

Global Perspectives of Educational Leadership: The English Context

David Godfrey, Lecturer in Education, Leadership and Management
david.godfrey@ucl.ac.uk

Overview

- Prominent definitions of leadership
- Culturally bound elements
- Empirical research:
 1. Review of leadership landscape (Earley et al, 2012)
 2. Pedagogical leadership (Male & Palaiologou, 2015).
 3. Distributed leadership (Bush and Glover, 2012)

Prominent notions of leadership in England

- Distributed leadership (constrained)
- Evidence-based leadership
- Leadership focused on 'learning'
- System leadership

Culturally-bound aspects



The hard 'Anglo-Saxon' approach – autonomy, choice, competition, with multiple layers of accountability

Structural and institutional reforms



These dictate evidence-informed leadership, system leadership and DL

Review of leadership landscape (Earley et al, 2012)

Since 2010:

- Academies
- Teaching Schools
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Qualifications
- Funding
- Accountability framework

Focus of Study

- Survey of school leaders
- Qualitative data from case studies, telephone interviews and focus groups
- How school leaders used their time
- Implications for the reformed National College for School Leadership (NCSL)

Findings/conclusions

- balancing act between strategic issues and operational demands, especially those caused by government imposed changes

Pedagogical leadership (Male & Palaologou, 2015)

Focus:

- Pedagogical leadership in the English context
- Interviews with headteachers in Early Years, Primary and Secondary schools

Findings and conclusions

Narrow conception of pedagogy dominated in terms of academically focused 'teaching and learning'

Distributed leadership (Bush and Glover, 2012)

Focus:

- DL in Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) in a re-shaped institutional landscape. Looking at High Performing SLTs (HPSLTs)
- Primary, Secondary and Special School phases in England in 2010.
- Observation of an SLT meeting at each school; interviews with several SLT members, a middle leader, a teacher, a support staff and chair of the governing body. Document analysis of SLT policy

Findings

Four characteristics of HPSLTs in secondary schools:

- To recruit on the basis that being a good teacher was the first important consideration.
- ‘Grow your own’ policy
- Sharing the school vision was a key principle in appointment
- Having the right personal characteristics

Conclusions

- Delegation rather than shared decision-making at some schools
- Meetings were essential for building trust
- Balance between solo and DL

Overall issues

Rapid changes in England: towards what end?

Thank you

- Questions?

References:

Bush, T., & Glover, D. (2012). Distributed leadership in action: Leading high-performing leadership teams in English schools. *School leadership & management*, 32(1), 21-36

Earley, P., Higham, R., Allen, R., Allen, T., Howson, J., Nelson, R., Rawal, S., Lynch, S., Morton, L., Mehta, P. and Sims, D., 2012. Review of the school leadership landscape. NCSL.

Male, T., & Palaiologou, I. (2015). Pedagogical leadership in the 21st century: Evidence from the field. *Educational Management, Administration and Leadership.*, 43, 214–231