

Theorising leadership for inclusion in the Irish context: A triadic typology within a distributed ecosystem

Management in Education
2021, Vol. 35(1) 22–31
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(BELMAS)

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DOI: 10.1177/0892020620942507
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Abstract

Leadership for inclusion is a contested concept with competing definitions suggested by many researchers and educationalists. While broad and narrow interpretations of ‘inclusion’ exist, this article focuses solely on the inclusion of learners with special educational needs (SEN) in Irish mainstream schools. A critical literature review of various different leadership typologies, relevant to inclusive education, is presented, from a practising principal’s perspective. This review is used to theorise a hybrid leadership typology, present in schools where children with SEN are included in mainstream classes. The centrepiece of this theoretical model is that any leadership approach, in an inclusive education setting, must be triadic in structure. As a construct, it must be underpinned by a triad of teacher leadership, managerial leadership and values leadership. The argument is advanced that if this triadic structure is to flourish, then a distributed leadership framework is a necessity.

Keywords

distributed leadership, leadership for inclusion, leadership triad, managerial leadership, special educational needs, teacher leadership, values leadership

Introduction

The positive effect of school leadership on pupil achievement is well-established in empirical research studies (Alhosani et al., 2017; Dutta and Sahney, 2016; Leithwood and Mascall, 2008; Masci et al., 2018), with evidence suggesting that it is second only to teaching in terms of its impact on pupil learning (Bush and Glover, 2014). While defining educational leadership is complex, with many definitions ‘arbitrary and very subjective’ (Yukl, 2002: 4), the concept is generally regarded as three-dimensional (Bush and Glover, 2014). It is a ‘relationship of social *influence*’ (Spillane and Coldren, 2011: 76) characterised by a clear *vision* and strong underlying *values* (Bush, 2008; Bush and Glover, 2014). While this theoretical interpretation provides a useful lens through which educational leadership can be scrutinised in a broad sense, this article will examine the concept of leadership in the meso-setting of the Irish primary education sector. Specifically, it will explore the prevailing models for exercising leadership in schools where children with special educational needs (SEN) are meaningfully included in mainstream classes.

To succinctly analyse contemporary discourse on leadership for inclusion, following an overview of the methodology, this article will be divided into three sections. Section A will examine what inclusion is in a primary school context. Section B will give an overview of literature on relevant educational leadership typologies, while Section C will utilise the literature presented in the

previous two sections to theorise a triadic leadership typology present in schools with meaningful inclusive provision for children with SEN.

Methodology

This article is written from the perspective of a practising principal teacher in an ‘equality-based’, Educate Together national school in the Republic of Ireland. Its purpose is to make the case for the form of ‘Leadership for Inclusion’ theorised by the author, to enable school principals to facilitate meaningful inclusion in their own individual contexts. The article is presented in the form of a critical review. Literature was selected and examined from the 20-year period 2000 to 2020. Keyword searches were conducted on Summon 2.0 using the terms ‘principal’, ‘principalship’ and ‘school leader’ bracketed and combined with ‘inclusion’, ‘disability’ and ‘special educational needs’. Distinctions were not made on where the literature emanated from because the trend towards inclusive education is a global one. This literature was supplemented by material identified through a handsearch of article reference lists and material available to the author, as a result of his professional practice as a school principal in Ireland. Primarily,

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the researcher sought to establish from the literature what inclusion meant in a school context and how leadership could be mobilised to achieve it.

There are limitations with the approach utilised. The absence of any requirement to explicitly present search methods has led to criticism from Grant and Booth (2009: 93–94) that ‘critical reviews do not typically demonstrate the systematicity of other more structured approaches to the literature’. This may leave the article ‘vulnerable on the grounds of subjectivity’ (Paré et al., 2015: 189). The real strength of the approach, however, is its capacity to highlight problems and generate discussion (Paré et al., 2015), with a view to providing a ‘launch pad’ for future research endeavours (Grant and Booth, 2009: 93). This practitioner-led, desk-based approach to examining leadership for inclusion is intended to do just that and act as a starting point for future empirical investigations.

Section A: Inclusion in primary schools

The term ‘inclusion’ is contested within the education sphere (Lindqvist and Nilholm, 2013), with broad and narrow interpretations debated from both ends of a spectrum (Ainscow and Sandill, 2010). Internationally, it is recognised as an all-embracing concept where learners of all abilities, ethnicities and backgrounds, especially those whose voices have historically been excluded, are educated together within the one system (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, 2001: 15). However, in Ireland it is arguable that a narrower formulation prevails, whereby inclusion is predominantly ‘thought of as an approach to serving children with disabilities within general education settings’ (Ainscow and Sandill, 2010: 401). While the inclination to more precisely describe this practice as *inclusive special education* is appealing (Hornby, 2015), this is the subject of significant contestation due to ‘the antagonisms’ that exist ‘between so-called inclusionists and special educationists’ (Allan, 2014: 511). Although data are emerging attesting to the potentiality of inclusive special education as a concept and the role of school leadership in mobilising it (Fitzgerald and Radford, 2020), inclusive education and special education are more often construed as distinctly different (Farrell, 2012; Frederickson and Cline, 2015).

In some jurisdictions the term ‘inclusion’ is merely an ‘organisational concept’ to describe a child with SEN being placed in a mainstream classroom (Göransson et al., 2011: 543; Slee, 2006). Many scholars have criticised this notion due to the onus it places on the child to assimilate into the status quo (Barry, 2009; Frederickson and Cline, 2015). Farrell (2012: 37) argues that the latter concept might more accurately be referred to as ‘integration’, because inclusion involves a much more radical change in mindset. In its purest form, inclusion places the onus on the school to transform ‘curricula, methods, materials and procedures so that it becomes more responsive’ to the needs of each individual child (Frederickson and Cline, 2015: 75). As Barry (2009: 107) notes:

The presence of students with special needs is not enough – it has to lead to participation and that participation has to be guided by notions of equity and of the development of a shared community.

Defining leadership for inclusion is arduous, because the term ‘inclusion’ itself is a nebulous, ‘context-bound’ concept (Lindqvist and Nilholm, 2013: 96). Taking into consideration the three-dimensional framework outlined in the Introduction, it may reasonably be deduced as the process of influencing others towards a values-based vision (Bush and Glover, 2014; Thurlow et al., 2012) that all children, regardless of ability, should be educated meaningfully within the one school system that accounts for differing needs (Florian, 2019). The purpose of leadership in this scenario is to ‘establish, support and maintain an inclusive culture’ (Moloney and McCarthy, 2018: 58). Leaders committed to inclusion ensure that classrooms are heterogeneous environments where:

diverse learners breathe energy, openness and vitality into our classrooms and curriculum, so that for future generations, diversity will be mainstream, and appreciation of difference will be the one thing we all have in common. (Borosan, 2017: 23)

While this represents the broad thrust of what leadership for inclusion might look like, adopting a leadership typology that promotes it is more complex.

Bush and Glover (2014) postulate nine different leadership theories – instructional leadership, transformational leadership, system leadership, contingent leadership, authentic leadership, distributed leadership, moral or values leadership, teacher leadership and managerial leadership. While aspects of all of these leadership theories are relevant to inclusive education in the Irish context, the latter four are the most pertinent and have been used to inform the model of leadership for inclusion presented in this article. The five other typologies were excluded from in-depth critical review for a number of reasons. Authentic leadership ‘covers similar ground’ to that of moral or values leadership (Bush and Glover, 2014: 559), so the benefit of examining it in great detail here is somewhat limited. Contingent leadership is underpinned by the contention that flexibility is required and that different leadership styles are needed for different situations. In this context, ‘the situation’ is the facilitation of meaningful inclusive education and the current article puts forward a possible triadic approach for use in that situation – leadership for inclusion, in essence, is the contingency. System leadership assumes extensive collaboration among clusters of schools and while that practice may be evolving in the Irish context, it is not yet a pervasive feature and resources supporting its sustainability are somewhat limited. Instructional leadership was not examined because its focus on the principal as the ‘centre of expertise, power and authority’ (Hallinger, 2003: 330) undercuts the extent to which teachers ought to be able to exercise leadership in inclusive education systems (York-Barr et al., 2005). While transformational school leadership has been the focus of significant political

attention aimed at bringing change to education systems, its main focus on 'leaders' and their capacity to influence the behaviour of 'followers' (Bush, 2018: 883) is incongruous with the all-embracing, expansive concept of leadership for inclusion envisioned in this article.

Section B: Leadership typologies for inclusive education

Leadership for inclusion is commonly characterised as 'a journey' (Frederickson and Cline, 2015: 73) because ideally it involves leading schools away from a segregationist or integrationist perspective, to a more inclusive one (Kinsella, 2009). Using that theory as a lens, this section of the article will critique the distributed leadership, teacher leadership, values leadership and managerial leadership typologies. These four were selected for a multitude of reasons: distributed leadership enables teachers, as leaders, to exercise the kind of agency and autonomy (Harris, 2003) needed to advocate for children with special needs (York-Barr et al., 2005); teacher leadership is required because for inclusion to work effectively, teachers must buy into it and endeavour to guide others on the inclusion journey (York-Barr et al., 2005); managerial leadership is needed because 'the complex ways in which leadership from above' influences the work of teachers cannot be ignored (King and Stevenson, 2017: 657); values leadership is vital because the commitment to inclusion must be underpinned by a value that renders it as important (Winter and O'Raw, 2010). Literature dissecting each of these typologies and their pertinence to leadership for inclusion is explored below.

Distributed leadership

Distributed leadership is an 'indispensable component of inclusive education' systems (Miškolci et al., 2016: 53) and underpins how the Department of Education and Skills (DES) envisages how schools are led in the Irish context (DES, 2018). It has become the 'normatively preferred' educational leadership model of the 21st century (Bush and Glover, 2014: 559–560) and centralises the importance of relationships in the pursuit of school improvement (Harris, 2004). In its purest sense, it disregards 'positional authority' (Bush and Glover, 2014: 560) and facilitates capacity building in schools, as other leaders, apart from the principal, emerge and take various different responsibilities (Harris, 2004). Many have disagreed with the premise that this model constitutes leadership at all, given that autonomy may be 'bounded' by the principal (Hairon and Goh, 2015: 707). However, this analysis does not take account of two important elements.

First, it inappropriately conflates leadership with management and power. While the principal has the power to influence by virtue of his or her management position (Lumby, 2016), those in other positions can also exercise influence depending on their school circumstance (King and Stevenson, 2017; Sachs, 2003). In fact, it may be that the influence exerted is more authentic, because the principal is obliged to undertake his or her duties in accordance

with the wishes of the Board of Management (Education Act, 1998: s 33(5)). This statutory obligation limits the principal's autonomy significantly. Secondly, the argument relies on a contested conceptual framework that ignores the possibility of the distribution emerging incidentally within the school, as opposed to being distributed from a central source. A teacher may decide that they have expertise in a specific area and by virtue of the trust, respect and relationships they foster with other teachers are able to command influence in that area. If that influence is based on their vision and values, and if they are capable of bringing other teachers on a change journey with them, then it can legitimately be argued that they are exercising leadership (Criswell et al., 2018). As Bennett et al (2003) note, distributed leadership is not always done by one person to another; rather it can be a shared experience where leadership emerges naturally from within the group.

Teacher leadership

It has been argued that teacher leadership is a distinct manifestation of the distributed leadership model, as 'teachers are highly likely to be the people to whom leadership is distributed' (Bush, 2015: 671; Hairon and Goh, 2015), although many would disagree with this characterisation, as elaborated on earlier (Bennett et al., 2003). The concept of teacher leadership is increasingly applied to the inclusive education context (York-Barr et al., 2005), as many of the teachers who pioneer the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream primary classes do so outside of the formal school leadership structure (Fitzgerald and Radford, 2017). While the role of school principal was traditionally seen as the 'primary source of educational expertise' in a school, teacher leadership assumes that influence is also exercised by teachers beyond their own classroom to promote the development of the school in accordance with a shared vision and values system (Lai and Cheung, 2015: 673). Such leadership is transformational, facilitates school development and functions most effectively in 'communities of practice' (Lai and Cheung, 2015: 686). Teachers with or without formal school leadership roles can exhibit this leadership typology (Barth, 2013).

In an educational context where the leader is not required to have a pedagogical qualification or expertise in SEN, the role of teachers who do have such qualifications and expertise becomes ever more important to inclusion (Fitzgerald and Radford, 2017). They often assume positions as 'teacher leaders', who support colleagues with advice on differentiation and inclusive methodologies to ensure meaningful participation of those with SEN in mainstream classes (Mulrine and Huckvale, 2014: 61).

Managerial leadership

Managerial leadership in education places emphasis on completing tasks and functions associated with ensuring the smooth organisational running of the school (Bush and Glover, 2014). It can closely be aligned with the statutory functions of a school principal in Ireland who must fulfil

obligations as laid down by the school Board of Management (Education Act, 1998: s 23). In this typology, influence derives from the formal authority vested in the principal's role and it assumes that teachers will rationally adhere to him or her (Bush and Glover, 2014). The purpose of managerial leadership is to ensure that teaching and learning is provided for effectively and efficiently, and that procedures are in place for facilitating this (Hoyle and Wallace, 2005). This typology can also be mapped on to the four domains outlined in the delegated 'Leadership and Management Framework' in place in Irish primary schools (DES, 2018). These four domains – Leading Teaching and Learning, Managing the Organisation, Leading School Development and Developing Leadership Capacity – are used to provide 'a common understanding... around the organisation and practice of leadership' in schools (DES, 2018: 8). Individual teachers appointed to Assistant Principal posts are obligated to 'implement a system to promote professional responsibility and accountability' and manage 'physical and financial resources' for the area they are delegated responsibility for (DES, 2018: 5). These requirements render managerial leadership a *de jure* component of both principalship and promoted positions in schools and to detach it from them would ignore the statutory reality (Drea and O'Brien, 2002). In some schools, managerial responsibility for inclusion and special education is vested in an Assistant Principal (Fitzgerald and Radford, 2017), and where it is, departmental guidance is clear in respect of their managerial role (DES, 2018).

The dangers of the managerial approach stem from the fact that 'by focusing on functions, tasks and behaviours, there is the possibility that the aims of education will be subordinated to the managerial aim of greater efficiency' (Bush and Glover, 2014: 557). There is some evidence to suggest that this drive towards efficiency is linked to the increase in performativity in some schools, especially in jurisdictions where high-stakes tests are administered to pupils (Mutereko, 2018). While the merits of this assertion may be true, and the system may become too 'rigid' in the pursuit of fixed targets (Simkins, 2005: 14), this danger can be averted when the managerial form of leadership coexists with strong values (Bush and Glover, 2014).

Values-based leadership

Values-based leadership is a branch of moral leadership which centres around the idea that 'leaders act with integrity, drawing on firmly held personal and professional values', to inform their decision-making (Bush and Glover, 2014: 559). This form of leadership underpins inclusive education because all leaders must be committed to inclusion 'as a value' (Winter and O'Raw, 2010: 29), in order to put all necessary structures in place to ensure that children with SEN are supported and included in the mainstream classroom. Winter and O'Raw (2010: 28), writing from an Irish perspective, further argue that such leaders must also:

be able to articulate the reasons for their belief, be willing to defend this practice against detractors, and be willing to struggle, learn, and seek answers when specific approaches do not appear to be working for some students.

While the extent of scholarly research into values-based leadership within the education sector specifically is limited, the quiddity of the concept itself within general leadership discourse is contested (Ford and Harding, 2011). Although it is acknowledged that ethical values should underpin the work that organisations undertake (Parry and Proctor-Thomson, 2002), the arbiter of those values in a shared leadership context is less clear. If the values emerge from the principal 'influencing' the belief system of teachers, then ethical complications arise, as some scholars argue that 'it is inappropriate for leaders to attempt to instil their values in subordinates' (Viinamäki, 2009: 11). Others contend that the manifestation of one's true self is an 'impossibility' under this form of leadership, as it privileges the collective over the individual (Ford and Harding, 2011: 463). However, this psychoanalysis is based on a working assumption that an individual's sense of self is preformed as opposed to evolving. In doing this, it rules out the legitimacy of one's sense of self, and by extension their values, being informed and influenced by those around them. It also does not consider the possibility that employees have been selected on the values they hold and the degree to which they accord with those of the school. In such a scenario, it is plausible to envisage that even if one's true sense of self was preformed, such a sense could coexist within a collective where those already there were selected on the same values basis.

Section C: A triadic typology within a distributed ecosystem

Instead of applying one typology to an individual school leader or collective leadership, many scholars have proposed hybrid models where various different typologies coexist within the one leadership structure (Fiarman, 2017; Gronn, 2016; Townsend, 2015). Some have suggested that such leadership is 'configured' with different typologies manifested to varying degrees in different situations within the hybrid (Gronn, 2016: 169). This section of the article will extend that theory by proposing that in effective inclusive schools, leadership is manifested triadically within a distributed ecosystem. The ecosystem model is appropriate because it illustrates the interconnected, and often interdependent, nature of the constituent parts of the triad. Inclusive education is most effective when teacher leadership, values leadership and managerial leadership intersect. This intersection can only occur if there is a culture of distributed leadership in the school; because if such a culture does not exist, then teachers are not empowered to mould this triad in the first instance. Of course, there may be varying levels of each typology within the triadic structure, but the underlying theory is that they are all linked at some level. Where one typology is absent from the triad, this will have a significant effect on how inclusion operates within the school. This

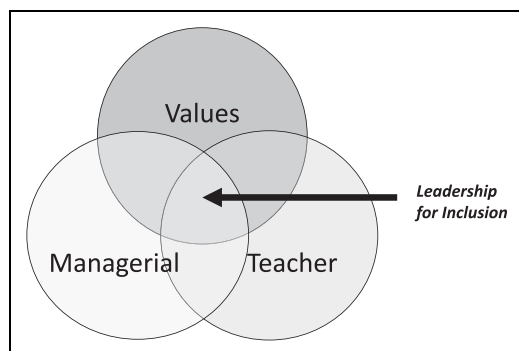


Figure 1. Distributed leadership system.

section of the article will explore how inclusive education is affected if one of the typologies illustrated in Figure 1 is absent, and in doing so will illustrate the importance of the triadic approach.

The case for distributed leadership

The legal architecture of the Irish education system vests formal responsibility for inclusion of children with SEN in the principal (DES, 2007, 2018). However, in recent times the responsibilities attached to principalship have rendered school leadership ‘an enormous task for one person to accomplish on his or her own’ (Brown et al., 2017: 3). There is a tacit acknowledgement of this in the *Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs* (DES, 2007: 68) document, which states that another teacher can ‘assume the responsibility for whole-school functions’ around inclusion. Without a distributed leadership structure in the school, this facility could not be utilised.

Although the role of Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is not formally recognised in the Irish policy context, the pressure on school principals has resulted in the proliferation of de facto SENCOs in many schools in Ireland. This observation is given credence by examining the Irish post-primary context, where Fitzgerald and Radford (2017) have found in their study of 27 schools that only two principals took responsibility for coordinating inclusive/special education themselves. There is no requirement on a school principal to have specialist knowledge on inclusion or special education, even though ‘school-leadership is critical in creating whole school approaches to inclusive education’ (Fitzgerald and Radford, 2017: 460). Without a culture of distributed leadership in a school, those with most experience in inclusive education have reduced capacity to influence inclusive whole-school systems. The extent to which the leadership triad itself could be accomplished, in the absence of distributed leadership, is limited, because its success depends on ‘coalitions of individuals’ being empowered to take up the invitation to lead at teacher, values and managerial levels (Kozleski and Huber, 2012: 155).

The teacher-managerial leadership dyad

Notwithstanding the potency of a teacher-managerial leadership dyad (King and Stevenson, 2017), it is not

sufficient to ensure meaningful inclusion for children with SEN in primary schools. This is ‘because attitudes, values and beliefs are fundamental to inclusive practices’ (Moloney and McCarthy, 2018: 49). Inclusion is intentionally led from a values perspective where leadership teams model inclusive values and challenge stereotypical behaviour which undermines them (Moloney and McCarthy, 2018).

Case study research on immigrant inclusion in the Irish context supports the importance of values leadership (Brown et al., 2017). Proposing a ‘distributed culturally responsive leadership’ model, Brown et al. (2017: 13) argue that effective leadership is generated by ‘the alignment among staff to a shared set of values’. The articulation of these values are what Sergiovanni and Starrat (2001) refer to as the ‘educational platform’ on which effective schools are built. The strong echoes of values-based leadership in Brown et al.’s (2017) typology can be transposed onto the inclusive education sector because those with disabilities, as with immigrants, were traditionally excluded from the education system (Borosan, 2017). Their ideas around listening to students are important because student voice is central to leadership for inclusion (Frederickson and Cline, 2015). Without values-based leadership as part of the triad, it might not necessarily be a part of a school’s calculus, as Figure 2 illustrates.

The teacher-values leadership dyad

Detaching the managerial element from any conception of school leadership, while ‘theoretically possible’ (Bush, 2015; Durrant, 2005; Torrance and Humes, 2015: 795), is in practice exceedingly difficult (Spillane and Diamond, 2007; Torrance and Humes, 2015). While teacher leadership and values leadership are critical, on their own, they are not enough to ensure successful provision for children with SEN in an inclusive learning environment. This is due to the organisational accommodations required to ensure meaningful inclusion (Florian, 2019) and the heavy administrative burden associated with SEN in the Irish context (Fitzgerald and Radford, 2017). The level of accountability now required makes managerial leadership a quasi-necessity (Drea and O’Brien, 2002). A brief examination of some of the statutory functions of school leadership in Ireland demonstrates why this is the case:

- The principal is required to be a member of the selection panel in employing teachers (DES, 2019). This role is especially important in identifying teachers who are ‘highly effective’ in educating children who have SEN (York-Barr et al., 2005: 193). Making the right selections also has important implications for retention (Semarco and Cho, 2018), which American research has identified as a problem in respect of teachers practising with children who have SEN (York-Barr et al., 2005).
- The principal must maintain records, timetable additional support, liaise with external agencies and ensure that ‘whole-school procedures are established to

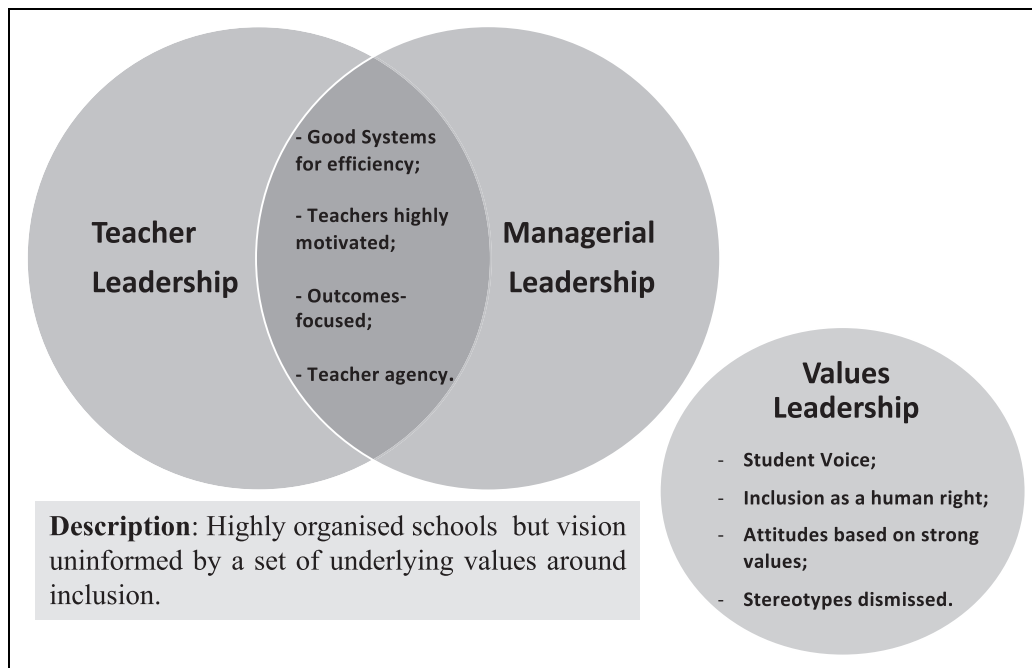


Figure 2. Teacher-managerial leadership dyad. Source: York-Barr et al. (2005), Bush and Glover (2014) and Hairon and Goh (2015).

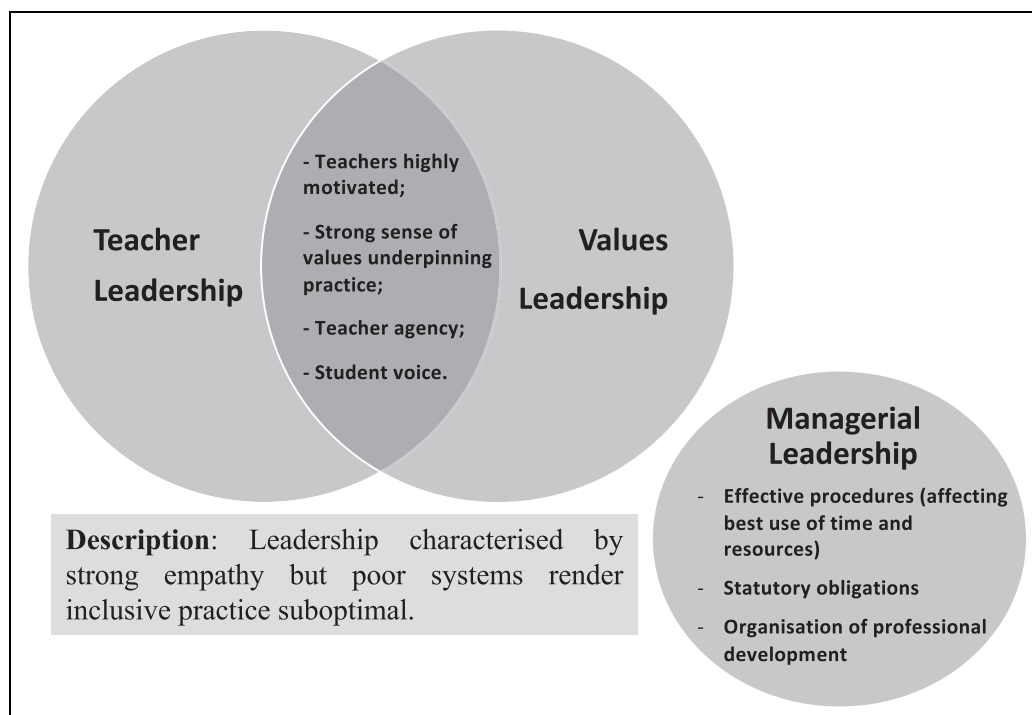


Figure 3. Teacher-values leadership dyad. Source: York-Barr et al. (2005), Bush and Glover (2014), Hairon and Goh (2015) and Hargreaves and O'Connor (2018).

facilitate the effective involvement of parents' (DES, 2017: 23). While a teacher-values leadership dyad might enrich those functions, managerial leadership is required to establish these kinds of organisational systems in the first place.

- The principal is obliged to arrange SEN professional development opportunities for teachers and 'oversee the implementation of a whole school assessment and

screening programme' to identify the school's needs (DES, 2000: 39).

While in practice many of these functions can be completed by another teacher in the school, this does not alter the fact that they are still functions of managerial leadership, as Figure 3 demonstrates, whether the teacher completing them has a management position or not. Those

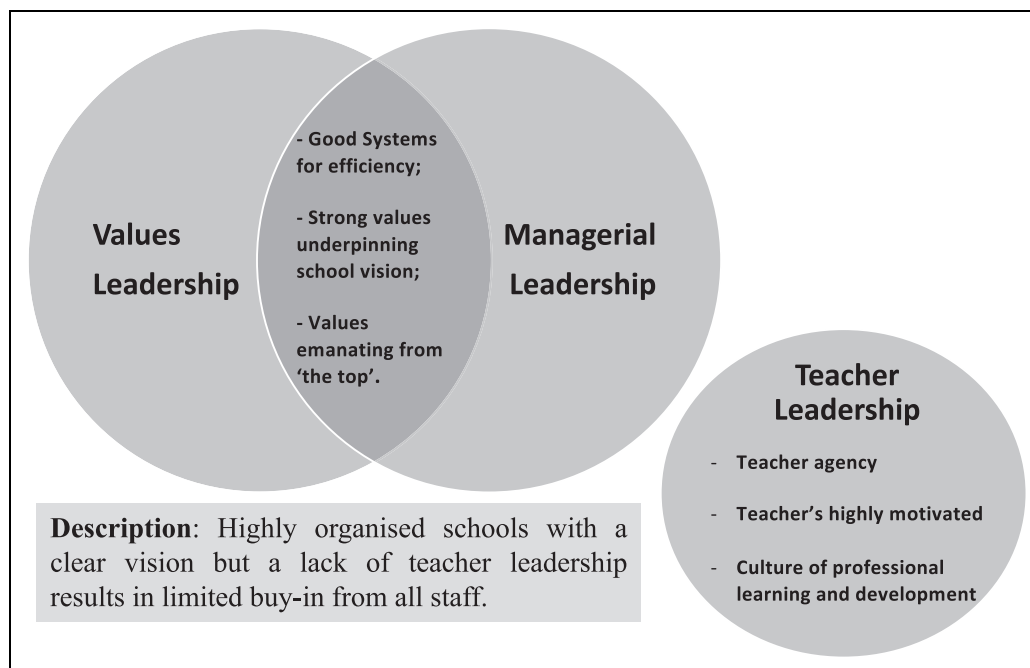


Figure 4. Managerial-values leadership dyad. Source: York-Barr et al. (2005), Bush and Glover (2014) and Hairon and Goh (2015).

delegated such responsibilities are fulfilling the role of 'SENCO as Auditor' in supporting the principal in the administration of the school (Kearns, 2005: 141).

Managerial-values leadership dyad

Structures and values are an important aspect of ensuring inclusive provision but the practice of inclusion itself depends not on procedures or ideologies but on teachers' 'hearts in the right place' (Warnock, 2005: 39). Without teacher leadership in the school and individual classrooms, inclusion becomes a mere political dogma where children with SEN are placed in mainstream, detached in reality from what that placement was intended to achieve (Warnock, 2005: 45):

The fact is that, if educated in mainstream schools, many such children are not included at all. They suffer all the pains of the permanent outsider.

As Figure 4 intimates, teacher leadership is required to enable teacher agency. Collaboration with other stakeholders, engaging in professional learning and attaining a high level of professional competence is a critical factor in the execution of inclusive pedagogies. It is for this reason that York-Barr et al. (2005) have argued that the work of educators supporting inclusion should be reframed as teacher leadership. Teacher leaders in inclusive settings must keep the broad 'vision or goal in clear focus, while simultaneously observing and orchestrating the smallest details' (York-Barr et al., 2005: 211).

Any conception of leadership within the inclusive education sector that does not include teacher leadership is likely to be suboptimal, because attracting high-quality, specialist teachers to work with children with

SEN is often dependent on them being allowed to exercise such leadership (York-Barr et al., 2005). There is evidence that teachers working with children with SEN are more likely than other teaching groups to leave the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). Part of the reason for this may be because they feel 'they are being held accountable for things over which they have little or no control' (Nazareno, 2013: 50). The promotion of teacher leadership affords skilled teachers the 'authority and autonomy to make authentic decisions' that develops their professional competence (Nazareno, 2013: 51). In leading through 'the horizontal channels of influence and relationship, as opposed to the vertical channels of hierarchy and positional power' (York-Barr et al., 2005: 211), teacher leaders anchor the leadership triad within the distributed domain.

Conclusion

Effective school leadership is an indispensable component of ensuring inclusive educational provision for children with SEN in the Irish context (Fitzgerald and Radford, 2017, 2020). Exercising a one-dimensional form of school leadership is insufficient to guarantee such provision. This article has theorised a triadic leadership typology present in all schools with meaningful inclusive provision. It has argued that this typology can only exist within a distributed framework because each arc of the triad is dependent on leadership being exercised, not only by the principal, but by other professionals working within the school. Values leadership is needed because meaningful inclusion is dependent on beliefs and attitudes; teacher leadership is required

because those involved in inclusive education need to be driven in the pursuit of excellence and improvement; while the organisational issues associated with effective SEN provision in the Irish context render managerial leadership a necessity. Of course, this article is a theoretical exploration of what leadership for inclusion might look like. It is informed by the author's own experience as a school principal, as well as a critical review of relevant literature in the inclusive education domain. Empirical research is required to test the conception of leadership articulated here. This article, and the hybrid leadership typology presented, will make a small, but significant, contribution towards this future research and provide some key signposts for further exploration.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

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Author biography

Barry Morrissey is Principal of the Limerick School Project – an equality-based primary school in the heart of Limerick City in Ireland. He has taught in both mainstream and special education settings for many years, and immediately prior to taking up principalship he was seconded to Ireland's Department of Education and Skills as a Professional Development Advisor. At present he is completing his Doctorate (Inclusive and Special Education) at the Institute of Education in Dublin City University.

