Studies in Educational Leadership

Volume 25

Leadership we know makes all the difference in success or failures of organizations. This series will bring together in a highly readable way the most recent insights in successful leadership. Emphasis will be placed on research focused on pre-collegiate educational organisations. Volumes should address issues related to leadership at all levels of the educational system and be written in a style accessible to scholars, educational practitioners and policy makers throughout the world. The volumes - monographs and edited volumes - should represent work from different parts in the world.

Please contact Astrid Noordermeer at Astrid.Noordermeer@springer.com if you wish to discuss a book proposal.

Charles F. Webber

Editor

Teacher Leadership in International Contexts

Editor
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Mount Royal University
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The *International Study of Teacher Leadership* (www.mru.ca/istl) began in 2018 at an invitational international research conference hosted by Dr. Wenji Fan and his colleagues in the Faculty of Education at Guangxi Normal University in Guilin, China. During the conference, several colleagues who had been co-researchers on previous international studies spent time discussing their mutual interest in the construct of teacher leadership. The colleagues agreed to form a core research team and, by the end of the conference, the team had formulated research questions and planned a six-stage study.

Over the next 4 years, the research team expanded its membership until it included representatives from Australia, Canada, China, Colombia, Mexico, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Tanzania, and Turkey, and more recently Morocco and Argentina. The co-researchers began their studies in their respective countries, maintaining their focus through ongoing synchronous videoconferences.

Early-stage ISTL reports were shared at a 2019 conference in Çesme, Turkey, hosted by Kadir Beycioglu, Ali Çağatay Kılınç, Serap Emil, Ahmet Su, and their colleagues with the Turkish Educational Administration Research and Development Association. Professor Beycioglu was one of the original research team members who gathered in Guilin in 2018. He had collaborated previously with several ISTL members on the *International Study of Principal Preparation.* Professor Beycioglu, in his role as Founding Editor of *Research in Educational Administration and Leadership*, also included a special journal issue, co-edited by Janet Mola Okoko, that featured the work of ISTL team members.

Although COVID-19 global pandemic restrictions made some parts of the research impossible from early 2020 until early 2022, the research team was able to adapt by using technology to conduct online interviews, observe online teacher meetings and professional development activities, and administer questionnaires. Our findings were shared during virtual conferences and seminars, due to the initia- tive of ISTL members such as Edith Cisneros-Cohernour, Pedro José Canto Herrera, and Gabriela Achach Sonda in Mexico; and by Jan Khumalo, Molly Fuller, Corné van der Vyver, and Jan Heystek in South Africa. As global health restrictions gradu- ally eased in 2022, other study stages became possible, such as case studies,

face-to-face interviews, and oral histories. We have returned to presenting our work at in-person conferences and publishing in academic journals.

In the meantime, this book shares some of what the ISTL team learned from its work that was conducted during difficult worldwide challenges. The book's appear- ance is testimony to the diligence of the ISTL research team, but it is important to note that Kadir Beycioglu was a major force behind our collective desire to produce this book. He planned to serve as co-editor and he began the initial exploration of publication possibilities. Then, Kadir and his family suffered two major blows. Tragically, they lost their young son in a traffic accident and Kadir was diagnosed with a severe illness. His declining health caused him to be unable to begin the edit- ing work that he was passionate about doing. He continued to stay in touch with all of us about the book and to offer encouragement right until he passed away in August 2021. Our international studies of teacher leadership would look very differ- ent without the vision and contributions of Professor Beycioglu.

Our ongoing international studies of teacher leadership are possible because of Wenji Fan's vision at the forefront of our planning, the impetus of Kadir Beycioglu, and the tireless research, analyses, and writing of all ISTL members. As with most well-functioning research teams, the ISTL is a collection of excellent scholars who also are friends.

In summary, this book articulates how the research team and study participants conceptualize teacher leadership and how they perceive it is manifested, or not, in Western and non-Western schools and educational systems. The chapter authors also share how the values, beliefs, and assumptions underpinning teacher leadership are reflective of culture and context. Part I describes who is interested in teacher leadership and why it has emerged as a relatively undefined yet influential factor in educational discourses in many nations. This section also describes how the purpose of the ISTL, and this book, is to contribute to the wider understanding of teacher leadership and of how professional developers might contribute to teacher leader- ship knowledge and skill development. Part II of the book highlights how important it is to contextualize descriptions of teacher leadership and the roles of teacher lead- ers. Factors such as social context, political frameworks, postcolonialism, and eco- nomic well-being determine the degree to which teacher leadership can be a consideration in educational governance, policy making, and leadership develop- ment. In Part III, readers are challenged to consider how traditional expectations for educators and the politics of leading may contribute to organizational homeostasis that frequently supports the status quo in education systems. This section of the book also describes schools and school systems as ecosystems in which some teach- ers and principals stand out because of their profiles as credible and trustworthy individuals. Such teacher leaders influence their communities more than most because of their self-awareness, altruism, and interpersonal acumen.

More to come.

Calgary, AB, Canada   Charles F. Webber
December 5, 2022

About the Editor

Charles F. Webber is a Professor in the Department of Education, Mount Royal University. He is a Teacher and Researcher who served the first half of his career as a classroom teacher and school principal in Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada. Following a move to higher education, he has held appointments as a Professor and Dean in Alberta and British Columbia, Canada. His teaching and research interests focus on teacher leadership, the principalship, student assessment, and higher education administration and leadership. He is Professor Emeritus with the University of Calgary in Canada and Buitengewone Professor with North-West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8093-5118 Email: cfwebber@mtroyal.ca

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Part I

Exploring Teacher Leadership

Chapter 1
Who Is Interested in Teacher Leadership and Why?

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Nicholas Wachira, and Jodi Nickel** ⓘ

Abstract This chapter addresses some of the significant gaps in knowledge about teacher leadership. First, the authors describe important attributes of teacher leaders and their motivations for exercising influence. The spheres of teacher leader influence and responsibilities are described, progressing from the need for individual self-reflection to the classroom and throughout the school. The widest level of influ- ence is on parents and the larger community. Further, the lens of teacher identity is used to examine the process by which teachers become leaders, along with the influ- ence of beliefs, values, and a sense of agency.

Next, the chapter will consider some of the influential voices and influences on teacher leadership dialogue. It describes how the term teacher leadership obscures nuances relevant to different international contexts. The argument is presented that there is an unintended but clearly discernible hegemonic dimension to our under- standing of teacher leadership. This will describe the terms in relation to implicit

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assumptions which may be competing and are perhaps primarily based in Western thought.

The chapter emphasizes the need for more context-centered interrogation of the discourse about teacher leadership, especially in relation to its cultural compatibility and sensitivity. Cultural, historical, economic, and political differences require understanding teacher leadership in global and local contexts. The chapter closes by briefly describing each of the chapters in the book and how they will address gaps in current understandings of teacher leadership.

Introduction

Teacher leadership is an educational term used widely in Western nations and often in other international settings. It is inherently an attractive term because it implies shared commitment to professional collaboration and to meeting the needs of learn- ers. Policy documents and professional development initiatives worldwide fre- quently reflect the assumption that teacher leadership is well understood. However, examination of educational policies and practices suggests that teacher leadership is not clearly defined nor is there a shared understanding in educational communities of how teacher leadership might be used or even if it should be used to improve teaching and learning. Further, Leithwood (2007) characterized teacher leadership as a movement rather than evidence-based practice. He suggested that the teacher leadership literature describes teacher leaders participating in duties that would be considered in most professions as normal responsibilities rather than leader- ship per se.

Teacher leadership may not be defined with clarity in the literature, but Nguyen et al. (2020, p. 67) provided a useful overview of "four common hallmarks of teacher leadership." They include teacher leaders as influencers, professional prac- tices based on collaboration and trust, leadership within classrooms and throughout school communities, and a focus on teaching, learning, and school effectiveness. Although not a definition per se, the four hallmarks provide a viable framework for discussing teacher leadership.

This chapter will draw upon the hallmarks provided by Nguyen et al. (2020) to discuss the spheres of influences for teacher leaders and how teacher identity shapes teacher leaders' influence within their schools and communities. This is followed by consideration of some of the influences on teacher leadership dialogue, how it may be dominated by Western thought, and argues that teacher leadership may require greater sensitivity to the local and global contexts that inform teacher leadership work. The chapter will close by explaining the information gaps this book seeks to address and by describing how the book chapters are intended to inform readers about how the construct of teacher leadership is understood in a wide range of sociocultural contexts (see Fig. 1.1).
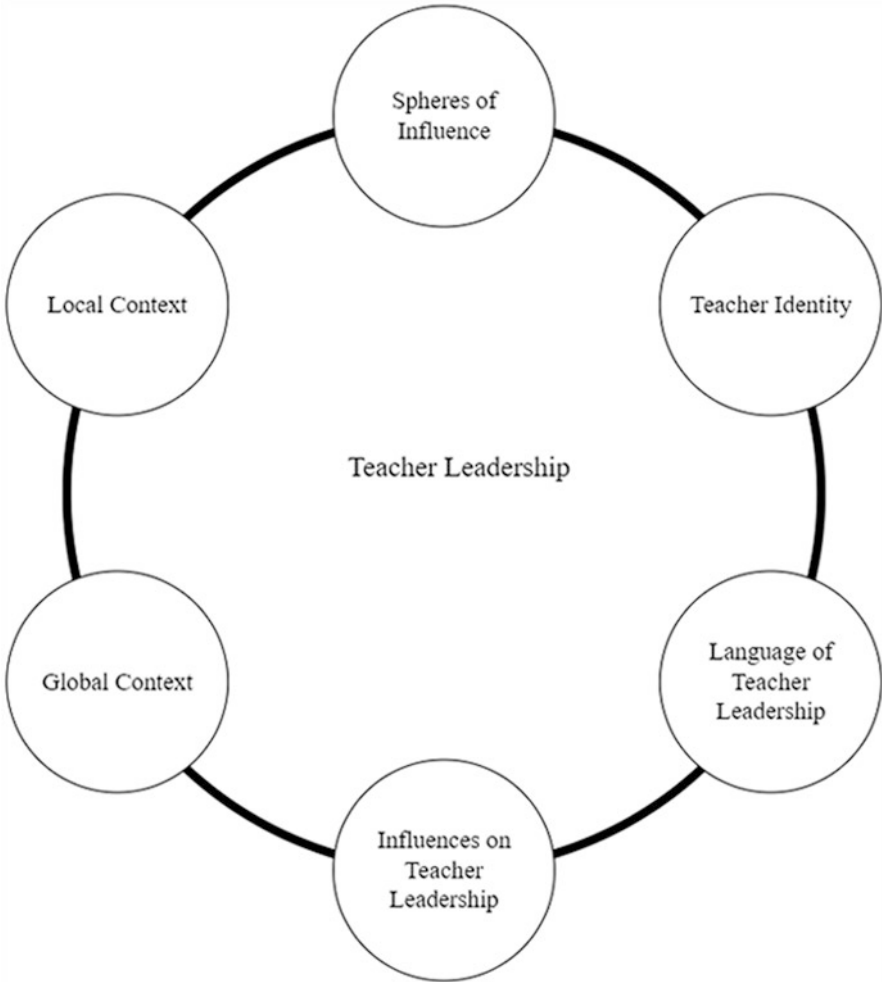
Fig. 1.1 Lens for viewing teacher leadership

Rationale for Studying Teacher Leadership

The significance of teachers in meeting the needs of complex learners has long been understood. For example, Hattie (2012), Leithwood et al. (2004), and Stronge (2010) all noted that teachers are the single most important factor in student suc- cess. Because of this, the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders are of great interest to all school community members with a stake in instructional improvement and student achievement.

For instance, as expectations have increased around the world for greater teacher accountability and increased student achievement, it is more crucial than ever that

teacher leaders facilitate school effectiveness and school improvement (Shen et al., 2020). They serve as classroom-based experts who also may be transformational leaders who wield influence with all school community partners: "administrators, policy makers, parents, and community leaders" (Berry, 2015, p. 147). They also act as change agents (Crowther et al., 2008) who facilitate school-wide instructional improvement and student achievement (Bond, 2011).

Whether teacher leaders exercise influence in formal or informal roles is dis- cussed in detail in the literature (see Campbell et al., 2015; Crowther, 2011). However, Poekert et al. (2016) suggested that the distinction between formal and informal leadership roles is less important than the credibility of teacher leaders with other school community members. According to Poekert et al. (2016) credibil- ity is enhanced when professional trust is established, and strong relationships are maintained with peers and school administrators. As Crowther et al. (2008) noted, teacher leaders often have strong personalities but Bond (2011) emphasized that they also must have high levels of awareness of self, others, school culture, and effective teaching.

Baum and Krulwich (2016) cautioned that it can be difficult to hire individuals with teacher leader expertise. Therefore, they advised administrators and teacher colleagues to strive to identify "high-potential teachers" (p. 64) who demonstrate understanding of both child and adult development early in their careers and then to mentor them and to invite them to engage in leadership development activities. Early identification and mentoring can enhance what Zepeda et al. (2013) described as teacher leader acumen.

Crowther et al. (2008) cautioned that teacher leadership must be voluntary. So why do teacher leaders strive to serve their communities? Bond (2011) suggested that teacher leaders simply care deeply about their students and their schools. Zepeda et al. (2013) concurred and described the strong commitment and sense of professionalism exhibited by teacher leaders. Another motivation for teacher lead- ers may be that they find their service a professionally exhilarating experience (Crowther et al., 2008).

However, teacher leaders also may be motivated by their need for professional self-care. That is, they may wish to avoid professional isolation (Bond, 2011) and to ameliorate stagnation (Zepeda et al., 2013). Teacher leaders may see engagement with school improvement initiatives as professional growth which leads to changes in how they perceive themselves (Poekert et al., 2016). In turn, successful teacher leadership experiences can enhance interest in advancing to more formal leadership positions (Zepeda et al., 2013). Bond (2011) even encouraged teacher educators to prepare teacher candidates for teacher leadership during pre-service degree programs. Teachers are central to the achievement of educational goals. Poekert (2012) described the movement within the United States to create teacher leadership posi- tions as part of school reform initiatives. The intent of mandating the appointment of teacher leaders is to promote professional development within schools and to establish communities of practice. That is, the goal is to use teacher leadership to promote school improvement. Frost (2010) wrote that teacher leadership is a

construct that can be used as the basis for innovation in education. Moreover, facilitating positive teacher engagement in decision making with their colleagues, students, and parents has the potential to increase job satisfaction significantly (Nyamubi, 2017).

Spheres of Influence

If teacher leaders are classroom-based while also being perceived as influencing practices and policies in their school communities then Fig. 1.2 depicts their spheres of influence and responsibility.

First, in their pursuit of professional growth, it is important that teacher leaders engage in critical reflection of their professional practices and challenge the assumptions and beliefs that they and colleagues may hold (Steffy & Wolfe, 2001). Engaging in introspection occurs for teachers at all career stages through interac- tions with the people and events within their environments (Bandura, 1995). Ideally, professional learning for early-career teachers is facilitated by mentors who provide observation, performance feedback, and follow-up support (Vygotsky, 1978). As their self-understanding and self-efficacy evolves, teacher leaders develop their ability to predict the outcomes of their work with their students (Bandura, 1995).

Second, as teacher leaders engage in transformative learning about themselves as professionals (Mezirow, 1991), they embrace the complexities of facilitating learning among the students in their classrooms. Teacher leaders exhibit high levels of self-efficacy in terms of their capacity to improve student learning (Eun, 2019). Self-efficacy may emerge from professional development that mobilizes teachers' capacity to lead innovation in classroom teaching that improves the learning of

Fig. 1.2 Spheres of teacher leader influence and responsibilities
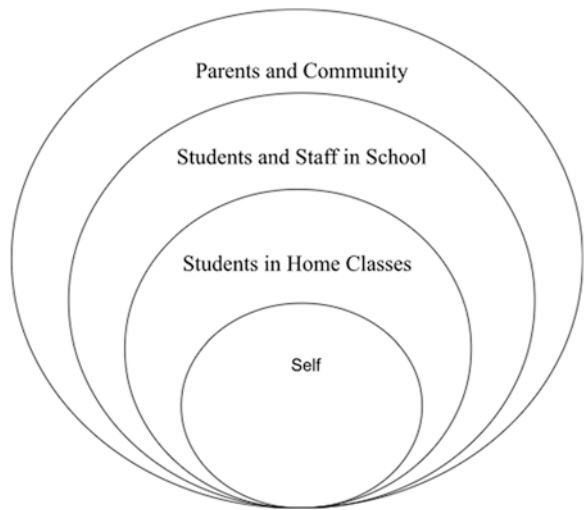
students (Eun, 2019; Frost, 2012). We know that teachers from most cultures enter their profession because they seek to contribute to society by facilitating learning by young people (Butler, 2017). However, they must master the challenging conditions associated with optimizing student learning. The conditions include classroom management that focuses and paces learning, provision of criteria for success and examples of student work that meets the criteria, establishing advance organizers, and using problem-based learning (Hattie & Zierer, 2017). The influence of teachers on their students' learning is predicated upon strong teacher subject matter knowl- edge. That is, teachers who become leaders in their school communities know and understand what they teach while establishing powerful relationships with their students that allow them to learn in a context of safety and trust. Another major factor for teacher leader success in their own classrooms is their passion for what they teach, who they teach, and their profession (Hattie & Zierer, 2019).

Third, teacher leaders feel obliged to serve the interests of students and col- leagues throughout their schools (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015). They model pro- fessional commitment, they share ideas and resources with colleagues throughout their schools, and they coach and collaborate with colleagues in the use of new curricula and materials. Teacher leaders' visibility in their school communities causes others to identify them as leaders because of their willingness to learn, risk, and advocate (Gonzales & Lambert, 2001). Sinha and Hanuscin (2017) suggested that teachers expand their perceptions of themselves as teacher leaders as they gain experience as influencers in their school communities.

The fourth sphere of influence and responsibility for teacher leaders is with par- ents and the larger community. Zepeda et al. (2013) posited that "Perhaps the most important relationship that a school can forge is with parents" (p. 44). They noted that having parents as allies supports student learning, develops joint problem- solving capacity, and informs decisions about learners. Berry et al. (2010) high- lighted the central role of establishing trust with parents in fostering student achievement. Frost (2011) also emphasized the importance of parents' voices in cre- ating an environment of inclusion of ethnic minority learners in schools. In stark contrast, Ottmann (2009) highlighted the ongoing trauma experienced in Indigenous communities in Canada because of the odious history of the removal of children from parents and their placement in residential schools which clearly operated in direct contravention to the goal of fostering collaborative parent-teacher relationships.

Teacher Identity

Teacher identity is an important lens to understand the process of becoming a teacher leader because it involves teachers' personal and professional experiences, as well as their interactions with all members of their communities (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). Further, this iterative process is also strongly influenced by con- text (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Wilkins, 2020) in which social expectations of teachers' roles (Osmond-Johnson, 2019), plus the social image and the prestige

associated with the teaching profession in each culture play an important role (Marcelo & Vaillant, 2009). Thus, the understanding of teacher leadership is a social construct informed by societal perceptions and cultural and organizational charac- teristics of the school (Coronel, 2005).

Definitions of teacher identity typically include teachers' self-efficacy, motiva- tion, collegial and pedagogical relationships, and approaches for negotiating exter- nal expectations (Anspal et al., 2019; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Hong, 2010; Izadinia, 2013). Teacher identity often results from teachers' increased confidence that is derived from peers' acknowledgment of their capabilities and from their feedback (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017). Hence, teacher identity is related to not only with how teachers perceive themselves, but also with how others perceive them in their profession (Gee, 2000; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018; Vähäsantanen, 2015). The more a teacher leader identifies with the profession of teaching, the more their behaviors will be consistent with professional norms and values (Lamote & Engels, 2010; Passmore & Prescott, 2020).

Teacher leaders construct their leadership beliefs and values "from their deeply held assumptions, their prior experiences, and their current engagement with com- pelling issues and collegial interactions" (Gonzales & Lambert, 2001, p. 9). At the core of those beliefs is the profound conviction that teaching transforms lives and that it cannot be reduced to a set of competencies (Bernal et al., 2013). Teacher lead- ers possess strong moral and ethical commitments to make a difference in students' lives (Pennac, 2008) and to advocate for issues of social justice. Bernal and Ibarrola (2015) stated that teacher leaders seek professional development opportunities to enrich their pedagogical repertoire to boost students' potential. They added that clarity about their mission helps teacher leaders to interpret "social expectations and demands of their teaching activity" (p. 67).

Teacher leaders have a strong sense of mission that enables them to become involved in institutional matters and to promote a collaborative culture. Visone (2020) observed that teacher leaders' agency allowed them to "move collective pedagogy forward" (p. 17). According to Buchanan (2015), professional agency and professional identity are intertwined and continuously developed. Teacher lead- ers align their actions with their professional identities and the school's professional environment.

There are additional forces that motivate teacher leaders. Margolis and Deuel (2009) described intrinsic motivations, such as the desire to transform professional practices and extrinsic motivations like financial rewards, peer recognition, or career advancement. Identity may vary depending upon teachers' career stages. Teachers in the early stages of their careers may become leaders because they begin valuing learning with adults, which leads them to join or create teams to advance collective endeavors (Margolis & Deuel, 2009). As teachers progress in their teaching careers, they find dynamic and productive ways to influence members of their communities (Aderet-German et al., 2019). Teacher identity is also adaptive and is influenced by teachers' capacity to learn, their maturity, and their feeling of safety. Fairman and Mackenzie (2015) indicated that teacher leadership is an "interactive and ongoing process" (p. 81) that changes, as do the individuals who are part of that process.

Teachers who assume roles as leaders may also manifest multiple identities depending on their circumstances and the people with whom they interact: students, peers, administrative staff, principals, and others external to the school. Day (2018) stated that teachers' professional identity involves emotional control that helps them to "navigate the complex, sometimes conflictual, worlds of classroom and staff- room, learning and teaching, and external expectations and demands" (p. 64). Iranzo-García et al. (2020) added that leadership necessitates solid communication skills and personal traits such as empathy and assertiveness.

In the Taiwanese context, Chien (2018) observed that teacher leaders perceive themselves as focusing on modeling instructional innovations and collaborating with colleagues rather than seeking formal positional appointments. However, teacher identity may evolve as teachers progress through the career stages that Steffy and Wolfe (2001) identified, i.e., novice, apprentice, professional, expert, distinguished, and emeritus phases. Within each career stage teacher identity dif- fers, potentially due to how they position themselves within their school communi- ties, and their self-images (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017).

Bandura (1995) observed that teacher-leaders' levels of self-efficacy fluctuate because of their successes as leaders and advocates. High levels of self-efficacy may lead to success but also can lead to teacher leaders sometimes being the recipients of "derision, condemnation and persecution, even though societies eventually ben- efit from their persevering efforts" (Bandura, 1995, p. 1). Bezzina and Bufalino (2019) also cautioned that working as a teacher leader within a hierarchical school system may produce tensions, which underscores the importance of nurturing pro- ductive relationships with others in school communities. Roby (2011) concurred that teacher leaders require resilience to ameliorate teacher isolation and improve school culture.

The Language of Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership is a construct that has attained a high profile among educators and policy makers, particularly in Western countries. It was described by Lambert (2003, p. 425) as "reciprocal, purposeful learning in a community" and as a respon- sibility of all members of a school. In fact, Lambert (2003) posited that all teachers are leaders. Harris (2003) suggested that not all teachers necessarily are leaders but, rather, they can choose to engage in collective leadership. She argued that our understanding of teacher leadership is enhanced by distributed leadership theory that identifies leadership as shared among interdependent members of a school staff. Wenner and Campbell (2017) defined teacher leadership as "teachers who maintain K-12 classroom-based teaching responsibilities, while also taking on leadership responsibilities outside of the classroom" (p. 139). A broader perspective was offered by Frost et al. (2018) who defined teacher leader as any adult, regardless of role, exercising leadership in a school while working in an educational capacity. York-Barr and Duke (2004) observed that many of the reports about teacher

leadership do not define it clearly, although they noted the strong focus of teacher leadership on improving teaching and learning.

Teacher leadership has been linked to other descriptors such as instructional leadership (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Pellicer and Anderson (1995) offered the perspective that effective instructional leadership is premised on teachers assuming the major responsibility for instructional leadership while working collaboratively with principals. The perspective that teacher leaders can and should be responsible for instructional leadership is consistent with York-Barr and Duke's (2004) observation that a key attribute of teacher leadership is a focus on improving teaching and learning. The suggestion that principals and teachers ought to collaborate is also consistent with the term parallel leadership offered by Crowther (2002) which he said needs to be based on mutualism, i.e., shared trust and respect, that underpins a shared purpose and pedagogical development.

Murphy (2005) connected teacher leadership to school improvement by high- lighting it as an alternative to the traditional formal leadership role of principals. He noted that it facilitates a shift from hierarchical leadership and enhances the capac- ity of schools to change and to respond to reform initiatives. Murphy (2005) empha- sized that teacher leadership is dependent upon the willingness of formal school leaders to share power and decision making with their teacher colleagues.

Much of the teacher leadership literature has been authored by Western research- ers based in the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. However, there has been a recent surge of calls for cross-cultural examination of teacher lead- ership. Schott et al. (2020) called for cross-cultural research after conducting an extensive review of theoretical and empirical publications focusing on teacher lead- ership. Nguyen et al. (2020) also noted that their review focused on publications in English and missed what they described as "a hidden literature concerning teacher leadership written in other languages" (p. 72).

The dearth of information about teacher leadership in non-Western contexts con- stitutes a dominance of Western thought and the relative absence of research and policies that exist in other contexts. This underscores Hallinger's (2018) contention that leadership of all types should be explored in relation to institutional, commu- nity, cultural, economic, political, and school improvement contexts. Insufficient consideration of context can result in inappropriate cross-cultural borrowing of edu- cational constructs and lead to the failure of teacher leadership to enhance localized educational practices. This may be particularly important in emerging democracies intent on nurturing strong educational systems and challenging the dominance of external perspectives.

Additional research about manifestations of teacher leadership in non-Western countries may highlight how teachers enact leadership without the language of teacher leadership drawn from current literature. For example, Machumu and Kaitila (2014) and Nyamubi (2017) described how job satisfaction in Tanzania is fostered by democratic leadership styles of headteachers, support for professional development, and engagement with school communities, including parents, stu- dents, and community members. Even though the reports from Tanzania do not use the term teacher leadership, features of teacher leadership may be evident in some

schools. Similar observations are emerging from Spanish-speaking countries such as Colombia, Mexico, and Spain (Fierro-Evans & Fortoul-Ollivier, 2021; Pineda- Báez, 2021).

Examining teacher leadership in context may lead to more informed use of the construct and, based on House's (1986) description of mutual adaptation, facilitate the reformulation of teacher leadership to better fit local social, cultural, and political contexts. In fact, teacher leadership may evolve in ways that conflict with how the term is understood in Western countries. Schott et al. (2020) described the importance of understanding teachership in context and also across cultures in order to strengthen understandings of what antecedents facilitate teacher influence within school communities. It will be important to guard against tensions among the understandings of international researchers, practitioners, and policy makers that would limit their capacity to learn from one another. This would constitute a missed opportunity to enact contextualized teacher leadership intended to improve teaching and learning.

Influences on Teacher Leadership

To explore the dimensions of teacher leadership thoroughly it is useful to consider the purposes of education as they are understood by organizations, policy makers, and researchers in different contexts. For example, UNESCO (2016) stated that education is a basic human right and a public good. The OECD (2019) emphasized the need for students to develop the knowledge and skills adequate for them to live meaningful, responsible lives while contributing to their societies. A related pur- pose of education is to support a thriving society (Webber & Scott, 2012, p. 45) that "respects differences in ability, culture, language, religion, and gender." One goal of the Global Partnership for Education (2020) is to allow children access to education during periods of conflict and disaster so they can experience a sense of normalcy and develop resilience. In Colombia the government has indicated its intent to facilitate ethical values and capacity to reduce inequity and promote national peace and economic prosperity (World Bank, 2015). Evident in some nations' educational statements is the influence of UNESCO (2016) which is a significant contributor to educational funding in those countries.

Teachers' unions are organizations that may both support and obstruct teacher leadership. There have been calls for teacher unions to support their members' contributions toward improving the quality of teaching and learning, and their service as proponents of egalitarian schooling (Moe, 2016; Poole, 2000). National and regional contexts vary widely but union leaders in countries like Canada find it dif- ficult to promote the value of high-quality public education while also addressing the short and long-term educational interests of teachers (Poole, 2000). In the con- text of the United States, there is a similar responsibility of union leaders to lobby for improvements to "wages, benefits, working conditions, and job security" (Moe, 2016, p. 272), sometimes at the cost of accountability for high-quality teaching and

learning. Student assessment initiatives that reveal good and poor teaching may invite school choice that "empowers poor and minority students, who are often trapped in the nation's worst schools" (Moe, 2016, p. 44) but leave remaining teach- ers and students languishing with insufficient support.

It is estimated that teachers' unions in South Africa control approximately one- third of schools in that country (Mahlangu, 2019). This leads to teacher recruitment and selection being the result of the "buying and selling of posts" (p. 115) which, in turn, determines who exercises influence as teacher leaders and how they lead. Alternatively, an OECD report about education systems in Latin America (Radinger et al., 2018) noted that teacher unions contribute in proactive, constructive ways to professional learning, career development, and policy development and implemen- tation. Bruns and Luque (2015) offered a counter view that teachers' unions in Latin America are most concerned with protection of job stability and with resisting teacher performance evaluation. The wide variance across contexts in perceptions of teachers' unions on teacher leadership is demonstrated by Bangs and MacBeath's (2012) summary of the positive contributions by unions in North America to profes- sional learning and teacher leadership. They also described that some high- performing countries have strong teacher unions, e.g., Finland, Japan, and Australia. It is in the interest of all educational stakeholders to facilitate the complex work of teacher leaders which can be fraught with political challenges such as competing demands among school community members, relationship tensions with other teachers, and demands on personal time (Zepeda et al., 2013).

Teacher leaders operate in the context of the macro and micro politics of school- ing. Within the larger school community, teacher leaders need to be aware of the ongoing debates among proponents and critics of progressive education (e.g., Edmondson, 2006; Sadovnik et al., 2017; Schutz, 2011). They also should be aware of the influence of globalization and its critics (e.g., Lyons, 2020). Teacher leaders will be subject to discourses that utilize or weaponize words like neoliberalism, privatization, humanism, decolonization, and more. Heated debates about important topics such as racial violence, poverty, and LGBTQS concerns will continue to be part of the political sphere within which teacher leaders work. Similarly, the mic- ropolitics of schools – teacher collaboration, pedagogical perspectives, budgetary constraints, and more (Blase, 1991) – will determine to a large extent how teacher leaders exercise influence and how successful they can be in improving teaching and learning. As a result, teacher leaders must be skilled at ameliorating the demoni- zation of the views of others and at seeking common understandings that facilitate cohesion and the common good.

The challenges of contemporary schools have increased the relevance of teachers as leaders. Legacies of colonial eras persist in nations as diverse as Cameroon (Ndille, 2021), Pakistan (Jabeen, 2020), Greenland and Australia (McLisky, 2017), Colombia (Murillo, 2009), and Canada (Ottmann, 2009). As a result, teachers have become leaders in decolonization initiatives intended to reshape school structures and curricula. At the same time, teacher leaders must navigate the intersections among race, same sex-sexuality, faith, and school (Carlile, 2020; Francis, 2021).

Other potentially divisive topics such as climate change (Lombardi & Sinatra, 2013) and the unique learning needs of the children of refugees seeking escape from civil unrest and poverty (Başaran, 2021) increase the demands on teacher leaders to manifest social and political acumen, plus the skills of collaboration and reflection (Bond, 2011). They must exercise such attributes while functioning effectively in teams (Crowther et al., 2008) and maintaining a focus on student learning (Bond, 2011).

The social and economic factors that Hallinger (2018) described influence the capacity of individual teachers to exercise leadership. For example, Mbepera (2017), in her description of leadership in rural schools in Tanzania, described how gender discrimination may be evident in schools because women lack sufficient support from their organizations and their larger societies. Besides gender-related consider- ations, social instability due to migration of refugees escaping war zones changes how teachers manifest leadership. For example, in Turkey teachers find they need to direct their efforts toward supporting Syrian students' literacy development, com- munication with families whose members do not speak Turkish, and children's sense of safety and belonging (Gokce & Acar, 2018). Further, economic factors shape the focus of teacher leaders' work. Cisneros-Cohernour (2021) described how poverty in the context of one state in Mexico is a determinant of slow progress in schools, possibly due to insufficient access to health services, adequate housing, and even enough food.

Clearly gender-related disparities, social upheaval, and socioeconomic differ- ences influence the capacity of teacher leaders to be influencers in their school com- munities. As a result, policy makers can place unrealistic expectations on educational personnel to solve social problems. Hooge et al. (2011, p. 298) described this phe- nomenon as "educationalisation" which is the result of a reasonable desire to see students access educational opportunities and to achieve well. However, the expec- tation that schools will address social and economic problems expands the mandate of school personnel beyond the formal curriculum. The result can be polarized debate about the role of teachers among policy makers, community members, and unions. Mahlangu (2019) outlined the struggle in South Africa among government regulatory agencies, unions, and members of the public about the roles and respon- sibilities of teachers. Hossain and Hickey (2019) and the OECD (2020) noted the close relationship between quality education and economic growth but also described how political factors also play a significant role in a nation's economy.

The discourse about teacher leadership in different cultural contexts reflects a wide range of interests. For example, the OECD (2012) supports the work of teach- ers as a tool for addressing poverty and economic well-being in developing coun- tries. Statistics Canada (2012) data underscore the strong connection between education levels and employment, which supports the voices of those who support education for the purpose of employment. The World Bank and UNESCO are prom- inent voices in developing countries that exercise power and influence by funding initiatives that are intended to ameliorate the impacts of low incomes, natural disas- ters, and social upheaval. Unfortunately, dependency upon aid funding for

education in Tanzania is perceived by some to result in unreliable and unsustainable educational practices (Mgaiwa, 2018).

It is evident in the literature that there is a plethora of strong voices contributing to the discussion of teacher leadership. The dialogue can be confrontational and highly politicized, but it also can be mutually respectful. Hardman et al. (2015), who described teacher development in Tanzania, suggested that positive profes- sional learning and effective development of teachers' capacity to improve teaching and learning should be based on collaboration among all stakeholders in the educa- tion system, including teachers, government personnel, and teacher educators, for example. In this way, shared goals can emerge from dialogue even when they are based in part on competing voices.

Global Context

Teacher leadership can be viewed from both a global perspective and a local per- spective. At the global level, teachers in many contexts practice their profession in the context of uncertainty and continuous change. Hallinger and Bryant (2013) noted the decades-long period of educational reform throughout the world. For instance, they described educational reforms in Thailand in response to evolving social and economic conditions, but with an accompanying slow adoption by teach- ers of changes to teaching practices. The reluctance of teachers to try more student- centered teaching practices may be the result of budget restrictions, political instability, and a lack of coherence between proposed reforms and the values of local cultures.

Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2008) provided parallel perspectives in the context of the United States where teachers often perceive ongoing reform initiatives as disconnected from local challenges. They described how professional learning net- works can expand teachers' capacity to lead and implement changes in practices. However, Lieberman and Pointer Mace (2008) also cautioned that effective profes- sional learning must be planned, deliberate, and ongoing. They observed that the challenges for teacher leaders can be addressed in part through online teaching communities that will help educators meet the challenges and opportunities of a rapidly changing global society.

Unexpected global events also can impact how teacher leaders learn and grow professionally. The COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 led to almost immedi- ate dramatic changes to how teachers work with students. Hill et al. (2020) shared how teachers in British Columbia, Canada, pivoted from face-to-face instruction in schools to online teaching and learning, with accompanying expectations for teach- ers to engage in community outreach in the form of telephone and in-person but socially distanced communication. As a result, teachers in British Columbia devel- oped new instructional strategies that align with remote learning and modified their professional practices within a context of heightened uncertainty and complexity.

Concurrent with pandemic-related restrictions to global travel and migration, political events have triggered changes to what students need to be educated and to the skills and knowledge that teachers need to be effective. Horsford (2018) shared her views of how the Trump presidency introduced widespread uncertainty through the United States and internationally. She underscored the responsibility of teachers to lead and to advocate for safe, supportive learning environments. Political instabil- ity in other nations such as Brazil has reduced the focus in that country on educa- tional matters and the need for more schools, impacting the role of teachers (Chagas-Bastos, 2019). In Tanzania, recent government policies have increased access to primary education, but with insufficient attention to secondary and tertiary education, and a concurrent change from English to Kiswahili as the language of instruction in primary schools and an intention to do the same in secondary schools (Anyimadu, 2016).

Teachers in international settings also grapple with the impact on learners of forced migration and political unrest (Alzaroo & Lewando Hunt, 2003). For exam- ple, Rose (2019) described how teachers' belief in their power to facilitate the learn- ing of refugee students in New South Wales, Australia, was evidenced by innovation and entrepreneurship and the "willingness to take charge and act" (p. 85). Wong and Moorhouse (2020) described a similarly enhanced commitment to teaching and learning by teachers of students in Hong Kong who were impacted by the "COVID-19 pandemic and the 2019 Hong Kong protests" (p. 650). According to Greaves et al. (2021), who reported the experiences of Syrian refugee teachers in Lebanon, professional development that focuses on best practices related to teach- ing in times of crisis can enhance teacher leadership. Importantly, teachers who emerge as leaders in difficult circumstances are open to new ideas and manifest the ability to work independently. They also manage to accumulate detailed knowledge of the lived experiences of their students. Aydin and Kaya's (2019) findings related to the ability of Turkish teachers to support students who are Syrian refugees cor- roborate the importance of professional development and a rich understanding of "the refugee journey" (p. 64). It appears that teacher leaders strive to manifest resil- ience, creativity, and professionalism despite challenging conditions imposed by social unrest and forced migration.

The strategies associated with teacher leadership are consistent with Doney's (2013) finding, in an American context, that teacher resilience is associated with an understanding that their professional identity is an evolving construct and that nur- turing relational connections is important. The strategies are parallel to Beutel et al.'s (2019) findings in eastern Australia that teacher resilience is enhanced when a strong support system is developed and that resilience is enhanced when teachers are able to distinguish between attributes within their environment that they can change and things that they cannot.

Local Context

An understanding of global influences on teacher leadership can inform practitioners and teacher educators but equally important is an understanding of the complexities of local school communities. Goddard (2010) argued for the need for educational leaders to integrate their understandings of global and local perspectives. He noted that in many countries Indigenous and rural residents have migrated to urban areas. The result, according to Goddard, is an evolving population in urban schools that is more diverse and multiethnic than ever before.

Ødegaard (2016) suggested the need for the "glocal teacher" (p. 55) who under- stands the needs of learners from a pluralistic, heterogeneous perspective while also attending to the "local, situated and culture-sensitive" (p. 55). The work of a glocal teacher may be challenging, particularly in an era when new technologies allow learners to cross the boundaries of time and space in the context of the knowledge society (Trippestad & Huang, 2016). In fact, even very young learners may develop a sense of membership in virtual communities that go far beyond venues determined by geography or by traditional parent and teacher safety considerations (Reich et al., 2014).

Luciak (2010) noted that societal diversity is a long-standing consideration for educators but one that continues to evolve. For example, teachers must collaborate with one another and school community members to determine how to balance the dominant language and culture with the cultural differences represented by stu- dents. In addition to the cultural, linguistic, and religious diversity among learners, educators continue to address socioeconomic, gender, sexual orientation, and other factors that influence identity (Luciak, 2010).

The processes of reconciliation and decolonization are evident in numerous parts of the world. Teachers in Alberta, Canada, are required to demonstrate competence in "applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit" (Alberta Education, 2020, p. 5). Schools in South Africa seek to ameliorate the long-lasting effects of apartheid and to understand students who appear to discard "homoge- neous identities for an unfixed and inclusive 'South African' identity" (Vandeyar, 2008, p. 296). In Botswana, Pansiri and Majwabe (2020) noted that country's failure to decolonize its education system with the result that it has not escaped its cultural and historical hegemonies.

It is clear that local school communities are anything but entirely local in struc- ture, sociocultural composition, or pedagogical approaches. Teacher leaders face the daunting challenge of honoring or even challenging local histories and values while navigating legal, policy, and curricular frameworks that may have their ori- gins situated in other times and places. While formal leaders are expected to work closely with other schools and with local community members, teachers are encour- aged to work within a distributed leadership model that strives to improve teaching and learning (OECD, 2012).

Conclusion

This chapter offers a rationale for studying teacher leadership, the spheres of influence for teacher leaders, and the teacher identity that informs their values, beliefs, and sense of agency. Next, the language of teacher leadership was profiled with a particular focus on non-Western voices and on the variety of influences upon teacher leaders. Global and local factors shaping teacher leadership were summarized.

This chapter offers a lens for studying teacher leadership within the hallmarks provided by Nguyen et al. (2020). That is, the parameters of influence, collaboration and trust, leadership within and beyond the classroom, and a focus on teaching and learning were used as the base for viewing teacher leadership. Then, teacher leadership was analyzed vis-à-vis relevant factors observed in the educational literature. Consideration was given to who is interested in teacher leadership and why. The professional identity of educators who fit the hallmarks was explored in relation to their development as leaders, their values and beliefs, and their sense of agency. The language of teacher leadership was profiled in relation to the voices that exercise control of the teacher leadership narrative.

Readers are invited to apply the lens shared in this chapter to the following chap- ters in this book which is intended to fill some of the gaps in understanding of teacher leadership across organizational and cultural contexts. The chapters high- light some of the implicit meanings and competing assumptions about teacher lead- ership that may contribute to confusion in school communities, particularly where the concept is applied outside of its original Western contexts.

To conclude, this book is intended to foster awareness of how teacher leadership is conceptualized and manifested differently across sociocultural conditions. Chapter authors have provided contextualized reports of teacher leadership in North American, European, African, Asian, Latin-American, and Australasian settings. Their goal is to contribute to the wider understanding of teacher leadership and of how professional development and university programs might contribute to effec- tive school leadership.

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