# International Studies in Educational Administration

Journal of the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration & Management



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Institutions, Commonwealth	£150
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## International Studies in Educational Administration (ISEA)

An official publication of the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management (CCEAM)

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#### ISSN 1324-1702

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## Instructional Leadership in Germany: An **Evolutionary Perspective**

Stefan Geißler, Brauckmann, **Tobias** Feldhoff and Gert **Petros Pashiardis** 

**Abstract:** Comparative studies on school leadership so far provide little information on the national contexts underlying school principals' actions. Framing school leadership in this sense includes the underlying legal framework (setting) and the structure of its regulations, as well as state-organised support systems (e.g. qualification and training programmes) aiming to empower school leaders to do what they are supposed to do. Stemming from the above, the guiding question of our approach is as follows: In what way does the German policy-related context frame and shape the understanding, roles and meaning of instructional leadership from an historical perspective? In order to answer this question, this article focuses on how the historical understanding of leading pedagogical and instructional development processes, of the legal framework as well of as the empirical findings of the German research literature on instructional leadership contributes to the variety of German contexts and prerequisites for the use and understanding of instructional leadership. It outlines the importance of examining instructional leadership in the context of broader political and cultural debates within national school systems.

Keywords: Leadership activities, accountability, pedagogical autonomy, contextual factors, empirical perspective, German education system, educational history.

## Why Does Instructional Leadership Still Matter?

Across the world, educational systems are not only deeply rooted in national traditions and characterised by specific national features, but are also affected by global economic, social and cultural changes that impact the role, understanding and meaning of educational leadership. Such (inter-)national changes strengthen the need for school leaders to learn more about malleable and non-malleable factors of their national education systems (Brauckmann & Pashiardis 2016). Reforms strengthening the role of educational leadership with regards to school quality assurance and development have generally been imposed on schools via a top-down legislative process (Eurydice European Unit 2007). Whatever the chosen model – be it through general education legislation, specific legislation or more flexible regulation - reforms include provisions for the transfer of duties affecting teachers' and principals' professionalism. Although policy contexts change and vary from the need for more democratic participation, to more efficient public management and, today, the concern to improve the quality of education (Wößmann, Ludemann, Schutz & West 2007) – two main governance strategies (although they differ from state to state) can be observed:

- more accountability for the performance of the individual school
- a greater degree of freedom for the individual school.

School leadership, not just in Europe but worldwide, is faced with strategic management tasks, because school principals are not only charged with the everyday management of administrative and pedagogical routines, they also have to establish and lead the instructional and pedagogical development processes within schools in order to assure the implementation of externally determined standards and accountability demands. With regard to their workloads, some principals remain in a state of critical assertiveness rather than compliance in response to the externally imposed reformist cultures, for instance with respect to the mix of autonomy and accountability settings (Pont, Nusche & Hopkins 2008). Others try to find strategies or work harder to live up to global expectations and demands (Mulford 2008; Shields 2006; Tsiakkiros & Pashiardis 2002).

The increasing global emphasis on accountability seems to have reignited interest in instructional leadership. Until recently, the considerable and growing body of research on principal leadership styles (Mangin & Dunsmore 2015; Neumerski 2013; The Wallace Foundation 2012) suggested that the instructional leadership construct was still alive in the domains of policy, research and practice in school leadership and management. 'Instructional leadership' is a term that has been derived from the effective schools research, primarily in the USA (Hallinger 2005; Nettles & Herrington 2007; Waters, Marzano & McNulty 2003). This leadership style has a strong focus on the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning as the core practices of the school. Within the instructional leadership framework, different conceptualisations of leadership have been developed (Brauckmann & Pashiardis 2011; Hallinger 2010, 2011; Heck & Hallinger 2010; Pashiardis 2014).

More concretely, the basic goals of instructional leadership are: (1) improvement of the teaching profession and teachers, (2) the promotion of effective teachers, and (3) genuine improvement of the deep learning that takes place in schools. Using teacher evaluation practices, efforts are made to improve classroom teaching, to improve the qualitative development of school life, to accelerate the implementation of educational programmes, to identify strengths and weaknesses with regards to teaching and learning, and generally to improve the quality of the schooling process. A number of researchers claim that monitoring and evaluation are primary constituents of an effective instructional leader (Daley & Kim 2010; Danielson 2011; Marshall 2012; Papay 2012). In Germany, instructional leadership, as an important leitmotiv of school effectiveness research, has been acknowledged and described (Wissinger 2014), but not critically revised or contextualised so far.

Although there is a growing homogenisation of expectations and approaches of school leaders, especially with regards to effective leadership styles such as instructional leadership, it is interesting to observe that these approaches often do not take national and cultural traditions into consideration (Hallinger 2005). For instance, the form and degree of accountability pressure might differ from place to place, since accountability is deeply rooted in cultures, on both national and local levels, that interpret these changes in various ways. This might also bear consequence for the implementation of the accountability-driven instructional leadership style (Brauckmann & Pashiardis 2016). Framing school leadership in this sense includes the underlying legal framework (setting), and the structure of its regulations, as well as state-organised support systems (e.g. qualification and training programmes) aiming to empower school leaders to do what they are supposed to do.

It must be noted that so far, comparative studies on school leadership provide little holistic information on the national contexts underlying school principals' actions. More theoretical and empirical light needs to be shed on the ongoing debate about the contextualised adaptation processes of a postulated transnational construct of leadership (Dimmock & Walker 2000; Murakami, Törnsén & Pollock 2014; Walker 2014).

Policy studies on instructional leadership can reveal how international trends are adopted as well as how national and local cultures influence principals and their work. Stemming from the above, the extent to which the historical foundation and the legal and organisational framework of the German school system legitimate the use and, even more so, frame the understanding of instructional leadership in terms of adherence, coherence and consistency between expectations, formal regulations and historical foundations has remained unanswered. As a result, there is a great deal of uncertainty over the extent to which German principals actually engage in instructional leadership tasks (Brauckmann et al. 2014).

Sound evidence-based knowledge of the differences and commonalities in leading instructional development processes which might contribute (in the long run) to a discussion on the benefits and detriments of a transnational model of instructional leadership, as often envisioned in the internationally oriented leadership community, is lacking within the German context. Thus, the guiding question of our approach to this study was as follows: In what way does the German policy-related context frame and shape the understanding, roles and meaning of instructional leadership from a historical perspective? In order to answer this question, this article focuses on how the historical understanding of leading pedagogical and instructional development processes (the legal framework, as well as the empirical findings of the German research literature on instructional leadership) contribute to the variety of German contexts and prerequisites for the use and understanding of instructional leadership. Furthermore, this article outlines the importance of examining instructional leadership in the context of broader political and cultural debates within national school systems.

By using the above-mentioned multi-perspective approach, this study seeks to clarify two issues: (1) the underlying concepts, foundations and theoretical beliefs that shape the German perspective on instructional leadership; and (2) the theory-driven model of instructional leadership. A report on the empirical evidence of the effects of this model of instructional leadership is then given. Thus, by contrasting the underlying concepts, on the one hand, and empirical operationalisation on the other, we intend to discuss alternative, distinct models of instructional leadership that might be more pedagogy-driven and aligned with the experiences, values, orientations and professional self-understanding of German school leaders. Implications for further research, policy and practice will also be discussed, from a more global perspective, as a result of the German experience on this profoundly interesting area of educational leadership. In a nutshell and with reference to the four guiding questions for this special issue, this article:

- describes what German high school principals used to do and now do in terms of instructional leadership practices, and some of the historical reasons why
- 2. provides information about principals' expectations and practices in Germany, allowing for comparisons with other countries
- illustrates how instructional leadership, as a concept, is applied in German schools, which in concert with the other articles in this issue, will deepen the understanding of this concept across countries

4. provides a description of instructional leadership outside of a North American context. While Europe and North America are both viewed as 'the West', it is clear that there are differences between European and North American schooling and leadership.

## Facets of Instructional Leadership in Upper Secondary and Lower Secondary Schools in Germany

Starting with the example of Prussia, which became the largest, most populated, and thus most important actor in Germany with regards to matters of schooling in the early 19th century, many regents in Germany declared the state to be the organiser of schooling. Instructional institutions were to be administrated according to state rules and legislation, and running a school required prior permission by the state.

In the process of allocating power to the state, priority concerning the content taught and supervision of teaching staff was awarded to 'educated schools'. These schools were known as *Gymnasium* (upper secondary schools) in northern Germany and Prussia (Tenorth 2008). State school governance authorities defined precise content for teaching and exams, decreed school orders and disciplinary rules, demanded and controlled the regularly submitted annual school reports, and supervised, inspected and advised teachers and principals. As a consequence, compliance with instructional standards became far more evident (Geißler 2013).

The following is a historical account of instructional leadership expectations and practices in Germany. It should be noted that the use of instructional leadership has to be understood as an evolutionary process. The various instructional leadership functions categorised below did not become obsolete at a certain point in time and others practices suddenly begin; on the contrary, these functions can be seen as operating on a continuum, with overlaps between historical periods and the associated instructional leadership activities and expectations. For instance, teacher evaluation was seen as fulfilling two functions – formative and summative (Harris 1986; Pashiardis 1994, 1996; Stronge 1997) – and the perceived role of the school leader varied accordingly; teachers were seen either as instructional leaders who improved teaching and learning, or as judges who would grade other teachers and thus influence their promotion and career path. The information below is presented as objectively as possible, even though it is understood that the interpretation of rules and regulations will always entail some degree of subjectivity and discretion.

## The Paternalistic Leader in Terms of Instruction

Given the conditions of a school system that is largely governed by the state, high school principals were no longer able to select their own teaching staff. Instead, personnel were appointed by the competent disciplinary body, which was also in charge of transfer. To assure the functionality of an institution, a principal therefore had to cultivate a constructive relationship with the teaching staff – who were tenured, and thus actually led the school and instruction – as well as secure his¹ own lawful position. This stressed the rather paternalistic approach to leading the teaching staff, since school leaders had no instruments of power over their teachers (Strutz & Nevermann 1985).

High school (*Gymnasium*) principals had a right to visit all lessons and all classrooms, and were also allowed to inspect any of the students' written work. Even so, teachers at the time were highly qualified and principals tended not to interfere in their lessons, as doing so was perceived as interference with pedagogical autonomy. Collegial conduct did not change, even if a principal was

1 'His' represents both genders, although teachers/principals were mainly men during this period.

promoted. As a school inspector, the former school principal was expected to assess the principal and his staff at the schools for which he was responsible. While occupying this role, the inspector acted as a superior, but still perceived himself as part of the collegial-scientific community from which he himself had emerged. He issued recommendations instead of directives, unless a violation of norms was evident. Announcements in ministerial bulletins were worded in such a way as to uphold the aforementioned culture of autonomy, at least as far as instructional procedures were concerned (Geißler 2013). Principals could expect their teaching staff to be reliable and to teach and educate according to official orders. Teachers were bound by their university backgrounds and social milieus, as well as their ambition, academically; most teachers held doctorates (Geißler & Brauckmann 2015).

Like upper secondary principals, school heads at lower secondary schools were also entitled to visit lessons. They were allowed to select individual, permanently appointed and experienced teachers as heads for specific areas of instruction (Geißler 2013). After the turn of the century, however, this type of instructional supervision became less significant, due to progress in teacher training seminars and the growing interest of teachers in their own training. Thus, lower high school teachers became more active. Teachers organised into unions and their social status improved; moreover, they were increasingly less willing to submit their pedagogical authority to the outdated conditions of subordination. Teacher associations demanded 'collegial leadership' (Strutz & Nevermann 1985), and suggested that the school principal's office be restricted to management and coordination duties. At the time, this demand was unsuccessful.

#### The Instructional Leader

By the mid-19th century, all high school teachers had acquired university training and the practice of schooling, and particularly instruction, was therefore the decisive factor when school authorities decided whom to appoint as principal. As a rule, a high school principal was appointed after many years of teaching at a school. It was their teaching experience rather than their superior qualifications that rendered principals acceptable to other teachers (Geißler & Brauckmann 2015). The same notion was later applied to the appointment of general school principals (Wöhe 1933). It can be argued that the system implicitly 'rewarded' excellence in teaching, and thus emphasised pedagogical leadership as a key factor for promotion to principalship, albeit in a subtle way. By the final third of the 19th century, school principals had gained an outstanding and important status within education establishments by running assigned administrative operations, thanks to their influence on instruction, their educational relationships at school and their relationships with teachers (Pretzel 1909).

## The School Principal as the First Teacher of his School

Despite his principalship position, a principal leading a high school with between 200 and 700 students taught regularly; in Prussia, for example, a principal taught between 6 and 16 lessons per week. Regarding his function as a role model, the principal could thus practically demonstrate mastering the art he demanded from his teachers. It can therefore be said that the high school principal, having an academic teaching background, was a leader who was familiar with all aspects of school and instruction. His knowledge of teachers' strengths and weaknesses enabled him to purposefully deploy them in the system of subjects and classes. He was an administrative officer and the first teacher of the school who also supervised the entire instructional operations; he was responsible for organising order within the school. The principal was dependent not least upon tactful communication to inspire collaboration among colleagues, and he was the teachers'

highest-ranking representative when facing parents and the public. Regarding all these aspects, the principal was able to shape the profile of his institution within the limits of legal provisions. In a sense, this is the third era of educational administration, wherein human resources are 'matched' into the 'right' positions within the organisation (Geißler & Brauckmann 2015).

## Distributed Instructional Leadership

After the Empire years (1871-1918), the Weimar Republic era (1918-1933) began (Fend 2006). Given the growing complexity of schools and a socially disparate, conflict-prone environment, school leadership in general became more challenging. Hence, the distribution of management and leadership tasks even beyond deputy heads became necessary (Held 1980).

Principals working for the school authority were urged to perceive their duties in a new light by granting teachers professional autonomy and freedom ('creative room'), and were advised to meet teachers in the role of 'leaders, counsellors, and colleagues'. The implementation of official curricula by principals meant that teachers were granted considerable freedom with respect to contents and methods taught. An even more distinct digression from tradition is evident in the diverse forms of 'collegial schools', which were introduced in nearly all of the 26 states in the Weimar Republic (Preußischer Lehrerverein 1931). The customary right of a principal to visit classrooms was delimited or even relinquished, as it was regarded as an undemocratic instrument of school control. Staff elected a school principal – either directly or from a list recommended by the school authority – who was now considered to be 'primus inter pares'. In his voluntary office, the principal represented a school and its decisions externally. Within a school, he was responsible for technical and administrative operations. All these changes enabled teachers at schools that were open to reform to take instruction into their own hands (Held 1980). Similar to high schools, and depending on the subject, teams of experts established themselves in instructional matters. The principal was important for individual teachers as a motivator and adviser; he could serve as a moderator or guide (Geißler 2013).

With regards to school leadership in our time, the principal represents the school externally. He is also responsible for organisational and budgetary processes at his institution. Moreover, as a public officer appointed by the school authority, the principal acts on a permanent basis (Flossner 1980; Holtappels 1989; Müller & Diedrich 1980; Neulinger 1990). Until recently, there was no specific training or qualification for principals; only a few attempts were made to introduce such measures (Hildebrandt 2008; Hops 1983).

## Instructional Leadership in Germany from an Empirical Perspective: What Do We Know So Far?

For a long time in Germany, school leadership matters were not subject to educational scientific reflection or theory-driven empirical observation. Leadership issues were nearly exclusively treated by norm-giving school administrations and their legal experts, focusing on organisational and practical matters. In the 1970s, however, school improvement research began to rise in prominence (Feldhoff & Brauckmann 2015). Initially this research was ambitious (i.e. investigating the overall organisation of a school system) but by the 1990s, research had begun to focus on individual schools. In this regard, it was not possible to identify school leadership as the crucial instrument, particularly regarding instructional leadership (Feldhoff & Brauckmann 2015). In the early 21st century, new school improvement processes were introduced (Bonsen 2002), along with new school programmes, autonomy and accountability (Brauckmann 2012). School autonomy in particular, in terms of increased individual school responsibility, invoked a focus on school leadership, and its legal position was reinforced. Yet, leadership at the individual level remained tied to the overall governance of the system (e.g. the relationship between autonomy and accountability) and the systemic, legal, professional and cultural history of a given school's development (Nevermann 1982).

Few findings have been documented concerning school leadership in the past 15 years, and most of these originate from school improvement studies or re-analyses of large-scale assessments, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) or the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). During this period, only six studies provided analysis with indications of instructional leadership by principals in Germany. The findings can be categorised into three areas: \*1) workloads of school leaders with respect to instructional leadership, (2) teacher perceptions of instructional leadership style of their principals, (3) the relationship between instructional leadership and meaningful factors of school improvement and school effectiveness.

## Workloads of School Leaders with Respect to Instructional Leadership

Wissinger (2002) analysed data from a survey of principals in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) in 1995. A total of 1,006 lower secondary school principals in Germany, Austria, France, Sweden and the USA were asked how much time they spent on different tasks per month. Principals in Germany spent most of their time preparing, conducting and processing their own lessons (49.63 hours per month), as well as on internal administration (41.10 hours per month). Only 34.24 hours per month were spent on instructional activities (i.e. dealing with disciplinary issues, further training and guidance of teachers), whereas colleagues in the USA spent 57.02 hours per month on these tasks.

About ten years after Wissinger's study, Brauckmann and Schwarz (2015) showed similar results. They analysed the relative workload<sup>2</sup> of school leaders in different tasks in a project called 'School leaders' activities between more responsibility and more power', usin data from 153 school leaders in primary and upper secondary schools (Gymnasium) in six German federal states. On average, leaders spent only 18.64 per cent of their weekly working hours on teaching-related management activities, which are similar to activities in the context of instructional leadership. Leaders spent most of their time working on their own lessons (32.98 per cent), followed by administration and organisation tasks (19.38 per cent).

## Teachers' Perceptions of the Instructional Leadership Style of their Principals

Feldhoff, Kanders, and Rolff (2008), in the pilot project 'Self-governing school in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany', investigated school leadership actions longitudinally in 82 schools of various forms/types (special education schools, primary schools, and different secondary school tracks). According to teacher estimations, leadership actions are distinctly evident in the fields of management, organisation and participation (Table 1). By comparison, leadership action in the field of instructional leadership is less pronounced.

2 Workload was measured as hours per week, from which we generate the relative workload in each task area (i.e. the seven individual relative workloads sum up to 100 per cent of the working hours per week). The relative workload reflects the proportion of weekly working time spent on each area of leadership activity, and may indicate priorities given by school principals to specific tasks of their acting as a leader.

**Table 1:** School leadership actions from the teachers' perspective

Scales	Assessment	M	SD	N	α
Leadership competence in	2003	3.11	0.282	82	.67
autonomous schools	2005	3.08	0.321	77	.68
	2007	3.11	0.287	70	.73
Participation competence of	2003	3.08	0.392	82	.78
school leaders	2005	3.04	0.446	77	.80
	2007	3.11	0.353	70	.81
Competence of school leaders	2003	3.16	0.354	82	.85
regarding organisation of	2005	3.17	0.419	77	.87
school operations	2007	3.22	0.334	70	.87
Management competence of	2003	3.51	0.273	82	.68
school leaders	2005	3.45	0.330	77	.71
	2007	3.50	0.226	70	.75
Instructional leadership	2003	2.60	0.337	82	.66
	2005	2.61	0.315	77	.66
	2007	2.67	0.332	70	.69

Notes: Response categories in the used scales: not true (1) to true (4)

Source: (Feldhoff et al. 2008: 148)

Similar results were reported by Harazd (2010), who presented a study on leadership concepts in 'good' and 'healthy' schools based on a survey of 2,876 teachers from 123 schools in North Rhine-Westphalia. In the perception of the teachers, school leadership actions in the area of management and organisation scored highly (M=3.12/SD=0.61). Transformational leadership (M=2.73/SD=0.64), and most of all instructional leadership (M=2.37/SD=0.66), were the least pronounced.<sup>3</sup> An analysis of identification with different types of school leaders also showed that instructional leadership is the weakest of the three leadership styles in all of the identified types of school.

Pietsch (2014) compared instructional leadership at 50 schools in Hamburg in 2014 with data on instructional leadership as assessed in a national, non-representative online survey of teachers (the *Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft*, or GEW, survey) conducted by the national union of teachers (Demmer and von Saldern 2010), and data from the 2008 Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (OECD 2009; Schmich, Schreiner & Pointinger 2009), all based on teacher ratings. Somewhat surprisingly, the level of instructional leadership in schools in Hamburg is roughly equal to the school leadership average in OECD countries and the EU-TALIS countries (Table 2). In contrast, teachers participating in the GEW survey rated instructional leadership significantly lower, which corresponds to the findings of Feldhoff et al. (2008) and Harazd (2010). The high scores in Hamburg might be attributable to the fact that the city recently became the first competent authority in Germany to grant schools the right to decide for themselves whether or not the members of a leadership team should teach. Leaders might therefore be able to spend more time on other matters. Moreover, Hamburg also places a strong emphasis on data-based school improvement and focuses on instruction.

<sup>3</sup> Response categories of the used scales: not true (1) to true (4)

**Table 2:** National and international comparison of frequency of instructional activities for school leaders in Hamburg from the teachers' perspective (percentage of 'rather often' and 'very often' responses)

	Hamburg	TALIS-GEW <sup>a</sup>	OECD/ EU-TALIS <sup>b</sup>
The principal ensures that teachers work according to the school's educational goals.	66	31	76
The principal ensures that teachers are informed about possibilities for updating their knowledge and skills.	72	44	70
When a teacher has problems in his/ her classroom, the principal takes the initiative to discuss the matter.	57	30	54
The principal gives teachers suggestions as to how they can improve their teaching.	31	10	35
The principal or someone else in the management team observes teaching in classes.	26	5	34

Sources: Pietsch (2014: 25); a Demmer & von Saldern (2010); b Schmich & Schreiner (2009).

## Relationship between Instructional Leadership and Factors of School Improvement and School Effectiveness

Besides the descriptive findings presented above, evidence exists regarding the relationship between instructional leadership and relevant factors from school improvement research and school effectiveness research. In their analysis, Feldhoff and Rolff (2008) used instructional leadership, together with participation, management, organisational competence and instructional leadership, as part of an overall scale referred to as 'leadership competence in autonomous schools'. They demonstrated a positive influence of instructional leadership as part of the overall scale in the interplay of a steering group mediated via readiness for innovation and teamwork. This positive influence was observable regarding the structured nature and comprehensibility of mathematics and German instruction from the students' perspective (Feldhoff 2011). Moreover, instructional leadership as a part of leadership competence at autonomous schools, in cooperation with a steering group, has a positive influence on human resource development at the school and on its evaluation culture (Feldhoff 2011).

Based on school inspection data from Hamburg, Pietsch (2015) demonstrated a direct influence of instructional leadership on teaching practice. Moreover, an indirect influence on teaching practice exists through the mediation of variables such as cooperation, participation, school improvement, innovation capacity and job satisfaction. All these effects are positive, apart from job satisfaction. Besides analysing the different effects of different leaderships styles (including instructional leadership), Pietsch (2015) also tested whether a global factor of leadership style exists, which includes the four different leadership styles: transformational leadership, transactional leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and instructional leadership. The global factor exists and had an immediate positive influence on cooperation, participation, school improvement, and commitment. Via these factors, leadership also impacts on the structuring of instruction.

Taken together, the empirical findings indicate a relationship between the the workload of leaders and teachers' estimations of instructional leadership, with the exception of Hamburg. This might be interpreted by the realisation that a low workload is reflected in less pronounced instructional leadership. However, the analyses of correlations show that schools with pronounced instructional leadership also have a positive influence on school improvement processes and on teachers' instructional actions.

#### What Do We Make out of This?

Based on the historical and empirical analyses that were presented in the first sections of this paper, it can be argued that Germany has swung from one end of a pendulum to the other. Specifically, it has swung from: (1) the 'best' teacher as the best teacher/principal, to (2) the best teacher as administrator/manager, and then to (3) the best teacher as a part-time pedagogical leader, amongst other (primarily) teaching duties. Thus, it seems that the German education system is slowly but steadily moving towards the instructional model of school leadership, in the sense that instructional ability is the prevailing mode of elevating someone to principalship. It seems that within the German system, excellence in teaching has been the main prerequisite for someone to become the school principal in a process of 'natural' progression towards the position. Through the years, the German system has held in high esteem the idea that the principal is above all else the 'best' teacher. Actually, this idea has been prevalent in many parts of the world, with the exception of Anglo-Saxon countries such as the USA, Canada, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, where principalship was constructed first and foremost as a managerial/administrative position. We believe that the requirement that principals be excellent teachers will continue to exist, and will possibly even be enforced in the thinking of policy-makers in German states; the current worldwide research on principalship suggests that the instructional/pedagogical style of leadership is the main vehicle for the academic improvement of students and the overall enhancement of school improvement. At the same time, it should be noted that it is not an either/or situation; pedagogical leadership should go hand-in-hand with organisational management, thus producing the 'new ideal' for school principalship in Germany.

It might be the case that Germany will not have to go through the debate over whether a managerial and administrative type of school leader or an instructional and pedagogical one is superior (Mintrop 2015). The direction Germany will take is still unfolding, and is still an open question. However, as mentioned previously, it seems that the 'pedagogy' factor (or aspect) is stronger than the administrative aspect of the principalship, and a more 'pedagogical' leader will probably become manifest in the German education system. This is due to the influence that school principals can have on the culture of teaching and learning that takes place in their school. As principals essentially come from the ranks of teachers, they will be able to influence the pedagogical processes at their schools by creating comradeship in pedagogy and discussing the common understandings about what constitutes excellence in teaching. Based on current research, it seems that school leaders can have a profound effect on improving teachers within their schools not just individually, but also collectively (Heck & Hallinger 2014). In this way, the impact of a pedagogical principal can be enormous. By creating a true pedagogical culture through more pedagogical dialogues, more classroom observations and high expectations of pedagogical objectives, it seems that those measures will have an impact on the teaching force of the school that will inevitably elevate everybody to higher levels of quality teaching and learning in their school.

The previous assertions are further reinforced by the fact that, in Europe, the main goals for the general area of teacher evaluation and instructional and pedagogical leadership are: (1) to find out which are the abilities that teachers should have based on the knowledge society, and (2) to provide all the necessary support to teachers in order for them to be better suited for the challenges of the knowledge society through initial teacher education as well as through continuous professional development (European Union 2000, 2001).

#### Where Do We Go from Here?

In essence, when it comes to teacher evaluation of instruction, we need to move from the 'I' to the 'we', meaning that we need to create cultures of excellence in learning and teaching and, at the same time, reinforce organisational management towards pedagogy within our schools. We need to collectively create the pedagogical philosophy of our schools and make sense out of it, both as individual teachers as well as a collective community. This can be manifested via a school principal, who is most importantly the best teacher in a given school, and thus can lead the school forward in the creation of a pedagogical model that fits that school best. In order to do this, we need to use the plethora of research findings with regards to the Effective Schools Research Movement, which has been evolving for the last 40 years around the world, and see how we can incorporate research findings about excellence in teaching into current thinking about instructional and pedagogical leadership. Moreover, teacher expectations about instructional and pedagogical leadership should be taken into consideration when reconsidering the philosophy which is to be taken as the foundation of our instructional and pedagogical leadership system (Zepeda & Ponticell 1998).

In closing, we argue that there is a need to find a way to keep excellent teachers in the classroom and not promote them into other positions or force them to leave classroom teaching in search of higher monetary or other rewards. Thus, we probably need to rethink monetary promotions and rewards while teachers are still in the classroom. In this way, we can create a cadre of excellent teachers and mentors who will also play the role of instructional and pedagogical leaders in a complementary way to other school leaders. In this way, teacher leadership becomes a profound way to enhance instructional leadership, mainly through organising and managing the activities that lead to improved teaching.

In general, proponents of instructional leadership should think of incentives for school leaders in Germany to have a different view of their traditional roles as administrators rather than instructional quality developers. German school leaders have to see the value of a developmental and formative approach rather than a summative approach when it comes to instructional processes. One approach in the future could be to establish rituals and events to acknowledge, in a discreet but effective manner, the best instructional leadership practices within the German education system. Doing this would enable principals to be more closely involved in instructional practices in the classroom in a positive way. This could change the perspective from a rather pedagogical to a more instructional management one. Thus, acting as a pedagogical leader for an organisation in order to create an environment that fosters and stimulates stronger coordinated self-reflection on the instructional processes which can be observed in and across classes becomes a major new responsibility. Creating an environment in which staff members begin to have exchanges on their instructional practices could be a subset of pedagogical leadership at the principalship level, which then turns into instructional leadership at the middle management level.

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