

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Prof. RJ (Nico) Botha
College of Education
Unisa
Pretoria

6 September 2011

Creative leadership for tomorrow's schools: In search of new metaphors

As countries struggle to transform their education systems to prepare all young people with the knowledge and skills needed to function in rapidly changing societies, the roles and expectations for school leaders have changed radically. They are no longer expected to be merely good managers but leaders of schools as learning organisations. Effective school leadership is increasingly viewed as the key to large-scale education reform and to improved educational outcomes (Rapporteur, Moorman & Pont 2008)

Dear Professor Setati, other senior members of Management, colleagues, friends and family: I am so pleased you have joined me today at this inaugural lecture on “*Creative leadership for our schools of tomorrow: In search of new metaphors*”. Your kindness in accepting this invitation is greatly appreciated. Let me commence this lecture from a school improvement paradigm. Over the last few decades, research into education has led to the conclusion that there are indeed three factors in the quest for school improvement, namely agenda, community and capacity. My comments today, using educational leadership as framework, will refer frequently to these three factors.

The continuing reform initiatives taking place in our society and schools today call for new views on educational leadership. This lecture focuses on evolving school leadership within this changing context. It portrays the school context as dynamic and characterised by the interaction of external and internal factors, with the latter dominated by issues such as change, school improvement and school-based management. To understand the types of leadership approaches and metaphors suitable for the new environment, one first needs to understand this dynamic nature of change and the considerable challenges that emerge from it.

Given the present time constraints, I will neither explicitly examine the context in which schools operate, nor focus on the struggle by larger societal forces to have schools shape that context. Instead, my comments in this lecture will be grouped into three major sections.

In the first section, I will deal with the concept of educational leadership in a time of reform. In the second section, I will examine the defining characteristics of modern school reform. The third and last section of this lecture will present an emerging vision of creative leadership that will, I believe, help give life to these central elements of school reform. In so doing, I will introduce a few emerging metaphors of creative leadership that may have an effect on how our schools of tomorrow will be led. The focus in this lecture will therefore be on an emerging vision of schooling and the evolving concepts of creative leadership needed to nurture the development of that vision.

PART 1: EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN A TIME OF REFORM

In a discussion of the concept of educational leadership in a time of reform, four focus points seem to emerge from the research literature and consequently need to be addressed, namely

- The nature of educational leadership;
- The link between leadership and management;
- New trends in educational leadership; and
- Traditional approaches to educational leadership.

a) The nature of educational leadership

Defining the concept of leadership or educational leadership is one of the most challenging tasks facing educational researchers, educational practitioners or even educational leaders. It is such a complex concept that its definition, as well as its description, depends on how, when and by whom it is viewed and one's ability to defend a particular viewpoint. Leadership depends also on the position from which it is viewed and the conditions under which the definition or description is made (Pushpanadham 2006). It is this complex nature of educational leadership that drives continuing and sustained research in this area. Since there are so many different concepts of educational leadership, no universally accepted definition exists. Bolden (2004) summarises how the complexity of leadership in general makes it difficult to present a convincing definition, when he says:

In short, leadership is a complex phenomenon that touches on many other important organisational, social and personal processes. It depends on a process of influence, whereby people are inspired to work towards group goals, not through coercion, but through personal motivation. Which definition you accept should be a matter of choice, informed by your own predispositions, situation and beliefs.

Authors such as Bass (in Love 1994) divides leadership definitions into categories such as an act of behaviour, the art of inducing compliance, the exercise of influence, a form of persuasion, a power relation, an instrument of goal achievement and an emerging act of intervention. This provides an idea of the complexity of issues involved in the study of leadership. One of the traditional and widely accepted definitions for leadership is that of Greenberg and Baron (1993) who describes leadership as "*the process whereby one person influences individual and group members towards goal setting and goal achievement with no force or coercion*". According to this definition, leadership is not a matter of passive status or of the mere possession of some combination of traits. It appears rather to be a working relationship among members of a group, in which the leader acquires status through active participation and demonstration of his capacity for carrying cooperative tasks through to completion (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson 2001).

In summary it can be concluded that leadership is generally defined as the process of directing the behaviour of others towards the accomplishment of goals. It involves elements such as influencing and motivating people, either as individuals or groups, managing conflict and communicating with subordinates. Educational leadership entails all these aspects in an educational setting or school context.

b) The link between educational leadership and management

Another common issue that derived from the research literature on leadership is the continuing debate focusing on the link or relationship between leadership and management.

This debate, so common in leadership and management studies, has almost degenerated into, what Bennis (2007) refers to, “*conventional wisdom or an academic slogan*”. Some authors such as Ingvarson, Anderson and Gronn (2006) suggest a clear-cut distinction between the concepts and thus reinforce the idea that there is very little connection between them when they argue that leadership is mainly concerned with “*setting a new direction for an organisation*” while management is concerned with “*directing and controlling according to established principles*”. What this implies is that one can choose either to manage or to lead, and still succeed in carrying out either of the two effectively. In contrast, authors such as Bennis and Nanus (1985) indicate a clear link between the two concepts and reinforce the view that leadership is an essential part of management when they perceive management as “*doing things right*” and leadership as “*doing the right things*”. These authors contend that leadership and management are indeed two distinct but interrelated concepts, both essential in the school context.

c) New trends in educational leadership

In the past few decades various research studies focusing on educational leadership have emerged in the educational reform landscape of developed countries. Two major trends in educational leadership with regard to reform that emerged from these studies are worth noting, namely that of decentralisation (Murphy & Beck 1995; Johnston 1997; Bisschoff 2000; Bush & Heystek 2003; Taylor 2004; Botha 2006; Cuban 2008) and that of change and school improvement (Avery 2004; Marishane 2009; Marishane & Botha 2011).

I will deal with the trend of decentralisation first. This trend has changed the nature and shape of educational management with the blessing and advocacy of agencies such as The World Bank (2007) and UNESCO (2005). According to UNESCO (2005), decentralisation in practical terms, and I quote, “*aims at increasing responsibilities for efficient resource management and education quality improvements at levels below the central level*”.

Decentralisation in education is generally understood to refer to the devolution of decision-making authority from the central office of the state to the school level, in order to facilitate the inclusion and enhance active participation of those school community members who were previously excluded from decision-making processes. The move in support of decentralisation is motivated by the belief that a school can improve if those close to it have power and freedom over the use of resources geared toward its improvement. This has led to many countries developing policies of decentralisation and implementing various strategies to implement these policies. One such strategy is called ‘*school-based management*’ or ‘*site-based management*’, as it is commonly referred to in Britain, Canada, Australia and the USA (Rodriguez & Slate 2005; Marsihane 2009; Moller 2009).

Decentralisation of management policies through the application of a school-based management strategy has brought about the emergence in different countries of different types of schools with different degrees of authority.

These include `Charter schools' in the USA (Vanourek 2005), `Foundation schools' in Britain (West 2009) and `Section 21 schools' in South Africa (Marishane 2003). This shift towards school-based management, as well as other reform initiatives such as political and curriculum changes that have taken place over this time, has presented enormous challenges to role-players at every level of the education system, with many of the effects felt by those at the school level (Caldwell 2005; Gertler 2007).

The emergence of school-based management emphasises not only the importance of educational leadership, but also the need to look anew at the leadership role of the school principal. The current position of the principalship renders not only authority but also leadership to the incumbent (Dimmock & Wildley 1999). As more and more countries worldwide implement reform initiatives such as school-based management, principals are becoming more empowered. Empowerment with added authority in turn demands new and creative ways of leadership from the principal in terms of his or her style and vision and it is clear that in future, school principals will need to come up with new and creative approaches to leadership (Robinson 2008).

The second trend that has emerged is that of change and school improvement. Change and improvement are underlying concepts in all definitions of leadership. Change in school leadership and management entered an intense global discourse on educational reform towards the end of the last century, and well into the 21st century the debate continues unabated, if not vigorously. Preoccupation with change that underscores educational reform has been motivated by the growing demand for school improvement (Avery 2004; Marishane & Botha 2011).

School improvement is pursued by, among other things, seeking ways which will strengthen the management and leadership capacities of those working in schools to ensure that learners are provided with and experience quality learning opportunities. As an important component of management, school leadership is pivotal in determining the success of school improvement. The relationship between change, improvement and leadership in an era of educational reform can be described in a simple way, namely: Educational reform is about change and change in education is about improvement. In order for change to bring about sustainable improvement, effective leadership is required to lead change and direct it towards this end. In the words of Murphy (2003) and I quote: "*Effective leadership is a key component of lasting reform efforts*".

The concepts of educational decentralisation and change or school improvement dealt with in this section cannot be discussed in isolation from evolving views on educational leadership within the realm of educational change. This issue will now be dealt with.

d) Traditional approaches to educational leadership

A synopsis of some of the 'older' and more traditional views of or approaches to educational leadership that gained prominence in the past few decades is subsequently given. Common among these approaches is the understanding of school leadership as an evolving process. Although there are also others, the following seven traditional educational leadership approaches have been associated with the position of the principalship over the years (Hersey 1984; Blumberg & Greenfield 1986; Tichy 1990; Thody 1999; 2000; Grubb & Flessa 2006):

- **Authoritative leadership:** This traditional leadership concept presents the principal as someone who is totally in charge and is associated with aspects such as authority and power. In this approach the principal's subordinates have to accept his commands.
- **Instructional leadership:** This leadership concept presents the principal as someone whose approach to curriculum and instructional development displays strong, directive behaviour.
- **Contingency leadership:** This situational concept of the principal as leader proceeds from the premise that each situation is unique and must be viewed as such, to the conclusion that the effectiveness of leadership is contingent upon a particular situation.
- **Transactional leadership:** This approach occurs when the relationship between the leader and the followers is forged mainly on the basis of the exchange of valued things between them.
- **Shared leadership:** Also known as collaborative or distributed leadership, this approach, in which a leader acknowledges that leadership of an organisation cannot be the exclusive preserve of a single person, is team-based.
- **Transformational leadership:** This approach to leadership occurs when leaders and followers join hands "*in pursuit of higher-order common goals*", as Barnett and Sager (1994) refer to it. Transformational leaders build unity with followers around a clear collective vision and a commonly understood and accepted mission and purpose (Steward 2006).
- **Political leadership:** This leadership role of the principal can be described in terms of the principal as a member of the school governing body. In this structure the principal usually serves as a non-voting, *ex officio* member who nonetheless plays an important political leadership role.

Notwithstanding the fact that most of these traditional approaches will, according to Grubb and Flessa (2006), continue to be relevant in the future, Banathy (1999) posits the need for a comprehensive transformation or new way of thinking, an entirely new vision in our concepts of educational leadership for tomorrow's schools when he says:

Improving our educational system, which is still grounded in the industrial revolution of the 20th century, will not do in this post-industrial information society. What we need is a new image of education attained by a broad sweep of a comprehensive transformation; a metamorphosis of what we are used to.

With these words in mind, the next part of this lecture will focus on the defining characteristics of modern school reform that specifically necessitate a new way of thinking with regard to our concept of educational leadership for tomorrow's schools.

PART 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN SCHOOL REFORM

Underlying the literature on school reform, school restructuring and emerging visions for schooling (Murphy 1995; 2003; Rapporteur, Moorman & Pont 2008; Marishane & Sadiki 2009; Ainscow, Chapman, Bragg, Gunter, Hull, Mongon, Muijs & West 2009) are three central themes which represent the heart and soul of school reform.

They represent fundamental shifts in the notions of education that have dominated schooling for the last century, while touching each of the three key levels of schools as organisations: namely the institutional level or the interface between schools and their environments, the managerial level and the technical core level, or teaching and learning in the case of schools.

The three fundamental shifts that will be examined derived from earlier research on this issue by Murphy (1995; 2003); Begley (2000); Hay (2005); Hargreaves (2007); Marishane and Sadiki (2009) and they are:

- from producer-driven to consumer-driven concepts of education on the institutional level;
- from a hierarchic, bureaucratic focus to communal views of schooling on the managerial level;
- and from behavioural to social constructivist perspectives about teaching and learning on the core level.

The three key levels of the school organisation, each with its own fundamental shift, can be depicted as follows:

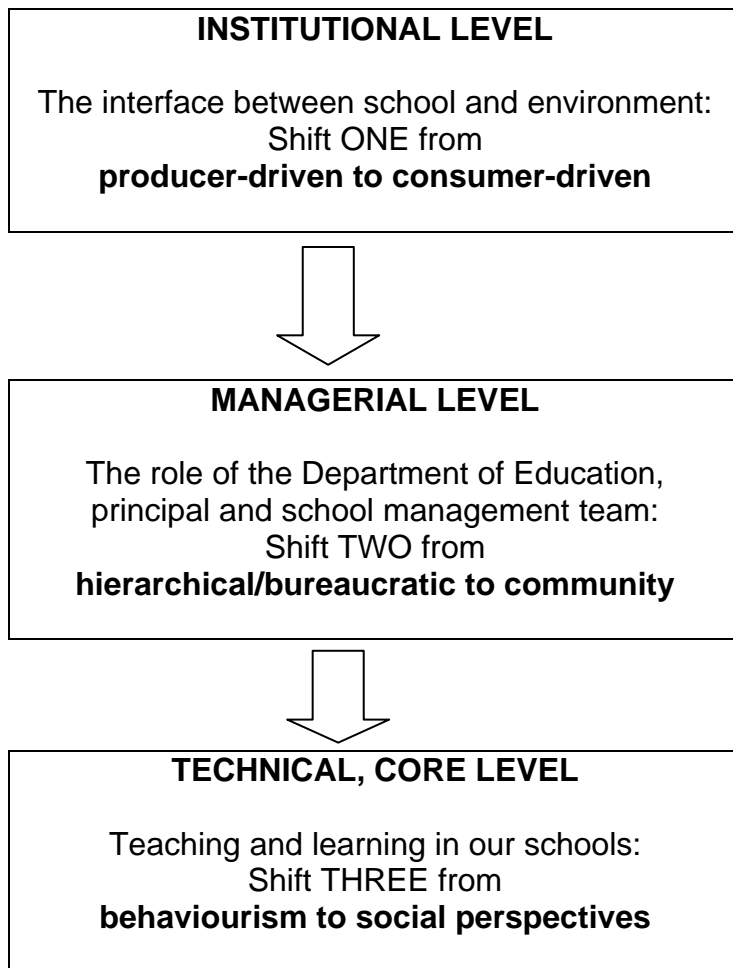


Figure 1: The changing conceptions of school reform
(Adapted from Murphy 2003)

Shift 1: From producer control to consumerism

There is currently a fundamental change in our view of the relationship between the school and its environment. Historically ingrained notions of schools as sheltered public monopolies are breaking down under the incursions of a market philosophy and consumerism into education. The business of schooling is being redefined in relation to the customer, marketisation and consumerism (Murphy 1995). Much of what is occurring today under the banner of school reform, when viewed holistically, lends support to the conclusion that privatisation of the educational industry is a central theme of this issue. Attacks on the dysfunctional and often monopolistic nature of the school and appeals to the power of competition to foster much-needed improvements in education are prominent (Hay 2005).

At the same time, the traditional dominant relationship between professional educators and the public is being reviewed in favour of parents and community members (Grubb & Flessa 2006). The role of parents is dramatically redefined in the restructuring of schools. Hargreaves (2007) emphasised four elements of this evolving role in the restructuring process, namely choice in selecting a school; voice in school governance and management; partnership in the educational process; and enhanced membership of the school community. Central to all four is the blurring of boundaries between the home and the school and between the school and the community. This places greater accountability on our schools and specifically on the leadership role of the school principal (Botha 2006).

Shift 2: From hierarchy to community

There is a growing feeling that the existing structures of management in our schools are unsustainable (Marishane & Botha 2011). Although school-based management has existed for a while, there are still various scholars such as Murphy (1995); Naidoo (2005); Gertler (2007) and Robinson (2008) who believe that the continuation of the existing bureaucratic systems of management in our schools is counterproductive to the needs and interests of educators. Behind the basic critique lie several beliefs such as that bureaucracies are set up to serve the adults that run them, that bureaucratic management practices undermine the authority of teachers, that these practices are incompatible with the professional nature of schools and, even worse, that they have been causing unacceptable distortions in the educational process (RSA 2007a).

In view of the far-reaching attack on the basic organisational infrastructure of schools, McNeil (1998) asserted, not unexpectedly, more than a decade ago that *“ambitious, if not radical, reforms are required to rectify this situation”*. In place of bureaucracy is an argument for the self-management of schools that, and I quote, involve *“a philosophy that will require from school principals to lead in new and creative ways”* (Crowther, Hann & Andrews 2002).

Shift 3: From behaviourism to social perspectives

At the centre of this new vision of schools for tomorrow are fairly radical changes in our assumptions about knowledge. The alpha paradigm of knowledge, i.e. the assumption that, and I quote, *“knowledge can be assumed to be an external entity existing independently of human thought and action, and hence, something about which one can be objective”* (Fisher 1990) has begun to be critically examined. Theorists such as Begley (2000) challenge this assumption of a cognitive core independent of context and intention. A newly situated nature of cognition, i.e. an assumption that holds that knowledge is internal and subjective, that it depends on the values of the persons working with it and the context within which that work is conducted, is receiving serious consideration.

As a result, in schools of tomorrow knowledge will be perceived as something mutually constructed by teacher and learner in order to make sense of human experiences. Knowledge will be seen as something that is created by humans rather than received by humans. Learning, on the other hand, is a social phenomenon. It will therefore also be necessary to devote considerable attention to the social and cultural contexts in which learning takes place. The traditional emphasis on acquiring information is being replaced by a focus on learning to learn and on the ability to use knowledge (Grub & Flessa 2006). In schools of tomorrow, a learner-centred model will replace the more traditional teacher-centred instruction on the core level and this will place huge demands on the way in which these schools will be instructionally led. In this regard outcomes-based education was introduced locally as an attempt to replace the traditional model, but failed miserably locally due to a variety of reasons (Marishane & Botha 2011).

The third and last section of this lecture presents an emerging vision of creative leadership that will, I suggest, help give life to these central elements of school reform.

PART 3: AN EMERGING VISION OF CREATIVE LEADERSHIP

According to Culbertson (2002), "*the over-riding challenge for tomorrow's school leaders then, is to help articulate and implement an educational vision for a new society*". Taking the abovementioned school reforms in mind, it becomes clear that schools of the future cannot be led in the same traditional manner as before and that these reforms necessitate new approaches to creative leadership. Because changing our metaphors is an important prerequisite for developing new approaches to leadership, a metaphorical approach will be applied in this section.

Principals worldwide use different leadership styles and approaches. The principal's style in leadership was traditionally based on his or her assumptions about human beings, human learning and human nature. These assumptions, conscious or not, are the foundation for choosing a leadership approach. Likewise, epistemological beliefs influence all aspects of education, especially leadership approaches. Schommer (1990) recasts epistemological beliefs as a system of independent beliefs, meaning that there is more than one belief, or approach in this instance, to be considered. Leadership consists of knowledge and skills which influence and direct others' activities. Therefore, a person's leadership style is the behavioural patterns or epistemological beliefs which he or she uses while directing others to do the job. Therefore, according to Varaki (2003) and I quote: "*the principal's assumptions and attitude toward other stakeholders are the foundation for the behavioural modification of individuals and ultimately for his/her choice of leadership style*". My view is consistent with existing research that suggests that a principal's leadership approach is often the reason why principals are successful or not as educational leaders.

School leadership for the schools of tomorrow will consequently be discussed by using various metaphors that portray fundamental shifts in our concept of educational leadership – metaphors that convey changes from what leadership is today to what leadership will need to be in tomorrow's schools. Although there are also other emerging approaches to or metaphors for educational leadership such as the post-modernistic style as well as the Ubuntu view on leadership, the following five metaphorical lenses seem to be the most relevant in a discussion of creative leadership for tomorrow's schools, namely that of the school principal as community servant, as organisational architect, as social architect, as moral educator and as visionary leader (cf. Murphy 1995; 2003; Fryar 2001; Stone, Russell & Patterson 2003; Davis, LaPointe & Meyerson 2005; Cuban 2008):

The school principal as community servant/facilitative leader

The leadership challenges for principals in this new era will be complex. Not only must they accept the mantle of leadership (i.e. changing from implementers to initiators, from focusing on process to a concern for outcomes, from being risk avoiders and conflict managers to risk takers) but they will also need to adopt leadership strategies that are in harmony with the central tenets of the innovative school organisations they seek to create, **working with people rather than through them**. As parents and the community are becoming equal partners in the South African educational landscape through formal structures such as school governing bodies and parent-teacher associations, principals will need to facilitate these partnerships and become '*servants*' of the community and the people in the true sense of the word. Principals will need to learn to become servant facilitative leaders, leading by **empowering staff rather than by controlling them**. Leadership in such a school becomes a support function for teaching rather than a mechanism for the control of teaching (Stone, Russell & Patterson 2003; RSA 2007a).

According to Fryar (2001), servant leadership differs from more traditional views of leadership in a number of ways. Establishing meaning rather than controlling and supervising is at the core of this type of leadership, which is based on dialogue and cooperative, democratic leadership principles. It is more ethical and is grounded more in the modelling of values and beliefs than upon telling people what to do. In such a paradigm, to lead means to serve. Serving leaders such as Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela have had a huge influence on the history of the world. This approach to leadership is influenced by the spirit of these leaders, their humanity and their respect for others. This type of leader can persuade and inspire staff to walk the extra mile, enabling the organisation to survive in times of uncertainty.

In summary, the servant-leader is a steward who holds the organization in trust to the public it serves, while empowering others to succeed professionally and personally. A servant-leader is one who is committed to the growth of both the individual and the organization, and who works to build community within the school as organisation.

The school principal as organisational architect

If there is an all-encompassing challenge for our leaders of tomorrow's schools, it is to lead the transition from the bureaucratic model of schooling to an **adaptive, self-management model**. At the same time, principals will have to adjust their own definition of what it means to be a school leader. The challenge, then, is to redirect administration from management to leadership, and to do so in ways consistent with the principles of post-industrial organisations. Administration has evolved to meet the clerical needs of the school. Bureaucratic schools require managers, but self-managed democratic schools of tomorrow will require leaders.

As noted earlier, there is a fair amount of agreement that existing organisational structures contribute to the problems that currently confront schools, and that these conditions either cause or support the educational negligence that often characterises the schooling system (Botha 2006; Marishane & Botha 2011). The attack on the existing bureaucratic infrastructure of the school, as already mentioned, is based on the belief that, according to authors such as Cuban (2008), "*the institution itself impedes the performance of all those working within it*" and those who, according to McNeil (1998), maintains that "*bureaucratic controls undermine educational goals*". School leaders of tomorrow will need to function less as classical managers and more as change agents. McNeil (1998) states in this regard:

The new school leader will not be a classical, hierarchically oriented bureaucrat, but a customised version of Indiana Jones: proactive, entrepreneurial, communicating, able to inspire, empower, motivate and persuade subordinates, colleagues and outside stakeholders in the educational landscape.

In summary: This metaphor confirmed the appropriateness of viewing the principal's role in school effectiveness through a conceptual framework that places the principal's leadership behaviour in the context of the school organization and its environment. The central purpose to this view is to argue that leadership is an organisational quality and that it flows through the network of roles that comprise organisations.

The school principal as social architect

As the single most important individual in the school context, the principal must possess the skills and abilities to transform the school into a high-performing organization focused on improving teaching and learning outcomes to prepare learners for the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Beyond these essential duties, the school leader is also confronted by some of the pressing social challenges that affect society and schooling on a daily basis in South Africa, including globalization, poverty, unemployment, unacceptable low literacy and numeracy rates amongst primary school learners, high crime rates, the ravages of HIV/AIDS, corruption, power black-outs, teen-age pregnancies, poor services delivery as well as a predictable water shortage within the next 20 years that will have an unimaginable backlash on the society at large.

It is these broader responsibilities, in fact, that have come to define the daily work of school leaders. This often-overwhelming social context makes the role of the principal extremely demanding, complex, and challenging. These changes are nowhere more visible than in the family. The condition and structure of the South African family is changing, so that an increasing number of learners come from homes without parents, without strong support systems and most often from very poor and disadvantage communities. The task then is to restructure schools completely in order to address these needs and problems. Problems currently experienced in this regard in South African schools indicate that we have so far largely failed this challenge (Marishane & Botha 2011). School leaders of tomorrow will need to play a significant role in determining whether the efforts of our schools are successful or not in this regard. The metaphor of the school leader as social architect has clear implications for the role of school leaders of the future, because schools in South Africa, as they are led today, are clearly not able to respond to these increasing demands (Botha 2006). School leaders will need to invent and implement ways of making schools into living places that fit learners, rather than continuing to operate schools for 'good learners' only who adapt to the existing structure. At the same time, school leaders will need to have a general appreciation of cultural diversity and understand how to make it work in the educational setting. To accomplish this, principals of tomorrow will need to bring together home, society and school more effectively in a concerted effort to address these increasing complexities in our society and to enhance the quality of education in the process (Davis, LaPointe & Meyerson 2005; RSA 2007b).

The school principal as moral, ethical or pastoral leader

The metaphor of the school leader as moral educator takes on many forms. At its roots is the fundamental belief of Greenfield (1999) who states that "*the new science of management will be a science with values and of values*". Moral leadership acknowledges that values and value judgements are the central elements in the day-to-day realisation of the educational purpose. As moral educators, leaders of tomorrow's schools will be more heavily invested in purpose-defining activities than simply in managing existing arrangements. This means that those wishing to impact society as school leaders must be motivated by a set of deep personal social values and beliefs (Bezzina 2007). This metaphor emphasises the fact that morality and values are at the very core of education. **Education is an inherently moral matter.** It is moral because people develop or fail to develop also morally.

Schools are inherently moral as well. For most children, school is life, not just preparation for it. Children learn from the lives they lead, not just from lessons. If we want our children to lead ethical lives, the school should model ethical behaviour.

As the moral character of both families and schools in South African continues to decline, school leaders should view their leadership task more as a mission than a job, as, according to Murphy (1995), a “*meaningful calling of the highest order*”. The task of the school leader will be, as Sergiovanni (1996) have stated, to “*create a moral order that bonds both leader and followers to a set of shared values and beliefs*”. The pedagogic dimensions of moral leadership are also becoming more clearly defined (Duignan & Bezzina 2006). Tomorrow’s leaders must provide one portion of learners with a more complex and demanding educational experience than ever before, while also reaching a large portion of learners who have not experienced success even under less demanding standards and expectations, largely due to issues such as Apartheid and subsequent poverty (Shapiro & Stefkovich 2000; Botha 2010). The belief that the activities of school leaders are deeply intertwined with ethical and moral issues is central to the issue of moral educational leadership. This belief means, *inter alia*, sensitivity to racial issues and the goal of equal educational opportunities and to be responsive to the needs of historically disenfranchised and undereducated learners. As defined by Kidder (1994), and I quote, “*an ethical dilemma is not a choice between right and wrong, but a choice between two rights*”.

The school principal as visionary leader

Creative leadership for our schools of tomorrow needs to be anchored in the struggle to forge a new vision for schools, and such a vision should be firmly grounded in a transformational view of education in relation to the South African society at large (Moller 2009). As a vision builder, the school principal assumes a futuristic-style of leadership. This involves taking the initiative in developing a dream about the school and sharing it with others in such a way that what is initially a personal dream is reshaped and elevated to the status of a shared organisational vision (Duignan & Bezzina 2006; Steward 2006).

According to Murphy (2003), this has three advantages. Firstly, a clearly expressed and shared vision gives all stakeholders in the school community clear direction. Secondly, for people to pursue a shared vision they need to have shared goals and clarity on how to achieve these goals. For this reason, the visionary school principal should be able to communicate realistic goals to stakeholders and ensure that all of them rally around these common goals. Thirdly, the visionary school principal should sets high performance standards directed at the achievement of these goals.

Viewed from the multifaceted school leadership perspective presented in this lecture, visionary leaders are leaders who cast their vision beyond the visible horizon and expect the unexpected. Hay’s (2005) approach to creating a vision lies in the development of, and I quote, a “*shared commitment to core values*” that will, by their very nature, change how people work together.

Stone, Russell & Patterson (2003) explains such a leadership shift in terms of tomorrow's values in schools and ways to put these values into action, namely openness to participation, openness to diversity, openness to conflict, openness to reflection and openness to mistakes.

Visionary leaders are the builders of a new dawn, working with imagination, insight, and boldness. They present a challenge that calls forth the best in people and brings them together around a shared sense of purpose. They work with the power of intentionality and alignment with a higher purpose. Their eyes are on the horizon, not just on the near at hand. They are social innovators and change agents, seeing the big picture and thinking strategically. There is a profound inter-connectedness between the leader and the whole, and true visionary leaders serve the good of the whole. They recognize that there is some truth on both sides of most polarized issues in our society today.

SYNTHESIS

The transition from the traditional educational leadership approaches to more emerging leadership metaphors (Ainscow et al. 2009) necessitated, *inter alia*, by modern school reforms, will now be discussed. While some of the traditional approaches to school leadership will continue to be relevant (Grubb & Flessa 2006), some of the current and outdated leadership practices will have to be changed to be in line with modern school reform.

As the South African educational landscape is volatile and changing by the day, the contingency leadership metaphor will always remain relevant as the school situation is and always will be contingent in nature. Emerging metaphors of school leadership are all dependent on the situation and will therefore be contingency-based. The authoritative leadership approach, for one, will not be applicable in the South African schools of tomorrow because of changing assumptions and the democratisation of the country as well as the school environment. As an organisational architect, the principal is to lead the transition from the autocratic and bureaucratic models of schooling to a more adaptive, self-management, distributive and participative model. Although instructional leadership is widely acknowledged to be a critical skill in educational leadership, very few South African principals have had training for that role (Marishane & Botha 2011). Current assumptions of instructional leadership (Grigg, Prichett & Thomas 2007) include much deeper involvement in the teaching and learning process and carry more sophisticated views of professional development of staff.

Influenced by leadership developments in the private sector, the focus has increasingly shifted in schools from an instructional model towards facilitative models of leadership that emphasise collaboration and empowerment. This suggests that the principal's role should not be to direct others but to facilitate a process in which decisions are made collaboratively. The servant leadership metaphor requires the principal to exercise power through others, instead of over them (Grigg et al. 2007).

In an era of transformation, the transformational leadership metaphor, focusing on the importance of teamwork and comprehensive school improvement, will continue to be important, but only as an expansion to other modes of leadership such as visionary and ethical leadership (Steward 2006). As 'vision' is one of the most frequently used buzzwords in the educational literature of the modern era, this aspect may be considered as the make-or-break leadership task of the school leader of tomorrow, more specifically in the ways in which leaders facilitate their vision. This includes the ethical responsibilities of principals and the dilemmas that they face in this regard. They should be able to examine these dilemmas from different perspectives and be willing to act and reflect upon them according to standards that are ethically acceptable.

The traditional transactional leadership role of the principal where relationships are based on the exchange of values (Grubb & Flessa 2006) will be continued and will expand as moral leadership which increasingly acknowledges the fact that values and value judgements are the central elements in the day-to-day realisation of the educational purpose. Those principals who really wish to influence society as school leaders will need to be motivated by a set of deep, personal social values and beliefs (Jones & Rudd 2007).

The shared or collaborative leadership metaphor emphasises a team-based approach to leadership (Spillane 2006). The metaphor of the school leader as social architect has clear implications for the role of school leaders as social architects of the future. School leaders of tomorrow will need to treat cultural diversity in a complex South African society from a team-based approach to make it work in the educational setting. In this process they will need to bring together home and school more effectively in a concerted effort to enhance the quality of education. The traditional concept of shared leadership will have to make way for their role as, *inter alia*, social architects of the schools of tomorrow (Duignan & Bezzina 2006).

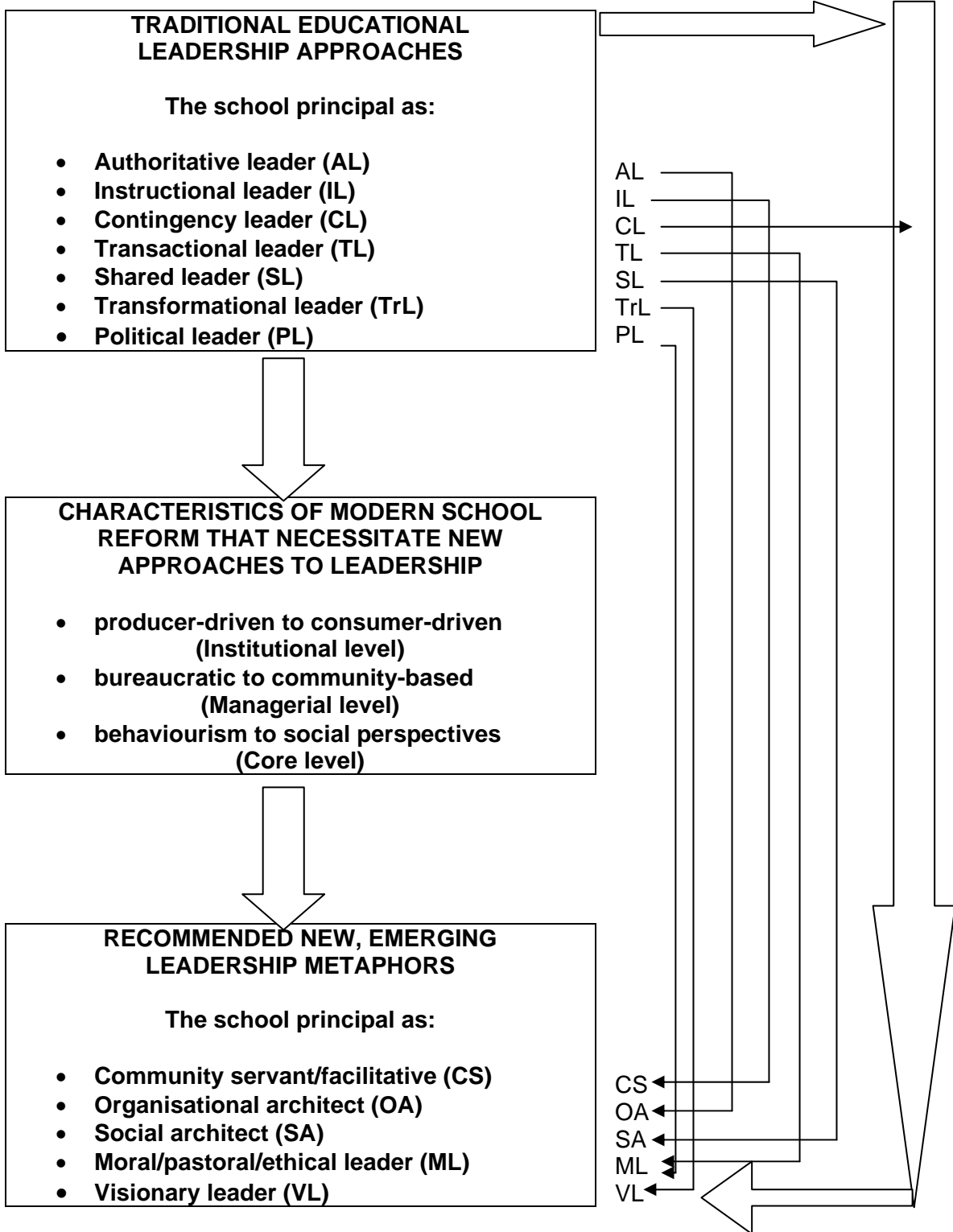


Figure 2: The changing metaphors of educational leadership

CONCLUSION

In conclusion: Studies on school restructuring and the leadership role of the school principal in this process suggest that what has been the traditional leadership role of the school principal appears to be changing in relation to the substantial changes and school-wide reforms that are taking place in our schools today. In response, this lecture has focused on evolving school leadership amid the changing school context. Understanding this dynamic nature and the critical changes and challenges that emerge is a prerequisite for understanding the type of leadership metaphor suitable for the new environment.

This lecture presented a multifaceted framework for school leadership to indicate leadership's response to the changing context, consisting of new emerging metaphors such as those of the school principal as community servant, as organisational architect, as social architect, as ethical or pastoral educator and as visionary leader.

An elevated concept of educational leadership, consistent with the changes noted earlier in this study, is an integral part of almost all visions' of schooling for tomorrow. Consideration and understanding of both its context in general and its dynamics in particular are important for successfully leading our schools of the future in an environment that is continually changing. I began this lecture with a quotation. Allow me to conclude with the following one from Davis, LaPointe & Meyerson (2005):

The role of the principal has swelled to include a staggering array of professional tasks and competencies. They are expected to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations and communications experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators, as well as guardians. In addition, they are expected to serve the often conflicting needs and interests of many stakeholders, including learners, parents, teachers, unions and departmental officials. Too often our nation looks for heroes in all the wrong places. Movie stars, musicians, athletes and models are not heroes, they are celebrities. Heroes abound as principals in our public schools.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ainscow C M, Bragg J, Chapman C, Gunter H, Hull J, Mongon D, Muijs D. & West M. 2009. *Emerging patterns of school leadership: Current practice and future directions*. Research report prepared by the University of Manchester for the National College for School Leadership. Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.
- Avery G 2004. *Understanding leadership*. London: SAGE.
- Banathy B H 1999. *Systems design of education: a journey to create the future*. Educational Technology Publishers.
- Barnett B G & Sagor R 1994. *The TQE principal: A transformational leader*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Begley P T 2000. Values and leadership: new research and an agenda for the future. *The Alberta Journal for Educational Research*, 46(3):233-249.
- Bennis W G 2007. *New managers for the new economy: a shift from management to leadership*. Leadership vs Management debate. Access online at http://www.locoventres.com/business_guide/crosscuttings/leadership_vs_mgmt.html.
- Bennis W G & Nanus B 1985. *Leaders: The strategies for taking charge*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bezzina M 2007. *Moral purpose and shared leadership: The leaders transforming learning and learners pilot study*. *The Leadership Challenge: Improving learning in schools*. ACER Research Conference 2007. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.
- Bisschoff T 2000. Functions of school governing bodies in South Africa: First steps towards school-based management. *Management in Education*, 14(3):12-14.
- Blumberg A. & Greenfield W D 1986. *The effective principal: Perspectives on school leadership*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bolden R 2004. *What is Leadership?* South West Leadership Report 1. Exeter: University of Exeter Centre for Leadership Studies.
- Botha R J 2006. Leadership in school-based management: a case study in selected schools. *South African Journal of Education*, 26(3):341-353.
- Botha R J 2010. School effectiveness: conceptualising divergent assessment approaches. *South African Journal of Education*, 30(4) of 2010.
- Bush T & Heystek J 2003. School governance in the new South Africa. *Compare*, 33(2):127-138.
- Caldwell B 2005. *School-Based Management*. Education Policy Series. Paris and Brussels: The International Institute for Educational Planning.

- Culbertson J 2002. Educational leadership preparation program: a glance at the past with an eye on the future. *Leadership and policy in schools*, 1(3):201-221.
- Crowther F, Hann L & Andrews D 2002. Rethinking the role of the school principal: successful school improvement in the post industrial era. *The Practicing Administrator*, 24(2):10–13.
- Cuban L 2008. *Frogs into princess: writing on school reform*. Teacher College Press.
- Davis S, LaPointe M & Meyerson D 2005. *School leadership study: Developing successful principals* (Review of Research). Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Stanford Educational Leadership Institute.
- Dimmock C & Wildley H 1999. Conceptualising curriculum management in an effective secondary school: a Western Australia case study. *The Curriculum Journal*, 6(3):297-323.
- Duignan P, & Bezzina M 2006. *Distributed leadership: The theory and the practice*. Paper presented at the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration Conference, Cyprus.
- Fisher C W 1990. Research agenda for mathematics education. *Journal for research in mathematics education*, 21(1):81-89.
- Fryar R 2001. *Servant leadership: setting the leader free*. St Louis: Concordia.
- Gertler P 2007. *Impact evaluation for school-based management reform*. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Greenberg J & Baron A 1993. *Behaviour in organisations: understanding and managing the human side of work* (4th edition). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Greenfield W D 1986. Moral, social and technical dimensions of the principalship. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 63:138-149.
- Greenfield W D 1999. *Moral leadership in schools*. Paper presented at the AERA, Montreal, Canada. April.
- Grigg J, Prichett R & Thomas C 2007. The new instructional leadership: Creating data-driven instructional systems in school. *Journal of School Leadership*, 17(2), 159-194.
- Grubb W N & Flessa J J 2006. A Job Too Big for One: Multiple Principals and Other Non-traditional Approaches to School Leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly* Vol. 42, No. 4 (October 2006) 518-550.
- Hargreaves A 2007. *School Leadership for Systematic Improvement in Finland*. A Case Study Report for OECD Activity: Improving School Leadership. December.
- Hay I 2005. *Transformational Leadership: characteristics and criticisms*. School of Geography, Population and Environmental Management, Flinders University. Access at <http://www.leadingtoday.org/weleadinlearning/transformationalleadership.htm>.
- Hersey P 1984. *The situational leader*. Minnesota: Wilson.

- Hersey P, Blanchard K H & Johnson D E 2001. *Management of organisational behaviour: leading human resources*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Ingvarson L C, Anderson M & Gronn P 2006. *Standards for School Leadership: A critical review of the literature*. Canberra: Teaching Australia.
- Johnston B J 1997. Types of educational leadership in a post-industrial society. 28(3):213-232.
- Jones, D W & Rudd, R D 2007. *Transactional, Transformational, or Laissez-Faire Leadership: An assessment of College of Agriculture Academic Program Leaders Leadership Styles. Proceedings of the 2007 AAAE Research Conference, Volume 34*.
- Kidder R 1994. *Shared values for a troubled world: Conversations with men and women of conscience*. Delray Beach, FL: St. Lucie Press.
- Leithwood K 1999. An organisational perspective on values for leaders of future schools, in Begley, PT (Eds), *Values and Educational Leadership*, pp. 25-50, Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Marishane R N 2003. Decentralisation of financial control: an empowerment strategy for school-based management. Unpublished PhD-thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Marishane R N 2009. *Education administration, management and leadership: teacher commitment to the instructional programme in rural schools in Limpopo Province*. Paper delivered at the 2009 EMASA Annual Conference, University of Pretoria, August.
- Marishane R N & Sadiki N B 2009. *Education Administration, Management and Leadership: Teacher Commitment to the Instructional Programme in Rural Schools in Limpopo Province*. Paper delivered at the 2009 EMASA annual Conference, August 2009, University of Pretoria.
- Marishane R N & Botha R J 2011. *School leadership towards the changing context: a case for school-based management*. Pretoria; Van Schaik.
- McNeil A 1998. Transforming leadership: new skills for an extraordinary future. *Servant Leadership Project*. Bloomington, in Phi Delta Education Foundation. In association with the University of Saskatchewan, Canada. Access online at <http://www.usask.ca/education/leadership/servant>.
- Love J R 1994. *Liberating leaders from the superman syndrome*. Lanham: University Press.
- Moller J 2009. School Leadership in the Age of Accountability. Tensions Between Managerial and Professional Accountability. *Journal of Educational Accountability*, 2009 (10): 37-46.
- Murphy J F 1995. *Effective school leadership in a post-industrial era*. Paper presented at the Australian Educational Research Association, Sydney, July.
- Murphy J F 2003. Re-culturing the profession of educational leadership: new blueprints. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 38(2):176-191.

- Murphy J F & Beck I 1995. *School-based management as a school reform: taking stock*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Naidoo J P 2005. *Education decentralization in South Africa: From policy to practice*. International Institute for Educational Planning. Paris: UNESCO.
- Pushpanadham K 2006. *Educational Leadership for School-based Management*. ABAC Journal, 26(1):41-48.
- Rapporteur P M, Moorman H & Pont D 2008. *School Leadership Strategies: Building Leadership Capacity in Victoria, Australia*. A case study report for OECD on improving school leadership. EDU/EDPC(2008)5. Access online at <http://www.oalis.oecd.org/oalis/2008dog.nsf/LinkTo/NT00000E4A/SFILE/JT03243299.P>
- Republic of South Africa (RSA) 2007a. *Education Laws Amendment Act Number 31 of 2007*. Pretoria: Government Printers.
- Republic of South Africa (RSA) 2007b. The Public Service Commission: Report on the Evaluation of the Batho Pele Principle of Value for Money in the Public Service. Pretoria: Commissioner House.
- Robinson V 2008. The impact of leadership on student outcomes: An analysis of the differential effects of leadership types. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5).
- Rodriguez, T.A. & Slate, J. R. 2005. *Site-based management: A review of the literature Part I: Setting the stage*. *Essays in Education*, 15. Available at: <http://www.usca.edu/essays/vol152005/Slate1.pdf>.
- Schommer M 1990. Effects of beliefs about the nature of knowledge n comprehension. *Journal of Educational psychology*, 82(3):406-411.
- Seeley D S 1992. *Visionary leaders for reforming public education*. Paper delivered at the AERA Conference in San Francisco, CA.
- Sergiovanni T J 1996. *Moral leadership; getting to the heart of school improvement*. Wiley, John & Sons (inc).
- Shapiro J & Stefkovich J 2000. *Ethical leadership in decision making in education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Spillane J P 2006. *Distributed leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Steward, J. 2006. Transformational Leadership: An Evolving Concept Examined through the Works of Burns, Bass, Avolio, and Leithwood. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, Issue #54, June 26.
- Stone AG, Russell RF & Patterson K 2003. Transformational versus servant leadership – difference in leader focus. *Servant leadership roundtable*. Access online at <http://www.regent.edu/acad/clis/2003servantleadershiproundtable/stone.pdf>.

- Taylor D 2004. *Effective school governing bodies: The misnomer of the idea of a balance between governance and management*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the Education Management Association of South Africa (EMASA), Port Elizabeth, March.
- The World Bank. 2007. *What is School-Based Management*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- Tichy N 1990. *The transformational leader*. New York: John Wiley and sons.
- Thody A 1999. Developing school governors: change or inertia? *School Leadership and Management*, 19(1):115-134.
- Thody A 2000. 'Utopia revisited – or is it better the second time around?' *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, 32, 2: 46 – 61.
- UNESCO. 2005. *Implementing National EFA Plans: Handbook for Decentralised Education planning*. Bangkok: UNESCO.
- Vanourek G 2005. *State of the Charter Movement: Trends, Issues & Indicators*. Washington; charter School Leadership Council. Volume 16 Number 1 August 2009 19-37.
- Varaki BS 2003. Epistemological beliefs and leadership style among school principals. *International Education Journal*, 4(3):224-231.