management and results. The second area emphasises the market principle of the public sector and competition between the public and private sectors. In the context of our study, the first group of principles is the most relevant.

3 The term "house" is used for a previously independent ECC that has merged with other ECCs and is now part of a larger unit.

Structural perspective

As an approach to the organisational changes, we have chosen a structural perspective on organisations (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Many Norwegian municipalities have reduced the number of administrative levels from three to two, but within the ECCs, the traditional two-level model with the director on the top and the pedagogical leaders below appears to have become more complicated.

From an organisational perspective, ECCs might be considered independent organisations as well as parts of the municipal organisation (Moen, 2006). Patterns of division of labour and coordination and the distribution of authority are viewed as key aspects of the centre's organisational structure. The way these elements are designed and developed might vary from centre to centre, depending on how the director wants to lead the centre and on the size of the centre unit. In general, it can be argued that larger organisations have more complex structures compared with smaller organisations and that the larger size increases the need for formalisation and procedures (Jakobsen & Thorsvik, 2007). This may also apply to the centres in our study, where several structural factors can affect the way the leaders spend their time. Three factors were identified as important to pedagogical leaders' use of time: 1) new leadership roles and leadership agreements for the directors, 2) the size of the centres and their internal organisation, and 3) the location of the centres. The latter applies when several smaller centres that are not located near each other are merged into larger units (Granrusten & Moen, 2009).

Leadership functions

There are several ways to approach leadership in ECCs. In recent years, there has been a tendency to associate *management* with the more organisational, tangible and visible aspects of day-to-day operations. In contrast, *leadership* has been associated with the symbolic, inspirational, pedagogical and normative functions of a leader (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Jones & Pound, 2008; Strand, 2007). The Norwegian language does not clearly distinguish between management and leadership. We have chosen to use the concept of leadership, but we are aware that leadership functions may also include some management functions.

Our study also focuses on leadership functions. Leadership functions and duties are many and various and have been described in many ways in the literature. Horrigmo and Nylehn (2004) are among the authors who note that organisations do not necessarily need leaders but that leadership is needed to accomplish the important tasks in an organisation. Examining leadership in terms of functions implies that different functions can be performed by different people and groups, especially as organisations become increasingly complex. In large organisations, the top leaders often work more overall and in a more long-term, strategic manner compared with leaders in smaller centres (Horrigmo & Nylehn, 2004).

Bleken (2005) defines four leadership areas in ECCs that also could be viewed as leadership functions. The four areas are included in figure 2: Strategic, pedagogical, administrative and staff leadership. These functions have specific tasks or sub-functions attached. The figure shows that pedagogical leadership is in the middle because it can be viewed as a core function of leadership. The different areas will overlap to some extent (Moen, 2006).

Pedagogical leadership includes leading to meet the children's care and educational aims and providing guidance and encouraging reflection among the staff related to such work (Gotvassli, 1996; Heikka & Waniganayake,

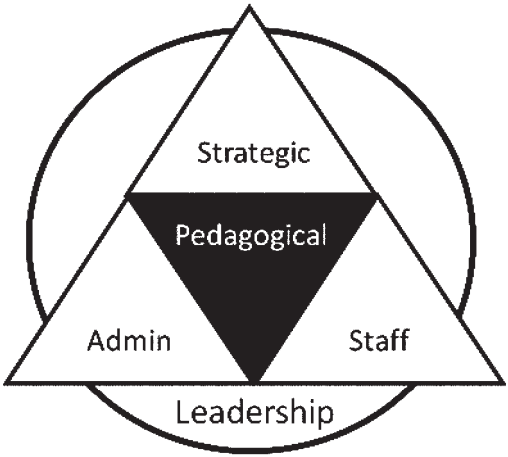

Figure 2. Leadership functions in ECCs (translated from Bleken, 2005, 62)

2011). Børhaug and Lotsberg (2010) claim that a pedagogical leadership sub-function may be to design organisational structures that safeguard pedagogical considerations, important for the leader. Børhaug and Lotsberg (2010) believe that this is more important among directors in large centres than those in small ones and that it allows indirect control of the pedagogy.

Tasks related to the staff leadership function might include recruiting new staff members, motivating and inspiring the staff, solving personal conflicts and facilitating good working and cooperative relationships. Administrative functions might include formulating working plans, hiring temporary staff to cover absenteeism and working with economic and budget matters. Leadership also involves the external dimension because of the need to interact with owners, government agents and other participants. Occasionally, directors are involved in strategic functions that require an ability to balance the multiple demands, expectations and incentives ("rewards") that different stakeholders bring to the organisation. Strategic functions also require directors to engage in qualitative development and make long-term plans to meet internal and external challenges.

Methodology and data

Our study has a qualitative exploratory design that included interviews with 15 participants who are part of a larger study. The sample includes five pedagogical leaders, five unit directors and five assistant directors in different public ECCs in one municipality in Norway. The sample was strategically drawn, with an aim to include participants who had worked in ECCs in this municipality since before the reorganisation process started. Furthermore, we sought leaders who worked in large centres, which were defined as those with 80 children or more.

An important criterion for the selection of our sample was that all respondents should have been involved in the reorganisation process in the municipality. The respondents were employed in ECCs before the reorganisation process started. All of the pedagogical leaders held the same position at the same centres throughout the restructuring process. The assistant directors and the unit directors were appointed to their positions because of the restructuring, but have all been employed in municipal centres since before the start of the reorganisation process in 2004. This process

included the municipal reorganisation into two main administrative levels and the merging of public ECCs.

Two of the pedagogical leaders in our study are working in centres that have changed from a departmental organisation to a "base" organisation. These centres have undergone extensive alterations on multiple levels. The pedagogical leaders are leaders for a larger number of children and staff compared with leaders who work in centres with traditional departments. Meanwhile, the informants who worked in the base shared leadership of the base. The three other pedagogical leaders in the study were leaders for one department each in different centres.

All of the participants were interviewed between 2007 and 2009 using interview guides that were prepared separately for each group. The pedagogical leaders were interviewed twice, once in 2007 and again in 2009. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed. The transcribed material was completely read and analysed by two researchers working independently and considering the four functions of pedagogical, staff, administrative and strategic leadership. Quotes from interviews are used as illustrations in the results and discussion sections.

Results and discussion

In this section, we present the results of our study and discuss our findings related to the distribution of leadership functions in large ECCs among three leadership positions in a sample of municipal ECCs in Norway.

Pedagogical leadership

None of the directors in our study said that pedagogical leadership was their primary focus. Under the new arrangements, this function was largely delegated to the assistant directors or to the pedagogical leaders who work at the operational level of the EECs. Some of the directors stressed that they have pedagogical responsibility, even if the pedagogical leadership functions are delegated to the assistant directors and pedagogical leaders. Delegation to other leadership groups might be a way of controlling the pedagogical work in the centre. One director has divided the staff into groups related to various disciplines and areas of focus in ECEC and has

delegated pedagogical leadership to these groups regardless of the formal education. Helgøy, Homme and Ludvigsen (2010) published a Norwegian article about this approach. The results of their study indicate that the work in the centre is often allocated according to experience-based knowledge and not just by formal education. One consequence may be that it might be difficult to distinguish between pedagogical work that requires higher education and typical unskilled work. This type of structure is in accordance with the traditional ideal of equality among the staff in Norwegian ECCs but may create situations in which the pedagogical leaders' overall role will be challenged.

The assistant directors did not say that they their primary focus was on pedagogical leadership. When asked what type of work accounts for most of their time, none of them said pedagogical leadership or pedagogical work. When asked about the nature of their position, none of them said that pedagogical leadership was the most important part. However, all five assistant directors have established or were working to establish a professional leadership team in the centre unit.

The pedagogical leaders lead the pedagogical work with a group of children and the staff responsible for the children. Some of the pedagogical leaders in the study mentioned that the director did not know the children and parents as well as before because of the large size of the centre, but the pedagogical leaders report to the director when they have concerns about children. Two of the pedagogical leaders emphasised that they were spending less time with the children and more with the staff to establish a common understanding of the way to work with children and provide guidance to the staff. One of the pedagogical leaders said that "sometimes I feel that my time is robbed from the children".

One interpretation of our findings is that pedagogical leadership is largely delegated to the operational level, the pedagogical leaders. The directors will, through the assistant directors, still have a partial overview, which they require to be responsible for the pedagogy of the centre. This structure is in accordance with an NPM model, in which clearer leadership responsibilities entail the professionalization of leadership and the extensive delegation of authority and responsibility (Øgård, 2005).

Leadership of staff

When we asked the directors which of the four functions they spent the most time on, all of them either answered staff leadership or staff and administrative leadership. They experienced an increase in the tasks related to staff leadership after the municipal reorganisation and the merging of the ECCs. For four of the directors, the reorganisation had led to a larger organisation, and the increased focus on staff leadership might be explained by their increased range of control. The fifth director in our study worked in a non-merged ECC but spent an increased amount of time leading the staff. The shifts in focus may also be related to the increased authority and responsibilities of the directors following the administrative reorganisation of the municipal organisation, which reduced the main leadership levels at the municipality. All directors were given more authority and responsibility for their units, including the responsibility to recruit and follow up with the employees.

The assistant directors' descriptions of how they spent their time varied from quite specific to rather diffuse. One said something that was expressed in different ways by others: "No, it is not possible to define the assistant director, you know. I cannot do it ... so actually I'm everywhere, then". Two assistant directors said they spent most of their time on staff affairs, but they had no formal responsibility for the staff. Some led the work of implementing "health, environment and safety" for the children and staff, and some mentioned that they were following up new employees and sickness absenteeism among the staff.

Most of the pedagogical leaders said they spend more time on staff leadership than before. Two of them said they spend most of their time on staff leadership. Being the leader of a base demands more planning and organisation than being the leader at a smaller department does, they said. One pedagogical leader at a base mentioned that she cannot lead by being a role model as much as before because the staff is in separate special rooms together with small groups of children during parts of the day. This requires clearer leadership and better systems. The absence of the director makes the pedagogical leaders feel that they have more responsibility for the staff members than before. Some of them have been delegated such tasks as appraising the assistants.

Strategic leadership

All five directors in our study have a leadership agreement with the CEO of the municipality that provides guidelines and defines goals for the centre's organisation. The directors described agreement as an effective and good tool for leadership and strategic planning. The way the directors organise their units becomes a part of the strategy to achieve the goals. One of the directors describes quite clearly that the staff was strengthened with purchased resources to relieve the administrative tasks. This gave the director the opportunity to use more time for thinking "long time thoughts" about pedagogical fundamentals and strategic planning for the centre. She says: "I spend a lot of time thinking thoroughly about what I want my centre to be in a pedagogical way. I absolutely spend a lot more time on this now than before". She has gone from being the director of a small centre to being the leader of a larger unit. This increased focus on strategic leadership among leaders in large organisations compared with those in smaller organisations concurs with previous findings (Horrigmo & Nylehn, 2004).

Based on the analyses, we understand that this leader's experience is fairly indicative of how the other directors work. Strategic leadership was the only function of the four in Bleken's (2005) model that all directors in the sample handled themselves. The analyses show that the three other functions were delegated in varying degrees to the assistant directors and pedagogical leaders in the unit centres.

Administrative leadership

Two of the five directors say that they spend most of their time on staff and administrative leadership functions. As mentioned above, one director is very clear that she has appointed a person with business expertise, so that she can free herself from many administrative tasks and focus more on strategic leadership.

The assistant directors seem to struggle to differentiate clearly between administrative and staff leadership functions because these functions are partly considered the same area. This may indicate that these functions are not mutually exclusive categories (Moen, 2006). One assistant director is aware that administration takes most of her time, but she says that a secretary could perform that work.

Some of the pedagogical leaders say that they have been given more administrative tasks and emphasise that they should be better about delegating to the assistants:

> Now we have decided that we should delegate some of our work down to the assistants... For example, the registration of absenteeism of the employees, that requires taking some time to do. Earlier, there was a secretary at the office doing this, but then it was delegated to us, and now I think that maybe the assistants may be allowed to do it. We, the pedagogical leaders, must become better at delegating tasks if we are to complete all that we should.

The pedagogical leaders also spend more time on documentation in meetings or in writing. One of them says that "the director wants written documentation. There is more need for documentation than before. It's her way to make sure that things get done. So I use more time on that".

General discussion

The directors and assistant directors

The directors in this study say that they spend more time on staff leadership than they did before the municipal reorganisation and the merging of ECCs. They also seem to spend more time on strategic leadership. All of the directors emphasised that they were responsible for all four of the leadership functions, but to a certain degree, some leadership sub-functions were delegated to other staff and performed elsewhere in the ECC organisation. This occurred to a greater extent after the reorganisation and the merging of ECCs than it did in the past.

The results of the interviews provide information about some aspects of the distribution of leadership and the experience of the roles of assistant director and unit director in a sample of ECCs. Our data do not allow us to comment on how common this experience is among ECCs; however, it is possible to identify some traits that can be developed into quantitative indicators that should be used in a larger-scale survey.

Our interpretation is that the operational leadership occurs more or less regardless of how the positions of unit director and assistant director relate to each other in the formal organisational structure. Tasks seem to

be distributed based on the competencies of the unit directors and assistant directors themselves. Structural factors, such as the size and internal localisation of the "houses", seem to affect whether the tasks are distributed in an overlapping or complementary way.

A common feature of our findings is that staff and administrative leadership demand a great deal of work time, both for the unit directors and the assistant directors. Our interpretation is that the assistant director has considerable latitude to act as unit director in many situations. The unit directors and the assistant director state that they delegate the pedagogical tasks to the pedagogical leaders throughout the organisation, either to individuals or to teams of experts.

We previously found that the pedagogical leaders in municipal ECCs use less time for pedagogical leadership today than they did before the municipality reorganised from three to two administrative levels (Granrusten & Moen, 2009). This is to accommodate new tasks that were previously performed by the director or work that became more complicated and time consuming with the new organisation. Based on these findings and what we learned in the present study about unit directors and assistant directors, it is reasonable to question whether less pedagogical leadership is exercised in municipal ECCs now than before, or whether pedagogical leadership is now distributed to staff members other than pedagogical leaders. Such an assumption finds support in Helgøy et al.'s (2010) findings that the ECC assistants' scope of action and responsibility increases with changes in the organisational structure.

The pedagogical leaders

All of the pedagogical leaders in the sample say that they experience increased time spent on tasks that arose after the reorganisation. However, they state that it can be difficult to identify the real causes of the changes in time demands. The pedagogical leaders are sometimes unsure which changes resulted from municipal reorganisation and which were caused by other factors. Among external factors, the informants particularly emphasise the municipalities' strong commitment to full coverage, with a greater developmental pace and the new framework plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens. The requirement for full coverage has, among other results, led to a greater focus on the ECC's profile to ensure that it

stands out in a future landscape where there may be a struggle for parental attention to fill the places in the ECCs. Reorganising into ECCs with several houses that may have previously had different profiles can make it difficult to distinguish between what changes are the development of a general ECC profile and which are the result of the coordination of previously existing profiles.

Several of the pedagogical leaders mention that they have spent much time working with the new curriculum. This may be because of the many new and demanding parts of the curriculum in the framework plan, or it could be because the plan is to be implemented in an organisation that is larger and more complex than the previous one and pedagogical leaders have been delegated more tasks by the unit director. One pedagogical leader say of the curriculum:

> I see that there is more responsibility, too, but I feel just as much of the responsibility in relation to such things as the new curriculum .... I feel the responsibility as head of the department; I feel, do we make the right choices? For when there is so much you have to choose, there is automatically something to reject...

This informant stated that she feels a heavy burden of responsibility for the choices she has to make and that she is not as concerned about the time required to fulfil this responsibility. She stated that she experiences more responsibility since the reorganisation because she has to make some choices that she believes the director would have made in the old organisational structure.

Based on interviews with pedagogical leaders, it is possible to identify three main levels of decisions that affect all educational leaders' use of time. These are political-administrative decisions at the national level, political decisions at the municipal level and decisions in each ECC.

It can be difficult to pinpoint exactly which decisions affect changes in time allocation the most. Causality can be combined and complex. It is possible to categorise some overlapping primary reasons for the changes in time allocation.

The situation in Norway is comparable to that of Finland. According to Heikka and Waniganayake (2011), the roles of early childhood teachers in Finland have changed recently as a result of organisational reforms in early childhood organisations run by various municipalities, similar to

what has happened in municipalities in Norway. Questions asked in the Finnish context include the following: Are early childhood teachers actors in pedagogical leadership and decision-making or just implementers of external aims, and can early childhood teachers implement pedagogical leadership in distributed ways? These questions might also be asked in the Norwegian context.

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Determination of Leadership in a Day Care Organisation

Leena Halttunen
University of Jyväskylä
Finland

Abstract

Quite often leadership is investigated only from the point of view of the leader and not all the elements which affect leadership are considered. Nevertheless, it is not just the leader who determines and creates leadership. In this article the aim is to discuss different elements which determine leadership and to show how these elements should be considered when for example the leadership structures are changed. These other elements which determine leadership include for example employees' individual needs for leadership, the role of the teams and groups, the physical structure of an organisation and how the leadership in arranged and carried out at the municipal level. The article will especially focus on the employees' role and in doing that, it is close to the concepts like organisational citizenship and distributed leadership. The context of the paper is Finland.

Tiivistelmä

Johtajuutta tarkastellaan usein vain johtajan näkökulmasta eikä huomioida kaikkia niitä tekijöitä, jotka vaikuttavat johtajuuteen. Johtaja ei ole kuitenkaan ainoa, joka määrittää ja luo johtajuutta. Tässä artikkelissa tavoitteena on tarkastella erilaisia tekijöitä, jotka määrittävät johtajuutta ja todentaa, että nämä tekijät on huomioitava kun esimerkiksi muutetaan johtajuuden rakenteita. Näitä muita tekijöitä, jotka määrittävät johtajuutta, ovat muun muassa työntekijöiden yksilölliset tarpeet johtajuudelle, tiimien ja ryhmien rooli, organisaation fyysinen rakenne ja se, kuinka johtajuus on järjestetty ja toteutetaan kuntatasolla. Artikkeli painottuu etenkin työntekijöiden rooliin ja on näin lähellä sellaisia käsiteitä kuten alaistaidot ja jaettu johtajuus. Artikkelin konteksti on Suomi.

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Introduction

Leadership theories and research have a tradition of a more than hundred years (Bennis & Nanus, 1986). However, most of the research has focused solely on leaders and "the followers have been viewed as recipients or moderators of the leader's influence, and as vehicles for the actualisation of the leader's vision, mission and goals" (Shamir, 2007, x; see also Yukl, 2002). This leader-centred view may raise too high perceptions of the role of the leaders. Meindl and his colleagues use the term the *romance of leadership* (Meindl, Ehrlich & Dukerich, 1985; Meindl, 1995). According to the romance of leadership, "leadership is a central organisational process and the premier force in the scheme of organisational events and activities" (Meindl et al., 1985, 79). This kind of a view may narrow the impact of the other elements, which affects leadership and puts the leader in a too central position.

Recent literature has emphasised the role of the followers in influencing leadership and seeing leadership as a relationship between the leader and the followers (Shamir, 2007, xx). This relationship is influenced by the characteristics and behaviour both of the leader and the follower/s. Due to that, research should not focus solely on leaders or on followers but on both of them. Leadership in this article is understood in the same way: it is a relationship especially between the leader and the followers. Moreover, this article also considers other elements which influence and determine leadership[1].

This article is based on the results of a study carried out in two distributed organisations in Finland (Halttunen, 2009). The aim of the study was to describe day care work and leadership in a distributed organisation in day care context. The specific aims of the study were to describe day care work and professional relationships in a day care setting, and to investigate how leadership in day care was carried out and what was expected from it. In addition to how leadership was in practice carried out, the findings of the research gave perceptions of the elements which determine leadership in early childhood education.

1 In this paper, leadership means the leadership of the day care centre leader although in the original research also the leadership of the employees was investigated.

The context of the study

In Finland, a day care centre leader has traditionally led only one day care centre, or a supervisor of family day care has just led family day care. In practise this has meant that a leader of a day care centre led one day care centre and meanwhile had duties as a kindergarten teacher. The first big change in leadership arrangements took place at the end of the 1980s when leaders of day care settings started simultaneously lead family day care centres and day care. Later, during the 1990s, the smallest day care units, for example small day care centres, were merged with bigger ones. This was the beginning of the use of multiunit organisations, in other words distributed organisations, in day care. The term distributed organisation refers to an organisation where a single leader leads at least two day care units (see e.g. Vartiainen, Kokko, & Hakonen, 2004). In such an organisation, the day care units are situated physically apart and may offer different kinds of day care services (day care in centres, family day care at private homes and open day care).

At the same time, the work role and the tasks of the day care centre leaders has changed: in the study by Nivala (1999) only about 30% of day care leaders worked solely as administrators with no kindergarten teaching duties. This can be compared to the percentage of leaders (72%) who today simultaneously lead both day care centres and family day care (Alila & Parrila, 2007). In other words, during the course of a decade the propositions been have revoked: whereas earlier most of the leaders led one day care centre and also had duties with children, today most of them focus wholly on leadership and run several units. Although one reason for these changes is the economical recession in Finland in the early 1990's (Parrila, 2005), I am of the opinion that the changes how leadership and professionalism are seen also affected and gave space to these organisational changes in day care settings.

Theoretical framework

As there are different ways to group leadership theories, there are different labels for the organisational theories and eras. According to Yukl (2002), one way to organise the major leadership theories and approaches is to

consider whether the leadership effectiveness includes characteristics of the leader, characteristics of the followers or characteristics of the situation. Most often the focus has been on leaders' characteristics. In the same way Hatch (1997) has gathered several approaches to organisations into four main categories: classical, modern, symbolic-interpretive and postmodern view to organisations.

At different times different theories or approaches to organisations and leadership have been more or less dominant regarding the organisational and leadership structure as that has been favoured. A postmodern organisation is seen as an organisation, where, for example, trust, low hierarchy and democracy are central. An opposite model is a modern organisation with a more formal structure and having the emphasis on hierarchical relationships, especially between the leader and the followers. (Clegg, 1990.) These aspects give a clue about the expectations of the leaders and the employees in different times. In addition, the emphasis on distributed leadership has increased along with the views of a postmodern organisation (e.g. Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). However, the change from a modern organisation to a postmodern organisation has some challenges. According to Collinson (2005, 1436), for example the notions of "the leader" and "the follower" are deeply embedded identities and there is a need to examine these identities. It is also necessary to keep in mind that at the same time there is the coexistence of multiple theories concerning organisations and leadership (Yukl, 2002). There is not a clear cut division between the different eras.

For the determination of leadership these changes and different views underpin the researchers to have a broader view when leadership is studied. There are critical views on how the research and literature has too much focused on leaders (Yukl, 2002). It can be said that there are two perspectives in the research: leader-centered and follower-centered (e.g. Shamir, 2007). The latest research and literature have increased the interest of the relationship between the leader and the followers and especially how the followers as a group shape what is seen as effective and good leadership for a group. A good leader is someone who fits well with the prototypical properties of the group. (Hogg, 2005.) This article is conducted without adherence to a specific organisational or leadership theory. The basic idea of the original research was to research how the new organisational structure affects leadership but also being open for the other possible elements

affecting it. In addition, one fundamental assumption was that it is not just the leader who determines his/her leadership.

Objectives and methods of the study

As pointed out earlier, there is a lack of studies focusing on followers and in Finland there is an overall lack of early childhood leadership studies. This research tried to cover these two shortcomings and did not just focus on the leaders and on their work but also emphasised the followers as participants of the leadership and researched their work as well.

In the present case study an ethnographic approach was taken. Two distributed organisations in different municipalities participated in this study. One organisation comprised four and the other five day care units. Both organisations included different kinds of day care units: day care centres, family day care and open day care. The total number of employees in these organisations consisted of two leaders and 48 staff members.

The data were collected during 2003–2006 using various sources: observation, group and individual interviews and a qualitative questionnaire. Observation (60 hours) was done in each unit and in different staff meetings. Almost all the staff members were able to take part in the group interviews, in addition to which there were nine individual interviews. In these interviews there were four themes: day care work, leadership, working in a distributed organisation, and co-operation between the units. Observation was focused on how leadership was carried out and on what kind of co-operation there was between different units. The two leaders were interviewed both individually and together. The themes of their interviews followed the ones with the staff members. The questionnaire was aimed only for the staff. In all 29 (62%) persons answered it. The questionnaire was formed in a qualitative design with open ended questions focusing on the same themes as used in the interviews.

The data were analysed using data-driven content analysis (e.g. Bos & Tarnai, 1999). The data were reduced according to the interview themes and sub and main categories were developed. This article uses the interviews of the two leaders and the staff members as the primary data.

Findings

As the organisational structure, which was the focus of this research, was very topical at the time when the research was done, there was also some discussion going on in the local papers. The spirit of the discussion was lightly against these distributed organisations. Also previous research show cases where, for example, merging family day care with day care centres had been problematic because of the lack of full consideration what it had meant in practice (Parrila, 2005).

However, my research verified that in addition to the new organisational structure, there were other elements which affected leadership and how it was carried out. These other elements were even more meaningful in determining the leadership. For example, the employees did not see the new organisational structure taking the time and energy of their leader. In addition to the physical structure of the organisation, the other identified elements determining leadership in this study were *leadership structure and culture of the community and the municipality, units and groups* and *individuals*. These elements are introduced in the following chapters. I will first focus on the physical structure because the change in the organisational and leadership structure directly affected and formed the physical structure of the organisation.

Physical structure of the organisation

According to Hatch (1997) one element of the physical structure of an organisation is the buildings and their location. It is more and more common that organisations operate in more than one location. As mentioned earlier, in the Finnish context the geographical location of a day care setting is not anymore one building but several buildings. My case organisations varied a bit concerning their physical structures: The units of the other organisation were located quite close to each other, the longest distance being about 1 kilometre. In the other one, the units were spread more: the longest distance between two units was about 3 kilometres, and the distance from the leader's office varied from less than 1 kilometre to about 2 kilometres. It can be said that the units of the first organisation were in the same neighbourhood, but the units of the latter one were in different areas of the town.

The employees mentioned several times that the physical structure of their organisation effected how the leadership was carried out and what the possibilities for carrying out the leadership were. The physical structure was related to such practical themes as the possibilities for face to face contacts between the leader and the staff, the leader's possibilities to take part in the daily activities of the units and how aware the leader was about the work done in the units. It can be concluded that the physical structure determined the interaction between the leader and the personnel.

> "(...) We talk about how hard it is, but it makes me feel that we just complain. It is difficult to use the right words, when she [the leader] does not see the real life situations (...) It is totally different to tell about the work while peacefully having a cup of coffee. (...)" (An employee)

Reforming the practical interaction meant that the leaders needed new ways how to arrange meetings and other contacts with the staff. These two leaders had arranged the staff meetings in different ways: in the first one the meetings were separately in each unit and in the other one all units sent their representative to a common staff meeting. Both leaders had arguments for these arrangements: the other one wanted to concentrate on each unit at a time and the other one wanted more to create a spirit of a community among the different units. The leaders also needed new practical tools for the interaction: the ways how to communicate and share information were more and more via email and phone.

At the end of the day, the most significant theme due to the physical structure was the presence or absence of the leader in her units: the leaders could not use the leadership tools they had had when leading one unit and the employees could not expect the same as from a traditional leader of one unit. As the leaders said they needed to learn not being aware of everything what was going on. The employees needed, as they had done, learn to work more independently as individuals and especially as teams. According to Parrila (2007) one problem in moving to the direction of new organisational forms has been that leaders have tried to lead using old tools suitable for traditional ways of organising leadership and units in new contexts.

In spite of the need that everyone should learn new ways and tools to carry out their work, the meaningful role of the leader should be remembered. In distributed leadership the basic idea is not to decrease the role of the leader but to reconsider the role, duties and tasks of the leader. (Spillane, 2006.)

Leadership structure and culture of the community and the municipality

The two case organisations of the study were from two different municipalities[2]. In the first one there were day care service administrators at the municipality level. In the other one day care centre leaders more collegially shared common responsibilities although there had also been consideration whether they needed a middle manager. The middle manager level at the municipalities was different partly due to the size of the municipality. Nevertheless, both of the leaders emphasised that all in all the work of all the leaders at the day care services had changed in the recent years. In Finland, during the last two decades decentralisation in administration has increased and day care centre leaders have more power in the decision making than earlier (Hujala, Karila, Nivala, & Puroila, 1998). In the review of the Finnish dissertations focusing on school leadership, Alava, Halttunen and Risku (2012) also emphasise the importance and effects of the municipality as principals' operating environment.

The leader of the other case organisation had a long work career and had experienced the change at the middle manager level. Earlier also in this municipality, the day care centre leaders had lead early childhood education more collegially having large responsibilities at the municipality level. The leader mentioned in one of the interviews that today she could focus on the units of her own more than earlier because she was not anymore so involved on the general early childhood development work at the municipality level. Now there were other leaders at the municipality level doing that work.

What was evident and did not depend on the municipality was that both the leaders and the personnel underlined how much the middle management and the municipality affected the work of the leaders. This view was even more underpinned in the opinions of the staff members.

> "There is so much that is expected from the leaders. They need to do several reports and be members in different work groups. Sometimes

2 In Finland, at the time when the data were collected there were about 430 municipalities. It is at the municipality level where the decisions how to arrange day care services are made: day care services should be arranged in a way what is seen the most appropriate as far it covers the need of day care services in the municipality (Law of Children's Day Care 36/1973). This means that the municipalities also form that kind of organisations that are seen appropriate.

> I feel that in too many. These work groups take time and you can't prioritise the issues of your own units." (An employee)

This view of a heavy workload coming from the municipality level was also supported by the questionnaire answered by the employees. I asked in the questionnaire what work duties took the most of the leader's time. Only a few of the given answers did not relate to different kinds of administration duties. The employees used expressions like *administration*, *paper work*, *meetings* and *computer* for the most time-consuming tasks and mostly these were connected to the work 'out-side' the day care centre.

Hujala (2004) has same kind of findings: there is a contradiction between the demands from the higher administration and in the implementation of everyday work. For Hujala this contradiction should result in clarifying the mission of childcare and at the same time the tasks and duties of day care leaders. The leaders in my study expected that when new vacancies to middle management were planned at the municipality level, it should be assessed how these vacancies could support the leaders of day care centres.

Units and groups

Expectations which employees have towards their leaders is a topic not researched a lot, and in the same way the role of the followers in determining leadership has been underestimated. According to Shamir (2007), the newer leadership theories more than the previous ones focusing on leaders' skill, personality and behaviour emphasise the role of the followers. However, there is a major lack of research which investigates not just the relationship between the leader and an individual follower but focuses on the relationship between the leader and the followers as a group. Although the leader-member exchange theory (LMX-theory) is seen as a theory which emphasises the role of the employees, it also merely focuses on the relationship between the individuals (Howell & Shamir, 2005).

Hogg (2005) and van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg and Giessner (2007) emphasise that people sum up their views as individuals also as members of a group. The more important is the membership in a group, the more important is the effect of the group on, for example, how an individual understands leadership. This notion has also increased research focusing on

the relationships among the employees, for example, in their team member relationships (Cole, Schaninger, & Harris, 2002). In an organisation where the units and groups are situated apart, it is highly important to understand the role of a group. The leaders in my research had realised it and argued that they needed to see and meet both the individual and the groups – this meant, for example, having personal discussions both with the individuals and teams. Also the employees sometimes in their interviews expressed that they had discussed the role of the leader and the expectations they had. Sometimes in an individual interview, the interviewee used the pronoun *we* instead of *I* when describing her views.

There were also other and in this research more important elements besides the effect of a group on its members which determined leadership at the unit and group level. Particularly two aspects are to be mentioned: the type of the day care service of the unit and the life cycle of the unit.

Especially the leaders discussed the meaning of the type of the day care unit. As said, both of the leaders led day care centres, family day care and open day care activities. One reason why they felt having a need to carry out different kind of leadership was the educational background of the employees in the units, and another one was that the core idea of the mission of the services.

> "In family day care the employees want to discuss more individual families, children... directly issues related to education and pedagogy. They want more support in these issues." (A leader)

The other element determining leadership was the life cycle of the unit. The first years of the new unit were very crucial and the leaders had paid more attention to the new units, and also the employees needed more from the leadership. Also the employees saw the beginning of the new unit as a time when leadership was needed. Both of the leaders had seen different units facing same kind of development processes. There were different kinds of issues where the leader was needed at the beginning of the new unit more than during the years later. Nevertheless, quite often after a couple of years' time there were also such conflicts among the employees that the leader was needed to solve them. It is urgent to remember that the first years are not the only years when leadership is needed.

> "Yes, I know the leader is satisfied with us, but it is important that every now and then the leader remembers to say how good we are and how well you have done your work. You know, something very concrete." (An employee)

Individuals

At different times different views are more or less dominant, and at the same time there are several views about leadership present (e.g. Morgan, 1998). It is understandable that employees from different age groups are used to different leadership styles and have different expectations towards leadership. One aspect which divides views on leadership whether a leader can manage leadership alone or whether he should share it (Yukl, 2002).

Employees in my research realised that different individuals had different expectations towards the leaders. In general, the employees took more responsibility over their units and work. However, some employees were more independent than the others.

> "Someone expects to get a new potty just today and after waiting for a week complains that she does not have it yet. But someone goes and buys it by herself. So, it is really what we expect from the leader." (An employee)

In both organisations the leader had changed during the last couple of years. Especially in that organisation where this change had happened very recently, actually during the research, the discussion focusing on different styles in leadership was present in the interviews. For many employees the new leader and the change in the leadership position made it visible how different leaders had different styles and manners in leading their organisation. Also the leader who came to this organisation after the leader who had worked there for around two decades, saw that the personnel had to get used to her way of leading. She said that it would take a couple of years to instill some of the core issues she considered significant in her work. In other words, it was evident that the leaders had their own personal styles in leading their organisations.

> "It also depends on the leaders. I remember when Anna [the former leader] was here, I more often called her if I wanted to have a day off. With this new one, we first discuss here at the unit if we can have a day off and then inform the leader." (An employee)

Of course it is not just what the employees expect from their leader and leadership, but it is also significant to understand what is expected from the employees. However, it seems, based on the leadership and organisational theories, that the expectations towards the employees are dependent on how leadership and organisations are seen (e.g. Shamir, 2007; Clegg, 1990). When individuals and their effect on leadership are discussed, we are also close to the concept of organisational citizenship behaviour. This concept was introduced by Organ (1997). If this concept is seen as employees doing something extra that is not strictly included in their work roles, it may be that in today's organisations part of this "extra" is related to leadership practices.

Conclusion

The starting point of my research was a major change in organising leadership in day care units and at the same time a change in the traditional way of organising day care units. I as a researcher assumed that this change affected not just the work of the leader but also the work of all the staff members in these organisations. Naturally the core question was to ask how this new kind of an organisational structure affected leadership and the work of the employees.

At the end of the day, the new organisational structure as such was not the major element determining leadership. The leaders had to arrange their work in new ways and also needed to reflect on their role, duties and responsibilities as leaders. Thus, there were other elements which determined leadership more than the organisational structure.

The new insight in this study is the notion of significance of the role of the followers in determining leadership. Emphasising their role rises from different sources. First, the role of the followers is more highlighted in the newer leadership theories. (Shamir, 2007.) When earlier leadership was seen as "a one man's show" it is today characterised being distributed among all the members in an organisation (Spillane, 2006). This new

way of seeing leadership also calls followers to determine leadership, and this call invites them to be part of leadership discussions and to be one of the definers. Secondly, newer organisational theories intertwined with leadership theories underline the same things and pay attention to the involvement of the employees in many issues in a work organisation (Clegg, 1990). Thirdly, there is more and more literature and research which sees followers as an independent group worth to be researched on its own (Cole et al., 2002). One aspect is to consider how powerful the group cohesion and attitudes towards individual members in shaping the views of leadership are (van Knippenberg et al., 2007). In sum, the role of the followers is not any more invisible, for example, in leadership. In many figures describing the relationship between the leader and the follower, there is an arrow pointing from the leader towards the follower, but there is and should also be an arrow pointing from the follower towards the leader.

These other elements affecting leadership – task environment, administration, units, and individuals – should be considered when the work of the early childhood leaders meets changes and when the work of the leaders is evaluated. Especially in a change situation we are quite often not able to have an enough broad view and can't see how widely the change affects (Leavitt, 1965). In other words, it can be said that perhaps we can't see all the issues affecting and determining a certain issue. According to this research these other issues which at the beginning are not seen as being important may finally turn out to be the most important issues. Like in this case, the public discussion easily blamed the new organisational structure negatively affecting leadership because it was a visible change. However, it was not the whole truth for how the leadership was carried out and what determined this carrying out. For the practice, these findings recommend to have a broad view when evaluating and developing leadership practices especially in a situation of change.

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Professional Training for Beginning Directors of Early Childhood Education Programs in Taiwan

Yuling Hsue
National Hsin-Chu University of Education
Taiwan

Abstract

This chapter proposes that the training requirements for beginning directors of early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs in Taiwan be established in accordance with the Early Childhood Education and Care Act of 2011. Questionnaires and focus group interviews were used to collect data from 979 participants working in ECEC, including centre directors, government administrators, and teacher educators. The five main findings arising from this study were: 1) Training programs should include 7 categories comprising Legal aspects of preschool education and child welfare, Program administration, Curriculum leading, Personnel management, Financial and document management, Safety and health, and School-community communication. 2) A supervision mechanism by the government should be established to ensure the quality of training; 3) Teachers and directors agree that 180 training hours evenly distributed over a six-month period as the minimum hours for preparing an experienced teacher to serve as a first-year director; 4) The pedagogical design of the programs should include hands-on experience, case studies, and learning from outstanding ECEC models; and 5) Instructors should be able to integrate theory and practice of ECEC. Finally, three recommendations were made for designing effective training programs for prospective directors of ECEC in Taiwan.

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幼兒園新手園長專業培訓方案

本章針對台灣 2011年制定的幼兒教育及照顧法中欲取得幼兒園園長資格之專業培訓課程提供方案建議。本研究重點在園長專業培訓課程之關鍵核心如課程結構內容、課程形式、以及授課師資等項目之探究，結果將供未來開課單位實施之參考。研究過程包含專家諮詢和問卷調查兩種方式，以全國與幼兒教育和保育相關的行政人員、師培機構人員、幼兒園園長及老師作為研究對象，調查其意見。共有69人參與諮詢討論以及共發放979份問卷。
研究結果共有五點，一、 園長培訓的課程架構分為七個領域，包涵：學前教保政策及法令、園務行政專題與實務、教育與保育專題實務、人事管理專題與實務、文書及財物管理與實務、健康安全管理與危機處理、幼兒園與家庭互動專題與實務。二、 為確保課程之品質，政府應審查培訓單位並訂定成果標準。三、 受訪者同意課程時數至少需 180 小時才夠培養基本能力並於半年內分散式授課完成。四、 授課形式須以學員實作為主並運用實際案例與觀摩優質幼兒園進行學習。五、園長培訓之授課師資應分為兩類，理論與實務須兼具。基於以上結論，本研究將對教育部、師培機構、及縣市政府提供三點建議。

Tiivistelmä

Tässä artikkelissa esitetään, että aloittelevien varhaiskasvatuksen johtajien koulutusvaatimukset Taiwanissa pitäisi määrittää lakiperusteisesti. Tutkimuksen aineisto kerättiin kyselyillä ja kohderyhmähaastatteluilla. Tutkimukseen osallistui 979 varhaiskasvatuksen työntekijää, johtajia, valtionhallinnon virkamiehiä ja opettajien kouluttajia. Viisi tärkeintä tutkimustulosta tässä tutkimuksessa ovat: 1) Koulutusohjelmien pitäisi sisältää 7 kategoriaa: Juridiset näkökulmat esiopetukseen ja lasten hyvinvointiin, ohjelman hallinta, opetussuunnitelmajohtaminen, henkilöstöjohtaminen, taloudellinen- ja asiakirjahallinta, turvallisuus ja terveys sekä kouluyhteisön kommunikaatio; 2) Pitäisi kehittää hallituksen ohjausmekanismi koulutuksen laadun varmistamiseksi; 3) Opettajien ja johtajien tulisi päätyä yhteisymmärrykseen 180 tunnin koulutuksen jakautumisesta tasaisesti kuuden kuukauden jaksolle minimivaatimuksena kokeneen opettajan valmentamisena johtajan työhön ensimmäisen työvuotensa aikana; 4) Ohjelman pedagogiseen sisältöön tulisi sisällyttää käytännön kokemusta, tapaustutkimusta ja tutustumista onnistuneisiin varhaiskasvatuksen malleihin; ja 5) Ohjaajan pitäisi yhdistää koulutuksessa varhaiskasvatuksen teoria ja käytäntö. Artikkelissa esitetään lopulta kolme suositusta varhaiskasvatuksen johtajien koulutusohjelmien toteutukseen Taiwanissa.

Introduction

The year 2011 leads the field of Taiwan's early childhood education and care (ECEC) to a new era because of the passage of the Early Childhood Education and Care Act (hereafter referred to as the "ECEC Act"). It requires the traditional kindergartens serving 4–6 year olds and traditional nursery schools serving 0–6 year olds to change by becoming preschools serving 2–6 year olds. The change has brings about an integration of education and care provided by ECEC centres serving young children and their families. According to Article 19 of ECEC Act, prospective directors of preschools not only must have at least five years of experience as a certified teacher or assistant teacher, but also need to complete a director's professional training program. Moreover, the ECEC Act stipulates that each training program must be administered and supervised by either the local government or an institute of higher education with a department of early childhood education or child welfare.

In 1997 educational authorities in the USA began to actively promoting the standardisation of professional qualifications required by directors of ECEC programs (Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Culkin, 2000). By contrast, until very recently many preschool directors in Taiwan have lacked sufficient management and leadership training. According to the Ministry of Education (2011), at present there are a total of 6,984 preschools in Taiwan. In line with the great importance given to education in traditional Taiwanese culture, in 1994 the law on teacher qualifications, deemed that a bachelor degree be the minimum qualification for teachers working with children aged four to six years. From this time onwards trainers and researchers of ECEC focuses remained on the teaching qualities of teachers, and little attention was paid to the preschool's directors, despite the research finding that the director has a major influence on the school's learning environment and overall quality (Hsue, 2004; Morgan, 2000). With the passage of the ECEC Act, preschool directors are now required to receive specified professional training, including leadership and management skills, and this has led to the creation of new investments of improving the overall quality of preschool education as the OECD suggested to the members of United nations (OECD, 2011).

Literature review

According to Hsue (2004) and Liao and Bao (2002), there were four main ways in which ECEC directors could acquire administrative skills: 1) learning by doing; 2) guidance from an experienced director or administrator; 3) visiting model preschools; and 4) taking short-time training workshop. The arrangements of existing training workshops for ECEC directors consisted mainly of lectures, peer discussions, and few field visits (Taipei City Government, Bureau of Social Affairs, 2005; Taipei City Government, Bureau of Education, 2009). It has been pointed out that case studies, curriculum reform plans, and action research are all effective ways to support participants in such courses better integrate theory and practice (Bloom & Bella, 2005). Moreover, Hsu (2005) studied Taiwanese teachers' perspectives on learning and suggested that in-service training should include a balance of theory and practice; such as learning through observation; simulations; problem solving; interactive learning; group discussion; practical training; and apprenticeship.

In a questionnaire-based study, Hsu (2005) found that Taiwanese preschool teachers and directors held similar views. They had the same preference list as to choose the instructor for training directors. These were, in descending order of preference: highly experienced preschools directors, specialists in ECEC relating fields, educational administrators, and university professors. These findings suggest that those participating in a training program for directors were most inclined to learn from instructors who could make use of lots of practical experiences, since instruction provided by such teachers was akin to on-the-job training.

Moreover, participants indicated that director training should centre on the actual duties and skills required by the position, and the content of training had been addressed in a number of studies (Hsue, 2005; Liao & Cheng, 2008). A composite summary of these studies reveals that the work of an ECEC centre director consisted of seven broad categories: program administration; financial management; personnel management; safety and health; curriculum leading; parent-teacher communication; and professional development. To be sure, the responsibilities of an ECEC centre director as defined in the ECEC Act of 2011 will bring changes inside these seven categories, and this is something which needs further study.

Nonetheless, it remains to be seen to the extent to which the future professional training programs will succeed in equipping directors with the skills required due to the increasingly important role they were expected to play in the educational system. Thus the purpose of the present study was to determine the most suitable type of training programs, with special attention given to the key areas of structure, content, and instructors. It is anticipated that the results of this study will provide useful research-based evidence for those in charge of establishing director training courses in the future.

Research methodology and data analysis

Data was collected using two methods comprising focus groups and a survey questionnaire. In order to include a wide variety of perspectives, six focus groups were conducted in the north, centre, and south of Taiwan with a total of 69 participants. Participants of these focus groups consisted of educators from the departments of ECE or child welfare programs at colleges and universities; specialists in the administration of childhood education programs; highly experienced kindergarten directors; and the head administrators of the education departments of various city and county governments. The focus group discussions centred on the program's goals, structure, content, and length of training.

Subsequently, a questionnaire was formulated based on the information obtained in the focus groups, with several rounds of revision carried out to incorporate the suggestions provided in group consultations with specialists in ECE and child welfare. Stratified sampling was carried out on the data collected from the responses provided by the head administrators of city and county departments of education, ECEC centre directors and workers, and educators at university departments of ECE. A total of 979 questionnaires were sent out, and of these 84 percent (n=809) were completed and returned.

The data thus collected was analyzed using frequency distribution, means, and percentages, thereby providing insight into the participants' background variables, degree of approval concerning the "Training Course for ECEC Centre Directors," and their overall views concerning the course. A Chi-square test (χ^2) was used to test for any significant differences between

the participants' background variables and their degree of approval as to the structure, content, and length of the course.

Main results

There were no significant difference in the data collected between the various stakeholder groups that participated in the study. Based on the analysis of data collected through the focus group discussions and the completion of questionnaires, this section presents the five main results:

1) The training course for prospective directors should consist of 7 categories and 44 topics and these should be delivered over 180 hours evenly distributed over a six month period (See Table 1)

Table 1. Recommended topics for inclusion in a training program for ECEC directors

Category	Class hours	Topics
Legal aspects of preschool education and child welfare	18	1. Preschool and child welfare policy 2. The Early Childhood Education and Care Act 3. Laws and regulations related to child welfare 4. Gender equality legislation (the Gender Equity Education Act, the Sexual Assault Prevention Act, and the Sexual Harassment Prevention Act, etc.) 5. Special topics (safeguarding personal information, human rights, etc.)
Program administration	36	1. Director's role and duties 2. Making preschool development policies 3. Formulating and implementing measures for staff supervision & evaluation, etc. 4. Planning and holding meetings 5. Design for Learning environment and facility management 6. Marketing concepts and strategies 7. Administration and management with computer 8. Professional ethics

Curriculum leading	36	1. Laws related to curriculum planning 2. Curriculum planning and implementation 3. Establishing learning communities 4. Staff meetings and class supervision 5. Individual child guidance 6. Appraising and making arrangements for children with special needs
Personnel management	18	1. Laws and regulations related to Teacher's Act 2. Legal rights and interests of auxiliary staff 3. Leadership skills and strategies 4. Communication skills and conflict resolution 5. Morale and time management
Financial and document management	18	1. Creating, handling, and filing official documents 2. Planning budget and operating costs 3. Accounting and purchasing 4. School property management
Safety and health	36	1. Planning and implementing safety program 2. Safety management 3. Responding to accidents and emergencies 4. Crisis prevention and management 5. Health measures, education, and services 6. Food management (hygiene and kitchen safety) 7. General sanitation 8. Prevention of contagious and non-contagious illnesses 9. Safe use of medicines 10. Personal safety education 11. Dealing with exceptional issues such as sexual assault, domestic violence, and family problems
School-community communication	18	1. Communicating with parents 2. Planning school-parent program, and parenting workshop for diversified family 3. Minority services 4. Searching social resources 5. Making community networking

The contents of Table 1 showed that the consensus on beginning director's training topics among ECE teacher educators, administrators, and practitioners were all focused on the skills of planning and dealing with a director's work. The seven categories of training courses are different to what are expected of a preschool teacher's training in Taiwan. Pre-service teachers of ECEC need to accomplish four categories of courses including educational theories, pedagogies, basics of teaching, and field practices (Ministry of Education, 2003). In comparison with what is included in previous teacher training, the courses for directors help a teacher changing

the roles of teaching and caring to a manager of a school by doing to learn. The majority of the topics such as marketing, budgeting, accounting, kitchen safety, morale and making various school policies were totally new to teachers who would stay the most time in his or her classroom with young children. Only a few topics such as child guidance, curriculum planning and communicating with parents build on what would have learnt when training to become a preschool teacher.

These findings are in agreement with the study by Catron and Groves (1999). They found that moving from the position of a preschool teacher to that of a director requires a shift in focus from the individual classroom to the entire school, including working with all the teachers and parents, as well as the wider community and education system as a whole. In other words, because the director was responsible for all the affairs of the school, in addition to the basic knowledge prerequisite to serving as a teacher, he or she must also be competent in school administration and management.

2) Teaching methods should be designed according to the practical needs of the prospective director and include an adequate variety of ECEC case studies

Research has shown that what new directors lack the most was practical experience (Bloom, 1989). Thus it is important for training programs to introduce trainees to appropriate information and documents they need to be familiar with, without which it will take them more time to learn about the roles and responsibilities of their new position.

This finding matched the work by Bloom and Bella (2005), who implemented a training course for preschool directors. It was found that such programs needed to centre on those areas that the trainees have the most difficulty with. Moreover, such courses should also include in-depth discussions of a variety of case studies so as to provide trainees with adequate problem-solving skills. Similarly, since both teachers and directors have to deal with complex and ambiguous situations as a regular part of their work, it has been suggested that case studies were a highly beneficial aspect in the training of education professionals (Kau, 2000). Moreover, in a study by Hsue and Wu (2007) it was found that administrative personnel at preschools agreed that in addition to teaching experience, directors' professional growth was also facilitated by their participation in such activities as small group discussions, consultation with specialists, and field trips to other

schools along with colleagues. Thus it is clear that a director must be able to handle a wide variety of responsibilities, and that collaborative learning and case studies are effective approaches to acquiring and enhancing the knowledge and skills they require to perform their duties.

3) The training course should be delivered over a minimum period of six-months, with a total of 180 training hours evenly distributed after work time

Similar to previous research which found that the most pressing need of a new director was to smoothly deal with the work at hand (Catron & Groves, 1999) and study findings underscored the need of systematic, intensive, and relevant training focused on the unique needs of early childhood directors (Bella & Bloom, 2003), participants in the present study agreed that a training course should consist of a minimum of 180 hours of class time evenly distributed over a six-month period, so as to meet the trainees' requirements with better management of work, family, and education (Bloom, Vinci, Rafanello, & Donohue, 2011). Such arrangement can also enable trainees to gain new information, try it out in their work, and then discuss in class any questions or problems which arise.

4) The training programs must ensure a sound integration of theory and practice on EC leadership

There was general agreement among the respondents that the training course should be taught by two different kinds of instructors: educators at university or college departments of ECE or child welfare; and outstanding preschool directors along with at least a ECE master's degree. The reasoning for the inclusion of an experienced director was threefold:

- An acting director with extensive experience of the relationship between theory and practice was in a good position to provide lots of practical material for case studies;
- The concrete situations provided by such case studies were conducive to decision-making modeling and effective learning; and
- An instructor with at least a master's degree would be able to present the material in a systematic manner, provide pertinent guidance and feedback on the students' reports, and convey the essential information within the allotted amount of time.

There was also agreement among the participants in this research that the training course would be more effective if the class size is limited to 50 trainees. This was based on the belief that smaller group sizes could enable better interaction, group discussion, and effective engagement in learning.

5) Government supervision is needed

The participants in the focus groups were in agreement that a supervision mechanism should be established to ensure the quality of the training program. There was also general agreement that certification for completing the course should be based on more than merely a satisfactory rate of attendance. For this purpose, the university offering the course or the local government should set up a committee to determine the minimal requirements for certification. The research participants had offered suggestions such as portfolio evaluation, oral presentation on a certain leadership topic, and written exam on ECEC Act and regulations.

Recommendations and challenges

There is a need for early childhood centres to respond to the changing social context and national policies in Taiwan – to the far greater diversity in families, younger children entering centres, children and families in need of social support, and expectations of working parents. The traditional teacher training which more focused on the school learning has responded insufficiently with the new ECEC Act implementation. Directors will be required to play an enhanced role in leading all staff to transform their roles of integrating the care, upbringing, and education to meet the legal requirements. The findings of this study suggested an expected profile of the director's training program. However, as the training programs will start up soon and widely spread all over the country to meet requirements of laws, several challenges arises, for which program instructors' availabilities and qualities are critical for the effectiveness of the program. Three recommendations thus were made to the policy makers, government administrators, and teacher educators as the followings.

A. Establish a registered system for director's training instructors

Because the purpose of the training program is to provide trainees with the knowledge and skills they will require to serve as effective directors, the course needs to include both theory and practice. Since such courses have not been offered before, neither at colleges or universities level, nor as a form of internship, the first step is to give full consideration to the availability of a sufficient number of qualified instructors who meet the requirements of being registered EC director trainers with local government bodies. In order to be approved as a qualified instructor, he or she must have a masters degree in EC and worked in the sector for three more years. If he or she worked as a director in a national or local government accredited outstanding centre more than three years or involved in the central government mentor program will waive the degree requirement.

B. Training university instructors or teacher educators to teach courses for preschool directors

If trainees are to learn what they need to know within the time allotted for completing the program, the instructors must have a comprehensive understanding of the topics they teach, and in most cases this will require that they make preschool administration one of their areas of specialization. For example, in conducting a course on time management, the instructor needs to integrate the theory of time management with the actual situations for a centre director who requires many time management skills. Moreover, he or she needs to demonstrate how this is done in preschool daily situations.

C. Evaluating the effectiveness of the programs

In response to the requirements of the ECEC Act, these training programs for preschool directors are set to open throughout Taiwan from the new semester on 2013. It is necessary that they all meet uniform standards of quality. Thus it is essential that the relevant authorities establish suitable quality control measures, including vetting the qualifications of the instructors, or participant's outcomes and undertaking research to evaluate the qualities of the programs. At the same time, it will also be essential to carry out follow-up research to determine which training models are most effective in training future preschool directors.

The enactment of 2011 ECEC Act in Taiwan was expected to improve the overall quality of preschool education. The director's critical roles of leadership and management have an important share of the policy. Since the professional training of beginning directors is built upon the 5-year practical teaching experiences and child development knowledge of a certified teacher, the study findings proposed essential information of the training program, including contents, instructors, pedagogies, structure and program supervision mechanism. Moreover, recommendations were made to meet the challenges of possible lack of qualified instructors and challenges of program standards and evaluations in the future.

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Superior's Pedagogical Support in Distributed Organisation of Early Childhood Education

Ulla Soukainen
ECEC, City of Turku
Finland

Abstract

The focus of this research is on the distributed organisation of early childhood education: or in other words long-distance management, given that there are managers who have many day-care centres or several types of day care to lead. My focus is comparing the staff who are physically in the same unit as their superior, to those who work in units without a superior's constant presence.

The data were collected from a questionnaire that was constructed to include the question: "What kind of pedagogical support do you need from your superior?" The results highlight several categories, such as cooperation and interaction, pedagogical guidance, development and resources. Questions using a 16-point Likert scale measured pedagogical support. The data indicated that staff who worked without a superior's constant presence felt that they received more support than those physically working in the same unit as their superior.

Tiivistelmä

Tämä artikkeli keskittyy tutkimaan pedagogisen tuen kokemuksia varhaiskasvatuksen hajautetussa organisaatiossa. Varhaiskasvatuksen hajautetulla organisaatiolla viitataan tässä yhteydessä organisaatiorakenteeseen, jossa yhdellä esimiehellä on johdettavanaan monta päiväkotia tai päivähoitomuotoa.

Aineisto kerättiin kyselylomakkeella, jossa esitettiin avoin kysymys: "Minkälaista pedagogista tukea kaipaat esimieheltäsi?" Vastaukset ryhmiteltiin seuraaviin luokkiin: yhteistyö ja vuorovaikutus, pedagoginen ohjaus, kehittäminen sekä resurssit. Lisäksi lomakkeessa oli 16-osainen Likert-asteikkoinen summamuuttuja, joka kuvasi pedagogiseen tukeen liittyviä väittämiä. Tutkimuksessa havaittiin erillisyksikössä

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työskennelleen henkilöstön kokeneen saavansa enemmän pedagogista tukea kuin henkilöstön, joka työskenteli esimiehen kanssa samassa paikassa.

Introduction

By visiting and observing the meetings of day-care centres' superiors or headteachers the main problem of their work is evident. It seems that most of their days are occupied with increasing amounts of paperwork – both related to administration and management – even though they would prefer to engage in leadership activities with their staff. Leaders should have time for guiding people in a manner that produces the desired results. How can leaders organise their day to manage and complete everything? How can, and how do, leaders prioritise their tasks? Soukainen and Keskinen (2010) have explored the way that superiors believe they can influence their work and found that a majority did not actually realize that this would even be possible: they blamed this on a lack of time, and said that they would need secretaries to help with their work. However, this problem was less acute if computers are used effectively, and teams are utilized to manage the day-care centre. It is often argued that trained and professional early childhood staff help their superiors – but there is also another point of view, that is, that the superior should take care of the staff. Motivated and engaged staff are a major resource, which no employer can give up without there being consequences (Manka, 2007).

Although superiors have their problems, subordinates also experience certain difficulties when working in early childhood services. The support of a superior is thus very important. If there is a time pressure in the work, there is too much to do, there is a lack of control, or a feeling of being unrewarded, then conflicts appear – sooner or later the employee will be stressed (Manka, 2007).

I became involved in this problematic world through my position as a headteacher of a day-care centre. I was the leader of a large day-care centre comprising four teams and 12 employee who worked in family day care – there were 25 subordinates in all. One of the teams worked in a different building. During my time there, I began to consider what difference physically working in the same building as one's superior might make, as

opposed to working in a different building, in which the superior has no office. And what about the women who worked from their own homes?

Vartiainen (2004) defines distributed organisation through four elements: place, time, diversity and the way of interaction. Hujala and Puroila (1998) and Nivala (2002) had opened up the theoretical discussion about the early-childhood leadership phenomenon in relation to context and culture. The context model is based upon Bronfenbrenner's (1994) ecological theory where leadership is displayed in a certain context – my context was a distributed organisation. For the purposes of this research, I transferred the term from the industrial field or sector of enterprises to the context of early-childhood education (Vartiainen, Kokko, & Hakonen, 2004; Léman, 2005; Léman, 2007; Halttunen, 2009).

These kinds of distributed organisations became increasingly common during the 1990s (Halttunen, 2009). One reason for this was the saving and reorganisation of work: when one manager retired, her or his work was re-organised and rationalized. Another main reason was the tendency to reduce hierarchical structures.

Thus, a number of key questions have been raised. What does it mean to work in a distributed organisation in a pedagogical context? What happens to the interaction between the superiors and the staff in a distributed organisation? Can I find the solution to these questions from LMX (leader-member exchange) theory (Scandura & Lankau, 1996; Illies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007; Northouse, 2007)?

Therefore, this article focuses on identifying what kind of pedagogical support staff need, and whether there are any differences in how the staff experience that support depending on the context of their workplace.

Distributed organisation in early childhood education

Increasingly, organisations are trying to reduce costs, get closer to their customers and engage the best talent, wherever that may be. This kind of distribution and mobility of work will strongly influence its management. Working in multiple locations, with different working hours and without a traditional team nearby challenges both superiors and subordinates (Vartiainen et al., 2004). Distributed organisation can easily lead to a situation where superiors control and oversee their employees' work, without

developing any trust. It is difficult to establish and maintain trust when face-to-face contact is reduced (Sims, 2010). Also, employees can feel that they are not getting any support from their superiors. According to Fisher and Fisher (2001), people will provide a special effort when they feel trusted and supported. Yet the possibilities for informal discussion are decreased in a distributed organisation, and thus it is harder to feel a part of the "unit".

In an early-childhood context, distributed organisation means that one manager is a superior for many day-care centres or that one manager has different services – for example, a day-care centre and family day care – under his or her control (Léman, 2007; Halttunen, 2009; Keskinen & Soukainen, 2010; Soukainen & Keskinen, 2010). We can compare this with the "traditional organisation" where there was one manager per day-care centre or one supervisor for family day care. In early childhood education, distributed organisation can also mean that the local area commune is divided into areas which include different kinds of services. There can then be so-called Service Area Managers who are the superiors of managers who have their own units; and these units can cover almost anything. Especially in these kinds of organisations, organisational citizenship behaviour has a significant role, and the role of a functioning structure in obtaining a good interaction between a superior and subordinates cannot be stressed enough.

From a client's point of view, distributed organisation is very useful. When the child is very young he or she is taken care of in a family day-care. The parents transact their business with a manager, with whom they later collaborate when the child goes to a day-care centre. The clients thus deal with the same person, no matter what the reason. Moreover, the possibilities to use the internet are growing; applications for day care can be filled out electronically, or the day-care fees can even be calculated with an online fee calculator. It is easy to find information from website, no matter where you live or to where you are planning to move. Indeed, municipal day care follows the same rules and laws throughout the country, as organisational differences do not influence the law.

Therefore, from the client's point of view things are straightforward: but what about from the superior's viewpoint? The Trade Union of Education in Finland has conducted two surveys, in 2004 and in 2007. Their results show that the superiors of day-care centres do not work with children as often as they used to. The reason for this change is said to be to providing the superiors with more time for leadership – but at the same time the units

have grown in size. One superior may even have 30 subordinates. According to the survey from 2007, almost 60% of superiors had, alongside day-care centres, also family day care, playground activities or other kinds of services to lead. This high percentage means that distributed organisation in early childhood education is rather common.

Working in a distributed organisation is also challenging for the staff, as they are unable to find support when they need it, because their manager is not present all of the time. It is difficult to build trust by leading from afar and without knowing what the staff are doing, and how. If work management is lacking a superior's support could be helpful, and feelings of well-being or of stress are correlated to social support (Karasek & Theorell, 1990).

Here I am talking about distributed organisation in early childhood education: but does this have anything to do with distributed leadership? Lately, there has been much research into distributed leadership which can result, for example, in a school in which there is a head teacher who deals with resources and a pedagogical leader who takes care of pedagogical guidance and development.

Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) and organisational citizenship behaviour

As mentioned above, organisational citizenship behaviour plays a large role in distributed organisation. Besides organisational citizenship and leadership skills, the relationship between a superior and their subordinates is important. The leader-member exchange (LMX) theory's main principle is that leaders develop different types of exchange relationships with their followers (Illies et al., 2007). Also, the role that trust plays is one determinant of intraorganisational cooperation (Kramer, 1999). LMX has significant influences on task performance, satisfaction, turnover and organisational commitment (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Zhang, 2012). Relationships between superiors and subordinates are characterised by, for example, physical or mental effort and emotional support (Durarajen, 2010).

Zhang (2012) suggest that through a strong relationship with a hierarchical leader, a team member may be priviledged to resources or information about the team. They also assume that LMX is positively related to a team member's emergence as an informal leader as perceived by peers.

Subordinates in high-LMX relationships are delegated with additional tasks and can act as agents for the leader. This high LMX provides resources that also enable the individual to claim leadership. Thus in LMX theory, there is an assumption that the trust between superiors and staff is strong, and that this trust is a basic element for good interaction and cooperation. If there is not enough trust in a superior–subordinate relationship, the staff will not be able to receive all the support they need.

If we think that leadership is formed in a process where superiors and staff do their jobs (Juuti & Rovio, 2010), LMX theory and the interactions between superiors and subordinates is very meaningful. Therefore, in a distributed organisation in particular, LMX theory is important. How does a superior arrange face-to-face meetings, set goals collaboratively, and make them concrete? The list of such questions is never ending. LMX-theory explains the actions and behaviours of a superior: but what is required from the subordinates? In organisational psychology there is the term " organisational citizenship behaviour" (OCB), as mentioned at the beginning of this section. According to Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine and Bachrach (2000) almost 30 potentially different forms of citizenship behaviour have been identified. Moreover, the number of publications on this field grew considerably from 1983 to 1999, from only a few to nearly 200, and today the research in this field is still growing. Podsakoff and others organised these conceptual definitions under seven common themes or dimensions. These dimensions were: helping behaviour, sportsmanship, organisational loyalty, organisational compliance, individual initiative, civic virtue, and self development.

Trust

Managers play a central role in determining the overall level of trust. They also design reward and control systems. (Kramer & Tyler, 1996.) Related to this idea of trust in distributed organisations, Vartiainen, Hakonen, Koivisto, Mannonen, Nieminen, Ruohomäki and Viertola (2007, 14) argue that: "Management typically has to rely more upon results than upon the supervision and direct control of behaviour typical of traditional organisations. Motivation of employees and social bonding, two of the major benefits of face-to-face communication, has to be at least partly

accomplished in other ways." The issue seems to be in relying on each other – not about control.

LMX theory tries to explain the interaction between leaders and followers. Trust is seen as part of the human interaction between two persons (Laine, 2008); in circumstances where a subordinate works for a long time without seeing or talking to a superior – as it may be in distributed organisations – this trust must have previously been developed. Fisher and Fisher (2001) offer tips for developing this trust, and from their point of view it is very important for a superior to communicate through face-to-face interaction. That is why in an early-childhood context it is also important to organise meetings or workshops where subordinates who usually do not see each other can, at least sometimes, do things together. By doing things together, they can picture the kind of organisation that they are working within. This is very important, especially in family-day care situations where staff are working alone in their own homes. Trust is increased among subordinates when they know, and care, about each other – and not only about the job they do.

Fisher and Fisher's (2001) tips for developing trust are as follows: 1) communicate openly and frequently; 2) to get trust, give trust; 3) be honest; 4) establish strong business ethics; 5) do what you say you will do, and make your actions visible; 6) make sure that your interactions with the team are consistent and predictable; 7) from the outset, set the tone for future interaction; 8) be accessible and responsive; 9) maintain confidences; 10) watch your language; and 11) create social time for the team.

Pedagogical leadership

Pedagogical leadership can be defined in many different ways. In a limited sense, it can mean a person who is a manager of a pedagogical organisation such as a school. More widely, it can mean a complicated system that is built to maintain subordinates' constant development and support adults as learners (Rodd, 2006). Pedagogical leadership is a term that also includes pedagogical support and guidance. Both individuals and teams require a superior's guidance to progress (Parrila, 2009). One method to increase efficiency in subordinates' pedagogical awareness and professional

development is mentoring. As with mentoring, coaching is another collaborative process that helps teams to achieve goals and objectives.

Fisher and Eheart (1991) conducted a survey in the early 1990s about factors related to the quality of caregiving practices in family day care. They noticed that training and support (in that study: child nutrition programs, professional associations, book loans, toy loans, county referral services and public libraries) are factors that can be manipulated to improve the quality of care. This support is not pedagogical support, requiring a superior's guidance. Fisher and Eheart's study was comprehensive and the caregiver's training was included in the model. The idea of a superior helping to progress a subordinate professionally is based in socio-constructivism, meaning that previous knowledge, skills and experience influence current learning (Parrila, 2009).

Therefore, pedagogical leadership is one part of a superior's task. Yet, some researchers think that the term 'pedagogical leadership' is unclear as a concept (Karila, 2001). Their (1994) reports that a superior as a pedagogical leader helps subordinates to act better more effectively. She also names competence areas where a manager should develop his or her own, but also his or her subordinates, competencies. These areas are cognitive skills, affective skills and social skills. Reviewing these different researches and theses presents an idea that there are almost as many definitions for the term pedagogical leadership as there are writers. Thus, for the purposes of my research, I define pedagogical leadership very widely, as do Nivala (2002b) and Fonsen (2008), who think that the basic task of day care is early childhood education. Therefore, pedagogical leadership is the development of this as its core substance.

Method

This research took place in Southern Finland during 2006. I interviewed 10 superiors who were leading distributed organisations. I constructed a questionnaire, which was presented to the superiors that I interviewed and their subordinates (87% answered, n=223). In the questionnaire there was this open-ended question: "What kind of support do you need from your superior?" and also 16-point Likert scale questions concerning

pedagogical support. From Table 1 can be seen the titles and workplaces of the participants.

I coded the open-ended questions with data-based content analysis. I made a scale variable from the Likert-scale questions and used a Mann-Whitney test to compare two groups: those who physically work in the same place as their superior and those who physically work in a different place to their superior.

Table 1. The titles and workplaces of the participants, superiors not included

Physically the same workplace as your superior?			N	Percent
yes		child minder	3	3.8
		nursemaid	36	45.6
		teacher	22	27.8
		other	17	21.5
		total	78	98.7
		missing	1	1.3
	Total		79	100.0
no		child minder	48	50.0
		nursemaid	15	15.6
		teacher	14	14.6
		other	17	17.7
		total	95	99.0
		missing	2	1.0
	Total	96	100.0	

other = assistant, cleaner or cook

The results were studied from two perspectives depending on the research question and strategy for data collection. The first research question was "What kind of pedagogical support do the subordinates need?", for which the data were collected with an open-ended question. The second question was "Is there any differences in subordinates' experiences by getting support depending on the workplace?", for which the data were collected by the 16-point Likert-scale questions.

Results

The subordinates need the superior's presence

Almost 63% of the 223 participants answered the open-ended question about their pedagogical support. Most responses described an existing problem, and how they needed their superior's support to solve that problem. Some of the responses included words like "trust", "frank", "feedback" and "instruction". Some of the respondents expressed a wish for education and courses.

I coded the answers into the following categories:

- cooperation/interaction
- pedagogical guidance
- development
- resources

The category of cooperation and interaction contains responses like meetings with personnel, togetherness, common values and the superior's presence.

> "That the superior answers the phone if I ring." (A 816)

The category of pedagogical guidance contained references to feedback discussions, development discussions between superiors and subordinates, discussions about pedagogical issues and there generally being time for discussion.

> "Discussing about difficult matters and how superior should take responsibility for them." (A 801)

The category of development contains references to education, the changing of proceedings, courses, knowledge and supervision.

> "Possibilities to participate proper schooling. Now courses last for two to three hours and it's impossible to take part in those lessons because there is not enough personnel to take care of the children during that time." (A 717)

The size of the group of children, materials and human resources are included in the category resources.

> "More material and *toys*." (A 1002)

From these varied answers, we can see that subordinates need different kinds of pedagogical support. Some would like to have support which is cognitive – like guidance – some require material support, for example toys.

The feeling of getting pedagogical support differs depending on where you work

By analysing the 16-point Likert-scale questions, I compared the two groups of subordinates who physically work in the same place as their superiors, and those who work from afar. I constructed a scale variable named "Superior's pedagogical support".

I carried out a statistical, non parametric Mann-Whitney test and compared the two groups. Those who either worked all the time or sometimes in a physically different place to their superior thought that they received more support (mean 3.94) than those who physically worked in the same unit as their superior (mean 3.71), Mann-Whitney, Z= -2.311; p = 0.021 (<0.05).

Some main items were highlighted with this scale of variance. Relating to pedagogical guidance, 21.6% of those who physically worked in the same place as their superior thought that they received a lot or quite a lot of pedagogical guidance. On the other hand, 42.7% of those who worked apart from their superior thought that they received a lot or quite a lot of pedagogical guidance. The percentages were 40.5% and 28.2%, respectively, if we view the answers for the options of little guidance and no guidance at all. This means that over 40% of those who physically worked in the same place as their superiors thought that they got little pedagogical guidance, or no guidance at all. Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($p \leq 0{,}05$).

Table 2. Scale variable: Superior's pedagogical support

Scale variable	Items	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Correlation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Superior's pedagogical support	Commendation and recognition from superior. Pedagogical guidance. Sufficiency of guidance. Development discussion. Usefulness of development discussions. Positive feedback from superior. Superior informs me of matters concerning me. Superior informs me of matters concerning early-childhood education (work). Superior knows what I'm doing (my tasks). Superior encourages me. Superior trusts me. Superior knows the problems of my work. Superior supports subordinates. Superior's fair management. Superior is flexible. Superior's advice transferred into practise.	16	.917	0.347–0.794	3.79	0.70

Table 3. Pedagogical support crosstabulation

Workplace *Pedagogical support Crosstabulation						
			Pedagogical support			
			little or not at all	not little, not much	a lot or quite a lot support	Total
Physically	the same	Count	35	34	25	94
		Expected Count	29.0	30.3	34.7	94.0
	different; including those who sometimes work in the same place	Count	32	36	55	123
		Expected Count	38.0	39.7	45.3	123.0
Total		Count	67	70	80	217
		Expected Count	67.0	70.0	80.0	217.0

χ^2= 7,7; df=2; p=0,02

The other interesting proposition relates to the feelings of trust, as 2.6% of those who physically worked in the same place as their superior felt that their superior did not trust them at all, or only a little. Only 1% of those who worked from afar thought that their superior did not trust them at all. Regarding the feeling of being trusted, 70.9% of those who physically worked in the same place, and 86.4 of those who worked afar, thought that their superior trusted them a lot or quite a lot. From Table 4 it can be seen that there is also a statistically significant difference between the two groups when it comes to trust.

Table 4. Trust crosstabulation

Workplace *Pedagogical support Crosstabulation						
			Pedagogical support			
			little or not at all	not little, not much	a lot or quite a lot support	Total
Physically	the same	Count	2	23	69	94
		Expected Count	1.3	16.5	76.2	94.0
	different; including those who sometimes work in the same place	Count	1	15	107	123
		Expected Count	1.7	21.5	99.8	123.0
Total		Count	3	38	176	217
		Expected Count	3.0	38.0	176.0	217.0

χ^2=6,46; df=2; p=0,04

Discussion

Though my sample is somewhat limited, the answers to the open-ended question are similar to those commonly found in the books of organisational psychology and management literature. Also, the high correlation between the items in the scale variable tells us from which parts the pedagogical support constructed. Based on the documentation, it seems that the superiors do things differently when they lead from afar. Though there is less face-to-face interaction, the structure seems to be more explicit in a context where the superior's presence is not felt on a daily basis. Those who physically work in the same building as their superior can arrange things in passing in the corridor, or during coffee breaks. Leading and managing from afar requires regular meetings, and the articulation of the vision, mission, core values, big picture goals and revenue projections. The superior must provide coaching and operating support besides ensuring that the subordinates have the resources they need.

When it comes to the feeling of trust, the participants in this survey have been lucky. They felt that their superiors trusted them and were are

not under any "negative control". Furthermore, they understand what is expected of them, and how they will be evaluated; they have power and responsibility. "Teams with trust converge more easily, organise their work more quickly, and manage themselves better" (Lipnack & Stamps, 2000, 69). This is the main issue – the superiors should focus on building trust with their subordinates. Group dynamics develop differently in distributed groups than in groups where people work in the same place (Vartiainen et al., 2004). I also collected additional data from interviews with superiors which are not included in this article. Many superiors said they did not attribute much significance to their subordinates' awareness of working in a distributed organisation. However, I think they should – if not for the subordinates' sake then at least for themselves. Leading a distributed organisation needs different kinds of tools than a traditional organisation, where there is one superior leading one kindergarten.

According to my results, it seems that the superiors had been successful with their units which are in a different physical location to themselves. They should thus use the same structure with the units that are in the same location as their offices. This could be done firstly by making their location visible, and by keeping a clear schedule for their meetings, so everybody can see that the superior works in many different places. Weekly meetings are important for all units. Organising one's own timetable, prioritizing tasks and being available when needed are challenges for every leader or superior. An open atmosphere where everybody – both superiors and subordinates – gives feedback frequently and constructively helps people to make their work better, and increase their feeling of belonging.

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Democratic Early Childhood Education and Care Management? The Norwegian Case

Kjetil Børhaug
University of Bergen
Norway

Abstract

Available research from the 1980s and 1990s suggests that Norwegian Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Centres have been characterised by democratic and non-hierarchical management. This corresponds with strong norms in the ECEC sector about democracy, involvement, equality and participation. However, New Public Management reforms represent a pressure for stronger managers and less democratic involvement from the employees. There is thus reason to expect that the democratic aspects of ECEC management are being pushed back. In this chapter we examine whether democratic management practices are an element of ECEC management and we examine conditions that may favour such management practice. Some 40% of all Norwegian ECEC managers responded to a national survey, and this survey material allows an assessment of democratic management practices and the conditions for such management.

Abstrakt

Tilgjengeleg forsking frå 1980 og 1990 åra tyder på at norske barnehagar har vore kjenneteikn av demokratisk og ikkje-hierarkisk leiing. Dette fell saman med sterke normer om demokrati, involvering, likskap og deltaking i heile sektoren. New Public Management reformer representerer eit pres i retning sterkare leiing og mindre demokratisk involvering av dei tilsette. Det er derfor grunn til å venta at dei demokratiske sidene ved barnehageleiing er under press. I dette paperet undersøkjer vi om demokratisk leiing kjenneteiknar barnehageleiinga og vi ser på vilkåra for slik demokratisk leiing. 40% av alle norske barnehagestyrarar svarte på ein nasjonal survey og dette materialet gir eit grunnlag for å diskutera om barnehagen er prega av demokratisk leiingspraksis og kva vilkåra for dette er.

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Tiivistelmä

1980- ja 1990-luvun tutkimusten mukaan norjalaisten päiväkotien johtamista voi kuvata demokraattiseksi ja epähierarkkiseksi. Tämä heijastelee varhaiskasvatussektorin vahvoja demokraattisuuden, osallisuuden, tasa-arvon ja osallistumisen vaateita. Kuitenkin julkisjohtamisen uudistuksien suuntaisessa kehityksessä tarvitaan pikemminkin voimakkaita johtajia ja vähemmän demokraattista työntekijöiden osallistumista. On siis syytä olettaa, että varhaiskasvatuksen johtamisen demokraattiset näkökannat työnnetään taka-alalle. Tässä artikkelissa tarkastelemme olosuhteita, jotka suosivat tällaista johtamistapaa. Noin 40 % norjalaisista varhaiskasvatusjohtajista vastasi valtakunnalliseen kyselyyn. Tämän kyselyaineiston perusteella arvioidaan demokraattisia johtamiskäytäntöjä ja olosuhteita.

Introduction

Available research suggests that Norwegian Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) institutions have been characterised by democratic management principles (Børhaug, Helgøy, Homme, Lotsberg, & Ludvigsen, 2011; Gotvassli, 1996). This meant that ECEC directors and the staff jointly made many decisions concerning how to run the institution. As will be argued below, this is a notion of democracy as direct participation in decision making processes.

New Public Management reforms were introduced in Norway in the late 1980s and have challenged this type of management, by its emphasis on strong management authority, reporting and responsibility. Democratically oriented notions of management are therefore assumed to be under pressure. The question arises as to how well the democratic management notions have resisted these pressures. We do not know the answer to that question, because the mentioned research was conducted around 1990.

Management practice is contextual (Strand, 2007). In this chapter, we examine ECEC institution management in a Norwegian context. However, within the Norwegian context, conditions vary and may affect the strength of democratic ideals in management practice.

Thus, two research questions will be the focus of this chapter:

- to what extent has the Norwegian, democratic ECEC management practices been sustained after two decades of NPM?
- what individual, cultural and organisational conditions promote such democratic management practice?

As a background, we will review Norwegian research and specify and document that this management has been understood as democratic by most scholars in key studies conducted around 1990. We will also argue that NPM challenges such management practices. We will examine concepts about democratic management and possible preconditions for such management. A Norwegian survey was conducted in 2008, and 40% of all ECEC institution directors responded to its questions about management practices. These data were thus collected when NPM had been in operation for 20 years. They thus make it possible to give a more recent picture of the strength of democratic management practices, and of the conditions that promote it.

The data was collected in the project, "Governance challenges, organisation and management in the ECEC sector", funded by the Norwegian Research Council. The project was managed by the Rokkan centre at Bergen University. Bergen University College was a partner in the project.

The evolvement of democratic ECEC institution management

ECEC institutions were first established in Norway in the 19th century, and remained until around 1970 a service for a small minority of children (Korsvold, 2005). The ECEC sector expanded rapidly after a new law was passed in 1975. Today, most Norwegian children attend ECEC institutions. Parents pay a moderate fee which may not exceed a governmentally defined ceiling. However, the expansion of the sector was partly driven by private ECEC providers such as parent associations, non-profit associations, churches and, increasingly, commercial enterprises. Today, the private ECEC providers represent some 50% of the sector.

Training of ECEC professionals escalated after 1975, and a whole generation of newly trained managers entered the sector in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The first major study of the management of ECEC institutions was conducted by Kjell Åge Gotvassli in the late 1980s (Gotvassli, 1990; 1996). His research has been a key reference for later Norwegian contributions, many of which date from the same period. Some of Gotvassli's findings point to a democratic type of management, but the reasons for this are not necessarily democratic ideals. In some contributions,

it has been found that the ECEC manager was remote and almost invisible (Gotvassli 1991, 162). The role was not clearly defined, the manager hesitated to communicate points of views clearly, and the distribution of power was fluid (Gotvassli, 1996). This lead to discussions and planning which was not systematic, lacking in commitment and short of overall guidance. Gotvassli (1990) refers to a study made by Ingeborg Kvalheim who has observed the following about an ECEC manager:

> "She does not *want* to be an authority, and she finds it difficult to make a stand concerning problems that she registered in various sections of the ECEC institution. She wanted her institution to be nice and pleasant, so that the employees would feel safe and accepted." (Gotvassli 1990, 18).

Thus, it is not surprising that Gotvassli (1990) found that 48.6% of the ECEC managers in his research did not wish to be managers at all (p. 38). Other researchers have also pointed out that ECEC institution managers are conflict avoiding (Bergersen, 2006). Gotvassli (1991) argues that although various studies point to different directions (see for instance Bastiansen 1991), conflict avoidance and a preference for good social relations are nevertheless prominent (Gotvassli, 1991, 167). According to Bergersen (2006) during interactions between the manager and employees the emphasis is placed on relationships and dialogue and conflicts are avoided (p. 128). Such weak management and conflict avoidance implies, by intent or not, that management is in the hands of all or most employees and that the director is a co-ordinator, facilitator or secretary. Norwegian ECEC managers have indeed been found to be democratic in the sense that all employees are involved in decision making processes (Gotvassli, 1991, 165). In short, research, mainly dating from around 1990, conclude that ECEC institutions were managed by means of democratic, participatory processes and only weakly directed by their director.

The belief that Norwegian ECEC managers have been and still are democratic can also be seen in the numerous contributions that discuss why this is so: One explanation that has been put forward is that notions about ECEC institution management were developed in the period of expansion after the reform of 1975 (Gotvassli, 1990, 57). Many young directors started their careers in this period when the effects of the general radicalisation and anti-authoritarian currents from 1968 were still very strongly felt. The majority of this generation of directors was young and inexperienced when

they started working as directors, which also led them to take an open and democratic approach to management (Gotvassli, 2004). Ingeborg Kvalheim (1990) who has followed Norwegian ECEC teacher training for decades writes that weak management, non-hierarchical structures, a preference for harmony, participative management and emphasis on human relations and care are characteristics of the management thinking of the sector. She explains this with the "warm, open, and democratic mode of cooperation that directors have experienced in their own training as ECEC teachers" (Kvalheim, 1990, cited in Gotvassli, 1991, 162). The democratic mode of management is also related to gender by several observers: In the 1970s, ECEC institutions were established and directed by young women who knew they were about to build up something new. At the same time, a key idea in Norwegian ECEC policies at that time was that these institutions should not have the school, but the home as its model. The implication here is that the home (unlike a school) was an arena for feminine values and maternal care (Bergersen 2006, 130).

New Public Management and changing management practices

Since the mid 1980's, *New Public Management* (NPM) has been implemented in many countries, even though it takes a different shape or form in different national contexts (Lægreid, 1993; Christensen & Lægreid, 2007). In recent years, some reforms have rejected NPM principles and have returned to older ideas of governance and coordination. Christensen and Lægreid (2007) have labelled this post NPM reforms. These tendencies have, however, not supplanted NPM which still plays a major role in practical public administration and in debates about public sector reform.

New Public Management is not a theory, it is rather a loosely coupled set of ideas about how the public sector can be run more effectively (Aasbrenn, 2010; Christensen, Lægreid, Roness, & Røvik, 2009). These ideas focus on allowing a more independent position for public organisations. I.e. that they should be more sensitive to the needs of clients, that they would benefit from competition, that they need stronger management which can be held responsible for results, and that public organisations should have a more clearly defined responsibility, and delegated authority to choose appropriate strategies and procedures (Aasbrenn, 2010, 20; Busch, 2005; Christensen &

Lægreid, 2007). Klausen (2005) argues that these NPM ideas and principles can be grouped in two pillars. One of them contains economically oriented reform ideas and favours market principles, in particular competition. The other he labels managerialism, which emphasises strong management, clear distinctions between political and administrative considerations and tasks, as well as delegation and manager responsibility for results.

New Public Management is endorsed as the governance doctrine of the Norwegian government. In the ECEC sector, this approach has led to extensive management training programs for ECEC managers from the 1990s. It was also made one of several optional specialisations in the initial training programs for ECEC professionals and a large advisory literature developed aimed at ECEC managers who were looking for guidance as to how to deal with management responsibilities in the new NPM led era. Since 2010 all new ECEC managers are strongly recommended to complete an extensive training (30 credits), called the ECEC manager school. The overall aim of these reforms was to strengthen ECEC managers, and to get rid of the loose management practices in which all participated and nobody was in charge as reported above. This also obviously presented challenge to democratic management. It is therefore assumed that we will not find much democratic management practices left in the sector in recent years.

On the other hand, as suggested by institutional organisational theory, organisations resist change efforts and stick to valued practices and organisational forms (March & Olsen, 1989; Scott, 2001). In 2007, when commenting on a survey about the performance of managers in various types of organisations, Dagens Næringsliv, the main newspaper for business interests in Norway, made a major point that ECEC institution managers did better than others and obviously had developed special types of management that other sectors could learn from.[1] Thus, it could be possible that democratic management of ECEC centres has remained important in spite of the NPM pressures. Our aim in this chapter is to examine to what extent the democratically inspired participatory management style found some 25 years ago has persisted up to recently. This assessment depends on what is meant by democratic management.

1 (http://www.dn.no/karriere/article1171254.ece).

Notions of democratic management

Management can be understood as taking care of key functions for the survival of an organisation. These functions are defined in different ways, and one approach distinguishes among production, administration, integration and entrepreneurship. Management is about making decisions concerning these functions, and by means of communication, to have them executed (Strand, 2007). In this approach it is emphasized that it may vary who takes part in the decision-making and communication of decisions. It may involve others than those who are formally appointed as managers. Democratic management, in this perspective, implies involving more people in the decision making managerial process as real participants.

However, management implies the existence of managers who manage others. Someone is given a special mandate to make sure that key decisions are made and implemented in the organisation (Strand, 2007). Thus, there is an inherent tension between management and democracy. Where participatory democracy is complete, there is hardly any room for left for management. Therefore, democratic management must be seen as a situation where the manager has some directive power which is balanced by the power of those have participatory possibilities.

Carol Pateman (1970) was concerned with democratic practices in the work place, and she argues in her books that managers should allow democratic participation to the employees. She makes a fruitful distinction between three types of participation:

a) full participation – participation is to be one of the final decision makers,

b) partial participation – the decision maker has strong incentives to take the wishes and values of participants into consideration when making the decision, and

c) pseudo-participation – the manager decides and is fairly free to consider or disregard the views of participating employees.

In the case of maximum, full participation, management is no longer needed. It has been supplanted by self-organised groups. In the case of pseudo-democracy, we are no longer dealing with democracy but with manipulation and exploitative forms of participation. That is, when workers are invited to

participate in order to motivate them to work harder and better, but not in order to give them a real say (Hyman & Mason, 1995).

In this Chapter we define democratic management in ECECs as partial participation. That is, the ECEC director has the final say, but there are incentives to involve and take into consideration the points of views of the employees. Such involvement may take many forms and degrees. Our data does not allow us to examine all different types of partial participation found within ECEC institutions. But we are able to examine the extent to which ECEC managers who responded to the survey accepted the general idea of involving the employees in decision-making processes.

Democratic management has been explained in different ways, as indicated above. The gender and training backgrounds are individual characteristics of the ECEC directors. The strength of democratic management may vary, as indicated above. It is assumed that women were more democratically oriented than men, and that training, age and experience can make a difference in their approach to managing and leading ECEC centres. It is also assumed that with age and experience, directors would find it easier to involve employees in decision-making. It could also be the other way around, that with age and experience, directors conclude that it is better not to waste too much time on involvement processes. The effects of these individual factors could be assessed using the survey data.

Some of the explanations we reviewed in the above point to culture. The cultural perspective on organisation and management makes it a key idea that values and world views are stable foundations of organisational life, and that they are very resistant to change (Bolman & Deal, 2003). For instance, that ECECs that were founded in the 1970s were marked by democratic values in the founding stages and can be assumed to have retained this cultural basis later on.

On the other hand, an organisational perspective could also imply an assumption that formal structures can make a major difference. Early contributions in this tradition saw organisations as ruled by formal rules of authority, division of work, coordination and performance standards (Scott, 1992). It must be assumed that formal structures of hierarchy and formal rules will block democratic decision-making. Rules mean to have made the decision about what to do when making the rules. Later on, this formal perspective has also emphasised that organisations depend on their environment and will structure themselves so as to adapt to changing

external requirements (ibid.). For instance, competition could have an impact on the extent of employee involvement in management processes.[2]

The survey data allowed us to examine some possible effects of these conditions on management.

Methods of research

In 2008, a survey was sent to all ECEC institutions in Norway by e-mail. Some 40% responded, resulting in data from 1462 ECEC directors. They are representative of the population on variables such as proportion of male and female directors and proportion of governmental and non-governmental ECEC institutions at that time. Being collected in 2008 these data cannot say how the situation is in 2013. However, the purpose of this analysis is to examine whether the democratic mode of ECEC management that seems to have developed in the 1970s and early 1980s could still be found after two decades of NPM management reforms and understanding of management as more directive. For this purpose, data from 2008 are valid.

In the survey, directors were asked about various aspects of their management thinking and practice. They were also asked to report on their gender, experience, training, and age. Further, they reported on characteristics of their ECEC institution such as size, founding year, ownership, how much competition they experienced, formalisation and hierarchy, decision making procedures and external relationships. The analysis has been supported by SPSS. When significance is mentioned, it refers to T-tests with a significance level of 0.05.

Democratic management in Norwegian ECECs

Employees in Norwegian ECEC centres, comprise approximately 1/3 ECEC teachers and 2/3 assistants of various types. The assistant group may have some vocational training in child care. We asked the directors about

2 In Norway, anyone who satisfies basic technical requirements can start an ECEC centre anywhere. Until 2013, any ECEC center has also been entitled to government subsidies. Because of this, a situation has developed where ECEC centres compete for children as their subsidies depend on the number of children they have.

what issues they involved the other ECEC teachers in. As table 1 shows, there were issues about which the other ECEC teachers were not consulted. The assistants must be assumed to be consulted even less.

Table 1. Percentage of ECEC directors who reported that they consulted ECEC teachers to a great or very great extent on selected issues[3]

Issues	(N)	Governmental ECECs	Non-governmental ECECs
Budget	1170	16%	10%
Annual Planning	1169	96%	96%
Pedagogical assessments	1173	98%	98%
Recruitment	1172	42%	65%
Personnel management	1172	28%	39%
External relations	1172	4%	7%

First, let us note that on several important issues most directors did not involve the employees very much, notably budgeting and external relations. Thus, there were at least some areas where ECEC management was not very democratic at all. Second, note that there were more issues where employee involvement was strong than not, and that involvement is high on planning and pedagogical assessments. Personnel issues and recruitment are more divided. Finally, let us also note that concerning personnel management and recruitment, involvement was stronger in non-governmental centres.

However, involvement does not necessarily mean democracy. It could mean noting what the employees think, without taking much notice (i.e. pseudo-participation). Or, it could mean that directors engaged in discussions with their employees. We asked whether there were discussions about goals and strategies. It was found that the majority of directors discussed organisational goals with their employees only sometimes (46%) or once a week (35%) (N=1215). Only 20% did it more often.

We could also approach the democratic nature of involvement by another item. We asked the directors about how important they felt various assertions about management was, one of these assertions was: "Is it important to

3 N are all the respondents on each item. It varies a little bit because some respondents responded to only some of these items. The proportion of private and governmental is approximately half of each.

consult employees in decision making?" Not all directors endorsed this point of view, though 58% of the participating directors tended to agree that this was important. The distribution of responses along a 7 point scale where 1 = completely disagree to 7 = completely agree, indicated that the great majority endorses this principle, but only 1/3 at the highest two levels, suggesting substantial modifications and reservations (N=1155).

Consultations and discussions are not the same, and the analysis of the survey data collected showed that these two variables were not correlated. This would suggest that discussing goals is not the same as consulting employees. That could mean that consulting is a democratically very weak form of management, or that it is a stronger form than discussions. The Norwegian term that was translated as "consulted" was "ta med på råd" which reflects the idea of involvement in decision-making. Consultations are therefore interpreted as a stronger democratic obligation than discussing goals.

In summary, the survey data analysed suggests that the democratic involvement of employees is rather constrained. First, it is constrained in the sense that it does not include all issues, only some. Second, it is constrained in the sense that it does not occur on a daily basis but once a week or less often. And finally, it is contrained in the sense that most directors endorse the idea only partially, i.e. only 1/3 completely or almost completely agrees that it is important to consult. Such a cautious and selective involvement is closer to NPM ideas of concentrating management powers with the director.

We asked the directors to what extent various role descriptions described them as leaders. For each description, a scale from 1 to 7 was applied, 7 indicating maximum fit. In table 2 we have given the percentage of the total who reported 5–7 for each role description, and as we can see, some roles were seen as much more appropriate than others. N varies from 1132 til 1158 because some respondents did not respond on all role descriptions.

Table 2. Percentage of directors who agree that the role descriptions were accurate (i.e. percentage who answered 5–7 on a scale from 1–7, 7 being maximum agreement)

Role	
Business manager	77%
Controller	21%
Administrator	89%
Personnel manager	90%
Politician	15%
Psychologist	50%
Fellow human being	95%

The most directive role, the controller, has a low score. A role description close to dialogue, close community and non-hierarchical relations (fellow human being) scores very high. But so do administrator and personnel manager, which are more directive roles. Democratic notions seem to co-exist with more directive manager notions.

In short, there is a mixture and a variety of democratic role understandings and directive role understandings, there are results suggesting involvement and discussions as well as indications that this involvement is constrained. This makes it all the more important to examine the effects of factors that may strengthen or weaken democratic tendencies in ECEC management.

Conditions for democratic management

What are the conditions for democratic management? The best indicator of democratic management seems to be adherence to the proposition "It is important to consult the employees in decision making". Both in the earlier research we examined and in our own theoretical definition of democracy, direct involvement in decision making is the core of democratic management. We will therefore examine conditions for democratic management by asking what explains the variation on this variable. Support for consultation did not correlate with gender. A likely explanation for this is that the male directors in the survey were socialised into management cultures in the sector to such an extent that it neutralized gender differences. They only make up

10% of directors. On the other hand, it is often argued that men should be more present in ECECs because they bring something different as men. In this case they did not. Support for consultation did not correlate with age either, nor did it correlate with the level of extra management training. Thus individual level factors did not seem to explain very much in this case. This makes it all the more relevant to turn to cultural characteristics of the ECEC centres. We compared the ECEC centres that were established in the 1970s with others, assuming that the ideals of that period would influence these directors in a democratic direction. There was however, no correlation here; the directors in ECEC centres established in the 1970s had the same beliefs in consulting the employees as the others.

Finally, we considered aspects of the ECEC centre as a formal organisation depending on its environment. The survey allowed more variables to be included here. We have considered the size of the centre. We used two different measures of routinisation, that is, the directors were asked to what extent was their ECEC was informally organised and we asked whether the ECECs had written routines on 16 different tasks. The answers to these 16 were combined in a total routinisation combined variable. We also used two measures of *hierarchical authority*: we asked whether the centre had a clearly defined hierarchy, and we asked whether the director felt that he/she was able to cut through discussions and force a decision. Finally, we asked questions about the extent to which the centre had to compete for core resources, i.e. children and personnel. There were reliability problems related to this data because they were only based on the directors' reporting, which must be assumed to be biased. When interpreting data, this has to keep that in mind. As these items are related, there was a need to control for how they affected each other, and therefore a linear, multiple regression was conducted. Table 3 shows the regression results.

Table 3. Variation in support for consultation as conditioned by organisational factors

Coefficients[a]					
	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig
(Constant)	4,213	,461		9,145	,000
Size	-,039	,006	-,203	-6,653	,000
We have an informal organisation	,095	,029	,102	3,296	,001
Competing when recruiting	-,140	,040	-,104	-3,492	,000
Total routinisation	,243	,092	,080	2,628	,009
We have a clearly defined hierarchy	-,086	,029	-,094	-3,029	,003
Director being able to force a decision	,104	,051	,063	2,034	,042

a. Dependent Variable: It is important to consult the employees in decision making. N=1045–1051.

In total, the model explains 9% of the variation (Adjusted R square = .093), which is a modest but notable explanatory power.

First, the centre size matters. Measured by number of staff in the ECEC centre, the negative correlation of size on support for consulting employees was clear and significant. This could reflect that frequent consultation is much more time consuming and complex once the number of people employed at the centre increases. In Norway, there is a tendency to build larger ECEC institutions than before (150–200 children and sometimes even more) and to merge older, smaller ones under one director. This can be seen as a policy shift which can undermine consulting management practices. On the other hand, democracy is obviously possible also when there are many participants. Scandinavian work place democracy in general functions on a much larger scale (Levin, Tove, Ravn, & Øyum, 2012). Instead of warning against big ECEC centres, the argument could be that there is a need to develop new notions of what democratic management can be when the ECEC staff is no longer a small, closely knit community in which participative management takes the form of face to face, daily, informal communication.

Second, competing for personnel was negatively correlated with consulting employees. This is not easy to understand, but it could reflect that

when there were recruitment difficulties, staff turnover increased, making it more problematic to consult because of the stress turnover brings and because newcomers may have difficulties engaging in organisational matters beyond their own tasks.

Third, routinisation matters. Contrary to expectations, however, high scores on routinisation correlated modestly, but significantly, with consultation.

The measures on hierarchy also show confusing results. When directors reported that there was a clear hierarchy, consulting decreased, which makes sense. But directors who reported that they were good at forcing decisions also reported stronger commitment to consultation. How can we make sense of this? How can democratic management be related to directive directors, i.e. director ability to force decisions when necessary? Consultation is not only a bottom-up, grassroot empowering phenomenon. It can also be a management tool for the new, more directive manager. In the general management literature, there has been a growing understanding of the need to engage and motivate the employees by means of participation. But the participation that is being envisaged in closely controlled and directed by the management and is mainly directed towards making employees work smarter and better, and it is not a matter of letting employees take part in the management of the entire enterprise. (Hyman & Mason, 1995.) Thus, support to the idea that one must consult the employees, may mean different things and have different sources, i.e. in the democratic ideas of the 1970s and in modern management theory, the latter offering participation which tends towards the pseudo-participation end. These two currents probably co-exist in the ECEC sector, or at least the data from 2008 suggest they did then. How the relative strength of them have developed later is difficult to say.

In total, we cannot explain a lot of the variation in support of the existence of democratic values. We can however, argue that the individual characteristics that we have measured have no effect. Having been established in the 1970s had no effect either. What matters in this material is organisational framework, notably size, routinisation, hierarchy and, very modestly, competition.

Concluding discussion

The analysis has shown that in the 2008 data there were marked elements of democratic consultation of employees in Norwegian ECEC centres, but this was not a general characteristic of ECEC management. Democratic principles were applied in some issues and not in others, and directors varied regarding how important they thought such consultation was. 10% of them rejected the idea almost completely. The majority supported it – to some extent. Very few supported it without any reservations. Democracy is constrained, and this has to be seen as connected to findings that Norwegian ECEC directors of today are very conscious of their role and responsibility as managers and take charge of things to a larger extent than previously reported (Børhaug & Lotsberg, 2010). Democratic participation has to be adjusted to this overall strengthening of director authority. However, support for consultation was stronger where the directors were more directive, which suggests that consultation also has a role to play in strong, NPM inspired management, but this is most likely a more controlled and constrained consultation than what was reported in the 1990 findings.

We have found that support for consultation does not vary with individual backgrounds of centre directors comprising factors such as age, gender, training or amount of experience. It does however vary with the organisational structure in which directors work. First, directors in non-governmental ECECs involved staff in more issues than did governmental directors. This is most likely related to the fact that in the public sector, democracy is institutionalized at the very apex of the organisation, i.e. in parliament and local government council and lower level, employee democracy cannot easily negotiate with that. The government has to take care of values that are superior to other concerns and thus the practice of employee democracy can become more difficult in governmental organisations (Downs & Larkey, 1986; Strand, 2007).

Second, consulting the staff was negatively correlated to size. The problem of size is most likely that with increasing size, consultation becomes more complex and time consuming. The influence of size is probably related to the fact that the informal, face to face type of daily consultation that is reported in previous research could survive in small ECEC centres, but not in bigger ones. There is a need for more research on the nature of consultation processes in ECEC institutions. In as far as it is desirable to

promote participatory management in the future, new ways of consultation on a larger scale must be developed. It can develop along the lines of controlled, director controlled participation of management theory. Or it could evolve as broader consultation between more equal partners, as was the tendency in the research reported from around 1990. Such participatory management would, however be at odds with NPM.

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Mentoring as a Leadership Development Strategy in Early Childhood Education

Doranna Wong and Manjula Waniganayake
Institute of Early Childhood
Macquarie University
Australia

Abstract

Mentoring is a facilitated process involving two or more individuals that have a shared interest in professional learning and development. Mentoring in early childhood is also seen as a leadership development strategy. Traditionally, mentoring has been used as a 'solution strategy' to enhance teacher pedagogical practice. Accordingly, what is mentoring and who can be a mentor are important to consider when assessing the veracity of the positive outcomes it claims. This paper will unpack the conceptual evolution of mentoring as a top-down model to the current collegial model by examining the definitions, functions, approaches and contexts of mentoring. By examining key findings of research on mentoring conducted during 2000–2012, implications for the early childhood sector are discussed.

Tiivistelmä

Mentorointi on ohjattu ja johdettu prosessi, jossa kahta tai useampaa henkilöä yhdistää kiinnostus samansuuntaiseen ammatilliseen oppimiseen ja kehittämiseen. Mentorointi varhaiskasvatuksessa nähdään myös johtamisen kehittämisen strategiana. Perinteisesti mentorointi on nähty ratkaisuna opettajan pedagogisten käytäntöjen kehittämisessä. Niinpä se, mitä mentorointi on ja kuka voi toimia mentorina, on tärkeää ottaa huomioon, kun arvioidaan väitettyjen postitiivisten tulosten totuudenmukaisuutta. Tämä artikkeli purkaa mentoroinnin käsitteellistä evoluutiota mentoroinnin top down -mallista nykyiseen kollegiaaliseen malliin tarkastelemalla mentoroinnin määritelmiä, toimintoja, lähestymistapoja ja konteksteja. Tarkastelemalla tärkeimpiä tutkimustuloksia mentoroinnista vuosina 2000–2012, esitetään päätelmiä varhaiskasvatuksen alueelle.

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Significance and purpose of mentoring

'Mentoring' has been conceptualised and implemented in diverse ways within different professions, organisations and cultural contexts. As a process, mentoring may be generally described as a dynamic interpersonal relationship involving two or more people. Mentoring in early childhood is often perceived as "a peer relationship" (Nolan, 2007, xvii), where a more experienced practitioner provides professional guidance to one or more novice practitioners, either on a 1:1 basis or as a group. The differences in meaning and expectations held by the key stakeholders in the mentoring relationship, the mentor and protégé, can also contribute to the inconsistencies of how mentoring is understood and positioned within a formal leadership framework.

Governments today recognise that the quality of early childhood programs are dependent on the quality of its workforce that is assessed in terms of staff' qualifications and participation in ongoing professional learning (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012). In Australia, for instance, mentoring has been attracting much attention recently as an effective strategy to promote leadership development (Waniganayake, Cheeseman, Fenech, Hadley, & Shepherd, 2012). Mentoring of both qualified and unqualified teachers has been used as a 'solutions strategy' to overcome workplace challenges at times of conflict or crisis when intervention by someone with authority and experience is required. Mentoring, however, is more than a short-term intrusion in times of high need and can be a adopted as a preventative approach, as in the case of succession planning to safeguard against the sudden loss of expertise and ensure a smooth handover from one leader to another (Waniganayake et al., 2012). This approach is also endorsed by government legislation where mentoring is linked with the *National Quality Framework* (Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority, 2011).

Likewise, pre-service teacher mentoring programs used in universities and schools have been developed typically with the aim of supporting the induction of new teachers into the teaching profession. Mentoring during the initial degree training and induction has been shown to boost teachers' professional confidence, identity and their willingness to participate in professional learning (Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh, & Wilss, 2008; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2010; Le Cornu, 2005; McCormick & Brennan, 2001;

Simpson, Hastings, & Hill, 2007). It has also been shown that involvement in mentoring can sustain the mentors' interests in the profession, lowering attrition rates and providing opportunities for continuous engagement in action research focused on pedagogy and practice (Morton, 2005; Souto-Manning, 2007).

The absence of role clarity in terms of the mentor and the protégé, as well as task confusion in terms of how the mentoring is implemented, can create confusion and dissatisfaction. In this chapter, a historical perspective is adopted in discussing how the concept of mentoring has evolved over time. It will also examine the critical dimensions of mentoring and how mentoring has been interpreted and implemented in education contexts. Based on an analysis of research conducted on mentoring over a decade, implications for the early childhood sector is presented.

Conceptual origins and meaning of mentoring

Mentoring is classically described as a relationship between two individuals where the older, more competent and experienced individual plays a nurturing, intentional, instructive and supportive role in shaping and developing the younger, less experienced individual. The notion of a 'Mentor' is often linked to a character in 'The Odyssey', the epic which dates back to ancient Greece where Telemachus, son of Odysseus, was entrusted to Mentor, a loyal family friend (Onchwari & Keengwe, 2008). Mentor was responsible for protecting, educating, teaching, guiding and nurturing Telemanchus during Odysseus' absence for lengthy periods (Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003). Roberts (1999) provides an alternative perspective as he believes that it was Athena disguised as Mentor in the Odyssey story that helped Telemanchus the most. Fenelon in his French book 'Telemaque' written in French, focused on the character of Mentor and so it is that the term mentor first appeared in French in 1749 and in English in 1750 when referring to a wise and experienced person and serves as a role model ("The Mentor," n.d.)

This origin explanation has contributed greatly to the way the term mentoring is perceived in western literature and has been refined over time. For instance, McCormick and Brennan (2001) considered mentoring to be a long-term individualised process where an experienced professional

provides a novice with support and guidance. Today, mentoring is perceived as complementary relationships building on the needs of both mentor and protégé (Awaya, McEwan, Heyler, Linsky, Lum, & Wakukawa, 2003; Beyene, Anglin, Sanchez, & Ballou, 2002; Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003). This shift in the power imbalance reflects the "recognition of the constructivist nature of mentoring" and this is "based on an appreciation of the mutuality of benefits from the teaching and learning that occurs" for both mentor and protégé (p. 152). It also shows that the usefulness of mentoring has been extended from being seen as uni-directional to becoming a bi-directional relationship, where both mentor and protégé profit from the dyad (Bollinger, 2009; Lee & Feng, 2007; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005).

The collaborative and collegial nature of mentoring is also reflected in the language being used in contemporary mentoring studies. This includes terms such as 'collaborative mentoring' (Kochan & Trimble, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Souto-Manning & Dice, 2007), 'co-mentoring' (Jipson & Paley, 2000; Kochan & Trimble, 2000; Mullen, 2000), 'critical constructivist mentoring' (Austin, 2005; Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010), 'mutual mentoring' (Beyene et al., 2002; Landay, 1998) and 'peer mentoring' (Heirdsfield et al., 2008; Le Cornu, 2005; O'Neil & Marsick, 2009). Rodd (2013) states that "mentoring is not a supervisory relationship; it is an opportunity for colleagues to engage in reflective dialogue that can enhance feelings of empowerment and success and promote dispositions towards lifelong learning" (p. 173). Accordingly mentoring must not be confused with staff supervision or performance management. Care is needed therefore when centre directors for instance, act as mentors to staff in the same organisation as positional power can be misused.

Dimensions of mentoring

In the business sector, companies have credited the role of mentoring for the successful development of their workers through inspiration, motivation and skill enhancement. These organisations saw mentoring as an innovative management strategy, contributing to the regeneration and survival of the organisation from within (Burke, Zena Burgess, & Fallon, 2006; Murray, 2001). Career advancement, retention and leadership development of employees have also been attributed to mentoring programs established

within organisations (Rodd, 2013). Similar trends have been found with informal mentoring strategies used within early childhood contexts. Those such as Onchwari and Keengwe (2008, 2010), Simpson et al. (2007) and Yip (2003) for instance, have also reported that mentoring provides teachers professional support and learning opportunities to improve workplace practice.

In seeking conceptual clarity, mentoring is discussed under three dimensions that underpin its relationship dynamics: dispositions, skills and knowledge, and roles and responsibilities. These three dimensions reflect the conceptualisations of an early childhood leader as a mentor (Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003; Rodd, 2006, 2013) and is considered appropriate for use in unpacking mentoring in relation to leadership growth.

Dispositions

Dispositions have been defined as "enduring habits of mind and actions, and tendencies to respond in characteristic ways to situations" (Carr, 2001, as cited in Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009, 47). In writing one of the first books dedicated to the study of mentoring in early childhood, Nolan (2007, xix) highlights "caring" as an essential attribute or quality of a mentor. Le Cornu (2005) also asserts that a particular attitude to mentoring is necessary for a successful mentoring relationship. She describes this to be an attitude where one is responsible for not only one's own learning within the relationship, but also of the other. As such, each individual contributes both as a learner and a facilitator. Accordingly, mentoring relationships are reciprocal, though how much is given and taken will vary between the individuals.

Importantly, within a reciprocal relationship, there is an expectation of being open to share and a willingness to learn continuously (Shank, 2005; Yip, 2003). Scholars such as John (2008) note that effective mentors are respectful and trustworthy. They work towards empowering themselves and the protégé to gain a sense of autonomy and agency towards their own professional growth. Nolan (2007) considers being asked to be a mentor as "an honour" and "a privilege" (p. 13), and that "if the mentor coach does not truly care, the process becomes simply a matter of passing on content" (p. xix). Elsewhere in the literature reviewed, it shows that mentors also strive

to motivate and extend their professional status and contribution to the context (Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010).

Effective mentoring also reflects commitment and enthusiasm in seeking, evaluating and questioning knowledge. Successful mentors are seen as having an air of emotional positiveness, are professional, nurturing, collegial, consistent and helpful (Beyene et al., 2002; Bouquillon, Sosik, & Lee, 2005; W. B. Johnson, 2002; Sosik & Godshalk, 2005). They are flexible, patient and diplomatic (Souto-Manning & Dice, 2007; Trubowitz, 2004; Wang, 2001). Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) and Le Cornu (2005) also agree about the importance of being wholehearted, caring, affirming and dynamic as necessary aspects of fostering reciprocal relationships.

Skills and knowledge

Skills and knowledge of the individuals in the mentoring dyad can also impact on extending professional practice of those involved. Orland-Barak and Hasin (2010) state that good mentors are expert teachers with a wealth of content knowledge that is contextual, pedagogical and practical. They can also evaluate situations, and assess challenges encountered to identify for instance, possibilities for innovation and threats to an organisation. Morton (2005) regards the ability to demonstrate skills and techniques as an important part of being a mentor as someone who can facilitate confidence when adapting to changing circumstances, and adopting new programs or pedagogical approaches.

Roberts (2000) considers the ability to coach as an important asset a mentor can have as it is directly concerned with skill development and performance improvement through direct teaching, tutoring or training or skills and knowledge to be achieved. Coaching is seen here to be a particular technique or a specific skill-set used by a mentor (Higgins, Young, Weiner, & Wlodarczyk, 2009; Zwart, Wubbels, Bergen, & Bolhuis, 2007). The Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (McCormick & Brennan, 2001) stipulates a number of skills necessary when implementing a mentorship program. Two of these skills are the mentor's ability to facilitate the application of skills and knowledge and to convey understandings specific to the context, are regarded as key to its success.

Le Cornu (2005) also recommends two sets of skills she considers to be significant in mentoring: highly developed interpersonal skills and

critical reflection skills as key in a mentoring relationship. This is because, communication involves listening, reflecting, questioning, confirming, describing, challenging and debating – especially within the field of education, where one's own teaching pedagogy and practice continues to evolve through experience over time (Simpson et al., 2007; Yip, 2003). Critical reflection involving exploration of one's beliefs and values, can enable educators to question and analyse assumptions that underpins professional practice and evaluate responsiveness to changes within the professional context (Davey & Ham, 2010). The ability to communicate with sensitivity and confidence also assists trust development, and the creation of a comfortable atmosphere for continuing professional discussion that is reciprocal and emphatic. Thus through such professional dialogue, multiple perspectives can be promoted and encouraged as opposed to conformity to a singular viewpoint (Le Cornu).

Roles and responsibilities

Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) described the role of the mentor in three categories: the "pragmatic" role, the "supportive and complementary" role and the "managerial" role (p. 278). The pragmatic role of a mentor includes being "an observer, a provider of feedback and an instructor" (p. 280). Those such as Cordingley (2005) and Onchwari and Keengwe (2008) also refer to the role of an instructor or coach as being critical in facilitating the development of teachers. The seamless merging of the two terms – mentor and coach in this literature is however problematical and impacts on gaining clarity about the nature of roles or functions performed by a mentor and/or coach.

The supportive and complementary role of a mentor includes being "a role model, a counsellor, a critical friend and an equal partner" (Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005). Fleming and Love (2003) state that mentors are always in a fluid state between leading and following as the process of mentoring is never linear. According to Onchwari and Keengwe (2008), the collegial model of mentoring, can enable teachers to feel more empowered to share their work, observe others at work, and together, teach each other what they know about their pedagogy, learning and practice. This can encourage teachers to be more receptive to new knowledge, practice, ideas and teaching

styles demonstrated within the collaborative atmosphere of the mentoring partnership (Onchwari & Keengwe, 2010).

In discussing the managerial role of a mentor, Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005, 280) refer to being "a manager, an assessor and a quality controller". This role of the mentor can be contested as non-collegial and as having a bias towards a supervisory role and therefore does not sit well within democratically governed mentoring relationships, especially if the mentor holds a position of authority in the workplace. This discussion highlights the importance of having clearly defined roles and responsibilities within a formal mentoring program.

It is important to recognise that the concept of a mentor includes an enmeshment of the three dimensions of mentoring (see Figure 1).

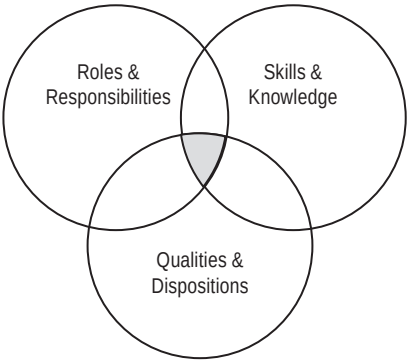

Figure 1. Three dimensions of mentoring (adapted from Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003; Rodd, 2006; 2013)

The grey triangle at the centre represents both mentor and protégé. The overlaps between the three dimensions reflect reciprocity and interdependence. Absence of mutual awareness and understanding of each dimension by the stakeholders can render the mentoring processes to be ineffective or unsatisfactory. This also highlights the importance of discussing the purposes, expectations and goals of mentoring early in the relationship and revisiting these along the way to minimise potential disharmony. By examining the different approaches to mentoring, analysis of key findings from research on mentoring are discussed next.

Research on mentoring

To ascertain key understandings about mentoring drawn from empirical studies, publications published during 2000–2012 were located through a comprehensive database search. It was found that only 13 per cent (n=80) of the 600 publications identified for this review reported on research undertaken by the authors themselves.

An examination of the aims of these studies on mentoring shows that there was a tendency to describe and discuss 'formal' mentoring programs with little or no reference to informal mentoring. Most studies investigated 1:1 or collective mentoring programs and the nature of the experience from the perspective of either the mentor or the protégé. There was limited clarity about research methods, data analysis and time taken to complete the programs.

There also appears to be a heavy reliance on qualitative research methods including interviews (e.g., Yip, 2003), shadowing (e.g. Shank, 2005), observations (e.g. Orland-Barack & Hasin, 2010) and written reflections (e.g. Heirsfield et al., 2008). Most were small-scale studies involving approximately four to ten dyads of mentor-mentees. Key findings generally tended to focus on the benefits of mentoring and identification of areas for further research was rare.

There was a proliferation of empirical studies on mentoring undertaken in education (Davey & Ham, 2010; Heirdsfield et al., 2008; John, 2008; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; Morton, 2005; Onchwari & Keengwe, 2008; 2010; Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010; Shank, 2005; Souto-Manning & Dice, 2007; Walkington, 2005; Yip, 2003), business administration (Wilmore & Bratlien, 2005) and healthcare (Austin, 2005). The formal mentoring programs involving early childhood practitioners (Le Cornu, 2005; McCormick & Brennan, 2001), focused on achieving best practice outcomes for pre-service teachers, who were the protégés. However, there was no evidence of systemic evaluations of mentoring programs to demonstrate that the intended outcomes were indeed achieved. There was little or no evidence of research that looked at mentoring as a socio-cultural construct and in part, this may be due to the varying definitions, significance and purpose of mentoring in different disciplines. Absence of large-scale longitudinal research studies on mentoring also makes it difficult

to lay claim to any benefits or challenges of mentoring from a long-term perspective.

The majority of the research concerned with early childhood focused on mentoring programs that supported pre-service teachers (Fowler, 2004; Heirdsfield et al., 2008; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005; Le Cornu, 2005; McCormick & Brennan, 2001; Walkington, 2005; Yip, 2003). These papers were written from the perspective of benefits to the pre-service teacher (i.e., the protégés). There was however limited discussion about the impact of mentoring on the mentors. Accordingly, in keeping with recent conceptualisations of mentoring as a co-constructed teaching-learning phenomenon, it is essential that empirical studies are developed to capture the perspectives of all stakeholders involved in mentoring. This includes capturing the voices of children if the purposes of mentoring were to enhance quality outcomes for children and families.

In doing this review, it was also difficult to identify a common pool of authors that have been referenced in the literature on mentoring. This may infer that there were no scholars conducting research on mentoring in a sustained way over time. It is also worth noting that in referring to the USA, Nolan (2007, 12) asserts "a 'tipping point' in mentor coaching was reached in the 1997–98 era as the number of organisations reporting the implementation of formal mentor coaching programs doubles in one year." There is however no information on the extent to which these programs were formally evaluated or of any research being conducted to assess the impact of these programs.

Implications for practice and future research

Over ten years ago, Long (1997) claimed that mentoring benefits both stakeholders and organisations involved. This analysis holds true for mentoring literature published during 2000–2012 and reviewed in this chapter. Mentoring has been used to address workplace challenges including reducing attrition rates, providing professional development, enhancing teaching pedagogy and practice, and as a career advancement strategy. Due to the absence of systematic evaluations or longitudinal research, it is difficult to show that the intended purposes of mentoring in these situations were indeed achieved.

In this chapter, mentoring was considered as a guided or facilitated process that can enhance professional knowledge and skill development broadly and leadership growth specifically. The effectiveness of a mentoring relationship can be examined by assessing the extent to which there is an adequate fit between the three dimensions of mentoring: dispositions, skills and knowledge, and roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders involved. The expectations of a mentoring relationship however, may or may not be formally assigned and agreed upon, and there is a danger that the mentoring relationship can turn sour due to the lack of understanding and clarity about expectations.

Slattery (2009) laments the lack of attention in exploring the impact of leaders and their behaviour in terms of the "dark side of leadership" which he described as being "a place inhabited by incompetence, flawed character and unethical behaviour." (p. 1). In the same way, Long's assessment of the "dark side of mentoring" highlights the "lack of awareness about the concerns of mentoring and the ambivalence connected with institutionalised or formal mentoring programs" (p. 129). The extent to which the outcomes of mentoring have been critically examined continues to be problematical, and presents as an important area for future research. Given the gendered nature of the early childhood workforce and the linguistic and cultural diversity found in multicultural societies such as Australia, how gender, language and culture can impact mentoring relationships also require attention.

Within early childhood, Nolan (2007) coined the term "mentor-coaching" by way of acknowledging that contemporary practice of mentoring (and coaching) has shifted ground. Nolan contends that coaching which was traditionally "more product oriented and was the practice of transferring knowledge" (p. xvi), when combined with the broader skills and contexts of mentoring incorporate reflective practice, and the emphasis is now placed on teaching and learning. Coaching, however, remains a commodity or a service that can be bought for a fee to deliver a certain skill set within a specified time period. The extent to which mentoring and coaching in early childhood reflect a shift in the commercial nature of coaching to the altruistic nature of mentoring, is difficult to assess.

Mentoring literature suggests that everyone benefits from being involved in a professional mentoring relationship (Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003). For protégés, mentoring can offer a powerful learning strategy to enhance professional capabilities in a particular profession such as early childhood

(Beyene et al., 2002; Cordingley, 2005; Erdem & Ozen, 2003; Griffiths, Thompson, & Hryniewicz, 2010; John, 2008; Mullen, 2008a; 2008b; Onchwari & Keengwe, 2008; 2010; Simpson et al., 2007; Yip, 2003). Likewise, mentors have reported that mentoring relationships can offer opportunities to renew and strengthen their own professional practice (Elliott, 2008; Fabian & Simpson, 2002; Gilles & Wilson, 2004; Heirdsfield et al., 2008; John, 2008; K. A. Johnson, 2003; Kwan & Lopez-Real, 2005; 2010; Lopez-Real & Kwan, 2005; Mullen, 2008b; Orland-Barak & Hasin, 2010; Walkington, 2005; Yip, 2003; Zwart et al., 2007). Government and employer interest in establishing mentoring in early childhood workplaces is also driven by the recognition of the benefits of mentoring. Yet, to date, there is little or no empirical evidence that demonstrates the effectiveness of mentoring in terms of leadership growth, career advancement or improved outcomes for children.

In an exploratory study conducted in Singapore by Wong (2012) a number of important insights in understanding the implementation of mentoring practices within childcare centres were gleaned. In particular, the significant association found between centres with a formal mentoring program and staff with high levels of qualifications in early childhood infers that mentoring can impact on professional growth, and this can, in turn, influence an educator's professional identity. It is possible that societal values and beliefs about teaching and learning can also influence the nature of mentoring. Peer reviewed publications on international comparisons of mentoring in early childhood however could not be located despite an extensive search of relevant databases. Given global interests in assessing the impacts of early childhood mentoring programs, cross-cultural comparisons can shed new insights on the relevance of diverse contexts in developing mentoring relationships within the early childhood sector.

Overall, the success and sustainability of professional mentoring is dependent on its relational nature. According to Thomas (2012) mentoring relationships can contribute to the shaping of one's professional's identity. Sachs (2005, 15, as cited in Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009, 178) reinforce that the professional identity frames how the professional then constructs their idea of "how to be", "how to understand" and "how to act". Although mentoring has been described as engaging in these types of processes, to date however, no study has reported on any connections underpinning the relationship processes and the formation of an educator's professional

identity. Wong (2012) has suggested that connections between mentoring and professional identity can be researched through an exploration of mentor-protégé relationships at different stages of induction to the profession.

Overall, scholars have noted a close association between mentoring and leadership highlighted in the literature reviewed for this chapter. Without a sound body of research-based evidence however, it is difficult to know whether this association is real or imagined. Likewise, the emergence of mentoring as a policy objective within Australia's national quality standards agenda (Council of Australian Governments, 2009, December) also reflects the importance and necessity to examine the definitions, functions, and approaches to mentoring so that implications for practice can be considered in an informed way. Accordingly, mentoring relationships in early childhood require thorough investigation and critical analysis in order to better understand its role, outcomes and effectiveness over time.

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Dimensions of Pedagogical Leadership in Early Childhood Education and Care

Elina Fonsén
University of Tampere
Finland

Abstract

The purpose of the research was to clarify the phenomena of pedagogical leadership and to investigate the implementation of pedagogical leadership by childcare centre directors. The research was connected with the University of Tampere's Development Project on pedagogical leadership carried out in seven municipalities in Finland. The project reflected an inclusive and participatory action research study. The ontological premise of the research is narrative where knowledge is seen as a socially constructed process. The study was based on the contextual leadership theory by Nivala (1998) which emphasises the importance of the core task of early childhood organisations. The data collection methods comprised questionnaires, development plans drawn up by the childcare centre directors and teachers, and narratives written by the directors. The main story reflected a shared understanding about the phenomena of pedagogical leadership. It can be seen that in Finnish childcare centres, pedagogical leadership is understood as a contextual and a cultural phenomenon.

Tiivistelmä

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selventää pedagogisen johtajuuden ilmiötä, käytännön toteutusta sekä sen kehittämishaasteita. Aineisto on kerätty seitsemästä suomalaisesta kunnasta Tampereen yliopiston varhaiskasvatuksen johtajuuden ja laadun kehittämishankkeessa. Metodologisesti kehittämishankkeen läsnäolo tuo tutkimukseen toimintatutkimuksellisia piirteitä. Ontologisesti tutkimusta voidaan luonnehtia narratiiviseksi. Tutkimuksen teoreettinen perusta rakentuu kontekstuaaliseen johtajuusmalliin, jossa organisaation perustehtävä määrittää johtajuutta (Nivala, 1998). Tutkimusaineistona on päiväkodin johtajien kehittämissuunnitelmia, pedagogisen johtajuuden päiväkirjoja ja kyselyitä. Narratiivisella analyysillä luodaan kuvaa peda-

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gogisesta johtajuudesta. Hyvärisen (2006) mukaan yksilöllisten tarinoiden kautta muodostuu päätarina, joka edustaa kulttuurisesti jaettua ymmärrystä kuvatusta ilmiöstä. Tällä luodaan kuvausta suomalaisessa varhaiskasvatuksessa kulttuurisesti ja kontekstuaalisesti jaetusta käsityksestä pedagogisesta johtajuudesta.

Introduction

To provide high quality early childhood education there is a need for pedagogical leadership. Previous leadership research in Finnish early childhood education contexts confirmed that teachers expect pedagogical leadership from their centre directors. Research also indicates that directors reported the lack of time for pedagogical leadership. It has also been indicated that it is difficult for directors to define the content of pedagogical leadership. (Fonsén, 2009; Hujala, Heikka, & Fonsén, 2009.) In addition pedagogical leadership is a complicated concept that has several definitions (e.g. Kurki, 1993; Nivala, 1999; Their, 1994).

When conceptualising pedagogical leadership the phenomena of early childhood education and care (ECEC) pedagogy in Finnish context needs to be defined. Pedagogy of ECEC combines education and teaching, as well as caregiving. Curriculum is seen as age-related and child-centred, where the participation and engagement of children are emphasised. The partnership between parents and teachers has a crucial role as it goes further than just co-operation. Partnerships can be formed and maintained by drawing up individual ECEC plans for children, which influence how teachers design and implement programs. Also early recognition and effective pedagogical interventions of individual learning difficulties are important. With individual pedagogical solutions, the needs of children can be met and the optimal foundation for developmental growth and effective learning can be ensured for each child (National Curriculum Guidelines on ECEC in Finland 2003).

The meaning of pedagogical leadership in Finnish ECEC is specific when compared with other educational contexts. The purposes of the Finnish ECEC are twofold. As with other Scandinavian ECEC systems, it combines education and caregiving. It is called the Educare system (Hujala, Puroila, Parrila-Haapakoski, & Nivala, 1998, 4). On the one hand, ECEC is part of the education system and on the other hand, it comprises social services provided for families. For ECEC leadership, this presents two kinds

of challenges (Nivala, 1998; 1999): the challenges of managing the child care as a service system for meeting the requirements of law, and providing a good service for parents as clients. These tasks are challenging because in Finland, parents have a legal right to municipal child care for children before starting school. Another challenge is how best to lead child centres care as part of an education system. The responsibilities of curriculum implementation, required under the National Curriculum Guidelines on ECEC in Finland (2003) raise the need for pedagogical leadership within ECEC settings. Therefore the quality of early childhood education and pedagogy forms a central focus of childcare centre directors' work in leadership.

Recently, the pedagogical aspect of ECEC centres has been raised in Finland. As a consequence of these discussions over half of the municipalities in the country have shifted the municipal administration of early childhood education from the social services council to the education council[1]. In the Government Program of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen (2011) a proposal was recorded to shift the ECEC services' legislation, administration and steering from the Ministry of Social Services and Health Care to the Ministry of Education and Culture. The change was implemented in January 2013.

Methodology and data

The data for this study was collected as a part of the University of Tampere's Development Project in seven Finnish municipalities. The researcher was a project coordinator and collected the data from directors of early childhood education, who were responsible for preschools, childcare centres, family day care and group family day care. The Project started in August 2010 and ended in June 2012. There were a total of 134 centres and 105 directors who participated in this research.

The Development Project as a context for the study determined the nature of the research as action research. The Development Project comprised the following phases: at the beginning of the project, child-specific assessments of the ECEC quality were conducted in every ECEC centre included in the

1 In Finland municipalities' local government has responsibility to provide day care for families. Municipalities can decide in which administrative organisation is the council of early childhood education.

study. On the basis of these results development plans were formed as a joint process with the stakeholders and the researcher. Development activities were then established according to the development plans. The researcher provided both consultancy advice and in-service training for the directors to assist with implementing the development plans and activities. In the last phase an evaluation of the effectiveness of the development process was carried out by assessing the quality of the pedagogy at each centre.

The main distinction between action research and other types of research is the implementation of an intervention. In action research the researcher makes an intervention and investigates the influences of the intervention. Kuula (2006) argues that in addition to investigating the changes following an intervention, it is essential to investigate the reasons or factors that contributed to the changes, especially if there are no changes arising through the intervention. Jyrkämä (2010) emphasises that the epistemological background of an action research is pragmatism. Theoretical knowledge is always connected to and actualised in practice. According to Kemmis (2008) and Kuula (2006), Kurt Lewin the father of action research, propose that the 'action research spiral' is characterised as research for social management or social engineering.

The methodological approach of the study can be defined as narrative research. Narrative diaries were one set of data in this research. The narratives proposed from the directors included semi-structured questions exploring the concept of pedagogical leadership and the development of the director's own understandings and skills of implementing pedagogical leadership. Due to the 'narrative' or 'linguistic turn' in the social sciences, narrative studies are currently enjoying a growth in popularity. In order to understand narrative inquiry in research we need to understand the characters of the stories. As Hyvärinen (2006) defines, stories are not only subjective but also imply a shared understanding of life. Hendry (2010) suggests that all research is narrative based on the assumption that a narrative is a basic human way of making sense of the world. Using narratives or stories, people can create order and structure in their lives; and hence, this can be seen as a way of 'meaning-making'. Hyvärinen (2006) applies narrative analysis in making a main story from the small stories of the data. After collecting the narrative data from the informants, researchers can construct their own narratives of the study, using techniques such as having a scene and a plot.

As developed by Labov (1997) and Waletzky (1967), the structural analysis method was originally intended for oral narratives. Labov's definition of a narrative analysis consisted of the structural types of narrative clauses, i.e. abstracts, orientations, complicating action and codas. According to Hyvärinen (2006) the structural analysis of narratives could be defined as an introductory analysis. By using content analysis the themes and theoretical constructions of the studied phenomena can be detected. The strength of the narrative method is that it highlights the factors which prevent or promote the implementation of the phenomena. The idea and *tellability* of the narrative is often based on the narrative clauses of 'complicating action'.

In this research the structural narrative analysis method was adapted to the analysis of the narrative diaries with an orientation clause that defines which phenomena belong to pedagogical leadership in the stakeholders' definitions. How the 'complicating action clauses' make a contribution or prevent the implementation of pedagogical leadership was conceptualised. In the last phase of this study, by 'result clauses' was investigated, how the stakeholders perceived the development of pedagogical leadership.

Results

The results of this research indicated that there were clear dimensions connecting theory and practice (Table 1) reflected in the analysed data. These dimensions are context, organisational culture, professionalism of directors and management of substance. Context is the primary determinant of leadership. Clearly defined core tasks can support the enactment of pedagogical leadership and the structure of organisation can either prevent or promote it. According to the contextual leadership model, leadership is related to the purposes of the work. The aims of the leadership should arise from the core tasks connected with the purposes of work (Nivala, 2002; Hujala, 2004; Hujala et al., 1998). As in contextual leadership model, the results of the present study indicate that in the macro level, how the municipalities organises and resources ECEC services were crucial to the successful implementation of early childhood education in childcare centres in Finland. At the national level the government's intention to provide high quality early childhood education as part of a lifelong learning path

modifies the success of the whole pedagogical systems operating within municipalities.

Table 1. Dimensions influencing the success of the pedagogical leadership

DIMENSION	PHENOMENA	THEORY
THE CONTEXT	Micro level: Structure of organisation, Definition of the core task Municipality's resources and structure of ECEC organisation Macro level: *The intentions of the national government*, situation, place, time, the values and attitudes in society	Contextual leadership model
ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE	Interaction and work community Distributed leadership	Leadership as cultural phenomena Distributed leadership
DIRECTORS' PROFESSIONALITY	Management skills, Leadership role and style Managing work tasks Time management	Transformative power of leadership Transformational leadership Pedagogical leadership as competence of leadership
MANAGEMENT OF SUBSTANCE	Pedagogical competence Management and development of the core task of organisation Theoretical and practical knowledge about ECEC The desire for personal development and pedagogical development	Educational leadership Pedagogical leadership defined narrowly

Organisational culture is another important dimension. As Sergiovanni (1984; 1998) has shown, in his studies that interactions within a working community should be respectful and appreciative. Leadership within a community is built around the values and virtues that are shared and pedagogical leadership should be seen as developing the social capital of whole community. Sergiovanni (2001, 54) uses the term "*ideal based leadership*", which means value based and shared leadership. Questions about distributed leadership that emerged from the analysis of the results can be connected with the research reported by Heikka and Waniganayake (2011) who investigated distributed perspectives of leadership within ECE organisations. These questions included can the director share leadership

and trust with teachers? Is the responsibility of the program quality shared amongst everyone in the organisation?

The director's professionalism and the way she or he can carry out the role and the authority is the third aspect determining the pedagogical leadership. Directors need leadership skills and they are responsible for the functionality of the organisation. They need to know how the vision, mission and strategy should be formed, so that the curriculum can be implemented. The style of leadership needs to be visionary and have transformational power (Bennis, 1989; Shields, 2010) and the leadership should also be active and not passive, as Sergiovanni (2005) has defined.

The fourth aspect seemed to be the director's pedagogical competence. Some crucial questions comprise: do the directors have a will to develop their own knowledge? Are they open to learn new things and do they try to develop the pedagogy in their centres? Are they ready to invest in teachers' pedagogical development? The pedagogical competence of the working community is also essential, and the pedagogically trained teachers are a pivotal resource for sheared pedagogical leadership. Those with limited understanding and lower level of education within a working community can create challenges for director's pedagogical leadership. Nivala (1999) has proposed that directors' pedagogical competence sets limits for pedagogical leadership. Instead of pedagogical orientation it seemed that they were more oriented to administrative or economic tasks.

The resources of pedagogical leadership located through this study were formulated on the basis of the thematic narrative analysis (Figure 1). Derived from directors' narratives there were story lines found, where the pedagogical leadership was defined either as being successful or ineffective. Narrative analysis was used to find 'complicating clauses'. Certain phenomena were identified which either contributed to or prevented the implementation of pedagogical leadership. Figure 1 was developed to reflect these contributions and preventions.

Adequate resources (enough personnel, time to work, not too large responsibility areas) are one part of pedagogical leadership resources. Without pedagogically educated personnel there cannot be good pedagogy. Having sufficient staff is essential. Substitutes are needed to replace absent staff, for example, those on sick leave. Adequate resources consist of materials as well as time. That is, directors should be resourced with sufficient time resource to perform their roles in pedagogical leadership effectively. This

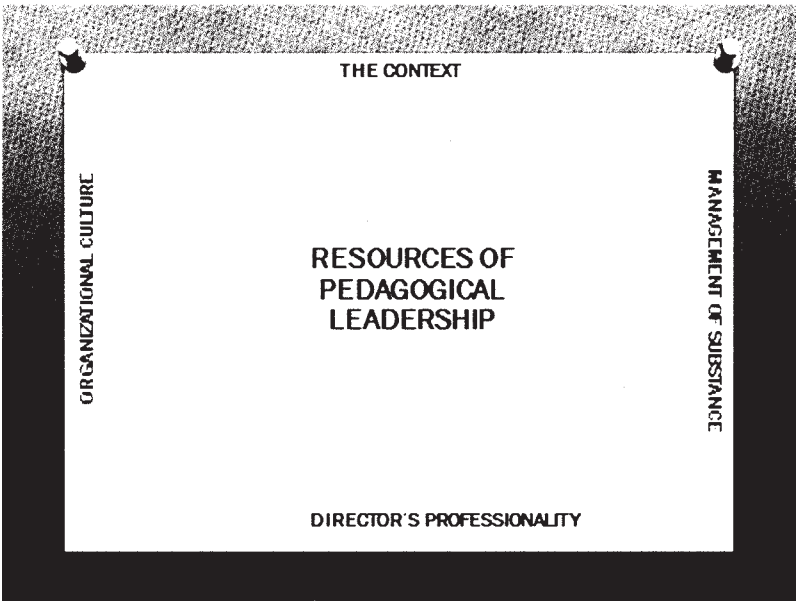

Figure 1. The resources of pedagogical leadership

includes time to explore the pedagogy in centers and to discuss with the staff about it. Directors also require support for themselves and this is one of the crucial parts of pedagogical leadership resources. It is necessary to gain the confidence of their supervisors and other management. The confidence of administration is also a prerequisite for adequate resourcing.

Personnel management skills are another essential dimension of pedagogical leadership resources. Personnel management skills are needed in order to engage staff with the values and pedagogical commitments of the center. Pedagogical management skills include the knowledge of pedagogy, and knowledge of recent research findings in the ECEC sector. It also includes the tools to lead the pedagogy. Management of ECEC curriculum processes require certain tools, such as planning sessions, shared understandings and tools to assess the pedagogy that has been implemented. Directors must have sufficient pedagogical knowledge to be able to argue the need for sufficient resources.

Directors want to develop the content of their profession. There is a need to clarify and prioritize the tasks of an ECEC director's position. Directors

call for more time resources and possibilities for pedagogical discussions. They mentioned that the discussion structures should be strengthened. They want to develop their own skills for personnel management and skills to implement pedagogical leadership in order to engage the staff with the center's values and core tasks. One of the challenges was increasing the appreciation of the director's pedagogical expertise necessary to achieve the confidence of senior management as without this, it was not possible to obtain better access to more resources.

Participation in the Development Project affected the directors' views about pedagogical leadership. It became deeper and more accurate. Many directors said that pedagogical leadership was very important for them already but the meaning became clearer because of their involvement in this project. The results of the quality assessment of pedagogical leadership and the ECEC quality increased from first assessment in the beginning of the project to the reassessment at the end of the project. This indicates that the development work was profitable and that pedagogical leadership can be developed through effective participation in professional learning opportunities such as those provided through the Development Project.

Conclusions

The practical applications of the results of this study can be used to develop the education of ECEC teachers and directors. Even at the basic level of ECEC teacher education there should be more studies on leadership, because of the importance of the teachers' role as pedagogical leaders in their centre teams. The directors need more in-service training on leadership skills. Childcare centre directors must have a strong sense of pedagogical competence in order to be pedagogical directors and they need to have a consistent and reflective will to promote pedagogical development within their centres.

The municipalities can benefit from the results of this project as well. Results indicate that the responsibility area for one director cannot be too wide. Ways of implementing a distributed leadership model require further investigation. The knowledge of pedagogy and the appreciation of pedagogy as the basis for making administrative decisions should be enhanced by strengthening the pedagogical leadership of centre directors.

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School Leadership in Azerbaijani Early Childhood Education: Implications for Education Transfer

Ulviyya Mikailova and Vitaly Radsky[1]
Centre for Innovations in Education
Azerbaijan

Abstract

This study looks at educational transfer from a school leadership perspective. Imported, internationally-inspired educational interventions designed to change or update teaching methodology that is considered outdated or 'traditional' by the international education community cannot change local leadership and educational paradigms. This study focuses on educational change at the micro level, specifically on the role of the preschool director in leading change. The results suggest that leadership is a critical part of educational transfer, but that transformational leadership theory may not be sufficient to describe specific leaders operating in contexts where consciousness of alternate leadership or educational discourses is lacking. In addition, the case studies suggest that it is difficult to separate leadership change from educational consciousness in both school and education system transformation.

1 The authors would also like to thank Yulia Karimova for her important contributions in gathering data and writing up the case studies upon which the study is based.

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Xülasə

Bu tədqiqat təhsil islahatını məktəb liderliyi perspektivindən təhlil edir. Beynəlxalq təhsil ictimaiyyəti tərəfindən köhnəlmiş və ya "ənənəvi" hesab edilən tədris metodologiyasını dəyişmək və ya yeniləmək məqsədilə tərtib edilən idxal edilmiş, beynəlxalq təcrübədən qaynaqlanan təhsil müdaxilələri yerli liderliyi və təhsil paradiqmasını dəyişə bilməz. Bu tədqiqat təhsildə baş verən dəyişikliyə mikro səviyyədə, daha spesifik olaraq, məktəbəqədər müəssisə direktorunun dəyişikliyi aparmasındakı roluna nəzər salır. Nəticələr göstərir ki, liderlik təhsil islahatının mühüm bir hissəsini təşkil edir, lakin həmin dəyişikliyə yönəlmiş rəhbərlik alternativ liderlik təfəkküründən və ya təhsil mühakiməsinin çatışmadığı kontekstlərdə fəaliyyət göstərən spesifik liderləri təsvir etmək üçün kifayət etməyə bilər. Əlavə olaraq, fərdi hallar üzrə aparılmış tədqiqatlar göstərir ki, həm məktəbdə, həm də təhsil sistemi transformasiyasında liderlik dəyişikliyini təhsil təfəkküründən ayırmaq çətindir.

Tiivistelmä

Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee koulutuksen muutosta koulun johtamisen perspektiivistä. Maahantuodut, kansainvälisesti inspiroidut koulutuksen interventiot muovaavat ja päivittävät kansainvälisen koulutusyhteisön näkökulmasta vanhentuneita opetusmenetelmiä, mutta ne eivät pysty muuttamaan paikallisia johtamisen ja koulutuksen paradigmoja. Tässä tutkimuksessa keskitytään koulutukselliseen muutokseen mikrotasolla, erityisesti varhaiskasvatuksen johtajan rooliin muutoksen johtamisessa. Tutkimuksen mukaan johtaminen on kriittinen osa koulutuksellista muutosta, mutta transformationaalinen johtamisteoria ei ehkä riitä kuvaamaan tiettyjen johtajien toimintaa konteksteissa, joissa tietoisuus vaihtoehtoisesta johtajuudesta tai koulutuksellisesta keskustelusta puuttuu. Lisäksi, tapaustutkimukset osoittavat että on vaikeaa erottaa johtajuuden muutosta koulutuksellisesta tietoisuudesta sekä koulun että koulutusjärjestelmän muutoksesta.

Introduction

From 1998 to 2003 the Open Society Institute's (OSI) education program piloted its Step-by-Step (SbS) teaching methodology in 53 kindergartens across Azerbaijan.[2] This was the first attempt to develop national child-centred educational practices at the preschool level in Azerbaijan and was a major initiative of the Soros Foundation's work not only in Azerbaijan but across the post-Soviet region.[3] The main project initiatives ended in 2003[4] with SbS methodology gaining recognition by the Ministry of Education as an alternative teaching methodology for national preschool education (formally allowing teachers/directors to continue implementation of the child-centred teaching program. However, the end of major project activities also ended funding and technical support for the 53 preschools which piloted the program. Following the end of the project in 2003 and a 2006 preschool privatisation initiative which closed or disrupted many of the participating

2 Step by Step (SbS) is a comprehensive education reform program for children from birth through age ten, which introduces child-centred, individualised teaching methodologies and supports community and family involvement in preschools and primary schools. The Step by Step Program was developed by Georgetown University experts based on the US HeadStart Program and operates based on a five-year developmental framework in each country. Strategically, the program begins in each country by developing fully-funded model preschool and/or primary school classrooms, and then works to promote low-cost expansion to new classrooms, relying on matching funds from communities. Special emphasis is placed on the long-term replicability of these demonstration schools, through work with Ministries of Education and institutions that train new teachers and re-train experienced teachers. At the end of the development period the program aims to have established high quality, self-sustaining Step by Step training programs that are officially accredited and are available to all teachers or schools seeking to learn the new methods. The program focuses on the needs of underserved children, especially minorities, children with disabilities, Roma, refugee children, and all children living in poverty. The country's participating in OSI's 1998–2003 SbS initiative were: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Haiti, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, and Ukraine.

3 Step by Step Program acted as Soros's 'business card' in each country. For example, George Soros highlighted this program in when he met former Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev.

4 OSI has continued to support the development of SbS materials and the implementing organisation in Azerbaijan.

preschools, most of the pilot kindergartens returned to traditional, pre-SbS methodologies, or mixed SbS and traditional models, making conscious decisions about which SbS principles and activities to continue and which to stop.[5] However, despite the lack of funding, professional development opportunities for the staff, challenges dealing with staff and parents, and questionable returns in terms of prestige or additional pupils, some of the pilot kindergartens continue to self-identify with SbS methodologies.

OSI's SbS program is a great example of an internationally inspired educational intervention designed to change or update teaching methodology that is considered outdated or 'traditional' by the international education community. This article takes a new approach to the evaluation of educational transfer by looking at the results of OSI's SbS program from a school leadership perspective.

Over the last decade of implementing the SbS program and other educational initiatives, the authors have been struck by the importance of the personal commitment of school leaders in determining the success of project implementation. Although leadership has become an important part of the education discussion (e.g. Heck, 1998; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004; Fullan, 2005) most research on the north-south spread of educational programs and ideas has approached the topic from a general comparative approach (Anderson-Levitt, 2003), compared specific teaching practices (e.g. Anderson-Levitt, 2004), or taken a systems approach to educational programs (Bartlett, 2003).

On the other hand, leadership studies have demonstrated the importance (if indirect) of school leaders to school effectiveness and student learning (Heck 1998) as well as on schools and systems change (e.g. Fullan 2005; Bass, 1990). Although leadership has been studied across diverse contexts, including Azerbaijan (Magno, 2009; Magno & Kazimzade, forthcoming 2012), most studies have focused on identifying leadership characteristics across a large sample of school leaders in a particular context (Oplatka, 2004), or on comparing features of leadership and work between a few select countries, usually restricted to Western Europe, the U.S. and East Asia (Oplatka, 2004; Puroila & Rosemary, 2002; Karila, 2002). In addition, few studies have examined how the western-grounded concepts

5 The issue of cherry picking SbS concepts was relevant throughout the entire process.

of transformational and distributed leadership can be applied across diverse contexts (Dimmock & Walker, 2000).

This study focuses on educational change at the local level, specifically on the role of the preschool director in leading or inhibiting change. In-depth interviews with two school directors suggest that leadership is a critical part of educational transfer, but that the dichotomy between transformational and transactional leadership may not be sufficient to describe specific leaders operating in situations where the system significantly inhibits innovation and change, and where school leaders have a weak understanding of imported leadership and educational concepts. Transformational leadership depends as much on educational consciousness to change from 'traditional' to 'internationally-accepted' teaching methods as leadership skills, and a more contextualised look at leadership is necessary to define and evaluate transformational leadership.

Methodology and limitations

This study is based on the experience of the authors implementing the SbS program from 1998–2003, participation in research on school leadership (Magno, 2009; Magno & Kazmizade, 2012), and two in-depth interviews conducted with preschool directors who were among the 53 institutions that originally implemented the SbS program in the early 2000s.

The interviews were designed to uncover deeper differences in approach to ECE such as how participants define leadership in early childhood education settings and how they explain the origins of their leadership skills. Because context and even explicit professional experiences were remarkably constant between the two directors (very similar age, education, professional development, and career track), deeper differences in approach to and understanding of ECE were hypothesised to hold the key to answering why one director continued SbS, while another reverted to more traditional teaching methods.

Interview questions were developed by Dr. Cathryn Magno during her 2009 visit to Azerbaijan, but were adapted to ECE context by the authors. A thematic analysis approach was used to analyse themes across two cases. The identities of the interviewees are hidden by pseudonyms. Both interviews were conducted in July 2012, and initial research findings were reported at

the European Early Childhood Education Research Conference (EECERA, Porto, August–September 2012).

This study should be considered a starting point for the exploration of both educational program analysis and educational leadership in Azerbaijan. Although the authors are closely familiar with SbS and can provide rich detail into project circumstances, environment, and the implementation process, no data on continuing use of SbS was collected after the end of the project in 2003. Thus, all findings are based on the two interviews and personal experience implementing the SbS program.

Educational transfer from west to east

Based on the U.S. early childhood program Head Start, SbS looked to infuse western early childhood education principles into countries dominated by the Soviet education methodology. The SbS experience in Azerbaijan (and the larger Azeri school-reform movement) can inform the long-standing debate between the universality or particularity of educational systems (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). Educational literature contains somewhat of a dichotomy between world-theory scholars who focus on the convergence of schooling world-wide on a "common model" that includes a basic school and classroom structure, mass participation, and even common core curriculums and anthropological and comparative approaches that focus on the uniqueness and even diverging qualities of education in different contexts. Despite general agreement that ideas, curriculums, and principles undergo a re-contextualization as they are reinterpreted in local contexts (e.g. Steiner-Khamsi & Quist, 2000), the crux of debate is where change happens: "Does true school reform happen at the level of global and national policies, or does real change happen at the level of classrooms and schools (Anderson-Levitt, 2003)?"

The results of the SbS program, which proposed child-centred methodologies that would move Azerbaijani early childhood centres toward western educational standards and practices, provides an interesting look into the dichotomy found in the literature. On an individual level, the project shows a lack of convergence toward international educational standards. Program implementation varied widely between institutions with only a very small group of institutions, perhaps seven of 53, continuing to

self-identify with SbS[6] post 2003 while the rest reverted back to traditional methods or created their own mix of pre-SbS and SbS methodologies.

On the other hand, despite the low level of retention for SbS preschools, the program made an impact nationally in 2009 with the unveiling of national preschool and primary education reform. The newly instituted curriculum incorporated many of the child-centred principles and methodologies now standard in the international literature and first proposed (in Azerbaijan) by the SbS program.

Leadership for change?

A similar universality/particularity debate is being argued within the leadership field where research, even when extended to different contexts, has remained nearly exclusively grounded in western theory (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). Understandings of leadership in the West have evolved from the principal as a manager, to street-level bureaucrat, change agent, instructional leader, educational leader, and most recently to transformational leader (Heck, 1998). Transformational leadership has two components. First, transformational leaders are able to "broaden and elevate the interests of their employees... generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group... and stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group (Bass, 1990, 21)." In contrast, transactional leadership is often described as the leadership relationship found in common work environments that is based on "transactions between manager and employees such as promise and reward for good performance or threat and discipline for poor performance. The second part of transformational leadership involves looking beyond the entrenched status quo and creating change both within the organisation and throughout the larger system (Fullan, 2005).

Fullan takes transformation leadership outside the organisation, applying it to a leader's role not only on his/her institution, but his/her impact on the entire educational system. To Fullan, systems thinking, or consciousness of a leader's and the institution's role in the larger environment is a necessary aspect of embracing change and incorporating it into the larger organisation.

6 Although compliance with methodology has not been evaluated since the end of the program.

Working beyond immediate personal or institutional utility is a key part of the transformation leadership as defined by Fullan. Under this definition, the main mark of a school head is not simply what kind of organisation they are able to create, but how many good leaders they create who can go further in creating system-wide changes (Fullan, 2005).

A second aspect of modern leadership discourse refers to distributed leadership, the development of shared roles for thinking and acting within an organisation that are based within an "implicit framework of understanding" that creates "concertive action" (Gronn, 2000 in Magno, 2009, 27). In other words, leadership that is distributed involves many people in tasks not simply through delegation, but through creating a culture of joint thinking and action across organisational levels, activities, and goals (Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2004).

Leadership in context

Both transformational and distributional leadership theory are strongly rooted in a largely western context. It is not clear whether a single definition of leadership can be applied globally, nor how leadership ideas are transferred between nations and cultures (Heck, 1998; Magno, 2009). It is quite clear however, that the variance in operating environments in schools and educational systems creates important distinctions in leadership and teaching practices even within the Western context (Puroila & Rosemary, 2002; Anderson-Levitt, 2004). Leadership practiced in more culturally distant areas exhibits significant contextual differences from that of the west, including highly-centralised systems, greater authoritarianism and less independent schools (Oplatka, 2004; Puroila, Melnik, & Sarvela-Pikkarainen, 2002).

A contextual approach to leadership links the practice of leadership with social interaction within the local community and national environment, expanding leadership practices and understandings beyond localisation in the leader and placing them within culturally based social interactions and understandings (Karila, 2002). Azerbaijani principals and preschool directors operate in a similar environment to other developing countries. As a result, some similar characteristics including, limited autonomy from the national ministry, absences of instructional leadership, low degree of change

initiation, and conservative and autocratic leadership tendencies have been observed (Oplatka, 2004; Magno, 2009). Preschools also exhibit similarities to the Russian early childhood environment which includes a greater role differentiation among staff within a hierarchical system and more focus on evaluation and control (Puroila et al., 2002; Karila, 2002).

Magno found that the local understanding of "leadership" is inconsistent with western literature's understanding of transformational and distributed leadership. Most principals do not feel like they can set goals for their schools above and beyond the requirements of the Ministry of Education, and neither do they feel like there is room for more than one leader within an organisation (Magno, 2009).

Building a leadership consciousness: Interviews with two school leaders

Two directors of preschool institutions who participated in the SbS program from 1998–2003 were interviewed. Both directors lead preschools in Baku and have very similar professional development histories. However, Firangiz's preschool reverted back to traditional teaching methods after the end of the program, while Maryam and her preschool continue to identify with the SbS program.

Despite both being educated as pedagogues (Firangiz in Preschool Pedagogy and Methodology and Maryam in Philology and Teaching Language), neither one originally set out to work in preschool education. However, Maryam did desire to work in education, recounting that that she always wanted to be educated and educate others. She liked when others listened to her and realised that in order to "have attention of others she need to know very much and do everything very well." She reported that her attraction for teaching and her role as a leader developed in childhood, saying, "I played a role of a teacher, I gathered children when my mom was out at work and taught them, I knew that it was very interesting to be a teacher, this is the profession, when one could always have followers and when one could always influence others." After graduating from university, Maryam could not find a job in school after graduation and accepted a methodologist position at the preschool where years later she was appointed as a director.

Firangiz showed a similar desire for a leadership position, though not necessarily one in education. She recalled that she first realised that it was possible to become a boss and lead others when her sister was working as a teacher practitioner in a preschool. Though her original idea was to become a doctor, she settled on preschool pedagogy because she did not have the test scores for the medical faculty. After graduation Firangiz worked as a member of a trade union, but when her youngest son was one and half and it was time to return to work after maternity leave she decided to give her kids to preschool and go work at the preschool herself. She remembered thinking that after a certain amount of time she could become a director at a preschool and satisfy the wish that was even written in her school graduation album – to become a director.

Both directors seem to have achieved their goals of having influence and educating people, and despite the differences in their ideas about education and leadership it is difficult to label Maryam as a more transformational leader. For example, both directors defined setting a good example as an important part of leadership. Firangiz, the director who ended the official SbS program, mentioned responsibility, keeping promises, and the ability to talk openly and share concerns. On the other hand, Maryam, a director who continues to identify with the SbS program, defined leadership as helping others achieve more and mentioned the specific example of working with two pedagogues during the SbS program as an experience that taught her how to work together and be productive. Both leaders stressed the aspect of being role models, but, while Maryam used the words "team" and "we" to describe the working relationship in her preschool, Firangiz used the word "staff."

In addition, self-evaluation of their leadership understandings show important, but small differences in philosophy and understanding between the two directors. Firangiz reported that her motivation for the development of her leadership is recognition and differentiation. On the other hand, Maryam reported that she has always wanted to achieve something beyond simply reaching pre-set targets and following regulations – a very unusual attitude among school leaders based on Magno's (2009) findings.

Maryam describes her leadership development under the SbS program as the movement from the fulfilment of externally imposed duties to trying new things and motivating people for new achievements. She also reported a different way of thinking about management, describing that even before

becoming a director she had always wanted to achieve more than "consistency with the expectations." Although, she did not have a clear understanding of what she wanted to change and what new things she wanted to bring to her profession, she emphasised that SbS was a period of intensive learning that taught her two things that influenced her development as a leader. Firstly, she realised that even when the person assumes managing position and could be considering herself as a completed person, she still has something to learn from others and teach others how to do to achieve the change; and second, she realised that in order to manage the work effectively one should be open for other ideas and thoughts and should be able to use from different understandings in order to achieve a "sense of collective."

Although, the idea of a sense of collective is missing from Firangiz, she describes a similar transformation of her leadership style from admittedly too controlling and authoritative in her first preschool to developing a more family-like atmosphere where all workers know their responsibilities. The first preschool in which she became a director was a large preschool that she was able to develop into one of the best in Azerbaijan. After leaving due to the stress of the job, she found a smaller preschool nearer to her home and again successfully built up the centre into one of the most respected institutions in Azerbaijan. She signed up for the SbS, she admitted, primarily to improve the material conditions of the preschool, and despite saying the program was interesting, she did not attribute significant impact on her leadership to the SbS program. However, Firangiz did describe ideas similar to Maryam's achievement beyond the "expectations" when recounting her experience in a 1996 Ministry of Education project on self-monitoring. From this program she learned not wait for Ministry inspections, and rather to take personal responsibility for her preschool.

Magno (2009) writes that school leadership, specifically the concepts of transformational and distributional leadership, "stands poised as the catalyst" for systemic reform toward democratic schooling in Azerbaijan. Maryam demonstrates that significant changes at the micro level are possible through leadership and educational programs. According to a further comparison of the two directors based on their influence on the national education framework according to Fullan's (2005) definition of transformational leadership as system-wide change, Maryam's centre has produced numerous influential pedagogues and trainers who work with child-centred methodology, and Maryam herself was invited by the

Ministry to participate in the development of the new national preschool curriculum. Firangiz, on the other hand, has not produced any pedagogues known beyond her centre and is not involved in policy discussions.

However, the system wide impact of Maryam and the pedagogues developed through her centre is unclear, putting into question the potential impact of transformational leadership on an external system that significantly inhibits innovation and change orientation. For example, Maryam's centre was one of the preschools privatized in 2006 and it continues to operate in a legal vacuum. Both centres are considered among the best in Azerbaijan by the Ministry of Education and it is not clear that the system values Maryam's educational transformation in any concrete way.

Building an educational consciousness

Numerous studies have pointed to the importance of the external environment in terms of formal regulations and legislation (Karila, 2002), system structure (Oplatka, 2004), and the cultural and ideological reality of society (Nivala, 2002) in shaping leadership ideas and practices. Magno (2009) suggests that a major shift in school culture is needed to conceptualise transformational and distributed leadership, but the two case studies suggest that it is difficult to separate leadership consciousness from educational consciousness in both local and macro-level transformation.

Neither education, nor leadership occurs in a vacuum, and a child-centred educational approach of the kind proposed by the SbS program necessitates a rethinking of relationships both between children and teachers within classrooms and between teachers and school directors. In essence, SbS espouses a form of school democratisation, shifting focus from the teacher as the sole provider of knowledge, skills, and direction, to a holistic focus on developing, listening to, and responding to the needs and desires of the child. It was one of the first, and continues to be an important, western-motivated educational program proposing a western, child-centred perspective.

The 'Western' model represented by the SbS program focuses on child-centredness, parental involvement, and a more equal child–teacher relationship. Although liberation ideology is not made explicit, one can draw parallels to Fréire's recognition that schooling is a political act that

can emancipate or further oppress (Bartlett, 2003, 152). In fact, part of the Open Society Institute's stated goal for the program was to "engender democratic principles and practices in young children and their families" and to "promote students' critical thinking, creativity, and leadership skills which were perceived to be lacking from the traditional educational approach" (SbS evaluation report).

Fréire differentiates between "banking education," which rests on hierarchical relationships between students as "objects of assistance" and teachers as "owners of knowledge," and problem-posing education, which allows questioning of the status quo and relies upon an egalitarian relationship between teachers and students and a dialogical pedagogy (Fréire 1972, 56). Problem-posing education and a focus on holistic development, development through play, and child choice is at odds with the 'traditional' focus on teacher control and knowledge development in Azeri classrooms. Thus, the SbS program was a redesign of classroom interaction from the traditional to a Western-developed child-centred approach. This redesign requires a significant rethink in the teacher's understanding of the purpose and principles of education. At the classroom level, this rethink stems from a greater orientation toward Fréire's concept of problem posing education and requires a critical assessment of the "theories of knowledge and learning that shape the way people think about education and its purpose" (Bartlett, 2003).

The interviews suggest that both directors view the SbS, child-centred model of child development as substantially different from the traditional, Soviet-based methods currently dominant in Azeri preschools. For example, Firangiz views the two approaches in a clear dichotomy:

> "SbS is innovative and creative approach, respecting child's individuality and requires hard work of teachers on own self-improvement. But traditional approach is more about collective work, being more focused on development of children's academic skills and building their knowledge basis."

Firangiz recognises the difference between the two approaches and admitted that SbS was an interesting learning experience especially in terms of providing a different view of the child.

However, Maryam described her first experience in learning about SbS program philosophy and principles as discovering a totally "new world of

childhood" and "professional sensitivity of people working with young children." When she was asked to describe the meaning of the word she used – "sensitivity" – in that particular context, she explained this as a new approach for listening to and understanding children. Maryam described that traditional programs implemented in preschool settings focus on content-based knowledge and academic skills, such as reading, writing, drawing, counting, reciting poems.

The idea and terminology of two-levels of consciousness – educational and leadership – comes from Nivala (2002). He proposes that first, a director's understanding of both leadership and educational paradigm is directly tied to the contextual influences of the legislative, political, and cultural environment. In order for leaders in educational institutions to enact changes (as described by transformational leadership models), they must be conscious of the aims of the work in early childhood education settings (substance) as well as their roles as administrators and leaders. In other words, changes in consciousness in both leadership and educational content are important because "pedagogical leadership can only be actualised within the limits of the leader's pedagogic consciousness" (Nivala, 2002, 18).

Consciousness is a major part of Nivala's overall contextual framework bounding a school director's actions. Though both directors recognise the difference between the two educational approaches, they differ substantially in their internalization (and valuation) of the child-centred methodology and the extent to which the introduction to SbS has affected their understanding and practice. Although the SbS program did not specifically target school leaders and did not provide school leadership theory or training, Maryam clearly internalised the program impacting her perception of both education and leadership.

For example, Maryam described her aims for preschool education as going beyond simplistic preparation of children for entering the elementary school to developing talents and "building the first stair to their future." She demonstrated an emotional attachment to the SbS ideas recounting her realization that in order to teach children effectively adults must "listen to them, observe them and learn from them." The last expression – "learn from them [children]" – she said with a smile, elaborating on her ideas that not too many people responsible for the provision of ECEC in our country think this way even now.

Maryam reported a similar impact on her leadership practice, recounting how SbS enhanced her openness to new ideas and thoughts and led to the development of a "sense of collective." She credited "the two Svetas,"[7] for always sharing their ideas with her and then sharing with the rest of the team. Thus, for Maryam, the transformation of educational consciousness toward an educational model that implicitly utilised distributed leadership principles enabled a leadership transformation as well.

Firangiz offers more traditional views on early childhood education, demonstrating her preference for the Soviet-based view of preschool as a preparation for the next stage of schooling. She reported that the main duty of a preschool principal is to "lead the process of a child's training and development" and her main responsibility as the health of the child. For example, she responded that children should attend preschool after the age of three when they are able to express their own feelings and control themselves. This demonstrates her belief that the primary goal of preschool is to teach elementary academic skills that prepare children for primary school. In addition, her evaluation of the biggest issues concerning her preschool concerns almost exclusively material things, such as small classrooms, absence of outdoor space, and lack of music classroom. Though undoubtedly important, the limited category of concerns suggests a lack of transformational thinking on new approaches to child education, rather a focus on small changes that can improve specific services that are already offered.

When speaking of innovation and learning Firangiz recounts how she has read almost every book on childhood education and that she always buys one for herself and one for her centre. She describes herself as always being the first to innovate, but her examples, getting computers into her centre and starting computer and English language courses, do not get to the heart of leadership or pedagogical innovation taught by the SbS program. When comparing the current early childhood education in Azerbaijan to the situation under the Soviet Union, she also focuses solely on material things such as funding and food for children, suggesting that she has not been affected by any changes in teaching practices and ideologies. Although Firangiz is able to clearly articulate the difference between the western, SbS-introduced approach and the traditional, Soviet-

7 Both were employees of Maryam's centre during the implementation of the project.

based practices, she does not recognise the infusion of child-centred early childhood methodology (either into her centre as part of the SbS project or into the national curriculum since 2009) as a significant change compared to changing levels of state material support for early childhood institutions.

Although Firangiz recognised the difference between the two preschool programs and was very capable of reorienting her preschool in line with the SbS program if she chose to, her lack of belief in the educational components of the program seemed to be the core factor preventing a transformational integration of the SbS program within her preschool. For example, she describes difficulties with her teachers accepting the program and complaints of parents as the main reasons for only keeping certain aspects of the program. She described herself as having attempted to explain the program and convince her pedagogues, but said the discussions were not effective. However, given her history as an effective and decisive leader, it seems that this failure to convert the preschool to the SbS program had as much to do with her lack of belief in the program as anything else.

Conclusion

The child-centred, problem-posing teaching model stands in contrast to how most teachers and education professionals in Azerbaijan view teaching and learning. Education in the Azerbaijani context is seen as autonomous from societal forces, and knowledge is thought to be transmitted through a "universal, cognitive developmental series," or the teaching process (Bartlett, 2003, 153). This leads teachers to focus on giving information and lends itself to teacher-centred classrooms and a more centralised system. In the local Azerbaijani context, early childhood education professionals see their job as first taking care of children's physical needs such as food and rest, and secondly passing academic knowledge such as reading, writing, and arithmetic from teacher to child. The goal of ECE is seen as preparation for primary school and knowledge is viewed through a much more autonomous model.

On a macro level, educational projects attempt to shape the way people think about schooling and its purpose and the overall theory of knowledge and learning they internalise are important not only in who benefits from them, but in how they are adapted by local cultures (Bartlett, 2003, 2–3).

The macro, institutional changes envisioned by the SbS program included "contribution to broader reform efforts" and the "development of students' critical thinking, creativity, and leadership skills which were perceived to be lacking from the traditional educational approach (SbS Evaluation)." Program driven, macro educational change must then make holistic change in how society and educational actors perceive education (Moss, presentation in Opatija, Croatia Oct, 2012).

However, the two case studies suggest that on a micro-level institutional change is very dependent on the role of the director. The director's change-orientation, in-turn, depends on his/her understanding of both leadership and education. Although theories of transformational leadership set out behaviours, interactions, and values allowing leaders to achieve changes within their organisations and broader systems, it is unclear how such models of behaviour can be applied to leaders and contexts lacking exposure to both these leadership ideas and new models for early childhood education.

The case-studies suggest that leadership and educational consciousness are inter-related to such an extent that they cannot be separated. Maryam's commitment to and internalisation of the educational model drove her adoption of distributed and transformational leadership practices. At the same time, her open-minded leadership tendencies may have contributed to her ability to internalise the SbS educational principles.

On the other hand, although Firangiz was interested in the program and seemed very capable to reorient her preschool in line with the SbS program if she chose to. However, her lack of belief in the educational components of the program seemed to be the core factor preventing a transformational integration of the SbS program within her preschool.

This paper has important implications for education interventions in the region and suggests that interventions looking to import forward-thinking initiatives need to take a broad approach that incorporates leadership, teaching, and a holistic systems approach to educational reform. Changing national consciousness is an incremental process and this study suggests that interventions can, and in this case do, have an important overall impact, but their direct impact may be limited to a select group of participants that is already self-motivated for change. Within this small group of motivated actors, innovative initiatives can make a big difference. However, the SbS experience illustrates the difficulties of taking development initiatives to scale.

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Leadership Tasks in Early Childhood Education

Eeva Hujala and Mervi Eskelinen
Tampere University
Finland

Abstract

Leadership research in early childhood education and care (ECEC) is quite a young arena. It combines leadership concepts from school research as well as from business. There are common aspects in leadership profession in general but the context and the mission define the content of leadership tasks and responsibilities. In Finnish early childhood education pedagogical leadership, human resource management, and daily managerial tasks are the main functions of leaders' work. An ECEC leader's work either as a centre director or as a municipal administrative ECE leader is quite the same. Human resource management dominates most of their leadership work. Importance of leadership tasks and time management differ according to the position of leadership. Full time leaders consider human resource management important and this work can dominate the allocation of their time. Pedagogical leadership dominates part-time leaders' working day but they define daily managerial tasks as being most important. The splintered nature of the daily work profile can frame EC leadership. That is, the leadership tasks are not clear and the concept of pedagogical leadership is silenced in ECEC centres. In order to implement high quality ECEC programs, the mission, core tasks and leadership responsibilities connected to them must be clearly defined.

Tiivistelmä

Varhaiskasvatuksen johtajuustutkimus on Suomessa jokseenkin nuorta. Siinä löytyy vaikutteita sekä koulumaailman että liike-elämän johtajuustutkimuksista. Vaikka johtajuudessa on paljon yhteisiä piirteitä, kunkin organisaation toimintakonteksti ja perustehtävä määrittävät johtajuuden vastuita ja sisältöjä. Suomalaisessa varhaiskasvatuksessa keskeisiä johtajuustehtäviä ovat pedagogiikan johtaminen ja henkilöstöjohtaminen sekä päivittäisjohtamiseen liittyvät tehtävät. Varhaiskasvatuksen alalla toimivien johtajien työssä painottuvat paljolti samat asiat riippumatta siitä toimivatko he päiväkodin johtajina vai varhaiskasvatuksen johtajina

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kunnan tasolla. Johtajat panostavat henkilöstöjohtamiseen. Johtajan tehtävien tärkeys ja ajankäyttö riippuvat kuitenkin johtajan positiosta. Päätoimiset johtajat pitävät henkilöstöjohtamista tärkeänä ja se viekin heidän työajastaan suurimman osan. Ryhmässä toimivien johtajien aikaa vievin tehtävä on pedagoginen johtaminen, mutta tärkeimpänä he pitävät päivittäisjohtamista. Päivittäisen työn pirstaleisuus luo kehyksen johtajana toimimiselle: johtajuus vastuineen ei ole selvää ja pedagoginen johtajuus voi jäädä päiväkodeissa näkymättömäksi. Varhaiskasvatuksen korkean laadun takaamiseksi päivähoidon perustehtävä ja siihen kytkeytyvä johtajuus pitäisi määritellä tarkemmin.

Introduction

Leadership in early childhood education and care (ECEC) is a holistic process that involves not only the leader and the administration, but also personnel and indirectly parents and everyone else who has an influence on the implementation of early education practices. According to the contextual leadership model (Hujala, Heikka & Halttunen, 2011), leadership is determined and guided by the mission of ECEC, which defines core tasks of the practice in child care. Managerial responsibilities comprise the professional work of centre directors and municipal ECE leaders, defined according to their professional profile and professionalism.

The literature review in this article describes what the leadership arena in ECEC looks like, and what the leadership and management responsibilities are inside ECEC organisations. In light of international research (Nupponen, 2005; Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003; Mäkelä, 2007; Isosomppi, 1996) it seems that leadership arenas appear similar regardless of school type or the context of the society. The content and amount of daily responsibilities performed by leaders can vary significantly. The discourse of leadership and the emphasis of the management work can vary according to the leadership context (Hujala, Heikka, & Halttunen, 2011). In addition, in this chapter, results of Finnish ECEC research will be introduced, and based on these findings future challenges for EC leadership development will be discussed.

Research review on leadership responsibilities

The number of research on what EC directors do in child care programs is limited. Most of the existing research is conducted in freestanding centres instead of centres, which are part of a larger system (Ryan, Whitebook, Kipnis, & Sakai, 2011). This is the case in Finland, where child care is mainly organised by municipalities and led according to macro level decisions.

Nupponen (2005, 62) has analysed international leadership research in ECEC, and based on that meta-analysis she has listed leaders' roles and responsibilities. These responsibilities consisted of: 1) to create a professional environment in child care centres, 2) to build and maintain strong interpersonal relationships, 3) to provide leadership and management that shapes the organisation, 4) to influence and provide quality of ECEC, 5) to ensure that outcomes are related to the quality of care and education, and 6) to guide staff and monitor centre activities.

Nupponen (2006) emphasised that the centre director's role was crucial in ensuring high quality ECEC. In the heart of a director's vision and perception of quality is the child and his or her needs. This has been perceived to be one of the main aspects of leadership and a significant dimension of pedagogical leadership. The directors emphasised the importance of a qualified team of teachers who were engaged in their work with children.

According to Rodd (2006, 26) the main responsibilities of centre directors were coordinating "time, talent and task". Jorde Bloom (2000) approached centre directors' responsibilities and tasks from the point of view of their personal competence and professional self-awareness, legal and fiscal management, human relations, educational programming, and facilities, marketing and public relations and advocacy. Scrivens (2003) characterised the crucial tasks in ECE leaders' daily work focusing on people (staff and parents), centre management (program development, curriculum planning and implementation, children and monitoring child/adult ratios), program guidelines and practices (human resource management, financial management, safety and wellbeing, curriculum dissemination, inclusive practices) and property maintenance.

According to a Finnish leadership study by Hujala and Heikka (2008) EC directors' greatest challenge was the lack of time in pedagogical leadership. They identified the contradiction between pedagogical leadership and daily management. Instead of developing pedagogy the directors' daily working

hours were spent in maintaining the structures of the program. Other challenges that directors faced included dealing with staff members' different educational backgrounds, reluctance to pursue self-direction, avoidance of collective development responsibility and conflict between professionals. Ho (2011) suggests that in meeting the needs of the multi-professional staff, the director's responsibility was to be a mentor for staff, especially when dealing with pedagogy or curriculum development work. Staff also wanted more pedagogical feedback from the director when evaluating the quality of their work.

Portin, Schneider, DeArmond and Grundlach (2003) identified seven essential areas in a school principal's duties: instructional leadership, cultural leadership, managerial leadership, human resource leadership, strategic leadership, external development leadership and micropolitical leadership. They criticise this separation of management duties into seven areas, because it may give a false impression of their independent existence.

Writing about school education, Sergiovanni (1995) saw leadership as consisting of various forces. He refers to these forces as technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural dimensions of leadership. Technical dimension was an ability to manage, organise and plan the school's activities. Leading people was the human dimension and the educational dimension reflected pedagogical leadership. The symbolic force was concerned with participation in school activities with students and teachers and the cultural force was about strengthening the unique identity of the school. According to Sergiovanni (1995), a competent school principal was an education expert who performed well in financial and administrative tasks as well as in leading people. An excellent principal also needs to master symbolic and cultural forces in addition to technical, human and educational dimensions of leadership.

Pennanen (2006, 180) argues that approximately two thirds of a principal's time was spent on "managing things", whereas only one third was spent on leading people. Already in Graham's (1997) research the principals considered themselves more as chief executive officers than education specialists. Research by Vuohijoki (2006), Karikoski (2009), and Mäkelä (2007) show that administrative and financial management were emphasised in a school principal's work. The amount of paperwork and managerial tasks has increased without corresponding increase in available resources. The majority of principals felt they were regularly occupied

with tasks that would rather belong to a caretaker, a secretary, student welfare services or other professionals. Even though these principals valued knowledge management and school development, not enough time was allocated to perform these tasks.

A principal's work can be fragmented, consisting of small and prompt activities. Their work will comprise mainly daily routines (Isosomppi, 1996). Working hours were often spent on filling in forms, handling mail and other routine business. Considerable amount of a principal's working time was spent on reacting to impulses coming from outside or from above. The hierarchical structure of school organisation was reflected in a principal's work. Mustonen (2003, 93) however sees that principals have much more power and possibilities in leading and developing their schools than their predecessors ever had.

Key concepts in researching EC leadership

The literature review above introduced the main leadership and management responsibilities in educational organisations. In the following literature review we will clarify some key concepts found when researching EC leadership.

Pedagogical leadership

Pedagogical leadership has traditionally been connected to improving and developing educational and teaching practices in educational organisations (Kyllönen, 2011). Portin et al. (2003, 18) talk about instructional leadership instead of pedagogical leadership. Instructional leadership was seen as guiding teaching practice, managing and supervising the curriculum work, ensuring quality of instructing and taking care of teacher's professional growth. In the implementation of instructional leadership Portin et al. (2003, 7) referred to the principal's way of leading the pedagogy, for example, through classroom observations. Taking care of students' safety and security, to maintain contact with their parents and to reassure there were enough enrollments, were seen as the most important tasks of the principal's duty. In her research Kyllönen (2011) broadened the concept of pedagogical leadership to include human resource management and

strategic leadership. Thus it seems that the term "instructional leadership" was a narrower concept than pedagogical leadership.

According to Hujala, Heikka and Halttunen (2011) pedagogical leadership consists of three elements: developing educational practices, taking care of human relations and administrative management from the point of view of educational goals. In ECEC pedagogical leadership means supporting the educational goals and accomplishing curriculum and its decision-making. Leading the pedagogy means leading the core tasks of the educational organisation by all who were involved with the program. According to Heikka and Waniganayake (2011, 505, 510) pedagogical leadership can be shaped by children's learning, professionalism of the EC staff and society's values. Therefore, pedagogical leadership was socially constructed and was aligned with both the centre director and the teacher. Pedagogy was also influenced by national and local information steering, teaching practices and curriculum planning theory. Importantly, leadership was necessary to create connections between these dimensions.

The goals of pedagogical leadership can be reached by creating a vision of future directions and by developing procedures. Organising pedagogical meetings, documenting and keeping statistics on pedagogical work were the means of pedagogical leadership and application of the changes in practice. (Nivala, 2002; Heikka & Waniganayake, 2010.) According to Sergiovanni (1998) pedagogical leader was in charge of securing the children's education and upbringing processes. Most important goal was to awaken teachers to realise the obstacles of these processes and to take initiative to remove these obstacles. O'Sullivan (2009) emphasised the pedagogical leader's ability to understand how children develop and learn. Without theoretical knowledge and a vision about pedagogy, the director cannot engage staff to develop the quality of ECEC practices.

Kagan and Hallmark (2001, 9) have found that a pedagogical leader's main task was to be "a bridge between research and practice". A pedagogical leader reflects on research findings based on her/his own experiences in the field and disseminates these interpretations to centre staff. In addition, a pedagogical leader is responsible for informing the stakeholders concerning the deficiencies she/he has realised.

Human resource management

In ECEC environments, human resource management consists of managing and leading people. Management of human resources aims at finding a balance between the need for personnel and the amount and quality of personnel, and also that the personnel works towards the goals of the organisation. Human resources management also means all those actions taken in steering and forming the organisation's human resources. In contrast, human resource management can also be referred to as daily routines dealing with personnel matters (Vanhala, Laukkanen, & Koskinen, 1998; Fullan, 2007).

Ryan, Whitebook, Kipnis and Sakai (2011) found that according to child care centre managers, human resource management was one of the strongest areas of their expertise. Strengths were found especially in creating and maintaining good staff relationships, ability to set clear goals, to support and to motivate staff to work efficiently, to encourage staff to educate themselves further, to solve conflicts and to communicate effectively with everyone.

In the USA, the accreditation guidelines from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (2008) described the EC manager's control over human resources management: supervision of the staff, examination of the procedures and the introduction of new practices were central managerial duties. Managers interviewed by Ang (2012) saw the challenges in human resource management arising from the multi-professional nature of ECEC work – professionals from different fields held differing views about the agenda and the means to achieve goals. The manager needs to understand both the clients' and the employees' views.

Leading change

Rodd (2006) suggests that decision-making usually means change. Implementing decisions require changes in an individual's thinking and skills as well as changes in organisational principles and practices. The most important thing in leadership when implementing change is to take care of staff wellbeing through the change. Feelings of insecurity, pressure and resistance to change can decrease the organisation's ability to perform effectively.

Lakomski (1999) examined change management from the organisational culture point of view. Key factors in change management identified by her

were: the vision created by the director, engagement of the members of the organisation to its values, and director's ability to improve the organisation. Because the dynamic changes in society require significant changes in educational field, leading the change is a crucial part of leadership work (Lakomski, 1999; Rodd, 2006).

Fullan (2001) suggests that an objective of leading change is finding meaning and meaningfulness in work. The manager needs to be able to understand the necessity for the change in order to manage the change. The manager's sense of direction reflects the work to the community. Fullan emphasised the meaning of interaction and sense of community in leading change.

Service management

Service management is strongly culture bound, depending on the structure and function of ECEC. It can be seen as strictly regulated social service for families, as is the case in Finland, or as a flexible client oriented business.

Nivala (1999) has defined service management as acknowledging customer orientation in leadership. The key issue in service management or in customer service is that the organisation is aware of how customers perceive the services and the quality of them, as well as how to provide services that meet the customer needs (Grönroos, 1987). Nivala (2002) and Armistead and Kiely (2003) defined service management in ECEC as developing variety of child care services according to the needs of the families, acknowledging the needs and meeting them by developing the practices, forming common policies and considering new technological service solutions. Rodd (2006) emphasised that providing high quality services requires sharing knowledge and empowering the staff and the parents in service management. From the point of view of service management Armistead and Kiely (2003) demand that staff have an ability to interpret the daily service situations, be proactive in development work, technical knowhow, the use of technological solutions, and the ability to understand organisation's viewpoint in providing services to be examples of service capabilities. Armistead and Kiely (2003) also found connection between the customer satisfaction and productivity. This is pivotal in ECEC as well, but it is difficult to make the connections visible because of the interdependence of different things (Nivala, 2012).

Financial management

In recent years demands for cost-effectiveness and business expertise have risen in the field of ECEC in Finland. Public economy sets the boundaries for solutions and actions taken. In publicly funded procedures public interest, resources and responsibility of clients' wellbeing always comes first. (Niiranen, Seppänen-Järvelä, Sinkkonen, & Vartiainen, 2010.) Because funding of ECEC is part of municipal economy, the budgeting is based on forward estimates, made in advance by municipal decision-making bodies.

Mitchell (1997; in NAYEC 2008) has analysed areas of EC leadership and concluded that efficient leadership can be described as consisting of two areas of expertise. ECE leader must have a strong business expertise and good personal leadership skills. However according to Ryan, Whitebook, Kipnis and Sakai (2011) and Nupponen (2006) child care centre directors do not have sufficient financial management skills. They point out that during this time, EC directors were trained as teachers, not as specialists in administration and business.

Portin et al. (2003) argue that financial management, such as budgeting and sharing resources, take a considerable amount of an EC manager's working time. It is an important skill area, due to the fact that fiscal management decisions regulate program practices. Rohacek, Adams and Kisker (2010, 90) state that "it is not surprising that variations in financial stress or comfort were associated with variations in observed classroom quality". They concluded that centres with the lowest observed quality were typically characterised as struggling with funding, and centres with the highest observed quality were all characterised as financially comfortable, with higher resource levels.

Network management

Fullan (2001) emphasised a shift away from highlighting the system, strategies and statistics, towards highlighting people and human interaction in management. Human and institutional networking was considered a prerequisite for future management. To facilitate collaboration instead of focusing only on individual development is a pathway to development of ECEC. When learning in a collaborative working context, information by itself is meaningless. In collaboration the information can be turned into meaningful and useful knowledge.

Kagan and Hallmark (2001) refer to community leadership, when the ECEC institution was aware and responsive to its neighborhood and took into account its community's needs. Furthermore many studies (for example Ryan, Whitebook, Kipnis, & Sakai, 2011) emphasised that public relations were often maintained only for funding purposes in ECEC institutions.

In network management leaders transmit the voices of children, families and employees, and act as advocates of various ECEC matters. This takes place when participating in discussions and influencing local level decision-making, for example, in recommending amendments in legislation (Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Kagan & Hallmark, 2001; NAYEC 2008). Ryan, Whitebook, Kipnis and Sakai (2011) emphasised that "leaders of preschool programs must not only improve and sustain quality in their own work environments but also collaborate with other leaders across differing programs". The Australian leaders in Nupponen's (2006) research felt that bringing children's advocacy to macro-level would require more skills than ECE leaders had at that time. Advocacy was connected to the political dimension of leadership.

Moyles and Yates (2004; Rodd, 2006) clarify that becoming politically aware can mean understanding how policies about the public, private and voluntary sectors can affect the lives of children, families and the EC profession. Those leaders who kept up with local policy and other issues, understood who was involved and how the political scene operated at the local level, and networked with key people to champion individual settings or the profession within the community. Leaders who act as advocates on behalf of the early childhood profession need the support of others – such as parents, the general public, politicians and administrators – to help them achieve their goals (Rodd, 2006).

Sergiovanni (1995) points out the importance of human relations and networks. He sees that the quality of human relationships determines the quality of the school. Creating interpersonal collaboration and care, information seeking and information sharing, and acceptance and love of pupils are the main duties of a leader. To succeed in this, the leader should have good interpersonal and networking skills.

Daily management

Daily management seems to be typically a Finnish concept referring to 'secretarial' tasks connected with leadership (Nivala, 1999). Daily managerial tasks were mechanisms and routine tasks that have to be carried out on a daily basis. These included recruitment of substitute staff, matters to do with maintenance of the property and making small purchases. No particular expert knowledge was needed to perform these tasks, but they can be very time-consuming.

Kagan and Hallmark (2001) list daily administrative tasks: financial and personnel management, knowledge management, immediate stakeholder collaboration, planning, pedagogy and services provided to families. Also in a research conducted in Hong Kong by Ho (2011, 54) was noted that ECE leaders must take care of "keeping the wheels turning" in their day care centre. This included for example, allocation of resources, monitoring daily activities and personnel management. Ho claimed that the reason why leaders had to perform these administrative tasks was the lack of middle management in daycare.

Researching leadership tasks in ECEC contexts in Finland

In Finland ECEC has two aims: to provide child care service for families and provide early childhood education for children. The early childhood education is embraced as the concept of 'EDUCARE'. It reflects the integration of education, teaching and care (Hujala, 2010). The aim of EDUCARE is to promote children's positive self-image, develop expressive and interactive skills, enhance learning and develop thinking as well as support children's overall wellbeing (STM, 2004).

Child care in Finland is a universal and public service for families. Every child has a subjective right to have early education regardless of their parents' employment status. Municipalities are obliged to organise child care for every child under school age if families need it. 62 percent of Finnish children aged 1–6 years were in child care. The child care as a service is typically full-time (80%) and mainly provided by municipal child care centres. There are also other forms of child care, such as family day care, private child care centres and part-time child care. Pre-school is voluntary for children aged six. (Karila & Kinos, 2012.)

The child care is regulated by legislation under the Act of Children's Day Care (36/1973), Decree of Children's Day Care (239/1973) and steered by the National Curriculum Guidelines on ECEC (Stakes, 2004). Pre-school for 6 years old children is steered by Core Curriculum for Pre-school Education in Finland (OPH, 2000). Qualification requirements for ECE leaders are defined in the Act on Qualification Requirements for Social Welfare Professionals (272/2005). Centre directors are required to be qualified EC teacher and to have adequate management skills. Administrative ECE leaders are required to have higher university degree, knowledge of the sector, and adequate management skills. In this legislative framework municipalities can define EC directors' tasks.

Conducting research

Leadership in the Finnish context was studied by clarifying the leadership responsibilities and tasks of centre directors and municipal administrative ECE leaders. Participants were asked to fill in a questionnaire where they assessed what kind of leadership tasks they did and what kind of responsibilities they had during the day. They were asked to assess what kind of tasks they felt were the most important and what tasks they felt were important but did not have enough time to accomplish. The questionnaire contained both open ended and structured closed questions. The data was analysed both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. The informants comprised of three groups: full-time directors (n=56) and part-time directors (n=18) in child care centres, and ECE leaders (n=16) that worked in local city offices. Part-time directors worked as directors or vice directors as well as teachers in a children's group.

Leadership tasks in Finnish ECEC

The informants of this study were asked to assess how they allocated their work time between different leadership tasks. They were asked to assess approximately what proportion of their daily working time was used in following management functions: pedagogical leadership, service

management, human resource management, financial management, leading change, network management, and daily managerial tasks.

Table 1. Leaders' time used in different leadership responsibilities (%)

	Centre directors (n=50)	Part-time directors (n=13)	ECE leaders (n=14)
Pedagogical leadership	18	32	18
Service management	13	12	13
Human resource management	26	16	25
Financial management	8	7	12
Leading change	11	7	15
Network management	8	5	11
Daily managerial tasks	17	19	16

The results of this study showed that main responsibilities of Finnish leaders were connected to pedagogical leadership and human resource management. Table 1 shows that there were differences between the respondent groups, and the percentages estimated their working time in allocated to different tasks. The total working loadings varied between 0 to 130% because for many informants it was difficult to divide their tasks exclusively into a certain category which then raised the percentage over 100.

Full time leaders – centre directors and ECE leaders – spent most of their time in human resource management. Directors working with a child group reported they spent most of their time in pedagogical leadership. This may indicate that the orientation of those directors working simultaneously as teachers was mainly pedagogical. It might be that the concept asked, such as pedagogical leadership, was not clear for them. The part-time directors also referred to pedagogical leadership as part of their teaching rather than pedagogical leadership at the centre level. Pedagogical leadership and daily managerial tasks were the second most time consuming areas for the full time directors. These results may imply that work time profiles of full time directors and ECE leaders were alike. Although in ECE leaders work profile the financial management, leading change and network management took slightly more time and resources than in centre directors' work loading. Part-time directors' work profile differed from the full-time directors

work profile. Daily managerial tasks were more loaded in part-time centre directors' work than in the full time directors' work.

Open ended questions were analysed qualitatively to gain an understanding of the content of the leadership tasks. This analysis implies that managerialism was present in all parts of Finnish ECE leadership. Managerialism seems to be part of especially centre directors' everyday tasks, as an essential aspect connected with maintaining structures. The most frequently mentioned stressful factor was the replacement of absent teachers with substitutes. Substitutes were difficult to get, and the search was very time consuming for the directors. The lack of time, stress and the feeling of fragmented work seem to burden these leaders.

Table 2 shows that centre directors and ECE leaders ranked the importance of their leadership tasks in a similar way. Full time centre directors and ECE leaders perceived the human resource management as the most important leadership task, and the pedagogical leadership as the second important task. Whereas the directors working with a children's group perceived daily management to be the most important leadership task, and human resource management the second most important task.

Table 2. The importance of leadership tasks vs. time resources (1=most important, 7=least important; *, **, ***=the more stars, the more time needed for successful completion)

	Centre directors		Part-time directors		ECE leaders	
	Task importance	Time resources	Task importance	Time resources	Task importance	Time resources
Pedagogical leadership	**2.**	***	**3.**	***	**2.**	***
Service management	**3.**		4.		4.	
Human resource management	**1.**	**	**2.**	**	**1.**	***
Financial management	5.		6.		4.	
Leading change	7.	*	6.		5.	*
Network management	6.		5.		**3.**	
Daily managerial tasks	4.		**1.**	*	6.	

The results indicated that directors and leaders felt they did not have enough time for the most important leadership tasks: pedagogical leadership and human resource management were perceived to be important by every respondent group. Part-time directors emphasised daily managerial tasks, although the time to accomplish those tasks was insufficient. ECE leaders considered network management as third important task. Both centre directors as well as ECE leaders wanted more time to lead change, although they did not consider it to be important.

The responses reflect that the directors and ECE leaders were somewhat frustrated. They felt they have responsibility for several tasks, but they did not have enough power or possibilities to influence them. This has been the situation for a long time in leadership reality in Finland (Nivala, 1999). Regardless of this the respondents felt that they were adequately supported in their leadership work. Over half of the respondents felt that peer support from other leaders provided most support for their own professional development. The support from their own supervisors and

the leadership training provided by the municipality were also considered important. The respondents considered their own communication skills as the most significant factor in succeeding in their leadership. In addition to these, professional staff and the support it provided were seen crucial to the leaders' work.

Network management including advocacy for children, parents and the whole community has been shown to be important in many EC leadership research (Aubrey, Godfrey, & Harris, 2013; Nupponen, 2005). Yet in Finnish ECEC thus the management leadership of the sector has not been considered to be an area of crucial responsibility (Table 2) and therefore directors did not spend much time with this task (Table 1). It seems that networking and advocacy were delegated outside of the centres to the municipal ECE leaders. Does this imply that centre directors in Finland were well concentrated in centre businesses and did not emphasise their expert role when serving families and children in the society?

Closing

EC leadership is based on the mission of ECEC. Ultimately, leadership aims at increasing the wellbeing of children through the provision of high quality ECEC services (see also Aubrey, Godfrey, & Harris, 2013). Leadership is constantly evolving to be appropriately updated according to the dynamic expectations of the mission of ECEC.

This study showed that in Finnish EC leadership tasks and job profiles were quite ambiguous. One reason for this is that the concepts of leadership are unclear for the leaders themselves. Human resource management and pedagogical leadership were emphasised by all of the respondent groups. These leadership tasks were perceived to form the basis for enhancing the high quality implementation of the core tasks. However, in this research the discourse of the mission was quite invisible. This questions the fact if pedagogical leadership is appropriately connected to the mission, does it enhance the teachers' actual pedagogical work? Also Fonsén (2013) found that directors were uncertain about the implementation of pedagogical leadership although the discourse of it was strong. Concept of pedagogical leadership should first be clarified and then find out how directors comprehend it in daily work. In practice, limited time can hinder both

pedagogical leadership and human resource management. Allocations of sufficient time for important leadership tasks should be more clearly defined to guarantee high quality ECEC programs.

All in all, centre directors felt burdened by constant feeling of hurry and splintered nature of work. Adequate support and assistant staff, such as secretaries, could make it possible for directors to focus on the core purpose of leadership profession in ECEC: pedagogical management and human resource management. In order to be responsible for high quality ECEC, directors need both managerial authority as well as authority to create and implement vision. Hill (2003) states that without support from policymakers and local administrators as well as authority to make decisions directors are responsible for everything without any power to decide anything.

Finnish EC leadership is characterised by managerialism, which is reactive instead of being proactive. It takes resources from visionary leadership and development work. The challenge for Finnish leadership is to shift the focus from managerialism to strategic leadership (Akselin, 2013) in order to ensure the high quality provision of the core tasks of ECEC. Change of leadership requires training for directors and also for staff in order to clarify the significance of leadership work. Communication skills, peer support and continual training are key elements in achieving success in leadership positions (see also Rodd, 2013; Waniganayake, Cheeseman, Fenech, Hadley, & Shepherd, 2012).

In Finland, currently the changes in ECEC structures and steering system and challenges for developing ECEC practice require both high status for leadership profession as well as developing shared responsibility of leadership. It is important to understand in ECEC practice that shared leadership (Pearce & Conger, 2003) and distributed leadership (Spillane, 2005) do not mean delegating or sharing the tasks but comprehending how the tasks are completed together. This means that when the staff members are aware of their role in ECEC institution they are able to act more according their self-initiated goals and responsibilities. All this means that leading team involvement and self-management as well as empowering the members of the organisation are key issues in distributing leadership. Updating the leadership discourse and concepts as well profiles and responsibilities in leadership work are challenging but essential in ensuring high quality leadership (see McDowall Clark & Murray, 2012; Aubrey et al., 2013). The EC director must understand the key functions of leadership and other

staff members need to know what kind of support they can expect from the leader. Both directors' and staff members' leadership responsibilities need to be clarified in order to improve the efficiency of leadership as well as to ensure the functioning and wellbeing of the whole organisation.

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Shared Leadership among Caribbean Early Childhood Practitioners

Carol Logie
University of the West Indies
Trinidad and Tobago

Abstract

The chapter identifies notions of shared leadership and concerns within the Caribbean context. It further explores the concept of shared leadership within the context of Caribbean early childhood environments. Commitment to the organization was also analysed as a selected variable affecting leadership acumen, roles and perceptions. Eighty teachers from Early Childhood Care and Education Centres across Trinidad and Tobago participated in the study and shared their perception of leadership and commitment to their profession. A questionnaire was used to gather data. The study found teachers who stated they had an administrative role believed they were effective leaders. Similarly, a strong correlation was found between teachers who were committed to the job and their leadership role.

Tiivistelmä

Tässä artikkelissa käsitellään jaetun johtajuuden käsitettä karibialaisessa varhaiskasvatuksen kontekstissa. Myös organisaatioon sitoutumista analysoitiin valittuna muuttujana, joka vaikuttaa johtajuuden ymmärtämiseen, rooleihin ja havaintoihin. Tutkimukseen osallistui 80 opettajaa Trinidadin ja Tobagon varhaiskasvatusinstituutioista. Opettajia yhdisti heidän näkemyksensä johtamisesta ja heidän sitoutumisensa omaan professioonsa. Tutkimuksen aineisto kerättiin kyselyn avulla. Tutkimuksen mukaan opettajat, jotka näkivät roolinsa hallinnollisena, uskoivat olevansa tehokkaita johtajia. Vahva korrelaatio löytyi myös niiden opettajien välillä, jotka olivat sitoutuneita työhönsä ja johtajan rooliinsa.

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Introduction

Research studies in the field of Early Childhood Care and Education over the last five years have given a great deal of attention to the role of effective teaching in early childhood environments (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; Bredekamp, 2011; Tobin, Hsueh, & Karasawa 2009). Moreover, new quality benchmarks, national curriculum standards and policy directives have generated statements which measure minimal quality standards for early childhood environments across the world. The discourse around quality practice and learning in early childhood environments has recently added a new dimension for our consideration. While it cannot be disputed that strong leadership plays a pivotal role in the cultural esprit de corp of any school setting, it is now strongly argued that there are benefits to promoting and supporting the leadership acumen of teachers as they navigate through the challenges of increasingly complex early childhood environments.

Teachers in early childhood settings have found themselves responding to increasing diversity in young children's cultural background, teacher qualifications, commitment to the job and staff understanding of required knowledge and competencies necessary to meet these new challenges (Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; Corsaro, 1988; DECET/ISSA, 2012; Thornton, 2007).

Similarly, shifting theories and constructs continue to affect early childhood practices in classrooms, while assumptions of the role of successful teachers are constantly under scrutiny (Logie, 2013). Teaching staff now find themselves required to make adjustments to their own assumptions and the internal workings of their early childhood environments (Jambunathan & Caulfield, 2008; Siraj-Blatchford, Sylva, Muttock, Gilden, & Bell, 2002; Stewart & Pugh, 2007).

The context – The Trinidad and Tobago experience

The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is an English-speaking island state in the Caribbean region with a population of 1.3 million inhabitants and a per capita income of US$15,781.50 in 2009 (UN Data World Statistics Pocket Book, 2009). The country's unemployment rate has been low over the last three years fluctuating around 5% (Central Bank Data Centre,

2010). Although the acquisition of a university degree with specialisation in the field of early childhood care and development is relatively new, young as well as seasoned providers in the field are presently seizing the opportunity to upgrade their skills.

Early education in Trinidad and Tobago has been part of every government's manifesto since 1996 and an increased number of providers are entering this service industry and educational field annually. Expanded services for young children under five offers greater access to families as both the public and private settings compete for student spaces. Teacher training and high quality early childhood settings that provide a smooth transition for children to the primary schools appears to be the paramount goal of parents. As part of the formal school system, high quality early education with the goal of Education for All, has led government policies to focus on the construction of state of the art preschools which meet international standards.

At present, there are at least 900 persons being trained at seven tertiary institutions (Trinidad and Tobago Government News, 2012). Three hundred teacher trainees are expected to enter tertiary institutions fully funded by the government of Trinidad and Tobago by 2015. There are 1,154 Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) centres in Trinidad and Tobago, 750 of which are registered with the Ministry of Education. Of these, the government oversees 71 schools operated by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and 130 government and government-assisted ECCE centres catering to 7,000 of the 34,000 children in the three to five year old age group in need of exposure to early childhood education (Trinidad and Tobago Government News, 2012). Approximately 27% of all children are not experiencing any programmes outside the home (Thornhill, 2011). Early childhood programmes can be found in both rural and urban areas and serve families in economically depressed areas as well as middle- and high-income households. All government centres offer free tuition, lunch and breakfast.

At present private centres outnumber government centres by three to one. Unfortunately, the private sector is not mandated by law to provide standardized ECCE services consistent with international standards. Many private centres provide largely custodial care or academic programmes not always suited to the developmental needs of the nation's children. Typically, physical conditions in private centres tend to be of poor quality

with high teacher-child ratios. Whether in low- or high-income settings, these programmes do not always adhere to the standards prescribed in the national curriculum guide.

Early childhood providers are also encouraged to upgrade their professional and academic qualifications through the Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses (GATE) programme which offers free tertiary education for the Bachelor's Degree to those who meet the matriculation requirements. Higher salaries for teachers with university degrees are also an incentive to fill new posts in all areas of the education system. While there is new impetus and apparent excitement among early childhood workers, historically there has been a paradigm shift. In the late 1950's–1970's, the dame school teacher/proprietor, (typically a retired female primary school teacher) managed, directed, lead and "whipped" the children into shape for their upcoming role as students in their nearby primary school. Preschools were then also a "drop off" custodial care facility for working parents and no professional early education/development training for adults in the setting was required. However, while sites like the one profiled above still exist, staff are now encouraged to seek training in the field of child development and larger numbers of gross domestic product (GDP) are spent annually on construction of new centres to meet international standards and the development of standardised certification for all providers at the national level. In the 2013 budget statement, education and training received $9.1 billion (16%) of the $58.4 billion budget (Howai, 2012).

Questions that are currently raised among the Caribbean teaching fraternity are as follows:

1. What is the commitment of teaching staff to their work environment?
2. What is the link between staff commitment and their perceived leadership acumen?

Positional leadership

In Trinidad and Tobago, the traditional model of leadership in education has typically been a hierarchical one in which the head teacher/principal's role is seen as an individual activity and power is concentrated within the position. The shift from a strong focus on positional leaders to various forms of shared leadership which stress the distribution of leadership

among teachers has been noted by many (Harris, 2006; Hatcher, 2005; Hulpia, Devos, Rosseel, & Vlesick, 2012; Gronn, 2002). Nonetheless, the fact remains that successful, high quality early childhood programmes are very often noted to be managed by a strong leader with the ability to build relationships, provide moral purpose, share knowledge and understand change. It is argued here that perhaps leadership (whether positional or shared) is in fact a key element of a quality environment and influences the context and culture of learning in the specific environment (Rodd, 2006).

Hujala (2004), in a study on early childhood leadership in Finland, also argued that although focus groups tended to speak about leadership at multiple levels, there was a tendency to focus on the Centre Director. This tendency highlights the important issue of the positional leader in the context of shared leadership. Furthermore, in their 2007 study "Effective Leadership in the Early Years Sector", Siraj-Blatchford and Manni posit that the positional or formal leader may not be at odds with the notion of shared leadership. In fact, it is argued that in some instances it may even be necessary in accomplishing the "structural change" to support the emergence of this model.

Shared or positional leadership – Is there a symbiotic relationship?

Thornton (2007) posits that leadership in this field is "working collaboratively in a learning community toward a shared vision" (p. 6). This broad definition parallels that of Crawford, Roberts and Hickmann (2010) who, referring to Johnson and Donaldson, 2007 and Wasley, 1991, consider teacher leadership to be, "a murky concept that refers not to a particular position, but rather to varied formal and informal leadership roles that teachers play within school communities" (p. 31). Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2007) argue that shared leadership has to be managed carefully, particularly in environments in which staff members might be young and inexperienced. In order to reap the benefits of shared leadership in early childhood settings, there is a need for the positional leader to develop the leadership capacity of the other employees and provide support for them as they execute their new leadership roles.

Although there is a movement away from hierarchical leadership in early childhood settings, there is an acceptance that the positional leader, who has the role of director or manager, has a greater responsibility than other

members for creating the context in which shared leadership can flourish. While conventional discussions of leadership thus far have focused on the traits of the positional, or formal leader (Bass & Bass, 2008; Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Northouse, 2004; York-Barr & Duke, 2008), it is argued here that other elements of leadership, particularly in the classroom need to be deconstructed.

While the typically non-hierarchical climate of the early childhood setting, Thornton and colleagues (2009) believe that hierarchical definitions of leadership are not applicable. The concept of distributed leadership speaks to a movement away from positional leadership, in which one person assumes the sole responsibility for leading a group or an organisation, to shared leadership responsibilities among several formal and informal leaders (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007). Whatever the definition, leadership in classrooms is a noted phenomenon. It is argued here that there can be a symbiotic relationship between all those who share leadership roles within the working organism of an early childhood environment. Moreover, this relationship can be the nucleus and driving force of a high quality learning environment.

Method in the study

The purpose of the study was to identify shared leadership among the teaching fraternity in the Caribbean region. It explored the concept of shared leadership in Trinidad and Tobago early childhood environments. Similarly, teachers' responses were analysed in an effort to gauge their perception of commitment to their centres, as well as their leadership acumen. During 2011, a sample of early childhood teachers was selected from rural and urban regions. These teachers were registered in a university programme, reading for their Bachelor of Education degree with a specialisation in Early Childhood Education. By strict adherence to the criterion of the target population, the above source yielded a sample size of 80 individuals engaged in full time employment as Early Childhood teachers. Full employment is defined in the Trinidad and Tobago context as permanent, temporary and contract workers.

In order to access the population as described above, the sampling frame was constructed from the enrolment lists. This approach to building

the sampling frame was undertaken in order to secure coverage from the number of individuals within early childhood centres across the country. Teachers in the sample were registered to upgrade their qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Development in response to a new government policy.

The study was guided by the notion that in Trinidad and Tobago, present teacher leadership was influenced by teachers' perceptions of themselves and their commitment to the job. The findings were gleaned from a questionnaire on the dimensions of shared leadership. The instrument included demographic information, data on respondents' perception of their leadership levels, roles and commitment levels.

The Leadership Scale used in the study was developed by Kenneth Leithwood, Robert Aitken and Doris Jantzi (2006) and reconstructed to allow feedback from teachers on ways in which their personal notion of leadership influenced teamwork, quality of interaction and pedagogical experiences in the classroom. From the original Leadership Scale, 31 of the 64 items related to leadership issues were included in the questionnaire. Like the original scale, variables were arranged in six subscales (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Leadership Scale within the Study

Subscales	Example Item	No. of Items
Identifying and articulating a vision	I am in support of and agree to school changes when and where necessary	5
Fostering the acceptance of group goals	I participate in the process of generating school goals	5
High performance expectations	I always meet the high expectation that is required of me	4
Providing individualised support/ consideration	I am equipped with the resources to support my professional development	5
Providing intellectual stimulation	I am a source of new ideas for the professional learning of other members of staff	7
Providing an appropriate model	I always set a respective tone for interaction with young children	6

Adapted from: Leithwood, Aitken & Jantzi, 2006

Permission was sought and was given for the use of the scale and the questionnaire was piloted prior to its administration and amended where necessary for cultural relevance and reliability. All returns were manually edited and coded. Coding guidelines were developed and documented. The

Leadership Scale was subjected to a test of reliability. The items were found to be internally consistent based on satisfactory levels of their Chronbach's Alpha which ranged from the lowest (.63–Scale A) to the highest (.93–Scale B). Each subscale was subjected to Factor Analysis for the purpose of obtaining factor scores to be used in correlation analysis of the Leadership Scale. By the method of *principal axis factoring*, factor scores for each leadership scale were extracted.

Teacher profile

Information provided on the demographics of the sampling units included: sex, age, centre type, location, main occupation, years of teaching experience, and highest educational attainment. Questions related to respondents' perception of their leadership acumen, main responsibilities and perceived influence in the environment provided relevant data. The study gleaned by indirect method, respondents' understanding of their managerial and classroom responsibilities.

The commitment survey

An attitudinal commitment inventory instrument based on the original version of the Meyer and Allen Three-Component Model (TCM) of commitment (1990) was utilised. The TCM measured three forms of employee commitment to an organisation: 1) desire-based "I want to" (affective commitment); 2) obligation-based "I ought to" (normative commitment); and 3) cost-based "I need to" (continuous commitment) (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Two well-validated sub-scales were used. These were the Affective Commitment Scale (ACS) and the Normative Commitment Scale (NCS). Items within each scale were scored on a five-point Likert scale.

According to Meyer and Allen (2004), in their more recent work, employees desirous of staying with an organisation exhibit high Affective Commitment and tend to perform at a higher level than those who did not. On the other hand, those with low Affective Commitment did not feel commited to stay with the organisation. Similarly, the authors noted that employees who remained due to feelings of obligation (high Normative Commitment) also tend to outperform those who feel no such obligation

(low Normative Commitment) but with weaker performance than workers with high Affective Commitment.

Each commitment scale was correlated with each of the six leadership scales on the basis of their factor scores. Zero order Pearson correlation coefficient was observed together with its level of significance. Only results at or below .05 level of significance were accepted as having significant correlations.

Results and discussion

The study found that there were indeed attributes to successful classroom leaders. The following describes four of the six subscales from the Leadership Scale (2006) which yielded interesting results from the sample. These scales were as follows: 1) Identifying and Articulating of Vision, 2) Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals, 3) High Performance Expectations, and 4) Providing Intellectual Stimulation. Similarly, the TCM commitment survey yielded critical results on Affective and Normative Commitment in Caribbean environments.

Identifying and Articulating of Vision

When asked about their sense of the overall purpose of their Early Childhood Centre 86% of the respondents indicated that they have a sense of the Centre's overall purpose. Eighty-five per cent of early childhood teachers agreed that they know about their Centres' vision. The majority of Early Childhood Educators (89%) indicated support of and agreement with necessary changes to Centre Policies. Seventy-eight per cent of participants demonstrated an understanding of the relationship between the Centre's vision and Government initiatives.

Brundrett, Burton and Smith (2003) citing Sirotnik and Kimball (1996), noted that the concept of influence that characterises leadership remains constant when used in the context of teacher leadership. They admit, however, that the methods and goals of leadership might be unique. Teacher leaders have a clear vision (Barth, 2007; Crowther, Kaagan, Ferguson, & Hann, 2007; Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007) and articulate it to other members of the team (Rodd, 2006; Siraj-

Blatchford & Manni, 2007). They translate this vision into practical strategies (Crowther et al., 2007) for action by setting goals and monitoring the progress toward the attainment of the goals. They are committed to the goals that are set (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007), confronting obstacles with which they might be presented (Crowther et al., 2007) and persisting in spite of these obstacles (Barth, 2007). Some authors, such as Ebbeck and Waniganayake (2003) consider these leadership elements to be narrow and posit the need to broaden them to include wider leadership roles such as advocacy.

Fostering the acceptance of group goals

The majority of Caribbean Educators in the study (76%) stated that they regularly encouraged achievement of centre goals among staff members. Similarly, an overwhelming majority of teachers agreed that they participate in the process of generating Centre goals with 5% of teachers disagreeing with the statement. 82% of teachers stated that they supported and encouraged the professional development of others consistent with the Centre policies. 18% of teachers indicated disagreement with the statement. Most participants (92%) agreed that their decisions and practices within the classroom are consistent with the goals of the Centre. 8% of teachers disagreed with the statement.

Most respondents (89%) agreed that they were involved in establishing goals and priorities of the Centre with 11% of teachers disagreeing with the statement.

The majority of early childhood teachers (94%) agreed that they display energy and enthusiasm for my work. Most respondents (96%) indicated that they set a respective tone for interaction with young children. Of those surveyed, 89% responded that they demonstrate a willingness to change policies and practices in light of new understandings/developments of the field. 92% of early childhood educators stated that they model techniques for solving problems that other staff members can relate to. An overwhelming majority of teachers (97%) stated that they are always open and genuine with staff, parents and children. Most early childhood professionals within the survey (90%) stated that they are perfect model of success and accomplishment within the profession and the early childhood environment.

Not unlike the studies by Gabriel (2005) and Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2007), this study found that teacher leaders were able to create a culture of teamwork and a culture of learning among members of staff. They were also found to work effectively with parents and the wider community. Similarly, Caribbean early childhood practitioners promoted professional development of their team members. These findings were aligned recent conversations and insights from Gabriel (2005) and Rodd (2006).

High performance expectations

When teachers' perceptions of meeting high expectations in Caribbean classrooms were examined, it was found that 90% of respondents believed that they were meeting the administration's targets. Of the sampled educators, 97% considered themselves effective innovators. Most early childhood professionals, 84%, agreed that they were equipped with the necessary resources to support their professional development. The majority of teachers (82%) agreed that their opinions were always taken into consideration when initiating Centre policies. Additionally, the majority of teachers (86%) agreed that their unique needs and expertise were always acknowledged by the Centre. Many participants, 89%, agreed they had never shown favouritism toward individuals or groups. An overwhelming majority of early childhood practitioners (97%) agreed that the Centre always acknowledged their unique needs and expertise.

Of the surveyed, 84% agreed that they were equipped with resources to support their professional development. Most educators (82%) agreed that their opinions were always taken into consideration when initiating Centre policies. In addition, 86% teachers agreed that the Centre always acknowledges their unique needs and expertise. The majority of early childhood teachers (89%) agreed that they had never shown favouritism toward individuals or groups.

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Providing intellectual stimulation

The majority of early childhood teachers (85%) agreed that they always encourage other staff members to re-examine some basic assumptions about

their work. An overwhelming majority of teachers (95%) agreed that they are a source of new ideas for the professional development of staff members. Of those surveyed, 93% agree that they always stimulate staff members to think about their interaction and practice with school children. Most of the respondents, (92%) agreed that they encourage staff members to pursue their personal goals for professional development. Additionally, 85% of early childhood professionals agreed that they always persuade staff members to evaluate and refine their practices when necessary. Many participants (86%) agreed that they always persuade staff members to evaluate and refine their practices when necessary. 88% of early childhood professionals agreed that they always facilitate opportunities for staff members to learn from each other.

Job commitment and leadership in the classroom

Affective Commitment. This study examined the importance of affective commitment to early childhood practices. Affective commitment is defined as components of identification and internalisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Affective commitment thus refers to the "emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization" (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002, 21). The findings indicated that affective commitment was highly and positively correlated with the study's leadership subscales with the exception of the scale "Providing Intellectual Stimulus" with which there was no significant correlation below the 5% level of significance (p = 073) (see Table 2).

In this study teachers who were found to display affective commitment to their Centre, demonstrated an internalisation and acceptance of its esprit de corp and values. The study found that their commitment and williness to lead were aligned with their personal goals and values. Additionally, teachers were found to accept the Centre's influence in maintaining a satisfying symbiotic relationship. The study also found that Caribbean teachers demonstrated behaviours which were consistent with the purview of the school's culture. Teachers were also willing to express additional effort on behalf of the educational system to maintain healthy relationships within their work environment. Moreover the study found that teachers exhibited a shared value system and their leadership goals were consistent with the goals of the education system.

Table 2. Correlations between Affective Commitment and Leadership Subscales with Cronbach's Alpha and (K.M.O) Goodness of Fit Measures

Scales	Statistics	Identifying and Articulating a Vision	Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals	Having High Performance Expectation	Providing Individual Support	Providing Intellectual Stimulus	Being an Appropriate Model	K.M.O (Goodness of fit)	Cronbach's Aplha
Affective Commitment	Pearson Correlation	0.41	0.415	0.331	0.355	0.198	0.302	0.782	0.719
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0.002	0.001	0.073	0.006		
K.M.O (Goodness of fit)		0.745	0.788	0.66	0.673	0.901	0.753		
Cronbach's Alpha		0.854	0.927	0.773	0.764	0.87	0.837		

Source: UWI-FDCRC Survey on Shared Leadership among Caribbean Teachers, 2010

Normative Commitment. Normative commitment refers to the employee's perception that he/she is obligated to remain with the organisation. Meyer and Allen indicated that an individual could experience one or more components of organisational commitment simultaneously (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). Interestingly, the study also pointed to commitment among classroom leaders which focused on a sense of obligation. This commitment which has its foundation in a sense of obligation to the organisation is defined as normative commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990) as "internalization of normative pressure" (p. 77). This component of commitment within the leadership goals of teachers in the study was expressed in their level of institutional reciprocity. In other words, where it was believed that not only the institution shared their specific values teacher leaders perceived that there was operational reciprocity between themselves and the centre's organisational system. Therefore, the more valued the organisation was to them, the more consistent the teacher felt linked to the Centre's organisation goals.

The study also found that only three of the leadership scales: 1) having high performance expectation, 2) providing individual support, and 3) being an appropriate model were positively correlated with the Normative Commitment Scale (see Table 3). As in the case of affective commitment, significant correlations were observed and indicated a link between high normative values and leadership in classrooms.

Table 3. Correlations between Normative Commitment and Leadership Subscales with Cronbach's Alpha and (K.M.O) Goodness of Fit

Scales	Statistics	Identifying and Articulating a Vision	Fostering the Acceptance of Group Goals	Having High Performance Expectation	Providing Individual Support	Providing Intellectual Stimulus	Being an Appropriate Model	K.M.O (Good-ness of fit)	Cronbach's Aplha
Normative Commitment	Pearson Correlation	0.128	0.192	0.337	0.282	0.21	0.252	0.697	0.647
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.247	0.082	0.002	0.01	0.057	0.021		

Source: UWI-FDCRC Survey on Shared Leadership among Caribbean Teachers, 2010

Conclusion

The research demonstrated several key findings from the Caribbean context which correspond with previous studies on shared leadership. Educators who perceived themselves as leaders within their school environment demonstrated higher levels of affective and normative commitment to their job. Three critical components of leadership were highly correlated with affective and normative commitment, these were: 1) having high performance expectations, 2) providing individual support, and 3) being an appropriate model. These findings were consistent with existing bodies of research (Bligh, Pearce, & Kohles, 2006; Houghton, Neck, & Manz, 2003).

Caribbean teacher-leaders typically hold high performance expecations for themselves. According to Rodd (2006), Manz and Neck (1999) and Houghton et al. (2003), such individuals tend to exert greater effort in dealing with challenges and difficulties. These Caribbean teacher-leaders, not unlike their findings and observations, had positive self-esteem and high expectations of their worth within the school setting. They were also more likely to employ specific strategies which make them less susceptible to setbacks, and more likely to be intrinsically motivated to achieve the organisation's goals. This in turn had a positive impact on a teacher's attachment to the organisation (Bligh et al., 2006). This may be what our research is demonstrating. One potential extrapolation from the data is that educators, within their settings are intrinsically motivated to achieve their internalised acceptance of the setting's values and goals, and as such are demonstrating high levels of affective and normative commitment.

Moreover, teacher-leaders exerted influence across and within their peer groups. They engage in motivational dialogue with peers within the organisation. They also take it upon themselves to create opportunities for peers to demonstrated their strengths and improve upon their weaknesses. Therefore, teacher-leaders provide peers with opportunities to grow, demonstrating support for individuals within their environment. This, in turn, assists teacher-leaders to perceive themselves as more empowered within their setting and translates to greater levels of organisational commitment.

Redefined teacher-leadership theory (Donghai, 2008; Harris & Muijs, 2007; Lambert, 2003) also suggest that strategies are verbally and behaviourally communicated within an organisation, the more likely

others within the team may become committed to the institution. Teacher-leaders may therefore, exert positive peer influence, thus facilitating the acceptance of organisational goals and values. These are implications which require further examination. Additionally, the current study requires further elucidation of key findings. In particular, within the contexts of early childhood environments it may be critical to examine the role of formal shared leadership teams, as well as informal leadership groups and individuals which may exist and the interaction of these leadership styles on teacher commitment within the organisation. Further, one may need to closely examine the leadership structure within early childhood settings, investigating whether patterns of shared leadership gathered through the data are indeed patterns which exist within the formal educational leadership structure. It is also important to note that the research currently conducted, in this study and in others, tends towards descriptive explanations of existing structures, and may require further unearthing of testable variables which may elucidate the existence of shared leadership and the ways in which it impacts not only organisational commitment but also aspects of job performance, quality outcomes and provision within early childhood contexts. Leadership styles also need to be further examined to determine its link to differing styles may relate to differing levels of organisational commitment.

At present these findings demonstrate important implications for shared leadership, and the potential impact of teacher-leadership as an antecedent which correlates with levels of affective and normative commitment. While further explorations are still needed to make more definitive conclusions, this research provides an important first step into the exploration of shared leadership within early childhood environments in the Caribbean.

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Enacting Distributed Pedagogical Leadership in Finland: Perceptions of Early Childhood Education Stakeholders

Johanna Heikka
University of Tampere
Finland
Macquarie University
Australia

Abstract

This study aimed to investigate pedagogical leadership in early childhood education (ECE) contexts. It focused on investigating how ECE leaders, centre directors and ECE teachers in Finnish municipalities perceived the enactment of pedagogical leadership. Using focus groups, the data was collected in 6 municipalities in Finland. It was found that the enactment of pedagogical leadership was connected with the employment positions of the participants. The participants perceived an imbalance between the aims of pedagogical improvement and the role-based enactment of pedagogical leadership. However, this paradox seemed to fuel new constructions of ECE leadership amongst the stakeholders involved in this study. The conclusions include suggestions for leadership development through the creation of interdependence in enacting pedagogical leadership within the ECE contexts.

Tiivistelmä

Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli tutkia pedagogista johtajuutta varhaiskasvatuksessa. Tutkimuksen tehtävänä oli selvittää miten päivähoidon johtavat virkamiehet, päiväkodin johtajat ja opettajat näkivät pedagogisen johtajuuden. Tutkimuksen aineisto kerättiin kuudessa kunnassa focus group -menetelmällä. Osallistujien keskusteluissa pedagogista johtajuutta tarkasteltiin johtajan position kautta. Johtajuustasot toimivat etäällä toisistaan, jonka nähtiin heikentävän pedagogiikan kehittämistä. Osallistujien

Johanna Heikka: Enacting Distributed Pedagogical Leadership in Finland:
Perceptions of Early Childhood Education Stakeholders.
Eeva Hujala, Manjula Waniganayake & Jillian Rodd (Eds)
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kokema ristiriita toimimattoman johtamisen ja pedagogisen johtajuuden tavoitteiden välillä nosti esiin jaetun johtajuuden konstruktioita osallistujien keskusteluissa. Tutkimuksen johtopäätöksissä esitetään kehittämisehdotuksia, joiden avulla eri tasojen välistä johtamistoimintaa voidaan kytkeä toisiinsa.

Introduction

This article is based on a study conducted in Finland, involving 6 municipalities providing ECE services. The rationale for studying distributed pedagogical leadership was connected to the contextual factors of Finnish ECE leadership. Municipalities are required to plan and implement community services, including ECE services. Within municipalities, ECE leadership is dispersed among geographically distanced macro and micro-level stakeholders. This distancing can create certain challenges for the enactment of pedagogical leadership, particularly in developing co-operation between stakeholders. Those stakeholders involved in this study, being municipal ECE leaders, centre directors and teachers emphasised pedagogical leadership being significant to pedagogical improvement. It was found that the interdependence between leadership enactments of the stakeholders was perceived essential for efficient pedagogical improvement. The study provides developmental suggestions to create better collaboration that can enhance the interdependence amongst the early childhood stakeholders within municipalities.

When connecting distributed leadership perspectives with pedagogical leadership approaches, one needs to focus on the interactions between the systems of how leadership focuses on developing pedagogical practices. The practice of distributed leadership can increase the depth of understanding about pedagogical leadership addressing it at a system level, as interactions between stakeholders. The theoretical underpinnings of this research were connected with the contextual model of early childhood leadership (Nivala, 1999) and informed by the distributed leadership approaches of scholars such as Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004; 2001) and Harris (2009). Although connections between pedagogical leadership and distributed leadership have not yet been explored fully in early childhood research (Heikka & Waniganayake, 2011), there is research to support the strong connection between shared thinking of teachers and pedagogically sound ECE programs (Lunn & Bishop, 2002; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007).

It should be noted that in Finland there was a significant policy change impacting on the curriculum and pedagogy of ECE due to the launching of the *National Curriculum Guidelines on Early Childhood Education and Care in Finland* (STAKES, 2003). In this chapter, for ease of reference, from now on this document will be referred to as the Finnish National Curriculum (STAKES, 2003). These policy reformulations raised the need to enhance leadership capacity within ECE and explore effective leadership approaches. The literature reviewed by Heikka, Waniganayake and Hujala (2013) suggest that distributed leadership approaches can assist in the implementation of leadership responsibilities by bringing about better interconnection, consistency and coherence in service delivery among diverse stakeholders.

In Finland, typically, the public ECE services formulate the context of leadership. Leadership is connected to educational work with children and is realised through the actions of a wider set of stakeholders. The three key stakeholder groups responsible for ECE services within municipalities are employed as ECE leaders, centre directors or teachers. ECE leaders are responsible for arranging ECE programs within the municipality ensuring that centres meet the requirements of the national ECE laws and local policies. ECE centre directors are responsible for multiple centres and programs within a specific municipality. Teachers work with children in different age groups at their centre. The study focused on examining participants' perceptions of how pedagogical leadership was enacted and represents a collectively constructed picture of their lived work experiences in local communities.

Based on the literature reviewed elsewhere (Heikka et al., 2013) the core elements of distributed leadership are firstly the involvement of multiple individuals in leadership; secondly, a focus on leadership enactment rather than leadership roles; thirdly, interdependence of the leadership enactments by multiple individuals, and fourthly, the connection of the significance of leadership to educational work.

The successful achievement of distributed leadership is determined by the interactive influences of multiple members in an organisation. Basing their argument on leadership thinking explained within distributed cognition (see Hutchins, 1995a; 1995b), Spillane et al. (2004, 11) state that leadership is best understood as a practice "distributed over leaders, followers, and the school's situation or contexts". Spillane et al. (2004, 9) discuss distributed

leadership practice as being "stretched over" the whole school, social and community contexts. In these contexts, leadership involves multiple personnel, consisting of those with either formal leadership positions and/or informal leadership responsibilities.

Interdependence between people and their enactments of leadership is a core element of implementing distributed leadership. Spillane et al. (2001, 25) refer to leaders who work towards a shared goal through "separate, but interdependent work". Likewise, Harris (2009) connects two properties, "interdependence" and "emergence", with distributed leadership. Spillane et al. (2004) focus on interdependence between leadership practices by analysing the enactment of leadership tasks. Interdependence of leadership practice exists when the implementation of leadership tasks involves interactions between multiple individuals.

When applying distributed leadership perspectives to ECE leadership, it is essential to remember the unique characteristics of this sector. The organisational contexts in their structure and governance incorporate a variety of programs and the personnel employed in these organisations. In addition, the purpose of ECE is twofold. Firstly, entitlement to services as a part of labour policy serves parents. Secondly, ECE supports children as users of services as according to the Act on Children's Day Care (Laki lasten päivähoidosta 19.1.1973/36), ECE has to support the overall development of the child. This study focused on studying ECE leadership from the point of view of ECE pedagogy.

Nivala (1999; 2001) has developed a contextual leadership model which provides a framework for examining leadership within contexts unique to ECE. Contextual leadership model is based on the core purposes of ECE and addresses interactive influences of micro and macro systems. (Hujala, 2004; Nivala, 2001.) According to Hujala (2010), contextually appropriate leadership is where the roles and responsibilities are based on the core purpose of ECE at all contextual levels. Distributed leadership methodologies can supplement contextual perspectives by enabling a deeper level of investigation of the interdependencies between stakeholders implementing ECE within Finnish municipalities.

In writings on pedagogical leadership, the role of teachers and learning in educational communities is emphasized. Here, teachers are seen as essential decision makers and builders of pedagogy for individual learners (Sergiovanni, 1998). According to Heikka and Waniganayake (2011)

pedagogical leadership is connected not only to children's learning, but also to the capacity building of the teachers' profession, as well as values and beliefs about education held by the wider society or community. In ECE settings, pedagogical leadership means taking responsibility for the shared understanding of the aims and methods of learning and teaching of young children.

Research task and methods

This study investigated how ECE leaders, centre directors and ECE teachers perceived the enactment of pedagogical leadership. In Finland, ECE leadership is interwoven and distributed in municipalities involving a variety of stakeholders. Accordingly, the findings were analysed within a distributed leadership framework.

Data was collected through focus group method commonly used by educational researchers (Hydén & Bülow, 2003). Each focus group consisted of a small number of participants meeting to discuss a specific topic under the guidance of a moderator, who is an outsider to the research discussion (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005; Wibeck, Dahlgren, & Öberg, 2007). During the meeting, participants express opinions, form points of view, and discuss their perceptions of the phenomenon and its various dimensions (Wibeck et al., 2007). Focus groups were chosen as a research method for this study because of it could generate collectively constructed perspectives of leadership enactment within municipalities on a day-to-day basis. By analysing the perspectives of each group of stakeholders separately as well as across the groups, it was possible to interpret the enactment of ECE leadership in Finnish contexts.

The municipalities were selected for the study based on their willingness to participate in the study, as well as their diversity in relation to population size and location in Finland. Participants were identified with the assistance of a key contact person from each municipality. The goal was to assemble a maximum of 10 people in each focus group and the actual number of participants varied between 2–10 in each group. Each focus group comprising ECE leaders, centre directors, and teachers, was conducted separately. The number of the participants was lowest among ECE leaders group in small municipalities. Two main questions were formulated for

the discussion: 1) The core purpose of ECE and 2) leadership of ECE. A total of 18 focus group interviews were conducted across six municipalities. Altogether there were 34 ECE leaders, 50 centre directors and 49 teachers, making a total of 133 participants.

The substantive inquiry of the content of the discussions among each stakeholder group was conveyed by qualitative content analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009). In qualitative content analysis, theoretical concepts and conclusions are generated through the process of interpretation and inference of participants' original expressions (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009). The data of each focus group was analysed separately in order to form categories describing pedagogical leadership discussed within each stakeholder group.

This qualitative content analysis began by identifying analytical codes by reading the transcribed data and selecting key ideas that reflected connections with the research question. After coding a couple of transcripts, sub-categories were formulated by clustering the initial codes. These initial sub-categories were then used when analysing the rest of the data among the stakeholder groups and categories were altered during the process where appropriate. In the second phase of the analysis the main categories of each stakeholder group were formulated by combining the sub-categories of codes. The content of the categories were condensed for use in across-group examination.

Cross-group examination of the substantive content of the discussions between the stakeholders included parallel investigation of the stakeholders' perceptions and identification of relative contents of the discussions. The researcher set the contents which were linked side by side enabling the dialogue between the different groups of the stakeholders. This phase of the analysis was inspired by the method introduced by Gergen and Gergen (2007, 472–473) naming it as 'distributed representations'. In distributed representations, the researcher allows for dialogic relationship between the differing voices. By examining the perceptions of leadership between these participants, the study discussed the enactment of ECE leadership from a contextual and distributed perspective. Original expressions of the participants could be followed in verbatim citations of quotations when reporting the results of the study. For ethical reasons the names of the municipalities and the individual participants in focus groups were withheld.

Results

The enactment of pedagogical leadership

During focus group discussions, the participants discussed the contents of pedagogical leadership and which stakeholders were expected to perform these tasks and responsibilities. The perceptions of how pedagogical leadership was enacted by ECE stakeholders comprising municipal ECE leaders, centre directors and teachers as agreed to by the respective participant groups are presented in Table 1.

Providing care, up-bringing and teaching of children were topics repeatedly discussed as was the content of the core purpose of ECE by each of the participant groups. ECE pedagogy and leadership were seen as holistic phenomena combining the elements of providing care, education and teaching in daily practices. Leadership of pedagogy was highly valued among all participants.

A significant finding was that the teachers were seen as leaders in pedagogy only when they had a formal appointment as an assistant director within a centre. Teachers were also seen to be capable of operating as professionals who understood ECE pedagogy and in developing their own skills and knowledge in relation to pedagogical work with children. When working as classroom teachers however, teachers were not acknowledged as leaders. It appears that leadership was perceived as being tightly linked with the director's position at the centre.

All stakeholders who participated in this study perceived the enactment of pedagogical leadership as being connected with the position of the centre director. The tasks performed by the centre directors in pedagogical leadership were seen to provide training for teachers, to enhance the discussions of pedagogy in centres, and to increase teachers' expertise and commitment. Although centre directors were considered responsible for pedagogical leadership, they were also perceived as having primarily a workload comprising administrative duties. They reported that their efficiency was estimated according to various non-pedagogical aspects of leadership, such as their capacity to manage finances. Some of the centre directors worked with children on a daily basis and for them balancing between diverse responsibilities was even more challenging.

All groups highlighted the important role of municipal ECE leaders as creators of the prerequisites for ECE pedagogy. These leaders set the goals for their municipality and allocated the resources necessary to achieve these goals in centres. ECE leaders were seen as the designers of visions, frameworks and guidelines for centre-based practice. It was their responsibility also to highlight the need to provide and develop ECE services in their communities. These ECE leaders saw it as their responsibility to find ways to support teachers' development of pedagogical skills.

Imbalance between the enactment of leadership and pedagogical improvement

According to the participants, pedagogical leadership was closely connected to the changes in practice connected with the implementation of the Finnish National Curriculum (STAKES, 2003). These situational aspects were highly emphasised and influential in the way leadership was perceived. In the analysis of data from the focus groups of centre directors and teachers, it was found that the resources allocated to curriculum implementation were insufficient and that pedagogical discussions in centres with parents were inadequate in identifying appropriate issues of general concern. These participants also believed that achieving the goals or targets set for ECE programs required more time for discussion. They also felt that teams in centres did not have enough time for discussions to acquire a shared understanding of goals. The examples below illustrate this:

> "It is a big challenge that it is a leader who should implement the early childhood plans and preschool curriculum; making these plans work or realized. So, when there are, because of the huge administrative workloads they could not do it. The lack of time is so great and this kind of extra work is coming all the time. Consequently we will no longer be so convincing." (Teacher focus group)

> "There is no time for discussion, so that you could really go deep into it." (Centre director focus group)

Some of the centre directors felt that they lacked the means and the time to organise, plan and assess the quality of their work and needed training in improving curriculum implementation. In this way, centre directors highlighted the importance of monitoring quality and their own leadership

Table 1. Perceptions of Pedagogical Leadership by ECE stakeholders

Participant groups	Perceptions of ECE leaders	Perceptions of Centre directors	Perceptions of ECE teachers	Enactment of pedagogical leadership according to the participant groups
Municipal ECE leaders in pedagogical leadership	ECE leaders secure resources, create visions and networks.	ECE leaders secure resources and create visions and guidelines. No enough means to share issues with ECE leaders – Anticipation for shared decision-making and construction of visions with ECE leaders.	ECE leaders secure resources, create visions and set targets. They provide support for pedagogical leadership. Remain from the field; no means to share issues with – anticipation for shared construction of visions. ECE leaders should create structures for information sharing.	**Provision of prerequisites for ECE**
Centre directors in pedagogical leadership	Centre directors have responsibility for pedagogy. They provide teachers with opportunities for training, discussion and visionary environment. They enhance teachers' expertise and commitment, implementation of Finnish National curriculum and quality improvement. Anticipated development of co-operation with centre directors.	Centre directors have responsibility for pedagogical development and teachers' expertise. They provide teachers with opportunities for training and discussion. They create visions and have responsibility for the implementation of the Finnish National curriculum. Centre directors provide information for decision makers. Inadequate time and resources for pedagogical discussion and assessment within centres.	Centre directors have responsibility for pedagogy, development, assessment and implementation of Finnish National curriculum. Centre directors should have influence on resources. They should create structures for information sharing. Inadequate time and resources for pedagogical discussion within centres.	**Pedagogical improvement within centres**
Teachers in pedagogical leadership	Teachers develop their own skills and knowledge. Teachers voices should be heard in decision-making.	Teachers develop their own skills and knowledge. Implementation of curriculum by an assistant director. Anticipation for discussion with the teachers and sharing responsibilities.	Teachers develop their own skills and knowledge. Inadequate time and resources for discussion among teachers. Confusion about the development work –evaluation systems should be developed. Self-appointed leaders among teachers.	**Developing as professionals**

skills. The teachers also considered that there should be clear quality assurance systems for ECE within municipalities:

> "Tracking and evaluation. Where we are going to. This maybe is what I think should happen in our municipality." (Teacher focus group)

Although all participant groups perceived that teachers were seen as responsible for their own professional development, who was responsible for the overall pedagogy in the centres was not shared between the teachers and centre directors. Centre directors were seen as experts who could transfer skills and knowledge to teachers, provide support and answers problems encountered with children and families and enhance the teachers' learning and well-being. Teachers were also expected to take on more responsibility for the children's education programs in the centres. However, the teachers emphasised that it was the centre directors' responsibility to guide curriculum implementation, assessment and securing of resources and cooperation with families.

Varying constructions of leadership

The ECE stakeholders participating in this research believed that pedagogical leadership reflected both distributed and disjointed leadership enactments. In distributed leadership enactments the development work involved coordinated leadership functions between a centre director and a assistant director. Assistant director was a positional title used in some municipalities involved in this study. It was used to identify a teacher who had designated leadership responsibilities within a centre. This process involved a centre director and an assistant director in the shared construction of understanding of the pedagogical improvements within a centre. The assistant director implemented pedagogical improvements within a centre according to the plans formulated jointly. This however was a small part of the ways in which leadership was enacted in the municipalities participating in this study.

Usually, participants' perceptions reflected disjointed, role-based leadership enactment. The participants repeatedly mentioned difficulties in information sharing between the stakeholders about development work. According to the teachers this resulted in confusion and uncertainty about the directions of the development work carried out in centres:

> "Information does not come to the level of subordinates, which feels as if we are in a fog then also. That you do not really know where we are going and there are different projects and new ones are also coming all the time." (Teacher focus group)

The expression also reflects that teachers do not necessarily perceive the developmental projects as jointly decided means for pedagogical improvement. Furthermore, the centre directors and teachers felt that there were no means to participate in the decision-making with the ECE leaders as reflected in the following excerpt from a teacher focus group:

> "Often it is said that this is an agreement. But who was involved in this agreement? Is it an agreement coming from the municipal decision making level? Has anyone asked the staff what they think about these issues?"

The centre directors and teachers wanted greater participation in leadership and more discussion and information sharing with ECE leaders about the visions, guidelines and quality improvement demands in their daily work.

Teachers' participation in pedagogical leadership

In the construction of leadership among each stakeholder group, leadership was not explicitly connected to the professional roles of the teachers. However, teachers' participation in pedagogical leadership was apparent in the teachers' discussions in various ways. There were self-appointed leaders, who were reported to emerge easily among teachers when a director was not permanently present in a centre. However, this was not felt to be a desirable phenomenon among teachers because of its tendency to disrupt the coherency of the usual pedagogical approaches in place in a centre. Therefore, teachers believed that there should be a position specifically named as a 'leading teacher' in each centre to be responsible for the pedagogy and discussions thereon. The teachers also discussed the delegation of leadership tasks by a centre director. The teachers were however, not positively disposed towards delegation. They reported that these tasks did not belong to teachers and might take them away from the children. These tasks were reported to be consistent with the managerial duties of centre directors. The teachers also considered that participation in planning teams also took them away from

children, and that this was also not appropriate in terms of doing their pedagogical work.

The teachers considered that the ECE leaders' responsibility was to create organisational structures to support pedagogical leadership, cooperation and knowledge sharing between teachers and centre directors. The teachers also claimed that ECE decision-makers and administrators in the municipalities were not sufficiently familiar with what happens in ECE centres. Similarly, the ECE leaders also believed that the teachers should have more say when decisions about strategies and resources were being planned in the municipality. ECE leaders considered that together with centre directors, they should give the teachers more feedback about their work. One other reason which was considered to inhibit the flow of information within municipalities was that the use of information technologies by the teachers was perceived as being inadequate, either due to poor access to facilities or because of the lack of sufficient IT skills among teachers.

Emerging constructions of leadership

The perceived imbalance between the responsibilities for pedagogical improvement and the way leadership was enacted raised discussions of leadership development among the study participants. The centre directors believed that sharing responsibilities and creating structures for discussion with the teachers, could improve teachers' attainments in pedagogy, contribute to their expertise and shared approaches in practice. In turn, they assumed, there might be more a comprehensive professional performance in the centres. Similarly, teachers perceived that enactment of leadership by applying distributed leadership approaches within centres could support their professional development by enabling them to reflect on the shared experiences and ideas. Participants highlighted the importance of distributed leadership by focusing on solving challenging issues together, sharing decision making and the construction of a shared vision between stakeholders as reflected in the next excerpt from one participant:

> "For the leader, it is important that pedagogical leadership can present all these visions and values and ask teachers to consider and discuss these ideas further." (Teacher focus group).

The Finnish National Curriculum (STAKES, 2003), was mentioned repeatedly by each stakeholder group and its implementation was connected to new and emerging constructions of leadership. All stakeholder groups perceived the implementation processes as a tool for providing a framework to guide or support the quality of pedagogy and equality in ECE in Finland. Furthermore, the processes of developing and updating the local curriculum as a shared activity was also believed to enhance ECE teachers' professional learning.

According to teachers, leaders would be able to promote quality and enhance capacity and commitment to changes by involving all stakeholders in leadership and enhancing participation by a collective way of leading. Similarly, the ECE leaders believed that the development of cooperation would foster learning and knowledge sharing between the ECE leaders and centre directors.

Discussion

Pedagogical development through the implementation of the Finnish National Curriculum (STAKES, 2003) was perceived as one of the most important leadership responsibilities. The way in which leadership was enacted was perceived to have an impact on the efficiency of curriculum implementation and pedagogical improvement within centres. In this study, disjoined enactment of pedagogical leadership was not perceived to be sufficiently efficient for pedagogical improvement. This notion emerged from discussions of ideas about more coherent ways of leading among the study participants.

The participants perceived distribution of tasks to be significant for the efficient practice of pedagogical leadership. However, albeit the ECE leaders had an important role in creating visions and tools for pedagogical improvement, it seemed that they were too remote from the field to create shared visions and efficient strategies to implement these visions. The gap between ECE leaders and centre directors resulted mainly from challenges in information sharing and lack of structures enabling shared decision making and the construction of visions and strategies. This study showed that it was only the centre directors who were perceived to be responsible for taking care of pedagogical leadership, thus having little impact on the resources

and means to improve practices. The development of interdependence in the enactment of organisational responsibilities by promoting shared decision-making could enhance the implementation of pedagogical leadership in ECE organisations.

Furthermore, the findings of this study confirmed concerns raised in earlier studies about the debate on directors having too little impact on the educational development of young children because most of their time was spent away from children, working on managerial tasks (Halttunen, 2009; Hujala, Heikka, & Fonsén, 2009; Nivala, 1999; Karila, 2004). Participants noted that the work of the centre directors involved the reconciliation of competing aspects of leadership and management work, and this was a major frustration for both centre directors and teachers. This meant reorganising the allocation of managerial duties and thereby supporting directors to enact pedagogical leadership more efficiently.

The main factors inhibiting the distribution of leadership between centre directors and teachers were shown to be the cultural conceptions of the organisational roles of the stakeholders, qualifications and lack of support and resources. Having a pedagogically strong centre director was seen as a prerequisite for practice development, with the teachers having only a minor role in enacting pedagogical leadership. Efficient pedagogical improvement was not shown to be dependent only from sufficient information transferring from centre directors to teachers, rather, it was perceived as a shared construction of understandings and practice of pedagogy. Distribution of leadership responsibilities between teachers and centre directors could construct shared consciousness of the aims and strategies of pedagogical improvement by the processes which can enhance distributed cognition. Salomon (1993) addressed the relationship between individuals and distributed systems and concluded that participating in the practices which enable distributed cognition had an influence on an individuals' cognition. The relationship is reciprocal for an individual and it can also give something to the system. Applying this idea to the contexts of ECE, one could assume that teachers' active participation in the negotiation and planning processes of pedagogy could enhance their capacities for pedagogical improvement and bring relevant information about practice to the macro level leaders of ECE organisations.

Andrews (2009) states that leadership can be seen as a strategy for creating opportunities for learning, not as a source of solutions. Activities

of individual learning are community bounded and influenced by the social processes and resources available in the environment (Hatch & Gardner, 1993; Moll, Tapia, & Whitmore, 1993). Teachers were inclined to adopt leadership roles, but this activity was not coordinated to be parallel with macro level decisions and development programs implemented in the municipality. This activity should be investigated to foster development and evaluation of leadership among teachers, and would in turn assist in maintaining consistency of ECE practices in municipalities.

According to Karila (2008), in Finland, teacher professionalism is strongly shaped by contextual factors, including the enactment of national ECE policy statements. In this study, leadership seemed to be distributed through municipalities by the Finnish National Curriculum (STAKES, 2003). These macro level decisions constituted an anchor for the enactment of distributed leadership between the stakeholders. A deficiency of interdependence could, however, be seen when there was no designated pedagogical leader in a centre. Several studies (Firestone & Martinez, 2007; Harris, 2008; Mascall, Leithwood, Strauss, & Sacks, 2008; Muijs & Harris, 2007) indicate that functioning distributed leadership with teachers demands expertise, ongoing development of leadership, planning, trust and cooperation. Structures, shared vision and support from administrative staff have also been shown to be crucial. Structures for pedagogical leadership at the team level within centres could be promoted by making this the responsibility of the University qualified ECE teachers as can be seen in Australian ECE centres (Waniganayake et al., 2012). At the moment there is a debate going on in Finland of ECE teachers not having sufficient possibilities for using their pedagogical expertise within centres. In general, the multi-professional teams in ECE centres comprised an ECE teacher, and an upper secondary vocational qualified practical nurse with specialised knowledge of young children. The culture of teamwork has long been dominated by the idea that everybody does everything, emphasising equality of responsibility in pedagogy amongst the team members. However, in reality, pedagogical expertise within ECE centres rests mainly with the University qualified ECE teachers.

Conclusion

In Finnish ECE contexts, distributed pedagogical leadership could be understood as the interdependence between leadership enactments for the purposes of pedagogical improvement. The study suggests that focusing on the development of interdependencies between macro and micro level leadership enactments could eliminate deficiencies in pedagogical improvement identified by participants in this study.

The contextual perspective of leadership affords a productive framework for addressing leadership in ECE in Finnish municipalities. Distributed leadership perspective builds on this by suggesting that not only the *interactions* between the stakeholders but the *interdependence* between macro and micro leadership enactments are crucial in achieving pedagogically sound ECE programs.

Distributed pedagogical leadership could be understood as pedagogical development which involves capacity building of the whole system through creating a zone of interdependence between stakeholders involved in leadership enactment. The zone of interdependence created increases distributed cognition, responsibilities and functions between the stakeholders involved in leadership. It includes structures and tools which enable joint construction of the means and aims for pedagogical improvement. Establishing evaluation systems that monitor and assess the strategies of pedagogical leadership in ECE settings is crucial. Evaluation creates a platform for shared discussion of the developmental areas of pedagogy. These strategies also include support for centre directors to enact pedagogical improvement provided from the upper levels of the municipality. Encouraging teachers' participation in pedagogical leadership is crucial as teachers work closest to the enactment of pedagogy with young children and have the essential knowledge of ECE practice. Sharing responsibilities and actions with teachers in pedagogical leadership includes in addition to distributed cognition, coordinated action of development work within centres. Provision of suitable tools and guidance for the developmental processes within staff teams by the leaders is crucial. Designing the team composition by appointing designated teacher leaders specialised in ECE pedagogy is an essential structural starting point in enhancing distributed leadership within centres.

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Researching Leadership in Early Childhood Education focuses on leadership research in early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings in seven countries from different parts of the world: Australia, Azerbaijan, England, Finland, Norway, Taiwan and Trinidad and Tobago.

This publication emerged through conversations that began at the inaugural **International Leadership Research Forum** (ILRF) held in Finland in 2011. It introduces theoretical perspectives and the history of leadership research as well studies on management practices in different countries. This publication responds to the challenges of developing further research into early childhood leadership in a rapidly changing world where young children and families continue to gather at ECEC settings. Effective leadership from early childhood educators can make a difference in ensuring every child enjoys high quality ECEC programs that nurture their wellbeing and developmental potential to the fullest.

The international editing team comprised Dr. ***Eeva Hujala****, a Professor at University of Tampere, Finland; Dr.* ***Manjula Waniganayake****, an Associate Professor at Macquarie University, Australia and Dr.* ***Jillian Rodd****, an educational Consultant based in England.*

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